

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 20, 2026
10:30 a.m.

**“THE
LAST
WILL BE
FIRST,
AND THE
FIRST
LAST.”**

MATTHEW 20:16, ESV



People like to keep score. If our team wins by a point, we rejoice and claim victory. But our relationships begin to dissolve when we count up little mistakes, losing trust and patience.

We learn today that God is not interested in playing counting games. In the reign of God, mercy is freely given to those who come late, as well as to those who have labored for many hours or years. Any claim to partiality, any impulse to keep score, is undercut by the grace of God received in word and sacrament. In the presence of God's mercy, wrote Luther, we are all beggars.

WELCOME

PRELUDE

INVOCATION

Stand

P In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **C Amen.**

WORDS OF CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Kneel/ Remain Standing

P Most merciful God,

C We confess that we are in bondage 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.

P Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, 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.

GREETING OF PEACE *Share a greeting of peace with those around you.*

SERVICE OF THE WORD

HYMN “O Day of Rest and Gladness” LSB 906

1 O day of rest and glad - ness, O day of joy and light,
2 This day at earth's cre - a - tion The light first had its birth;
3 This day, God's peo - ple meet - ing, His Ho - ly Scrip - ture hear;
△ 4 That light our hope sus - tain - ing, We walk the pil - grim way,

O balm of care and sad - ness, Most beau - ti - ful, most bright;
This day for our sal - va - tion Christ rose from depths of earth;
His liv - ing pres - ence greet - ing, Through bread and wine made near.
At length our rest at - tain - ing, Our end - less Sab - bath day.

This day the high and low - ly, Through a - ges joined to bless,
This day our Lord vic - to - rious The Spir - it sent from heav'n,
We jour - ney on, be - liev - ing, Re - newed with heav'n - ly might,
We sing to Thee our prais - es, O Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son;

Sing, “Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly,” The tri - une God con - fess.
And thus this day most glo - rious A three - fold light was giv'n.
From grace more grace re - ceiv - ing, On this blest day of light.
The Church her voice up - rais - es To Thee, blest Three in One.

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KYRIE

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

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



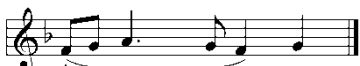
C Lord, have mer - cy.

P For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



C A - - - men.

HYMN OF PRAISE



C



Verse 2

Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and

hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his. *Sing the Refrain*

Verse 3

Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and

join in the hymn of all cre - a - - - tion:

Bless - ing, hon - or, glo - ry, and might be to

God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - - - men. *Sing the Refrain*

Verse 4

For the Lamb who was slain has be -

gun his reign. Al - le - lu - - - ia. *continue below*

Final Refrain

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.

Al-le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - - - ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

P Lord God, you call us to work in your vineyard and leave no one standing idle. Set us to our tasks in the work of your kingdom, and help us to order our lives by your wisdom; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **G** Amen.

Sit

Children are invited to the Fireside Lounge for the Children's Lesson.

FIRST LESSON Jonah 3:10--4:11

Unlike all other prophetic books, the book of Jonah focuses on the person of the prophet rather than on the prophet's message. The main story begins when Jonah flees God's call to announce destruction of the city of Nineveh, which symbolizes all that is hated by the Israelites. This comic story of a reluctant prophet highlights the very nature of God, the creator of the universe, who "is gracious and merciful . . . and abounding in steadfast love." In the end, every reader must answer the question: should this God not have pity on Nineveh?

R When God saw what the people of Nineveh did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

R This is the Word of the Lord **C** **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND LESSON Philippians 1:21-30

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison, knowing that he may soon suffer martyrdom for his faith.

R For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well--since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

R This is the Word of the Lord. **C** **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

intro: one chord

C Al-le-lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e-ter - nal - life. Al-le-lu - ia. Al-le-lu - ia.

GOSPEL **P** The Gospel is written in Matthew chapter 20, beginning at verse 1.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

Jesus tells his disciples a shocking parable about God's generosity, which reverses human expectations and offends those who believe God gives people only what they deserve.

P Jesus said to the disciples: "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here

idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord. **G** **Praise to You, O Christ.**

APOSTLES' CREED

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

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven,

And sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

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

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

MESSAGE

Stand

HYMN "To God be the Glory"

harmonized for part-singing

1) To God be the glo - ry, great things he has done;
2) Oh, per - fect re-demp-tion, the pur-chase of blood,
3) Great things he has taught us, great things he has done,

So loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
To ev - 'ry be - liev - er the prom - ise of God;
And great our re - joic - ing through Je - sus the Son;

Who yield - ed his life an a - tone-ment for sin,
The vil - est of - fend - er by grace may be - lieve,
But pur - er, and high - er, and great - er will be

And o - pened the life - gate that all may go in.
That mo - ment from Je - sus a par - don re - ceive.
Our won - der, our vic - t'ry, when Je - sus we see.

continued on next page

Refrain

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of four systems of music. Each system has a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 11/11. The lyrics are: 'Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice!', 'Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the peo - ple re - joice!', 'Oh, come to the Fa - ther, through Je - sus the Son,', and 'and give him the glo - ry, great things he has done.' The melody is simple and hymn-like, with the piano accompaniment providing harmonic support.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice!

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the peo - ple re - joice!

Oh, come to the Fa - ther, through Je - sus the Son,

and give him the glo - ry, great things he has done.

Meter: 11 11.11 11, with Refrain
Fanny Crosby, 1875

Source:
TFBF 264

Tune: To God Be the Glory
Wm. H. Doane, 1875

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

Other prayers are inserted here. Each petition ends with "Lord, in your mercy," to which the congregation responds, "hear our prayer." The prayers conclude:

P Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

SERVICE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

OFFERING

You may contribute online using the QR code or place a gift in the offering plate at the door along with the interest sheet.



OFFERTORY SONG AND PRAYER

introduction

C Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, ' and fill to the
brim our cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the
seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the
bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of
all; u - nite them with the prayers we of - fer
now. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence, and give
us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

P Let us pray. God of wisdom,

C in your Son Jesus you teach us to love one another and to share the gifts of our lives. Receive these gifts in thanksgiving for all you have done for us. Bring forth from us a rich yield in lives dedicated to your service. **C** Amen.

THE PREFACE

P The Lord be with you.



C And al - so with you.

P Lift up your hearts.



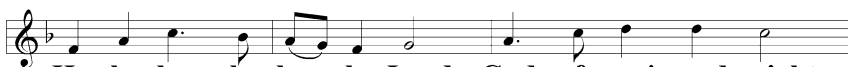
C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



C It is right to give him thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right and salutary that we should ... and so we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



WORDS OF INSTITUTION

- P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”
- P** In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

LORD’S PRAYER

Recognizing that the church, and this congregation, are comprised of people from many cultures, languages, and backgrounds, please speak this prayer in the language or version closest to your heart.

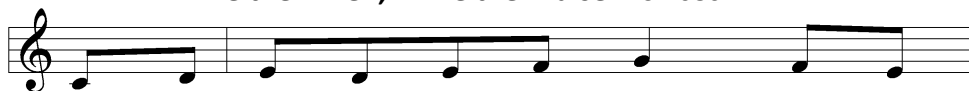
C Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

THE LAMB OF GOD

C Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. *(repeat from beginning)* Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

THE DISTRIBUTION *You are invited to approach the altar to receive communion elements along with an individual cup of wine or grape juice. Gluten-free available.*

HYMN "Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise" LSB 680



1 Thine the a - men Thine the praise Al - le -
 2 Thine the life e - ter - nal - ly Thine the -
 3 Thine the tru - ly Thine the yes Thine the
 4 Thine the king - dom Thine the prize Thine the
 5 Thine the glo - ry in the night No more



lu - ias an - gels raise Thine the ev - er - last - ing head
 prom - ise let there be Thine the vi - sion Thine the tree
 ta - ble we the guest Thine the mer - cy all from Thee
 won - der full sur - prise Thine the ban - quet then the praise
 dy - ing on - ly light Thine the riv - er Thine the tree



Thine the break - ing of the bread Thine the glo - ry Thine the
 All the earth on bend - ed knee Gone the nail - ing gone the
 Thine the glo - ry yet to be Then the ring - ing and the
 Then the jus - tice of Thy ways Thine the glo - ry Thine the
 Then the Lamb e - ter - nal - ly Then the ho - ly ho - ly



sto - ry Thine the har - vest then the cup Thine the
 rail - ing Gone the plead - ing gone the cry Gone the
 sing - ing Then the end of all the war Thine the
 sto - ry Then the wel - come to the least Then the
 ho - ly Cel - e - bra - tion ju - bi - lee Thine the



vine - yard then the cup is lift - ed up lift - ed up.
 sigh - ing gone the dy - ing what was loss lift - ed high.
 liv - ing Thine the lov - ing ev - er - more ev - er - more.
 won - der all in - creas - ing at Thy feast at Thy feast.
 splen - dor Thine the bright - ness on - ly Thee on - ly Thee.

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Stand

THE BLESSING

[P] The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **[C]** Amen.

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE AND PRAYER

intro: one chord

C Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev'-ry-one what he has done. Let all who seek the Lord re-joice and proud-ly bear his name. He re-calls his prom-is-es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

P Let us pray. Lord God, you are the one for whom we have waited. We rejoice in your salvation. As you have fed us with the riches of this table, place us again in your vineyard to reap the harvest of righteousness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **C Amen.**

BENEDICTION

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. **C Amen.**

P Go in peace; serve the Lord. **C Thanks be to God.**

HYMN "The Saints in Christ, Are One in Every Place" LSB 838

1 The saints in Christ are one in ev-'ry place
2 In chains for Christ! His pris-'ners love to sing,
3 To live is Christ, for us, to die is gain;
4 Lord Je-sus Christ! Heav'n's praise let earth re-peat;

To serve the Gos-pel of His cost-ly grace;
For slaves and free re-joice to praise our King;
Where then shall be our hun-ger, dan-ger, pain?
The work that You be-gan, You will com-plete.

continued on next page



From those first days to this, our hope the same:
 What though the Church on earth still suf - fers wrong?
 Our joy to preach good news to rich and poor,
 By grace let ev - 'ry foe be - come Your friend;
 The love of Christ, one Lord, one sav - ing name.
 The cross of Christ re - mains our pil - grim song.
 Then be with Christ, to live for - ev - er - more.
 Your day, O Christ, shall dawn and nev - er end.

POSTLUDE

Our Confession about Communion

Holy Communion is a divinely instituted act in which Jesus Christ gives His true (real) body and blood under the forms of bread and wine. We thus hold that the bread and wine are not mere symbols of Jesus' body and blood. When we receive the bread and wine, we receive in fact the body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins.

We believe that Communion is a celebration of this forgiveness which comes to us through faith as we eat and drink. In communion we remember our Lord's passion and death, His resurrection and ascension, and the promise of His coming again. Communion is truly the Gospel made visible and is offered for those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness."

We believe that as we eat and drink this Supper we are strengthened in our faith in Jesus Christ and in our love for one another.

Therefore, we invite to the Lord's Table all who have been instructed in the meaning of Communion; have been baptized in the name of the Triune God; and concur in our confession.

Those who are not yet instructed or hold a confession different than this congregation may come forward with their arms crossed across their chest to receive a blessing.

Those who have questions about communion are welcome to talk to one of the Pastors.

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"Christ- Students- Community Coming Together"

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