

Hope Lutheran Church

Worship Notes for Sunday, September 27th, 2020

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Delivery of Weekly Worship Notes

As you have been hearing in previous Announcements, the hand delivery of Weekly Worship Notes for Sunday September 27th will be the last of the weekly worship note deliveries.

We have been living through unprecedented times with Covid-19 and the resulting upheaval in our daily activities and our church services and fellowship activities. Hope suspended worship for March 22nd, 2020, following public health guidelines. Weekly Worship Notes for 20 or even 30 members immediately began to people in our congregation without email access. This was possible because Teresa and Richard Grynas stepped in and offered to do these deliveries. I'm sure they never thought it would become an 80-kilometre route every week for the next 6 months. We are so grateful for Teresa and Richard's faithful service and for taking the time to have those delightful visits on the steps or the front sidewalk of our homes.

Thank you, Teresa and Richard!

We are so blessed and appreciative of your dedication and service.

Other Worship News

There is good news for many members of the congregation with the return to in-person worship services on August 23rd. This has gone very smoothly and people have commented on how well things are set up and how safe they feel attending the service. Last week there was even some singing.

Fall officially began on September 22nd and we know that the risk of Covid-19 will continue through the fall and winter. Many of our members will need to remain cautious and vigilant and that may mean they need to stay home from in-person worship.

Council and Pastor Erik will be talking some time to figure out a plan for what we need to do to continue to provide worship support to those unable to attend in – person worship services and to maintain communication and connections with our Hope church family.

Caring For Each Other

As we transition to fall and fewer opportunities to do things outdoors, let's continue to be in touch and to take care of each other. These have been tough times, especially for some families whose loved ones have recently passed away. Please keep them in your prayers and please use your church directory and call up someone in the congregation to say hello and ask them how they are doing. Why not make this a frequent fellowship activity?

If you don't have someone's phone number, please call someone you do have a phone number for who may be able to assist you. Or you can call or email the church and we will help you get you get in touch with people in your Hope church family.

Fall Newsletter

A Fall *Messenger* will be prepared over the next two weeks. We plan to get it to everyone by email or pick up at Sunday service or by regular mail.

If you have articles or notices of events etc. for the newsletter, please email them, drop them off at the church, mail them in, or call the church and leave a message before October 5th.

The draft version of the unapproved Special Congregational Meeting Minutes is provided in this week's delivery. There is also a response from Council to the concerns mentioned at the meeting.

Quilting

Hope Lutheran Church Women will resume **Quilting on Wednesday, September 30th** in the Parish Hall. If you wish to join us, please bring your mask, own bag lunch and needle/scissors. We will start at the usual time of 9:00 a.m. and go until 3:00 p.m.

We hope to continue to have quilting on the last Wednesday of the month going forward. Future dates will be: October 28, November 25, January 27th, February 24, March 31, April 28.

Covid-19 safety guidelines will be observed, including masks and physical distancing

If you have any questions, please speak with Dorothy Moench 780-466-9119 or Teresa Grynas 780-450-0413.

Hope to see you there!

Announcing - Seniors Programming At Hope Lutheran

Beginning in October, we are pleased to announce the introduction of a series of presentations at Hope Lutheran. The presentations focus on three pillars for healthy aging: Spirituality, Creativity and Social Connection. Each short presentation will

focus on one or more of the pillars and will provide you with ideas, laughter, and inspiration.

The course dates and times are below. To register, please e-mail Dorothy Lowrie at dorothy@hlainc.ca or call 587 783-3414.

Wed. Oct. 14th - 10:30 - noon: The Game of Aging - This 1.5 hr presentation explores the health benefits of 'play' in our lives, regardless of our age, and some creative and fun ways to introduce more play into your life.

Wed. Oct. 28 - 10:30 - noon: Creativity and Aging: Staying creative is one of the key aspects of healthy aging. But what does it mean to be creative - we are not all artists after all! In this 1.5 hour session, we will cover the importance of opening ourselves up to different forms of creativity. We will examine what creativity might mean - to each of us. And we will even try an exercise in creativity that might open up your thinking to a new creative path.

Proper 21 – 17th Sunday after Pentecost – Series A

ELW Service of the Word

Created by Pastor Erik Osness

780-466-8502 – pastor-hopelutheran@telus.net – Office Hours: Mon, Tues, Fri, 9:30 am-1:00 pm

INVOCATION

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

Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

ABSOLUTION

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace we have been saved. In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen us with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in our hearts through faith. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG - ELW #520 – *Dearest Jesus, At Your Word*



1 Dear - est Je - sus, at your word we have come a -
2 All our knowl - edge, sense, and sight lie in deep - est
3 Ra - diance of God's glo - ry bright, Light of Light from
4 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost, praise to you and



gain to hear you; let our thoughts and hearts be stirred
dark - ness shroud - ed till your Spir - it breaks the night,
God pro - ceed - ing, Je - sus, send your bless - ed light;
ad - o - ra - tion! Grant us what we need the most:



and in glow - ing faith be near you as the prom - is -
fill - ing us with light un - cloud - ed. All good thoughts and
help our hear - ing, speak - ing, heed - ing, that our prayers and
all your gos - pel's con - so - la - tion while we here on



es here giv - en draw us whol - ly up to heav - en.
all good liv - ing come but by your gra - cious giv - ing.
songs may please you, as with grate - ful hearts we praise you.
earth a - wait you, till in heav'n with praise we greet you.

Text: Tobias Clausnitzer, 1619–1684, sts. 1–3; *Gesangbuch*, Berlin, 1707, st. 4; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, adapt.
Music: LIEBSEER JESU, WIR SIND HIER, Johann R. Ahle, 1625–1673

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:

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

¹The word of the LORD came to me: ²What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? ³As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

²⁵Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 25:1-9

Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love. (Ps. 25:6)

¹To | you, O LORD,
I lift | up my soul.

²**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be | put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph | over me.**

³Let none who look to you be | put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame | who are treacherous.

⁴**Show me your | ways, O LORD,
and teach | me your paths.**

⁵Lead me in your | truth and teach me,

for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all | the day long.

**⁶Remember, O LORD, your compas- | sion and love,
for they are from | everlasting.**

⁷Remember not the sins of my youth and | my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your
good- | ness, O LORD.

**⁸You are gracious and up- | right, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners | in your way.**

⁹You lead the low- | ly in justice
and teach the low- | ly your way.

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the Beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1-13

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

¹If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,

⁷but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

⁸he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,

¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32

After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 21st Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²³When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ ²⁶But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

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

. . .

Have you ever said you'd do something, and done the opposite?

Have you ever tried to impress your friends or family by stretching the truth, even just a little, to make yourself seem a bit better than you are, or to hide your true self?

Have you ever not done something, not because you thought it was wrong or out of place, but simply because you were scared of being judged, or even just scared of upsetting someone?

Sometimes, we think hiding is our best option. We respond to questions like the chief priests and the elders of the people do. Often, like them, we're too scared to give an honest response, so we simply say, "We do not know." Although, most of the time, it's just us, as individuals, saying, "I don't know." We think we're protecting ourselves. But Jesus, by introducing his parable about the two sons, isn't buying their attempt. Jesus doesn't buy our attempts to hide either, and hopes we learn to trust he's interested in "the true you," however flawed you may be.

There's no problem answering a question with, "I don't know," when you don't know the answer. But these so-called religious leaders don't even *consider* the right answer to the question. The question Jesus asks, which is, "Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" Instead, they argue with each other about "the right way" to respond. They consider how Jesus and the crowds will react to whatever answer they give, and, in doing so, have little regard for honesty or the truth.

What they do care about is keeping up appearances, so they calculate the safest answer is giving none at all.

"Better to do that than be embarrassed."

"Better to give no answer than a wrong one, or one that might get us in trouble."

That's basically what they decide after arguing with each other about how to respond. After all, these were the authorities of the Temple. If they gave a wrong answer, the people might lose respect for them.

If they have an answer that agreed with Jesus, they'd have to answer for their prior actions against John the Baptist.

If they gave an answer the crowds didn't like, the crowds could quickly turn on them. They might lose some of the power and authority they wielded. It might affect their *reputation*.

These are clearly the things they cared about, and were considering before they answered Jesus.

. . .

Well, people—glorious and flawed as we all are—say, do, and believe some funny things. We think we're ascending to high heights when we're really approaching dangerous cliffs. We think we're smooth sailing when we're really headed towards high winds. We look for accolades when what we really want, what we really need, are friends. So, these religious leaders make a wrong turn.

Strangely enough, the chief priests and the elders of the people had already thought of appropriate responses. Certainly, better responses than the non-answer they chose to give instead.

If they gave the response that the baptism of John “came from heaven,” it could have led to an important conversation about why they didn't support John the Baptist while he was still alive, and I'm sure Jesus would have engaged with them along those lines. Maybe the conversation would have led to them believing the baptism of John came from heaven, instead of just saying it. Or, maybe they already did, but saying it out loud made it real for them. Made them own their hidden, true beliefs. Maybe Jesus had a different, ready parable to draw them in in response, rather than having to point out the error of their ways as he did. You have to think Jesus would have done something like that, gracious and compassionate as he is.

But it's even more interesting to look at the *second* possible response they think of, but chose not to give: saying John's baptism is “of human origin.” They don't give this one because *they're afraid of the crowds*, who they admit “all regard John as a prophet.”

Hold up.

Let's stop there.

They, the chief priests and the elders of the people, *admit, confess, acknowledge* that the crowds regard John the Baptist *as a prophet. John the Baptist*. The chief priests and the elders, the one's supposed to have all this authority and power to protect,

importation reputations to uphold, *admit* this themselves (even if they don't do it "in front of" the crowds gathered there).

You have to wonder,

"Maybe they should have just taken a bit more time before they answered Jesus's question?"

"Maybe they were just a bit too hasty to respond?"

Maybe, but they *didn't* take more time, and there's no guarantee they would have figured it out or went ahead with a *real* answer any way.

You might still be wondering yourself, "What would they have figured out?" Or, perhaps, you're wondering, "What's so interesting about admitting the crowds 'all regard John the Baptist as a prophet'?"

Well, think about the difference between John the Baptist and the chief priests and the elders of the people.

If you know anything about John the Baptist, you might picture a man wearing something like a sackcloth dress with naturally dreaded hair. This was, from what we know, a man who ate locusts and honey, and lived out in the desert. He was an ascetic, who denied himself of earthly pleasures and conveniences to devote himself to fasting, prayer, and meditation. More starkly, for a guy "all the people regarded as a prophet," he spoke strange things like, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight paths for him," an ancient prophecy of Isaiah, and proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. I'm pretty sure asking for people to "repent" isn't offered by the experts as a way to gain a hearing, nor asking them to get dunked in a river.

Yet the crowds were drawn to this guy who easily could have been passed off as crazed or deranged. Nothing about his appearance, stature in society, or the message he preached suggested John the Baptist was an "attractive" guy to listen to or follow, at least in how we usually consider attractiveness. He was, in many respects, the exact opposite of the chief priests and the elders, yet even *they* were drawn to see what he was about, along with almost everyone else. From what we call tell, pretty much everyone came to know about John the Baptist, and knew about what he said and did. Many received his baptism of repentance. Historians of the time, even non-Christian ones, mention him.

John the Baptist, known more as “John the Forerunner” in the Eastern tradition of the church (which is a designation I quite like), did the exact opposite kinds of things compared to the chief priests and the elders of the people. Yet he received what they really wanted and more. For all his strangeness, he gained a following, but he didn’t change course because of it. He didn’t try to “keep up appearances,” or alter who he was just because he got popular. He didn’t care about his reputation. He didn’t have a special seat at the table before, and never took one after. He refused to abandon speaking the truth with authenticity, even if the secular authorities didn’t like what he had to say, and even though he ended up in prison and was executed for it.

And the crowd still supported him. They regarded him as a prophet long after he was killed. He had gained their ear *and* their respect. But he did it a different way.

The chief priests and the elders should have taken note. Honesty, vulnerability, and authenticity drew the crowds to John the Baptist. All that stuff the chief priests and the elders cared about wouldn’t get them there. Answering a question with, “We don’t know,” not because the statement was true but because, “We don’t know,” seemed like the safest answer, wouldn’t impress the crowds. All their power and authority, their seats in places of honour, none of it was real. It didn’t *mean* anything. It *doesn’t* mean anything. Caring about your reputation won’t make you more loved, or draw people towards you. More likely, it will keep people distant, and keep you scared of them. A non-response like the chief priests and the elders of the people gave would never lead to a loving, compassionate, and nurturing environment.

The better way forward is to open up, even if it hurts.

. . .

In our Second Reading, from Philippians 2, we hear more about Jesus’s example of humility, and to keep his example in mind.

After Paul encourages us to do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but to, in humility, regard others as better than ourselves, Paul quotes what was likely an early hymn:

“Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,

being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:5-8).

The King James Version of Philippians 2 offers a different translation of this first part of the hymn than I’m used to hearing. I’m used to hearing of Jesus “emptying” himself, but the King James says, “made himself *of no reputation*,” also a perfectly good translation of the Greek word *kenoó*.

This doesn’t mean “bad reputation,” or “questionable reputation.” Jesus didn’t just choose to be a rebel, only “of no reputation.”

The usual trappings of leadership—reputation, image, prestige, prominence, power—these all weren’t just *devalued* by him, they were purposefully *dismissed*. And Jesus did this, became one of us in complete humility, in order to serve us, love us, give to us, teach us, and, yes, even to lead us. Jesus presents us with a different way to lead, one where upholding your reputation isn’t considered or cared about, but service, love, and the truth instead.

The history of the church *hasn’t* always followed suit. In fact, it’s often completely abandoned this idea.

Henri Nouwen, while considering the amount of people leaving the church in the modern age, offers this reflection, “I am deeply convinced that the Christian leader of the future is called to be completely irrelevant and to stand in this world with nothing to offer but his or her own vulnerable self” (from his book, *In the Name of Jesus*). Certainly, those outside the church won’t likely be convinced without our humility. People aren’t actually impressed by clinging to a reputation, especially young people.

We need, instead, to bring the Good News of Christ through self-sacrificial love and service, and putting forth our authentic, flawed, vulnerable selves. We need to care about the truth of Jesus Christ more than we how we look, especially if how we look, and the responses we offer, aren’t honest or vulnerable.

. . .

Getting back into our Gospel reading, after the chief priests and the elders of the people answer Jesus, “We do not know,” as to where the baptism of John came from,

Jesus then responds to their initial question with, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.”

Jesus follows this by telling The Parable of the Two Sons. With it, he shows how saying the right thing doesn’t mean you do the right thing, or mean much at all.

So, Jesus mentions tax collectors and prostitutes as following the will of God because they believed in the message of John the Baptist. Jesus points to people who everyone knows had no reputation to uphold in the first place, but didn’t let their stature in society hold them back from changing their ways, from receiving from God.

“Prostitutes” is a simple enough translation into today, but “tax collector” is harder for us to understand. One way I’ve found for considering this is to think of any large group of people, or *vocal* group of people, you consider on the wrong side of something. Think of someone you even find repulsive, whether because of something they do, believe, or represent. Someone who, if they entered worship and asked to be part of your community, that you’re first response would be, “Oh please, not *them*,” or an even greater disbelief that it *couldn’t* be them.

That’s the tax collector Jesus is talking about.

And I’m sure these were the feelings of the early disciples, many of whom came from diverse backgrounds, but could unite against a common enemy like a tax collector. And maybe, as a personal touch, Matthew himself wouldn’t shy away from mentioning the Good News offered to tax collectors in *his* Gospel narrative, not to boast, but to marvel again, for him to reflect once more, several years later, of how Christ would call someone like him, a former tax collector himself, of no good reputation, to follow him and take part in building his kingdom.

. . .

Next week, we continue with Matthew 21 as Jesus continues his confrontation with the religious authorities of his day, offering another parable that this time points directly to himself and his purpose to suffer and die for us.

Until then, may we walk in humility, having little regard for our reputation, and draw others to Christ by being authentic and vulnerable, while ultimately concerned for the truth. May we be more like John the Baptist (but with better food hopefully), and find our identity in Christ and through Christ. And now, may the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY - ELW #712 – *Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service*



1 Lord, whose love in hum-ble ser-vice bore the weight of hu-man need,
2 Still your chil-dren wan-der home-less; still the hun-gry cry for bread;
3 As we wor-ship, grant us vi-sion, till your love's re-veal-ing light
4 Called by wor-ship to your ser-vice, forth in your dear name we go,



who up-on the cross, for-sak-en, worked your mer-cy's per-fect deed:
still the cap-tives long for free-dom; still in grief we mourn our dead.
in its height and depth and great-ness dawns up-on our quick-ened sight,
to the child, the youth, the a-ged, love in liv-ing deeds to show;



we, your ser-vants, bring the wor-ship not of voice a-lone, but heart;
As you, Lord, in deep com-pas-sion healed the sick and freed the soul,
mak-ing known the needs and bur-dens your com-pas-sion bids us bear,
hope and health, good-will and com-fort, coun-sel, aid, and peace we give,



con-se-crat-ing to your pur-pose ev-'ry gift which you im-part.
by your Spir-it send your pow-er to our world to make it whole.
stir-ring us to ar-dent ser-vice, your a-bun-dant life to share.
that your ser-vants, Lord, in free-dom may your mer-cy know and live.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–1984
Music: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844
Text © Oxford University Press

THE APOSTLE'S CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He 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,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

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

Let us pray for the church, the world, and all people according to their need.

[A brief silence is kept]

Most holy Father, thank you for making us your children. Thank you for your patience with us when we speak and act in ways that grieve and displease you. Thank you for your Son Jesus, who perfectly says and does your will. Make us to be like him, so we are your heart's delight and your blessing to the world.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Conform the Church throughout the world to the mind of your dear Son. Conform its proclamation and teaching to his own. Conform its works to his self-sacrificing love. Fashion the Church into the image and likeness of Christ – into his very body; so that the light of his love shines into the world, and many turn to him and live.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Put the mind of Christ into this congregation. Let his humility and self-giving love shape and direct our words, worship, service, and fellowship. Give us such willing hearts that we gladly speak and act in obedience to your will, to your glory and for the building up of your people.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bless all parents, step-parents, foster parents, and guardians of all kinds. Give them your Spirit of wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and fear of the Lord, and joy in your presence. Forgive their errors; relieve their fears; and grant them the joy of seeing their children grow into healthy, loving adults.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Make the world's leaders – not only of nations, but also of local government, and of all useful fields of human endeavor – into your wise and willing offspring. Teach them your will for guiding those for whom they are responsible. Make all of us honest, wise, and kind. Help us to care for our neighbor; to work for opportunity and harmony in our neighborhood and nation; and to live at peace with each other.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bring the joy of your saving help to everyone in distress, sorrow, danger or need – including: Adeline; Karen; Chris; Clarence; Irma; Bob; Gordon; David; Art; Paul; Otto; Betty Jo; Ewald; Joseph; Louise; Mona; Pastor Richard; Debbie; Jim; and all those we now name in our hearts. . . . Lead them through the things that afflict and endanger them, into the light of your blessed presence; and into the joy of restored health, hope, and fellowship with those who love them.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Thank you, dear Father, for the lives of your faithful servants who have been gathered into your eternal Kingdom. Especially we bless you for our departed loved ones, Ed Bartel, Gordon Hughes, Alan Delorme, George Schoepp (Shirley Sutherland's brother), Don Allen (Shirley Sutherland's brother-in-law), and Helen Burkett (aunt to Dorothy Lowry). Wipe away the tears of those whose grief is raw and deep. Give courage and compassion, wisdom and energy, faithfulness and hope, to each of us as we walk our pilgrim's pathway through this life. And bring us safely into your spacious house, where you have made ample room for everyone whom you have redeemed through the obedient and loving sacrifice of your Son; and where we will delight in praising your goodness forever.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Conform our prayers to the heart of Jesus, hear them through the interceding of your Holy Spirit, and grant them in accordance with your gracious will.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to 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,

forever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING

The LORD bless you and keep you.

The LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;

The Lord look upon you with favour and give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING SONG - ELW #535 – Hallelujah! We Sing We Your Praises

Refrain – sung twice each time



Ha - le - lu - ya! Pe - lo tsa ro - na, di tha -
Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your prais - es, all our



bi - le ka - o - fe - la. Ha - le - lu - ya! Pe - lo tsa
hearts are filled with glad - ness. Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your



ro - na, di tha - bi - le ka - o - fe - la. *End*
prais - es, all our hearts are filled with glad - ness.



1 Christ the Lord to us said: I am wine, I am bread,
2 Now he sends us all out, strong in faith, free of doubt,

Repeat stanza, then sing refrain



I am wine, I am bread, give to all who thirst and hun - ger.
strong in faith, free of doubt. Tell to all the joy - ful gos - pel.

Text: South African; tr. *Freedom Is Coming*, 1984
Music: HALELUYA! PELO TSA RONA, South African
Tr. © 1984 Utryck, admin. Walton Music Corp.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK: Isaiah 5:1-7, 25-32; Psalm 80:7-15; Philippians 3:4b-14; Matthew 21:33-46.