

The 20th Sunday of Pentecost +++ October 18, 2020

We are a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In keeping with the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, we joyfully and unconditionally welcome all people of any age, gender, race, culture, ability, sexual orientation or gender identity into our community of faith and affirm the worth of all people as unique individuals made in God's image. We are open to the special gifts that each person brings and invite each to participate in the life of our church.

In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

GATHERING

PRELUDE: Double Fugue

Kyrie Eleison

Calmly Abide

Nearer, My God, to Thee

How Dear to Me is Your Dwelling

Just as I Am, Without One Plea

John Keeble

Charles Gounod

J.S. Bach

Rob Roy Peery

Robert Powell

Dale Wood

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation.

Amen.

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin. Reconciling God,

we confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives. We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts. We fail to believe that you provide enough for all. We abuse your good creation for our own benefit. We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us. We sin in thought, word, and deed. By your grace, forgive us; through your love, renew us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.

Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through ✚ Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

Amen.



My Life Flows On in Endless Song

1 My life flows on in end - less song; a - bove earth's lam-en - ta - tion,
 2 Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I hear that mu - sic ring - ing.
 3 What though my joys and com-forts die? The Lord my Sav-ior liv - eth.
 4 The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a foun-tain ev - er spring-ing!

I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn that hails a new cre - a - tion.
 It finds an ech - o in my soul. How can I keep from sing-ing?
 What though the dark - ness gath-er round? Songs in the night he giv - eth.
 All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from sing-ing?

Refrain

No storm can shake my in-most calm while to that Rock I'm cling-ing.

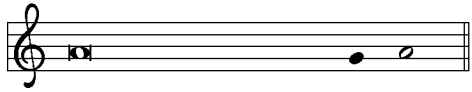
Since Christ is Lord of heav-en and earth, how can I keep from sing-ing?

Text: Robert Lowry, 1826–1899
 Music: HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING, Robert Lowry, alt.

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.**

KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



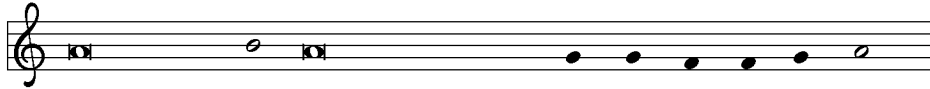
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



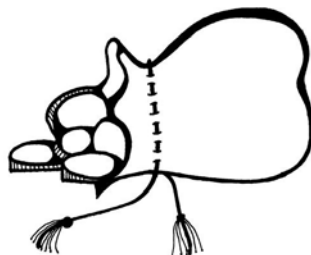
For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - - men.



HYMN OF PRAISE

Assisting minister



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - might-y God and Fa - ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 45:1-7

The prophet announces that Cyrus the Persian emperor is the one the LORD has anointed to end Israel's exile. The LORD makes this choice so that the whole world will recognize this LORD as the only God. Persia had a god of light and a god of darkness; the LORD claims sovereignty over both light and darkness.

¹Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus,
whose right hand I have grasped
to subdue nations before him
and strip kings of their robes,
to open doors before him—
and the gates shall not be closed:
²I will go before you
and level the mountains,
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron,
³I will give you the treasures of darkness
and riches hidden in secret places,
so that you may know that it is I, the LORD,
the God of Israel, who call you by your name.
⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel my chosen,
I call you by your name,
I surname you, though you do not know me.
⁵I am the LORD, and there is no other;
besides me there is no god.
I arm you, though you do not know me,
⁶so that they may know, from the rising of the sun
and from the west, that there is no one besides me;
I am the LORD, and there is no other.
⁷I form light and create darkness,
I make weal and create woe;
I the LORD do all these things.

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

PSALM: Psalm 96:1-9: (the congregation reads responsively the **bold print**)

¹Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.
²**Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD;
proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**
³Declare God's glory among the nations
and God's wonders among all peoples.
⁴**For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised,
more to be feared than all gods.**
⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;
but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.
⁶**Majesty and magnificence are in your presence;
power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**
⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD honor and power.
⁸**Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.**
⁹Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness;
tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 22:15-22

The Gospel according to the 22nd Chapter of Matthew:

Glory to you, O Lord.

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" ²¹They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." ²²When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ**

HOMILY

Jeffery Alvestad, Interim Pastor



What a Friend We Have in Jesus

1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
 2 Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y - where?
 3 Are we weak and heav - y - lad - en, cum - bered with a load of care?

What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!
 We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged— take it to the Lord in prayer.
 Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge— take it to the Lord in prayer.

Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit; oh, what need - less pain we bear—
 Can we find a friend so faith - ful who will all our sor - rows share?
 Do your friends de - spise, for - sake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.

all be - cause we do not car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!
 Je - sus knows our ev - 'ry weak - ness— take it to the Lord in prayer.
 In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a so - lace there.

Text: Joseph Scriven, 1820–1886
 Music: CÓNVERSE, Charles C. Converse, 1832–1918

APOSTLES' CREED

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: Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

WE SHARE GOD'S PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

As we share the peace today – and you do so in your home – You are invited you to contact a fellow member by phone, email or letter. You can do that today or any time during the week. Pick someone from the church directory. We could email each other or call each other during this time when we cannot meet. Then each week select another person to contact. Try to make it someone you don't really know and get acquainted with them. Always be sure to leave your address, email, and phone number on your message in case they do not have a directory. Talk to people you know and get the names and addresses of those who might not have directories and try to contact them. By the time we meet again we will have made many new friends.

OFFERING HYMN

ELW 686

We Give Thee but Thine Own

1 We give thee but thine own, what - e'er the gift may be;
2 May we thy boun - ties thus as stew - ards true re - ceive,
3 The cap - tive to re - lease, to God the lost to bring,
4 And we be - lieve thy word, though dim our faith may be:

all that we have is thine a - lone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.
and glad - ly, as thou bless - est us, to thee our first - fruits give.
to teach the way of life and peace—it is a Christ-like thing.
what-e'er we do for thine, O Lord, we do it un - to thee.

Text: William W. How, 1823–1897, alt.
Music: HEATH, L. Mason and G. Webb, *Cantica Lauda*, 1850

OFFERING PRAYER

MEAL

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

(At this time for those who choose, you may commune yourself or those worshipping with you by saying the words, "the body of Christ, given for you." And, "the blood of Christ, shed for you.")

SENDING

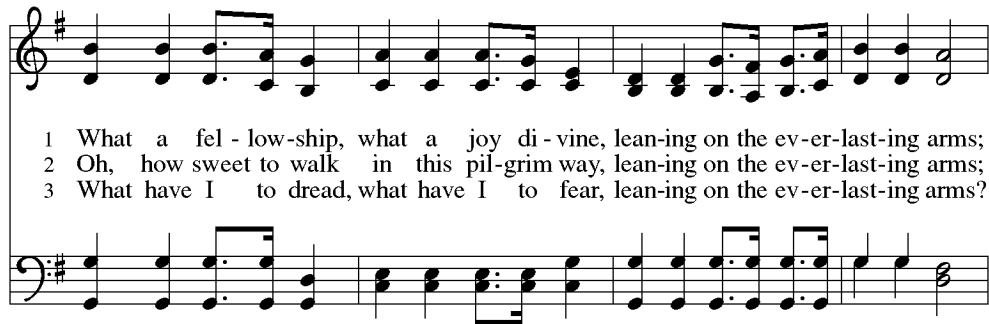
BLESSING

Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers." Our culture seeks violence, vengeance and retaliation. As people of faith and hope pursue peace. Be slow to anger, abounding in love. Be filled with gentleness, grace and kindness. Let the love of Jesus flow through you to all you meet. **Amen.**

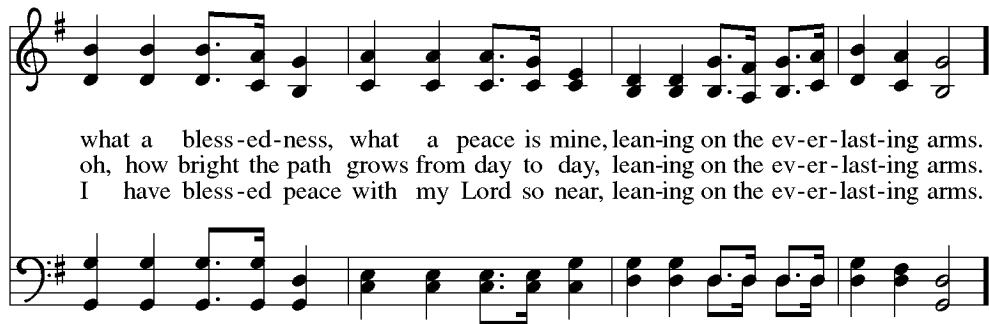


What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms



1 What a fel - low-ship, what a joy di - vine, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms;
 2 Oh, how sweet to walk in this pil-grim way, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms;
 3 What have I to dread, what have I to fear, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms?

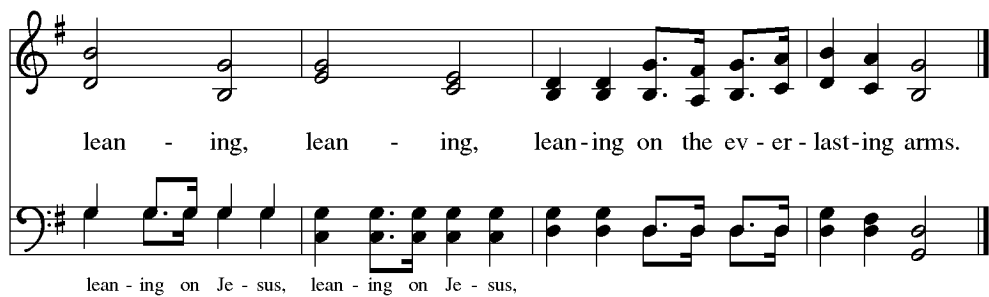


what a bless-ed-ness, what a peace is mine, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
 oh, how bright the path grows from day to day, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
 I have bless-ed peace with my Lord so near, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.

Refrain



Lean - ing, lean - ing, safe and se-cure from all a - larms;
 Lean - ing on Je - sus, lean - ing on Je - sus,



lean - ing, lean - ing, lean-ing on the ev - er - last-ing arms.
 lean - ing on Je - sus, lean - ing on Je - sus,

Text: Elisha A. Hoffman, 1839–1919
 Music: SHOWALTER, Anthony J. Showalter, 1858–1924

DISMISSAL

Christ is risen, just as he said. Go in peace. Remember the poor, the ill, those who care for them and those seeking a vaccine for Covid-19. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

“Give to Our God Immortal Praise”

John Hatton

OCTOBER 18, 2020
TWENTIETH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking  faith
home

God does great things through people.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 22:15-22	The question of paying taxes
Monday	Isaiah 45:1-7	Cyrus serves the Lord
Tuesday	1 Thessalonians 1:1-10	The example of faith
Wednesday	Exodus 33:12-23	Moses' intercession
Thursday	Psalms 99	Our Lord is king
Friday	Isaiah 42:1-9	The Lord's servant
Saturday	Psalms 96:1-13	Sing a new song
Sunday	Matthew 22:34-46	Loving God and neighbor

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. **1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, use our gifts, our faith, our hope in you, to do labors of love for the sake of Jesus Christ and his reign on earth. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for how you provide for us and for the hands that have brought this food to us today. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God who has chosen you in love, give you grace and peace. (1 Thessalonians 1:1, 4)



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OCTOBER 18, 2020
HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Open Your Ears,
O Faithful People*

WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What is something you have accomplished and are proud of?
- How can God use your efforts—your deeds—for others?
- Is it a surprise that God can use your efforts to accomplish God's will on earth? Explain.

DEVOTIONS

Read: Isaiah 45:1-7.

Cyrus is a Persian king. He is not part of God's chosen people through Abraham, Isaac or Jacob. Cyrus doesn't even know the God of Israel, and yet Cyrus does God's will by setting God's people free to return home from exile in Babylon. Isaiah lifts up the supreme power and authority of God's rule throughout the world. Besides the LORD, there is no god (v. 5). All that is, is God's. It is easy for us to forget that God can use others outside of the body of Christ to do God's will on earth. No wonder Psalm 96 commands all the earth to sing to the LORD (v. 1). In the midst of the tragedies that happen all too often around us, it is important to remember that we are a people of hope and trust in the God who holds all things together. The Apostle Paul wrote with thanksgiving for the Thessalonians' faith, love, and hope (1 Thessalonians 1:3). As a chosen people, Paul gladly affirms that they do God's work of love on earth through their "work of faith" and "steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 3). How does God's rule on earth give you hope and encourage you to act with love and faith?

Pray: **God of power and might, we thank you for your glory that breathes hope and love into all corners of the earth through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

God is the ruler of all of creation and we, God's servants, have responsibility to care for all that God has created. One of the greatest concerns for our world today is to care for the earth that is suffering under the weight of carbon emissions, overflowing landfills and polluted air and water. What can you do to reduce the waste that harms the earth?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Psalm 96 is a song of praise to God. It tells of the sea roaring, the creatures and fields rejoicing, and the trees singing. In what ways do you praise God through sounds and music? Sing a favorite Christian hymn. Think about what the words say about God. Then say: **Sing a new song to the Lord! Everyone on this earth, sing praises to the Lord, sing and praise his name.** (vv.1-2a)



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org