

Pentecost 7 Morning Prayer Service – July 24, 2022

Prelude

Hymn 390 – Praise to the Lord

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation;
O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation:
Join the great throng, psalter, organ, and son, sounding in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord; over all things he gloriously reigneth:
borne as on eagle wings, safely his saints he sustaineth.
Hast thou not seen how all thou needest hath been granted in what he ordaineth?

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy way and defend thee;
surely his goodness and mercy shall ever attend thee;
ponder anew what the Almighty can do, who with his love doth befriend thee.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that hath life and breath come now with praises before him!
Let the amen sound from his people again; gladly for ever adore him.

Opening sentence - BCP page 40

This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Invitation to Confession – BCP page 41

So that we may prepare ourselves in heart and mind to worship Almighty God, let us, with penitent and obedient hearts, confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy.

Confession – BCP pages 41-42

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, we have offended against thy holy laws, we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and have done those things which we ought not to have done. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, spare thou those who confess their

faults, restore thou those who are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord; and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

Absolution – BCP page 42

The almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

Gloria – BCP page 42

O Lord, open thou our lips.
And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Venite – BCP page 44

Come, let us sing to the Lord;
 let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving,
 and show ourselves glad in him with psalms.
For the Lord is a great God,
 and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are all the corners of the earth,
 and the strength of the hills is his also.
The sea is his and he made it,
 and his prepared the dry land.
O come, let us worship and fall down
 and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For he is the Lord our God,
 and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.
O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
 let the whole earth stand in awe of him.
For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth,
 and with righteousness to judge the world and the people with his truth.

Psalm 138 – insert

First Reading: Genesis 18:20-32 – insert

Second Reading: Colossians 2:-19– insert

Hymn 587 – Our Father, by whose Name all fatherhood is known

Our Father, by whose Name all fatherhood is known,
who dost in love proclaim each family thine own,
bless thou all parents, guarding well,
with constant love as sentinel, the homes in which they people dwell.

O Christ, thyself a child within an earthly home,
who heart still undefiled, though didst to manhood come;
Our children bless, in every place,
that they may all behold thy face, and knowing thee may grow in grace.

O Spirit, who dost bind our hearts in unity,
who teachest us to find the love from self set free,
in all our hearts such love increase,
that every home, by this release, may be the dwelling place of peace.

Gospel Lesson: Luke 11:1-13 - insert

Sermon – The Rev. Charles Rowins

Apostles' Creed – pp 53-54

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;*

*And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried,
He descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father
almighty.
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*

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

Lord's Prayer

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.
Let us 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, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Suffrages A – page 55

O Lord, show thy mercy upon us;
and grant us thy salvation.
Endue thy ministers with righteousness;
and make thy chosen people joyful.

Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;
for only in thee can we live in safety.
Lord, keep this nation under thy care;
and guide us in the way of justice and truth.
Let thy way be known upon earth;
thy saving health among all nations.
Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;
nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
Create in us clean hearts, O God;
and sustain us with thy Holy Spirit.

Collect for Seventh Sunday after Pentecost – insert

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reign with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever .*Amen.*

Prayers for Sundays (BCP p 56) and Unity (BCP p 818)

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace: Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions; take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that, as there is but one Body and one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Father, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

General Thanksgiving - BCP pp 58-59

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men. We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful; and that we show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

Announcements and *America*

*My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing;
Long may our land be bright with freedom's holy light;
Protect us by thy might, great God our King.*

Prayer of St. Chrysostom – BCP, p 59

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication unto thee, and hast promised through thy well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name thou wilt be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

The Grace – BCP, p 59

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

Hymn 473 – Lift high the cross

**Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred Name.**

Led on their way by this triumphant sign,
the hosts of God in conquering ranks combine.

Refrain

Each newborn servant of the Crucified
bears on the brow the seal of him who died.

Refrain

O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
as thou hast promised draw the world to thee.

Refrain

So shall our song of triumph ever be:
praise to the Crucified for victory.

Refrain.

Dismissal and Postlude

Alleluia! Alleluia! Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Sermon preached by The Rev. Charles Rowins at St. Christopher-by-the-Sea, Gibson Island, Maryland, Pentecost 7, July 24, 2022.

The theme for today is “Don’t mess up a good thing.” This is advice we receive from our parents, from our teachers, from workmates and teammates, from neighbors, maybe even strangers, and, yes, from God. And it is solid advice. After all, good things are not guaranteed, so when you have a good thing, take care of it.

And here’s an example of a really good thing. From the Book of Genesis (**Genesis 18:20-32**), the Lord is talking to Abraham about the poor behavior of Sodom and Gomorrah. These communities are not God-fearing, and therefore are in severe danger of being punished by God. Abraham is hopeful that somehow God will not punish these communities. And to Abraham’s surprise, the Lord appears open to the possibility of leniency. So Abraham presses the matter. “How many obedient people will it take for you, Lord, to withhold your anger: 50, 45, 40, 30, 20, 10? The Lord answers that he will spare the cities if only 10 people will improve their behavior.

That’s a pretty good deal. And, of course, that’s the point of the story. Cities don’t have to be perfect. And individuals don’t have to be perfect. Which, for us sinners, ought to be a great relief. That indeed is one of the reasons you and I gather. We want to say thank you to the Lord for giving us individually and collectively another chance at obedience. And not just one more chance, but a lifetime of chances. God loves us that much!

Our thanksgiving for the Lord’s forgiveness is evident in today’s Psalm (**Psalm 138**). “O Lord, your love endures for ever; do not abandon the works of your hands.”

St. Paul in his letter to the Colossians (**Colossians 2:16**) echoes the need for thanksgiving on a continual basis. “Therefore do not let anyone condemn you in matters of food and drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or Sabbaths. These are only a shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.” The short version is: If Jesus sacrifices his life for us, don’t ignore it or take it for granted or mess it up in any manner.

In the passage from Luke's gospel (**Luke 11:1**), Jesus teaches us how to pray. It is what you and I know as the Lord's Prayer. When Jesus is finished with his lesson on prayer, he urges his listeners – including you and me centuries later – to stay with the program. “Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock and the door will be opened.” In other words, “Don't give up on me. I am your best friend. Trust me.”

Yes, the Lord as Friend. The Lord as Teacher. The Lord as God Incarnate. The Lord who has given us many good things, always with the expectation that we will share them directly or indirectly with those in need. Not hoard blessings, but share them, extend them, apply them in the Lord's Name. From Paul's letter: “God made you alive, together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses erasing the record that stood against us.”

It's forgiveness with a purpose. That's what the Lord promises. “Okay, so you messed up. Learn from it. Pray about it. Make corrections. Accept the second chance and try again to represent the Lord. That representation is a gift in itself. Imagine offering to help someone, and the person asks, “Who sent you?” What a privilege to answer, “The Lord sent me.”

Now, the person might ask “Show me some credentials.” In response, we don't go for our wallet. Instead, we say that “I am baptized in the Name of the Lord, and I'm here to help, and I promise you that the Lord has my back, and, through me, the Lord has your back. Now, how can I help?”

As Jesus was persistent with us, so we can be persistent with those who doubt that Christ can help. In today's gospel, after Jesus teaches us the Lord's Prayer, he explains that persistence is part of what we should be about. If doubt enters our hearts, particularly in challenging situations, Jesus reminds that there can be a good outcome. Remember this exchange between a home-owner and a friend who is asking for bread to share with another who has none. Here's the response: “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you.”

Can it be that easy? Just ask, and there will be plenty of bread for everyone? Well, not easy for us, that's for sure. Few of us have that kind of faith. But our shaky conviction is not the measure of deliverance. We are not alone. We are in

the Lord's company. The Lord is capable of goodness beyond our imagination. Faith is not us counting on us. Faith is counting on the love of Christ, perhaps to act unilaterally or perhaps through others or – hard to believe – through us.

It is this possibility that invites us, welcomes us, assures us, and picks us up when we stumble. That kind of love, that kind of forgiveness, that kind of second chance, that kind of strength, is a “good thing.” And the only way we can mess up that “good thing” is not to believe it, not to practice it.

“Sorry, no bread tonight.” That’s an option. Many people choose to live under that umbrella. But not you and me. We’re here, reminding one another that we are not lone-rangers. We are disciples of the Lord. We are in His company. Indeed we are His company. Soldiers of the cross, if you will.

Our final hymn (**#473**) today is “Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim.” Why is this hymn such a favorite? It’s because it touches us somewhere deep. It reminds us of when we are happiest, when we feel most useful, when we feel we are doing what we are meant to do.

Never a doubt? Oh yes. Many doubts. But , when weighed against the chance to represent the Lord, particularly in tough situations, “Here I am Lord - send me” comes to the front pretty quickly. And that is a “good thing.” It’s a precious thing. It’s a divine thing. And definitely not something we want to mess up.

“Where’s that cross? I want to lift it high. And I know I will be in good company. What a gift!

Amen.

Lessons for Pentecost 7 – July 24, 2022

Collect: O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

First Reading: Genesis 18:20-32

The Lord said, "How great is the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin! I must go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me; and if not, I will know." So the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the Lord. Then Abraham came near and said, "Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there are fifty righteous within in the city; will you then sweep away the place and not forgive it for the fifty righteous who are in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" And the Lord said, "If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place for their sake." Abraham answered, "Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?" And he said, "I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there." Again he spoke to him, "Suppose forty are found there." He answered, "For the sake of forty I will not do it." Then he said, "Do not let the Lord be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there." He answered, "I will not do it, if I find thirty there." He said, "Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there." He answered, "For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it." Then he said, "Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there." He answered, "For the sake of ten I will not destroy it."

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

Psalm 138

I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart;

before the gods I will sing your praise.

I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your Name,

because of our love and faithfulness;

For you have glorified your Name

and your word above all things.

When I called, you answered me;

you increased my strength within me.

All the kings of the earth will praise you, O Lord,

When they have heard the words of our mouth.

They will sing of the ways of the Lord,

that great is the glory of the Lord.

Though the Lord be high, he cares for the lowly;

he perceives the haughty from afar.

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe;

you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right hand shall save me.

The Lord will make good his purpose for me;

O Lord, your love endures for ever; do not abandon the works of your hands.

Second Reading: Colossians 2:6-19

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority. In him also you were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision, by putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ; when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of our flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross.

He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it. Therefore do not let anyone condemn you in matters of food and drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or Sabbaths. These are only a shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. Do not let anyone disqualify you, insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, dwelling on visions, puffed up without cause by a human way of thinking, and not holding fast to the head, from whom the whole body, nourished and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows with a growth that is from God.

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

Gospel: Luke 11:1-13

Jesus was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed by your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial.’” And he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, let me three loaves of bread; for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.’ And he answers from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs. So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there any one among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? Or if he child asked for an egg, will give a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

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