

Service of Morning Prayer
Pentecost 20 – October 23, 2022

Hymn 432 – O praise ye the Lord

O praise ye the Lord! Praise him in the height;
rejoice in his word, ye angels of light;
ye heavens, adore him by whom ye were made,
and worship before him, in brightness arrayed.

O praise ye the Lord! Praise him upon on earth,
in tuneful accord, all ye of new birth;
praise him who hath brought you his grace from above,
praise him who hath taught you to sing of his love.

O praise ye the Lord! All things that give sound;
each jubilant chord re-echo around;
loud organs, his glory forth tell in deep tone,
and sweet harp, the story of what he hath done.

O praise ye the Lord! Thanksgiving and song
to him be outpoured all ages along!
for love in creation, for heaven restored,
for grace of salvation, O praise ye the Lord!

BCP - Page 40 - Greeting

I was glad when they said unto me, "We will go into the house of the Lord."

BCP – Pages 41 – Invitation to Confession

Dearly beloved, we have come together in the presence of Almighty God our heavenly Father, to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his Holy Word, and to ask, for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and our salvation. And so that we may prepare ourselves in heart and mind to worship him, let us kneel in silence, and with penitent and obedient hearts confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy.

BCP – Pages 41-42 – Confession and Absolution

*Almighty and most merciful Father,
we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep,
we have 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 we 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.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

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.*

BCP – Page 42 - Gloria

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.

BCP – Pages 44-45 – Venite

O come, let us sing unto 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 hands 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 peoples with his truth.

Psalm 84:1-6

First Reading – Jeremiah 14:7-10, 19-22

Second Reading – 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

Hymn 480 – When Jesus left his Father's throne

When Jesus left his Father's throne, he chose an humble birth;
like us, unhonored and unknown, he came to dwell on earth.
Like him may we be found below in wisdom's path of peace;
like him in grace and knowledge grow as years and strength increase.

Sweet were his words and kind his look, when mothers round him pressed;
their infants in his arms he took, and on his bosom blessed.
Safe from the world's alluring charms, beneath his watchful eye,
thus in the circle of his arms may we for ever lie.

When Jesus into Zion rode, the children sang around;
for joy they plucked the palms and strowed their garments on the ground.
Hosanna our glad voices raise, hosanna to our King!
Should few forget our Savior's praise, the stones themselves would sing.

Gospel – Luke 18:9-1

Sermon – The Reverend Charles Rowins

BCP – page 358 - The Apostles' Creed

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.*

BCP – page 54 – the Lord's Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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.*

BCP – page 55 – Suffrages A

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 20th Sunday after Pentecost

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain what your promise, make us love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Collect for Sundays

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.*

BCP – p. 832 -Prayer for Self-Dedication

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to thee, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly thine, utterly dedicated unto thee; and then use us, we pray thee, as though wilt, and always to thy glory and the welfare of thy people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

BCP – pages 58-59 - The General Thanksgiving

*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 our selves 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

Hymn 717 - America – portions of stanzas 1 and 3

*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.*

BCP – page 59 – Prayer of St. Chrysostom

*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.*

BCP – page 59 – The Grace

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 652 – Dear Lord and Father of mankind

Dear Lord and Father of mankind, forgive our foolish ways!
re clothe us in our rightful mind, in purer lives thy service find,
in deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard, beside the Syrian sea,
the gracious calling of the Lord, let us, like them, without a word,
rise up and follow thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee! O calm of hills above,
where Jesus knelt to share with thee the silence of eternity
interpreted by love!

Drop the still dews of quietness, till all our striving cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress, and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire; speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still, small voice of calm.

Dismissal

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

20th Sunday after Pentecost – October 23, 2022

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

First Reading: Jeremiah 14:7-10, 19-22

Although our iniquities testify against us, act, O Lord, for your name's sake; our apostasies indeed are many, and we have sinned against you. O hope of Israel, its savior in time of trouble, why should you be like a stranger in the land, like a traveler turning aside for the night? Why should you be like someone confused, like a mighty warrior who cannot give help? Yet you, O Lord, are in the midst of us, and we are called by your name; do not forsake us! Thus says the Lord concerning this people: Truly they have loved to wander, they have not restrained their feet; therefore the Lord does not accept them, now he will remember their iniquity and punish their sins. Have you completely rejected Judah? Does your heart loathe Zion? Why have you struck us down so that there is no healing for us? We look for peace, but find no good; for a time of healing, but there is terror instead. We acknowledge our wickedness, O Lord, the iniquity of our ancestors, for we have sinned against you. Do not spurn us, for your name's sake; do not dishonor your glorious throne; remember and do not break your covenant with us. Can any idols of the nations bring rain? Or can the heavens give showers? Is it not you, O Lord our God? We set our hope on you, for it is you who do all this.

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

Psalm 84:1-6

How dear to me is your dwelling, O Lord of hosts!

My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

The sparrow has found her a house and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young;

By the side of your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.

Happy are they who dwell in your house!

they will always be praising you.

Happy are the people whose strength is in you!
whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.
Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a place of springs,
For the early rains have covered it with pools of water.
They will climb from height to height,
And the God of gods will reveal himself in Zion.

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing. At my first defense no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

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

Gospel: Luke 18:9-14

Jesus told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

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

Sermon preached by The Rev. Charles Rowins at St. Christopher-by-the-Sea, Gibson Island, Maryland, 20th Sunday of Pentecost, October 23, 2022.

One of the things that you and I do when we know that we have disappointed God is to beg for forgiveness. We also do this with one another. There's something inside that wants to set things straight, whether with God or with one another. We want a fresh start. We know we can do better if there is a second chance or a third or a fourth.

Trying to put things right is a human characteristic. There are some exceptions, I suppose, but not many. Given the choice between letting things fester and setting the record straight, we'll choose setting the record straight. And this is the case whether there's anything to gain by setting the record straight, other than our sense of well-being.

Today's passage from the Prophet Jeremiah (**Jeremiah 14:7-10, 19-22**) is a good example of the human desire to set things straight. In this case, the relationship is with God, not another human.

Jeremiah begins with a confession: "Our apostasies indeed are many, and we have sinned against you." And then Jeremiah goes on and pleads "Do not forsake us!" Followed by the crux of the matter: "We set our hope on you."

Today's Psalm (**Psalm 84:1-6**) conveys the same message in a more poetic manner: "Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a place of springs."

We are not just hopeful, we are confident, that God not only can forgive, but wants to forgive and give us yet another chance.

Frankly, this confidence in God's forgiveness is why we are. Oh yes, the company is special. The music is special. The feeling of togetherness is special. The setting is special. But none of it would happen if we did not trust the Lord to give us yet another chance to be the kind of people God wants us to be.

For example, there would be no joy in gathering at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem if there was no confidence in the Lord's forgiveness. And if you and I didn't trust the power of prayer, we wouldn't be here in this setting.

Our common experience is grounded in trust in the Lord, that we have yet another opportunity to be the kind of people the Lord wants us to be and that we want to be.

In Paul's Second Letter to Timothy (**2 Timothy 4:17**), Paul notes that he "was rescued from the lion's mouth."

And in today's passage from Luke's Gospel (**Luke 18:13**), the tax collector confesses to God: "God, be merciful me, a sinner!"

If the tax collector didn't believe in God's forgiveness, in God's mercy, you and I would never know about this conversation, which has survived two thousand years of careful study.

The danger for you and me is that we will take this mercy for granted. But God's mercy is not a right. We are not guaranteed mercy. We are granted mercy thanks to a loving God. God could hear our confession and withhold mercy. That God chooses not to withhold mercy is one of life's greatest gifts, maybe The Greatest Gift.

We come to accept this gift in a variety of ways, including the teachings of Jesus, especially his parables. Today's parable (**Luke 18:9-14**) features the tax collector and the Pharisee.

The Pharisee is supremely confident. Not confident in God, but full of himself. He even fasts twice a week and gives a tenth of his income to charity, and loves to talk about it.

The tax collector, on the other hand, does not brag. Indeed, if anything, the tax collector is ashamed of what he does, and pleads with God to forgive him.

For Jesus the message is clear. If you're going to model your life in accordance with God's will, and in accordance with your own sense of values, make sure that you pursue modesty rather than bluster.

And the biggest element of modesty is honesty. We all make mistakes and we all wish that we had used better judgment. It's the nature of free will. It's what we

do after the mistake that is key. Do we take advantage of a situation, or do we change our behavior? Are we the Pharisee or the tax collector?

The parable is a remarkable device, not just as a literary option, but as a reminder of what is truly important. It's a simple story with a powerful message. It's one of the reasons why Jesus, in his 33 years on earth, touched so many people, and why his influence remains so powerful.

Jeremiah too speaks for us: "We set our hope on you, O Lord, for it is you who do all this."

St. Paul is equally grateful (**2 Timothy 4:18**). "The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory forever and ever. Amen."

And don't forget today's Psalm (**Psalm 84:4**): "Happy are the people whose strength is in you, O Lord. Whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way."

A pilgrim is one who is on a journey to a better place, a holy place. The pilgrim is self-aware. He or she knows that there is something better ahead. It won't be easy, but it will be worthwhile. In our context here, the "won't be easy part" is confession. The "worthwhile part" is absolution.

Our final hymn today (**#652**) refers to the "worthwhile part" as the "beauty of thy peace." Here's a portion of **stanza 4**: "Take from our souls the strain and stress, and let our ordered lives confess the beauty of thy peace."

A life without confession, and the absolution that follows, is a very tough row to hoe. And it doesn't have to be that way. You and I know this because we share this space weekly. And for that privilege, we give the Lord our thanks and our best efforts. There will be times when we falter, but those times don't have to last. And the key to moving on is to acknowledge our short-comings and receive with thanksgiving the absolution that follows.

And here's the result: "Happy are the people whose strength is in you, O Lord!" Happy! What's not to like. Amen.