

16TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 20, 2020 - 10:00 AM

Living Springs Lutheran Church

4224 Hard Scrabble Road, Columbia, SC 29223
www.livingspringscolumbia.org

Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.



Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen... since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses... let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus... (Hebrews 11:1-3, 12:1-2)

TEMPLE TALK - JUSTICE MINISTRY VIRTUAL HOUSE GATHERINGS

Mike Davidson

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

We stand as able

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

(Silence for reflection - we kneel as able)

Pastor: Faithful God,

People: **have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Pastor: God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of † Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world.

People: **Amen.**

We focus on the cross as it enters the sanctuary.

GATHERING SONG

"Blessing and Honor"



1 Bless - ing and hon - or and glo - ry and pow'r, wis - dom and
3 Ev - er as - cend - ing the song and the joy, ev - er de -



rich - es and strength ev - er - more, be to the Lamb who our
scend - ing the love from on high; bless - ing and hon - or and



bat - tle has won, whose are the king - dom, the crown, and the
glo - ry and praise— this is the theme of the hymns that we



throne; whose are the king - dom, the crown, and the throne!
raise; this is the theme of the hymns that we raise.

Blessing and Honor; Text: Horatius Bonar; Music: AMERICAN HYMN, Matthias Keller;.

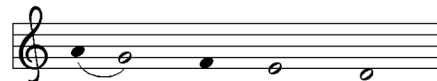
APOSTOLIC GREETING

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: **And also with you.**

KYRIE & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

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



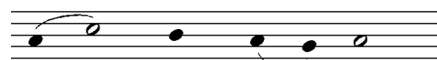
Lord, have mer - cy.

Pastor: 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.



Lord, have mer - cy.

Pastor: For this community of faith,
and all who offer their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord.



Lord have mer - cy.

Pastor: Help, save, comfort, and defend us Gracious Lord.



A - men.

Pastor: Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot
rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your
Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
People: Amen.

We are seated

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Rev. Eric Fink

Children, youth, and young at heart are invited for a special message. You may collect your coins or dollars at home for the bucket collection and bring them to the Parking Lot Communion Distributions (or drop them off at the church office). Current collection is for the Family Assistance Fund.

For-ward in faith! (clap-clap-clap)

For-ward in faith! (clap-clap-clap)

With our eyes on Jesus

***WE'RE RUNNIN' THE RACE!** (clap-clap-clap)*



FIRST READING

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?

Lector: A reading from Jonah.

When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] 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?" [Jonah 3:10--4:11]

Lector: Word of God, Word of life.

People: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 145:1-8

Lector: I will exalt you, my God and king,
and bless your name forever and ever.

**People: Every day will I bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.**

Lector: Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised!
There is no end to your greatness.

**People: One generation shall praise your works to another
and shall declare your power.**

Lector: I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty
and all your marvelous works.

**People: They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts,
and I will recount your greatness.**

Lector: They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.

**People: The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

SECOND READING

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

Lector: A reading from Philippians.

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. (Philippians 1:21–30)

Lector: Word of God, Word of life.

People: Thanks be to God.

We stand for the reading of the Gospel

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL LESSON

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

[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." (Matthew 20:1–16)

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

We are seated

MESSAGE

Rev. Eric Fink

HYMN OF THE DAY

"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy"



1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy, like the wide-ness of the sea;
4 'Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some-thing more than all:



there's a kind-ness in God's jus - tice which is more than lib - er - ty.
great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in heav'n.
Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,



There is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
and our lives will be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

There's A Wideness in God's Mercy; Text: Frederick W. Faber; Music: LORD, REVIVE US, North American.

APOSTLES' CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. 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 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

Assist: Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.
+ A brief silence +

Assist: Generous God, you make the last first, and the first last. Where this gospel challenges the church, equip it for its works of service. Strengthen those who suffer for Christ. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Assist: Sun and wind, bushes and worms, cattle and great cities—nothing in creation is outside your concern, mighty God. In your mercy, tend to it all. Give us a spirit of generosity toward all you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Assist: Where we find envy and create enemies, you provide enough for all. Bring peace to places of conflict and violence. Inspire leaders with creativity and wisdom. Bless the work of negotiators, peacekeepers, and development workers. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Assist: Reveal yourself to all in need as you are gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, ready to relent from punishing. Accompany judges and lawyers, victims of crime and those serving sentences. Give fruitful labor and a livelihood to those seeking work. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Assist: Even beyond our expectations, you choose to give generously. Grant life, health, and courage to all who are in need. We pray especially for *Henrietta Kaiser; Anne Ducate; Wendy McKenzie; Jim Grimmer; Gwen Brantley; Debbie Smith; Tammy Mancuso; Ed Brennan; Margaret Blank; Charles Kauffman; Bunie Talbert; Judy Jennings; Pam Deselem; Kelly Koziel; Lila Bell; Wilma Bracey; Charles Levitt; Addie Thompson; Kathy McDonald's parents/siblings; and those we name before you now, either silently or aloud...* Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Assist: We praise you for the generations that have declared your power to us. Give us faithfulness to follow them, living for Christ, until you call us to join them in the joyful song around his throne. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: O God, as we face ongoing uncertainties around coronavirus, we continue to pray for our nation and the world. Protect the most vulnerable among us, those who are currently sick, in isolation, or awaiting test results. Grant wisdom, patience, and clarity to scientists, vaccine researchers, educators, and health care/food/essential workers as their daily work puts them at risk. Fill us with patience and guide us as we consider how best to continue to respond in our families, congregations, workplaces, schools, and communities. Give us courage to face these days not with fear or self-centeredness, but with compassion, concern, and acts of loving service for others, trusting that you abide with us always. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

SHARING OF PEACE

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you always.

People: And also with you.

We greet one another, with the words that the risen Jesus spoke to his disciples: "Peace be with you."

OFFERINGS ARE GIVEN

Offering may be dropped off at the office during the week or sent through the mail. For those who wish to give electronically, you may use the secure Givelify app.



OFFERING PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray.

People: God of goodness and growth, all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens. Water and word, wine and bread: these are signs of your abundant grace. Nourish us through these gifts, that we might proclaim your steadfast love in our communities and in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song. Amen.

THANKSGIVING FOR HOLY COMMUNION

Pastor: We have been made one as the body of Christ thought the waters of baptism. In our journey of faith & life, we are fed with Christ's own body and blood. Even though we do not celebrate Holy Communion in this virtual gathering, we pause to give thanks for the gift of Holy Communion — as we anticipate, with joy, the time when we who are worshipping now will be gathered and fed at your table.

Pastor: O God most mighty, O God most merciful, O God our rock and our salvation, hear us as we offer our praise and give you thanks. When the earth was a formless void, you formed order and beauty. When Abraham and Sarah were barren, you sent them a child. When the Israelites were enslaved, you led them to freedom. Ruth faced starvation; David fought Goliath; the psalmists cried out for healing, and full of compassion, you granted the people your life. You entered our sorrows in Jesus our brother. He was born among the poor, he lived under oppression, he wept over the city. With infinite love, he conquered death and granted the people your life.

We give you thanks and praise for the gift of Holy Communion and for the blessing it brings to your people. Even though we abstain from your meal in this moment of worship, for reasons you understand, we still sense the power of your forgiveness and grace offered to us and the world through your Son. Awaiting that time when we can each share in this meal, we still cherish in our hearts the words which Jesus gave us, uplifting this great and glorious blessing:

People: In the night in which He was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of Me." Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of Me."

We take time for prayer and reflection as we sing together, giving thanks to God for all the times we have been fed with our Lord's body & blood—and look forward to the time when we each may come to gather with others around the Lord's Table.

COMMUNION REFLECTION

"Break Thou the Bread of Life"

JuBELLation Handbell Choir
arranged by Matthew Prins

LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

People: 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.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

People: Amen

SENDING SONG*"Your Grace Is Enough"*

Deacon Justin Rimbo (pre-recorded)

*(While we sing, we turn and face the processional cross as it is carried out the center aisle.)***Verse 1**

*Great is Your faithfulness O God
 You wrestle with the sinner's heart
 You lead us by still waters into mercy
 And nothing can keep us apart*

Verse 2

*Great is Your love and justice, God
 You use the weak to lead the strong
 You lead us in the song of Your salvation
 And all Your people sing along*

PRE-CHORUS

and noth - ing can ___ keep us ___ a - part. ___ So, re -
 and all ___ Your peo - ple sing ___ a - long. ___



-mem - ber ___ Your peo - ple, ___ re - mem - ber ___ Your chil - dren, ___ re -



-mem - ber ___ Your prom - ise ___ O ___ God. ___ Your

CHORUS

grace is e - nough, ___ Your grace is e - nough ___ Your



grace is e - nough, ___ for ___ me. ___

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DISMISSAL

Assist: Surrounded by the great cloud of witnesses, go in peace to run the race and move forward in faith!

People: **Thanks be to God.**

WORSHIP HELPERS FOR TODAY'S STREAMED SERVICE - THANK YOU!

John Imbert (Acolyte/Lector); Karen Kranz (Crucifer); Dea Jones, Cathy Lowman & Kay Herbert (Leader Worship Singers); Bob Turnmire (Sound); Trado Mayson (Piano); Gail Buchanan (Altar Guild). *Worship for next Sunday to be recorded this Wednesday at 7:15. Go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4baea92fa0f85-worship1> to sign-up to help for upcoming worship recordings (as a family, couple, or individuals).*

SEPTEMBER "ALTAR FLOWERS" - THANK YOU!

The following have given monetary gifts in lieu of, or in addition to, the flowers on the altar:

September 13: Gift to Backpack Ministry, in honor of September family birthdays by Judy Lawrence.

September 20: Gift to Backpack Ministry, in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary by Bill & Nancy Franck.



God's Love Shared Through You ...



One Life Deeper in 2020!

*Our prayerful goal is that God will work in every LS disciple to have an impact of faith and hope in the life of one person during 2020. **What shoes might they be wearing?** It may be someone you know already—at work, at home, at school, in the neighborhood, in your daily life. It may be a stranger whom God will bring to you this year. How will the Spirit work through you to bring someone deeper in 2020? **Deeper in Christ, Deeper in Grace, Deeper in Love!***

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS: inviting, involving, mentoring, discipling relationships 1 person at a time!

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS: for the work of God's kingdom in our community and world!

SHARING GOD'S LOVE: with those who are hurting, alone, marginalized, or feeling unloved!

SHARING GOD'S STORIES: so we do not remain silent about God's ongoing work in the world!

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST:

Leftovers

The last laborers to join the vineyard had spent their day being picked over. They were the hiring process leftovers. Like the last kids remaining in a gym class team selection, these laborers were for one reason or another deemed less valuable workers by the other landowners. Perhaps they were less physically capable than others. Maybe their strengths were not easily visible. Not being hired for work that day, they were standing around with no purpose or potential for growth.

But we have a generous landowner who does not overlook anyone. This landowner spends his entire day scouring the market for those who have been left behind and securing a place for them in his vineyard. He gives them value and meaning. Jesus will not rest until every lost and idle bystander has a place in the kingdom of heaven.

This radical generosity scandalizes the system that rewards people based on their merits and outputs. But Jesus rewards people of all abilities and work ethics equally. In God's commonwealth, the leftover workers have as much value as those chosen first.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver was keenly aware of how people with intellectual disabilities were defined by what they couldn't do. She wanted to provide opportunities for them to develop physical fitness, display courage, and find joy on the playing field. Her vision grew into the Special Olympics movement. This inclusive and expansive glimpse into the kingdom of heaven celebrates the athletic achievements of those who are often excluded from the vineyard.

In worship, we practice leaning into Jesus' vision as we gather around the table. Regardless of our status or position, we are all on equal footing at Christ's meal. We are given the same portions of bread. We drink from the same cup. It does not matter if we arrived late or early, young or old, grateful or ungrateful. Jesus has invited each of us here. We have not been overlooked. We have been given our work for this day.

September Book of the Month: Job