



**SOUTHWESTERN
PENNSYLVANIA
SYNOD** EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN AMERICA

SYNOD ASSEMBLY SUNDAY WORSHIP

November 15, 2020
The 24th Sunday After Pentecost



Prelude

Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness

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

Amen.

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. **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.

Gathering Hymn

A Mighty Fortress is Our God

ELW 504

Apostolic Greeting

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.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

First Reading ~ *Zephaniah 1: 7, 12-18*

A reading from Zephaniah.

⁷Be silent before the Lord GOD!
For the day of the LORD is at hand;
the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,
he has consecrated his guests.

¹²At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the people
who rest complacently on their dregs,
those who say in their hearts,
“The LORD will not do good,
nor will he do harm.”

¹³Their wealth shall be plundered,
and their houses laid waste.
Though they build houses,
they shall not inhabit them;
though they plant vineyards,
they shall not drink wine from them.

¹⁴The great day of the LORD is near,
near and hastening fast;
the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter,
the warrior cries aloud there.

¹⁵That day will be a day of wrath,
a day of distress and anguish,
a day of ruin and devastation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness,
¹⁶a day of trumpet blast and battle cry
against the fortified cities
and against the lofty battlements.

¹⁷I will bring such distress upon people
that they shall walk like the blind;

because they have sinned against the LORD,
their blood shall be poured out like dust,
and their flesh like dung.

¹⁸Neither their silver nor their gold
will be able to save them
on the day of the LORD's wrath;
in the fire of his passion
the whole earth shall be consumed;
for a full, a terrible end
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm ~ Psalm 90: 1-12

¹Lord, you have | been our refuge
from one generation | to another.

²**Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the | earth were born,
from age to age | you are God.**

³You turn us back to the | dust and say,
“Turn back, O child- | ren of earth.”

⁴**For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when | it is past
and like a watch | in the night;**

⁵you sweep them away | like a dream,
they fade away suddenly | like the grass:

⁶**in the morning it is | green and flourishes;
in the evening it is dried | up and withered.**

⁷For we are consumed | by your anger;
we are afraid because | of your wrath.

⁸**Our iniquities you have | set before you,
and our secret sins in the light | of your countenance.**

⁹When you are angry, all our | days are gone;
we bring our years to an end | like a sigh.

¹⁰**The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength | even eighty;
yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow, for they pass away quickly
and | we are gone.**

¹¹Who regards the power | of your wrath?
Who rightly fears your | indignation?
¹²**So teach us to num- | ber our days
that we may apply our | hearts to wisdom.**

Second Reading ~ 1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11

A reading from First Thessalonians.

¹Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! ⁴But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; ⁵for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. ⁶So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; ⁷for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-fifth chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

The Holy Gospel ~ Matthew 25:14-30

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹⁴"For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts

with them. ²⁰Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ ²¹His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ²²And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ ²³His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ ²⁶But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

The Rev. Bishop Kurt F. Kusserow

Hymn of the Day

Thine the Amen

ELW 826

Apostles’ Creed

*God has made us God’s people through our Baptism into Christ.
Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.*

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
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 again 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**

Prayers of Intercession

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Ignite your people with the passion of your love. Give strength and prophetic words to our rostered ministers, especially our bishops, Elizabeth and Kurt. By the fire of your Holy Spirit, unify us across ministries, congregations, and denominations, and refine us to participate in your activity throughout the world. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We stand in awe at the works of your hands and praise you for the beauty of nature. Bless the earth for your glory and restore its integrity where exploitation has caused ruin. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Sound forth your justice in the ears of all leaders. Increase concern for those who are most vulnerable, especially as international leaders forge trade agreements and cooperate to end human rights abuses. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Search out all who cry to you in distress. Scatter the heavy clouds of depression, chronic illness, unemployment, and loneliness with your radiant light. Send us as encouragement and signs of your healing. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Stir up holy restlessness in us to extend love to those at the margins. Release our desire for control and open us to learn from the perspectives of others. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Be with our Bishop, Kurt, his assistants Melissa and Peter, and all our synod staff as they continue to transition into their new office home. Guide us all as we transition into a new year. Bring health and healing to this nation. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We give you thanks for all the saints at rest from their labors, especially Gordon Ray, Randy Gullickson, Gordon Hills, Horst Bandle, Jack Hernstrom, and Vaughn Taylor. Rouse us to live by their example, that saints yet to come may also know your love.

Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever.

Amen.

Let us pray:

Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Amen.

Benediction

Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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