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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"

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST OCTOBER 4, 2020



In today's gospel reading, Jesus tells a vineyard parable, which serves as an image of Israel, the prophets' mission, and Christ's death. For Christians, the vineyard also speaks of God's love poured out in the blood of Christ, given to us for the forgiveness of sin. Grafted onto Christ the vine at baptism, we are nourished with wine and bread so that we may share Christ's sufferings and know the power of his resurrection.

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.

Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: *Isaiah 5:1-7*

The prophet sings a sad, parable-like love song about the relationship between God and Israel. In this song Israel is compared to a promising vineyard. Despite God's loving care, the vineyard that is Israel has brought forth "wild grapes" of injustice and distress, when fine grapes of justice and righteousness were expected.

A reading from Isaiah, the fifth chapter.

Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. ²He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. ³And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. ⁴What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? ⁵And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. ⁶I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. ⁷For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM: *Psalms 80:7-15*

Look down from heaven, O God; behold and tend this vine. (Ps. 80:14, 15)

A reading from Psalm Eighty.

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts;
 let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
⁸You have brought a vine out of Egypt;
 you cast out the nations and planted it.
⁹You cleared the ground for it;
 it took root and filled the land.
¹⁰The mountains were covered by its shadow
 and the towering cedar trees by its boughs.
¹¹You stretched out its tendrils to the sea
 and its branches to the river.
¹²Why have you broken down its wall,
 so that all who pass by pluck off its grapes?
¹³The wild boar of the forest has ravaged it,
 and the beasts of the field have grazed upon it.
¹⁴Turn now, O God of hosts,
 look down from heaven;
¹⁵behold and tend this vine;
 preserve what your right hand has planted.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: *Philippians 3:4b-14*

Paul reviews some of his supposed credentials, which no longer have any bearing in comparison to the right relationship he has been given through the death of Christ. The power of Christ's resurrection motivates him to press on toward the ultimate goal, eternal life with Christ.

A reading from Philippians, the third chapter.

Paul writes: ^{4b}If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. ⁷Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. ¹²Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 21:33-46*

Jesus tells a parable to the religious leaders who are plotting his death, revealing that their plans will, ironically, bring about the fulfillment of scripture.

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

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to the people: ³³“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. ³⁴When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ ³⁹So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” ⁴¹They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.” ⁴²Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’? ⁴³Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. ⁴⁴The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.” ⁴⁵When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN

If You But Trust in God to Guide You
Nancy Sloop, Organist / LeeAnn Miller, vocalist



1 If you but trust in God to guide you with gen - tle
2 What gain is there in anx - ious weep - ing, in help - less
3 The Lord our rest - less hearts is hold - ing, in peace and
4 Sing, pray, and keep God's ways un - swerv - ing, of - fer your



hand through all your ways, you'll find that God is there be -
an - ger and dis - tress? If you are in your Sav - ior's
qui - et - ness con - tent. We rest in God's good will un -
ser - vice faith - ful - ly. Trust heav - en's word; though un - de -



side you when cross - es come, in try - ing days. Trust then in
keep - ing, in sor - row will he love you less? For Christ who
fold - ing, what wis - dom from on high has sent. God, who has
serv - ing, you'll find God's prom - ise true to be. This is our



God's un - chang - ing love; build on the rock that will not move.
took for you a cross will bring you safe through ev - 'ry loss.
cho - sen us by grace, knows ver - y well the fears we face.
con - fi - dence in - deed: God nev - er fails in time of need.

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

With confidence in God's grace and mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

Holy God, you call us to work for peace and justice in your vineyard. Refresh the church with your life, that we may bear fruit through work and service. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Thank you for the abundant harvest of the earth. Bless and care for those whose hands bring the fruits of the earth to the tables of all who hunger. May we be inspired by your servants who cared deeply for your creation especially Francis of Assisi, whom we commemorate today. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Curb the impulses of greed and pride that lead us to take advantage of others. Grant that world leaders seek the fruits of the kingdom for the good and welfare of all people. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Sustain all who suffer with the promise of new life. Guide the efforts of those working on a vaccine for Covid 19. Protect doctors, nurses staff, and all providing care to the sick; teachers and students; first responders, essential workers, and all who seek to provide for their families; and all those who mourn the many losses brought about by this virus. Assured of your presence, heal our pain and suffering, and equip us to embrace all bodies aching for wholeness of mind, body, and soul. Lord in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for all managers in our community and for all who seek employment. Give hope and a future to those who lack meaningful work, those who have been marginalized or abused in the workplace, and those who desire new opportunities. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Thank you for the saints who teach us to live faithfully in your vineyard. May our chorus join theirs until our labor is complete. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Listen as we call on you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus 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!

Music Copyright Information

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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

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

- 04-Oct** Meghan Kuly
- 05-Oct** Charles Sloop
- 09-Oct** Elizabeth Thompson
- 10-Oct** Hayden Burroughs

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Lector/Intercessor: Kenny Propst
Vocalist: LeeAnn Miller

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Saturday, October 10 from 10:00 am until Noon. Join us for a blessing of the animals at Far Fetched Farm, 835 Bradford Drive, Concord. Bring you special pets and enjoy the farm. We will be collecting pet foods, donations of money and/or gift cards for local animal rescue organizations. All animals must be on leash, crate or restrained.

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

2020 CROP "Virtual" Walk

Sunday, October 11

It's an actual walking activity, but for reasons of safety and social distancing, participants will commit to walking on their own or in small groups in their neighborhoods, parks, or trails on walk day. We won't be gathering in one large group this year and the time and length of the walk is flexible. See the website or Ring Out to register.

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.

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

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OFFICE HOURS

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