

Order of Worship for September 17, 2023

Welcome

Children's Sermon

Gathering Hymn ELW #605 Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive

- 1 "Forgive our sins as we forgive,"
you taught us, Lord, to pray;
but you alone can grant us grace
to live the words we say.
- 2 How can your pardon reach and bless
the unforgiving heart
that broods on wrongs and will not let
old bitterness depart?
- 3 In blazing light your cross reveals
the truth we dimly knew:
how trifling others' debts to us;
how great our debt to you!
- 4 Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls
and bid resentment cease;
then, by your mercy reconciled,
our lives will spread your peace.

Text: Rosamond E. Herklots, 1905-1987, alt.
Text © Oxford University Press 1969

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be God, the one who forms us, ✠ Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete. **Amen.**

Let us come before God in humility, confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Steadfast and faithful God, **you have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you. We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering. We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others. For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us. For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation, forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor, forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path; in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

Beloved in Christ, God's justice stretches beyond all understanding. God's compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us. In ✠ Christ, you are already and always forgiven. **Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

O Lord God, **merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our**

hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

First reading Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Second reading Romans 14:1-12

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written,

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God."

¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God. Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel acclamation

Lord, let my heart be good soil,
open to the seed of your word.
Lord, let my heart be good soil,
where love can grow and peace is understood.
When my heart is hard, break the stone away.
When my heart is cold, warm it with the day.
When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.
Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart,
Lord, let my heart be good soil.

Gospel reading Matthew 18:21-35

The holy gospel according to _____. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart." The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Hymn of the Day ACS #1010 Wind and Cold Roar

- 1 Wind and cold roar through the city street;
some folk have no heat: forgive us, Lord.
Many have warm homes, wool clothes to wear;
this is so unfair: forgive us, Lord.

Refrain

Help us grasp how this is our sin;
teach us, save us by your cross,
for the things we crave and seek to win
cost our neighbors loss. Forgive us, Lord.

- 2 Those within may swell with civic pride;
many wait outside: forgive us, Lord.
Some have many chances to succeed;
others live in need: forgive us, Lord. *Refrain*

- 3 Violence and hatred, near and far,
terror, slaughter, war: forgive us, Lord.
You insist the hungry shall be fed;
let us give them bread: forgive us, Lord. *Refrain*

Apostle's Creed

We believe in God the Father, God Almighty by whose plan Earth and heaven sprang to being, all created things began.

We believe in Christ the Savior, Son of God in human frame, Virgin-born, the child of Mary upon whom the Spirit came. Christ, who on the cross forsaken, like a lamb to slaughter led, suffered under Pontius Pilate, he descended to the dead. We believe in Jesus risen, heaven's king to rule and reign, to the Father's side ascended till as judge he comes to reign.

We believe in God the Spirit; in one church, below, above; Saints of God in one communion, one in holiness and love. So by faith, our sins forgiven, Christ our Savior, Lord and Friend, we shall rise with him in glory to the life that knows no end.

Prayers of the People

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood. God of abundance, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and healing to rivers clogged with pollution. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger. God of abundance, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in positions of power to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle. God of abundance, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, the disease of addiction, or otherwise afraid or in harm's way. Protect all who cry out for mercy. God of abundance, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for this congregation. Open our hearts to practice intentional invitation. Help us to forgive each other, practice patience, and choose welcome over judgment. Move us to care for those in our community seeking refuge and safety. God of abundance, **receive our prayer.**

We give thanks for the saints who died in faith. Show us how to live faithfully, creatively, and lovingly in your church and world. God of abundance, **receive our prayer.**

Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Noisy Offering

Offering Prayer

Dear God, **thank you for all our blessings. Help our blessings be a blessing to others. In your name we pray, Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you!**

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heav'n and earth are full of your glory.
Hosana in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosana in the
highest hosana in the highest.

Words of Institution

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Lord's Prayer

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.

Invitation to Communion

Lamb of God

Come to the table of mercy,
prepared with the wine and the bread.

All who are hungry and thirsty,
come, and your souls will be fed.

Come at the Lord's invitation;
receive from his nail-scarred hand.

Eat of the bread of salvation;
drink of the blood of the Lamb.

Text: Claire Cloninger, b. 1942

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Meal of Holy Communion

Prayer after Communion

Gracious God, **we rejoice that you have used the harvest of field and vineyard to renew and**

sustain us. Lead us as we go from this life-giving meal into lives of grateful service to you and your cherished creation; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

The God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

Sending hymn ELW #721 Goodness Is Stronger than Evil

Goodness is stronger than evil;
love is stronger than hate;
light is stronger than darkness;
life is stronger than death;
vict'ry is ours, vict'ry is ours,
through God who loves us.
Vict'ry is ours, vict'ry is ours,
through God who loves us.

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Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you.
Thanks be to God.

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