**Worship Plan for Sunday, October 10, 2021**

20th Sunday after Pentecost

**Introduction to the day**

The rich man who comes to ask Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life is a good man, sincere in his asking. Mark’s gospel is alone in saying that Jesus looked on him and loved him. Out of love, not as judgment, Jesus offers him an open door to life: sell all you own and give it to the poor. Our culture bombards us with the message that we will find life by consuming. Our assemblies counter this message with the invitation to find life by divesting for the sake of the other.

**GOSPEL MESSAGE: Limitless Possibility**

For the young, life can feel like a limitless landscape of possibilities. It can seem there is nothing we cannot do or become if we simply set our minds to it. But as we age, the possibilities may appear to shrink, whether through the choices we make or through the limits of a world beyond our control. At certain points in life, we may look at ourselves—who we are and what we have become—and see not possibilities but, rather, inevitabilities. It may seem impossible to live any other way than how we are currently living or for people to see us in any other way than they currently do. We may struggle to see any way beyond our habits or patterns, our history, or our current roles.

In today’s gospel, Jesus invites a man to leave behind everything he has known and thought about himself to become Jesus’ disciple. To the world, the man is defined by his wealth, but Jesus sees the man behind the possessions and loves him. He sees past what seems inevitable about the man, to what God can make possible. Yet, tragically, the man can only see the world’s vision of him, a vision of limited possibilities. When Jesus calls him to leave his wealth behind, the man thinks he is being asked the impossible and goes away heartbroken.

In the Christian assembly, the voice of Christ calls us to look past one another’s worldly inevitabilities to the divine possibilities present among us. No matter what moment of life we are in, it is never too late. No matter what our history of failures or addictions, there are still more chances. No matter what we have been to this point, there is still something new we can become. Jesus calls us to leave ourselves behind in order to follow him, to rediscover who we are with a God for whom all things are possible.

**Gathering:** The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

**Greeting**

Welcome to worship today, we are glad to have you with our Faith Lutheran Church community. I'm Pr. John Barton and I will be leading our service today.

This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

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.**

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Announcements**

PLEASE NOTE: Because of the recent continued dramatic increase in positive COVID case rates in the city and county, it is necessary that everyone must wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status, during worship and all other in-person gatherings at Faith Lutheran Church. This policy is necessary for us to continue having in-person gatherings and we appreciate your participation and understanding. If you have forgotten your mask, please raise your hand and the ushers will provide one.

Monday: Executive Board meets at 1:00 in person and on Zoom

Tuesday: Lydia Circle meets at 10:00 in person; Education Committee meets at 4:30 on Zoom

Wednesday: Mary Circle meets at 10:00 on Zoom

Friday: Al-Anon meets at 10:30 in the Fellowship Hall.

For more information and a complete monthly calendar, contact the church office. Thank you!

**Gathering Song:*Lord of Light* (ELW 688)**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

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

Most merciful God, **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, increase in us your gift of faith, that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to what lies ahead, we may follow the way of your commandments and receive the crown of everlasting joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**Word:** God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**First Reading:** A reading from Amos.

6Seek the Lord and live, or he will break out against the house of Joseph like fire, and it will devour Bethel, with no one to quench it. 7Ah, you that turn justice to wormwood, and bring righteousness to the ground! 10They hate the one who reproves in the gate, and they abhor the one who speaks the truth. 11Therefore because you trample on the poor and take from them levies of grain, you have built houses of hewn stone, but you shall not live in them; you have planted pleasant vineyards, but you shall not drink their wine. 12For I know how many are your transgressions, and how great are your sins—you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe, and push aside the needy in the gate. 13Therefore the prudent will keep silent in such a time; for it is an evil time. 14Seek good and not evil, that you may live; and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you, just as you have said. 15Hate evil and love good, and establish justice in the gate; it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**PsalmODY:**

12So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

13**Return, O Lord; how long will you tarry? Be gracious to your servants.**

14Satisfy us by your steadfast love in the morning; so shall we rejoice and be glad all our days.

15**Make us glad as many days as you afflicted us and as many years as we suffered adversity.**

16Show your servants your works, and your splendor to their children.

17**May the graciousness of the Lord our God be upon us; prosper the work of our hands; prosper our handiwork.**

**Second Reading:** A reading from Hebrews.

12Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13And before him no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account. 14Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. 15For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. 16Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel:** The holy gospel according to Mark. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

17As [Jesus] was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” 18Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. 19You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother.’ ” 20He said to him, “Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.” 21Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, “You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” 22When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.  
23Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” 24And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! 25It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” 26They were greatly astounded and said to one another, “Then who can be saved?” 27Jesus looked at them and said, “For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.” 28Peter began to say to him, “Look, we have left everything and followed you.” 29Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, 30who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. 31But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our risen Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, “You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” 22 When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

This part is usually what makes the story grind to a halt as we listen to it. How many of you remember what happened next in the gospel? Don’t worry, it is where the rich man gets caught up too, in what Jesus’ words are to him.

For the man in the story, this is what Jesus suggests, that he give up and sacrifice what is holding him back from the spirit of following the law and the new good news in Jesus. The man walks away from Jesus, who looked on him and loved him but also gave him the hard Truth! In order for the man to become a follower of Christ, he would have to give up his multitude of possessions. We hear nothing of the man's response but in this case, actions clearly spoke louder than words. Faced with the prospect of following Christ and receiving salvation, somehow he could not do what it took. He had such a complete disposition of attachment to the possessions that he could not bear to let them go.

Take what is holding you back, what is causing you to stumble on the path of faith and turn it into something useful for others.

There are some amazing modern examples of this concept of modern sacrifice, of turning your stumbling block into a step for others. For example: formerly incarcerated or convicted people taking their experiences of hitting rock bottom, and turning it around lifting themselves up and others with similar experiences at the same time. For many people getting out of prison they re-enter a world that has changed without them, they have lost connections and even their orientation to their place in the world and now have a criminal record which restricts them from certain avenues of aid. Organizations like The Formerly Incarcerated Convicted People and Families Movement are networks of people who help those former prisoners embrace their place again and help others realize they are still people. Essentially, they ensure that when the prison doors open, those who walk out find open arms of those who have gone through what they have, especially so that they don’t fall back into the clutches of what brought them to prison in the first place.

Another example was made famous in the movie "American Sniper" U.S. Navy SEAL Chris Kyle (Bradley Cooper) took his mission - protect his comrades - seriously on the battlefield but then also when we returned home. Though not physically injured, Chris was haunted by his memories of being in the war zone and couldn’t quite settle into civilian life - until he realized that other former soldiers were probably feeling the same. Those haunting experiences were holding him back from his life and growing into it with his friends and family. So he took up his mission to protect his brothers and sisters at arms, and help them rest at home by spending time with them and sharing their experiences to help them open up and release the trauma that was still haunting them from the terrors of war. People like Chris Kyle and those in the wounded warrior programs seek to help those who have sacrificed much in war find peace at home.

For some of us, the stumbling block which could be holding us back from growing in faith and helping others do the same might be time. As we approach our first stewardship Sunday next week with our first temple talk, which will be about stewarding time, let's dwell on that topic a little bit by hearing part of a devotional which was read a couple of weeks ago at our most recent stewardship committee meeting.

WAIT QUIETLY IN MY PRESENCE while My thoughts form silently in the depths of your being. Do not try to rush this process, because hurry keeps your heart earthbound. I am the Creator of the entire universe, yet I choose to make My humble home in your heart. It is there where you know Me most intimately; it is there where I speak to you in holy whispers. Ask My Spirit to quiet your mind so that you can hear My still small voice within you. I am speaking to you continually: words of Life... Peace... Love. Tune your heart to receive these messages of abundant blessing. Lay your requests before Me, and wait in expectation.

Perhaps we will have the epiphany of what is needing to be sacrificed in our life, maybe not. Perhaps we will have a brainstorm of ideas, or perhaps we will not. There is much to think about with all of these stories, both from our modern times and lives, along with the lives we hear about in the Bible like the man who couldn’t bear to let go of something, even if it meant receiving Jesus’ precious gift and helping others at the same time. The truth of it is, we continue to wonder how we can keep from doing the same as that man, how to follow Jesus in a meaningful way and how to make sense of the Bible. I like how one pastor put it though: “The Bible is not a "how to" manual. It is a collection of writings of people's wrestling with God, often getting it wrong, and how God's grace overtook them anyway." Marcus Halley @word\_made FRESH

God has a miraculous way of transforming us and everything in our lives to make it work. When we encounter obstacles or even create them for ourselves, God is there to help us. As it was for the disciples, it is for us: the Bible tells us so.

Jesus looked at them, and looks through time and space at us, and said, “For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.”

God be praised. Amen.

**Hymn of the Day:*Take My Life, That I May Be* (ELW 685)**

**ASSISTING MINISTER**

We continue as we confess our faith using the words of the Apostle's Creed.

**Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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.**

**Pastor and Assisting Minister: Prayers of Intercession**

Made children and heirs of God’s promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

Uniting God, you call forth different gifts in those who follow you. Encourage us to welcome the diverse benefits and blessings of the whole church in teaching, preaching, prophecy, healing, and more. Christ, be our light.

**Shine in your church gathered today.**

Nurturing God, you bring forth crops from the soil and bounty from the trees. Increase the produce of the land and bless all who toil in fields and orchards. Provide for good working conditions and keep them safe. Christ, be our light.

**Shine in your church gathered today.**

Empowering God, you offer compassion for those who are overlooked or forgotten. Open the hearts of local, national, and world leaders to show such compassion and love for their neighbors. Christ, be our light.

**Shine in your church gathered today.**

Sheltering God, in Jesus you travelled among us without a place to lay your head. Provide safe places to sleep and rest for those who have no place to live. Sustain ministries that offer food, clothing, and peace of mind (local ministries may be named). Christ, be our light.

**Shine in your church gathered today.**

Renewing God, you bring life out of death. Help us part with those things that are no longer beneficial to us and open our hearts to see where new life is budding in this congregation. Christ, be our light.

**Shine in your church gathered today.**

Eternal God, we thank you for the lives of those who have died (especially). Make us confident in your promise of salvation and support us in our own journey of faith. Christ, be our light.

**Shine in your church gathered today.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Prayer List**

Boss Anderson; Gloria Anderson; Julie Chevraux; Daniel Conner; Vicki Crow; Sally Duncan; Joni Gray; Kally Homchick; Marlon Jay; Francis Key; Patsy Loughboro; the McGavran and Hicks families on the loss of Ken Wall;  Sandra Miller; Carol Morris; Pat Myers; Sheila Neal; Ron Neumen; Tina Peteroski & family; Andrew Quinn; Edy Rose; JoAnne Schriock; Dee Seel; Jan Simon; Earlean Wagner; Diana Ward; Bernie Weston; Mary Yturralde; the homebound; the Emergency responders; and those grieving and anticipating surgery/tests.

We especially pray for those affected by COVID-19 and those who have lost loved ones. At this time we also pray for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts.

If you would like your name added to our prayer list, please contact the church office.

**Peace**

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

**Offering**

At this time, we remember that the giving of our offering is an authentic part of worship.

This month we are highlighting the ministry of Stewardship, especially this year’s emphasis "Let your light shine – to the glory of God!"

It is as Jesus said, “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

This month, we will hear during worship from three Faith members about how God has worked and continues to work in their lives, and how they respond to God’s generosity through their gifts of time and energy, talents and skills, and monetary giving.

Thank you so much for all the ways you give and help to make the ministries of this church possible!

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Offering Prayer**

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**Meal:** God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

**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, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, Holy, Holy (ELW p. 153)**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of pow’r and might: Heav’n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

**INSTRUCTION FOR COMMUNION**

Now, I invite you to gather bread and drink for communion and share with anyone in your household.

As a note, it helps to take the wafer off first then the juice separately afterward.

Gathering at Christ's table, we trust in God's all-reaching power and grace to provide each one of us the complete and total sacrament in these extraordinary times.

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.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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:** Taste and see that the Lord is good.

**Communion**

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you. Amen.

**Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray.

God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

**Sending Song:*God of Grace and God of Glory* (ELW 705)**

**Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Dismissal**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

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