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Saint James Lutheran Church

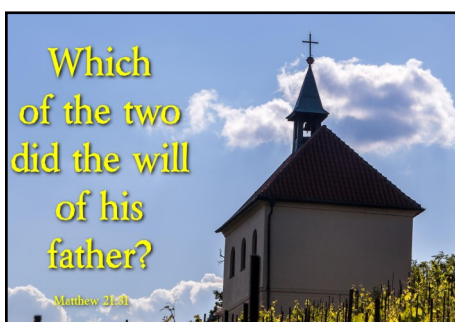


A Parish of the North Carolina Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



"Growing in Christ Through Worship, Learning, Fellowship, and Service"

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST SEPTEMBER 27, 2020



Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Faithful God,

have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of ✝ Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world.

Amen.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: *Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32*

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

A reading from Ezekiel, the eighteenth chapter.

The word of the Lord came to me: ²What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? ³As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die. ²⁵Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ³⁰Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM: *Psalms 25:1-9*

Remember, O *Lord*, your compassion and love. (*Ps. 25:6*)

A reading from Psalm twenty-five.

- ¹To you, O LORD,
 I lift up my soul.
- ²My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,
 nor let my enemies triumph over me.
- ³Let none who look to you be put to shame;
 rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.
- ⁴Show me your ways, O LORD,
 and teach me your paths.
- ⁵Lead me in your truth and teach me,
 for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.
- ⁶Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
 for they are from everlasting.
- ⁷Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
 remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.
- ⁸You are gracious and upright, O LORD;
 therefore you teach sinners in your way.
- ⁹You lead the lowly in justice
 and teach the lowly your way.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: *Philippians 2:1-13*

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

A reading from Philippians, the second chapter.

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. ¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 21:23-32*

After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the twenty-first chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ ²⁶But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ²⁸‘What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?’” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN

Lord Whose Love in Humble Service
Nancy Sloop, Organist / Jeremy Jay, vocalist



1 Lord, whose love in hum-ble ser - vice bore the weight of hu-man need,
2 Still your chil-dren wan-der home-less; still the hun - gry cry for bread;
3 As we wor-ship, grant us vi - sion, till your love's re - veal-ing light
4 Called by wor-ship to your ser - vice, forth in your dear name we go,



who up - on the cross, for - sak - en, worked your mer-cy's per - fect deed:
still the cap - tives long for free - dom; still in grief we mourn our dead.
in its height and depth and great-ness dawns up - on our quick-ened sight,
to the child, the youth, the a - ged, love in liv - ing deeds to show;



we, your ser - vants, bring the wor - ship not of voice a - lone, but heart;
As you, Lord, in deep com-pas - sion healed the sick and freed the soul,
mak - ing known the needs and bur - dens your com-pas-sion bids us bear,
hope and health, good-will and com - fort, coun - sel, aid, and peace we give,



con - se - crat - ing to your pur - pose ev - 'ry gift which you im - part.
by your Spir - it send your pow - er to our world to make it whole.
stir - ring us to ar - dent ser - vice, your a - bun - dant life to share.
that your ser - vants, Lord, in free - dom may your mer - cy know and live.

APOSTLES' CREED

God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we profess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary,

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

In all the world, give your church unity. Inspire all the baptized with the mind of Christ. Where the church is powerful and where it struggles, shape us with humility and obedience so that your love may be at work in us. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Your Son took on all of bodily life in our world, even to death. Preserve and keep your creation, O God. Mend and redeem places that are polluted and damaged, so that all of creation confesses you as Lord.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Turn the nations toward life. Where our ways are unfair, give us new hearts and new spirits. Where sin permeates our cultures and institutions, change our minds and teach us to trust your authority. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Our lives are yours, O God. Relieve the suffering of those who are ill in body, mind, or spirit. Defend the lives and welfare of children who are abused or neglected, hungry or exploited, bullied or lonely. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Continue to guide the hearts and lives of this congregation toward the needs of others. Fill us with your compassion and sympathy. Bless ministries of care in our community especially Cooperative Christian Ministries, Salvation Army Night Shelter, My Father's House, and Esther's Heart; make us signs of your mercy and justice for our neighbors. Lord in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Thank you for those who have gone into the kingdom ahead of us—tax collectors and prostitutes, likely and unlikely, obedient and slow to learn. By their witness, teach us to confess Jesus Christ as Lord in life and in death. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

Our Father, who art in heaven,

**hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread;

**and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever and ever.**

Amen.

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

God in peace, to love and serve the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Amazing Grace

NEW BRITAIN

The Liturgy Has Ended; The Service Begins!

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WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please e-mail all information to the church office at keith@sjnc.net

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PRAYER LIST

Hal Merriott
Kelly Hill, friend of Debbie
Wilkinson

All health care professionals and first responders including:

Deb Bradshaw
Lauri Fowler
DeeDee Gilbert
Annette Propst
Meagan Lambert
Alison Monk
Jason and Stephanie Matthews
Dr Bradley Propst, son of
Kenny and Annette Propst
Sam Hurley, son of Elizabeth
Hurley
Julie Greathouse, friend of
Lois Marlow
Betsy Waselovich, sister of
Golda Jay
Lauren, daughter of Angie
Buchanan
Dr. Stephanie Garrison,
daughter-in-law of Margaret
Garrison
Dr. Kevin Burns, son-in-law of
Margaret Garrison.

If you have someone you would like to add to the prayer list, please contact Keith. 704-786-0166 and leave a message or email at keith@sjnc.net

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

27-Sept Jeff Faggart
27-Sept Tommy Propst
28-Sept Francie Davis
28-Sept Miles Marlow
28-Sept Christopher Miller
30-Sept Jo Eng
30-Sept David Hartgen
30-Sept Katie Popovici
01-Oct Chase Lineberger
01-Oct Conner Lineberger
01-Oct Donae Yoos
03-Oct Nicholas Crainshaw

OUR STEWARDSHIP
Contributions and Receipts
for September 20, 2020
\$7,124.00
(\$8,414.00 needed for weekly)

ASSISTING IN TODAY'S WORSHIP

Lector/Intercessor: Ann Gillon
Vocalist: Jeremy Jay

CCM FOOD PANTRY DRIVE

St James is hosting a food drive for CCM on Wednesday, October 7 from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. On that Wednesday, simply enter the church back parking lot and stop near the portico at the back entrance of the church. A volunteer will remove your donations from your car and take them to the truck provided by CCM. There is also a need for financial donations. You may make a financial contribution directly to CCM or to the church, designated for CCM's Food Pantry. Check the Ring Out Newsletter or website for a list of needed items

Join Saint James Lutheran Church Facebook and Instagram groups—send Jeremy Jay any pictures and/or articles you would like to have posted at jeremy@pbnjay.com

St. James YouTube Channel Search for [St. James Lutheran Church Concord NC](#) and subscribe.

DIRECTORY

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The Rev. Dr. Timothy M. Smith.....Bishop

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CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

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Joseph Beasley..... Vice President
Golda Jay..... Secretary
Beth Huss Treasurer

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Samantha Hillegass
Elizabeth Hurley
Hunter Huss
Nick Lovelace
Mac Mullins
Mark Murphy
Al Pieschel
Jodi Ramirez



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OFFICE HOURS

M-Th 8:30-4:00, F 8:30-1:00
Closed for lunch 12:30 - 1:00