



Worship for Sunday, September 13, 2020 - 15th Sunday after Pentecost
St. Stephen the Martyr Lutheran Church
Greendale, WI www.ssmelca.org

Introduction to the day

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

PRELUDE - "O Bread of Life from Heaven" arr. Johannes Brahms

BLESSING OF THE ORGAN

P: Dear friends: Today we give thanks to God and we seek God's blessing as we set apart this organ for the glory and praise of God.

P: Sing with joy to God our strength

C: **and raise a loud shout to the God of Jacob.**

P: Praise God with tambourine and dance;

C: **praise God with strings and pipe.**

P: We give you thanks, O God, creator of the universe, for your abundant gifts.
The whole earth reflects your glory; all your creatures praise you.
We lift our voices to join the sounds and song of heaven and earth,
of things seen and unseen, in praise of your glory.

You alone do great wonders,
and by your wisdom you made the heavens and the earth.
You have breathed your breath of mercy into your children,
to hear from them a joyful shout with their own song.
In the fullness of time, O God, you sang your new song, our Lord Jesus Christ,
who is exalted by poets, musicians, and all your saints.
Your Spirit is the breath of our music and song.

Send your blessing upon us and upon this organ,
which we dedicate to your praise and glory.
Enrich the lives of your people through it,
and grant us faith to hear your gracious purpose in it.
By your Holy Spirit, let this organ
enliven the proclamation of your word
to the building up of your church, to the glory of your name,
and to the good of all your people;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, on God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

C: **Amen**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Faithful God,

C: **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.

P: 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.

C: **Amen.**

GREETING

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

C: **And also with you.**

HYMN OF PRAISE - "Holy God" *Trisagion*

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly God, ho - ly and might - y,

ho - ly and im - mor - tal, have mer - cy on us.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

C: O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21 (Read by Joe Ferguson)

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves."¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12 (Read by Joe Ferguson)

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions.

²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.

⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written,

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God."

¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Verses may be sung by a leader. Then the alleluia is repeated.

Music: "Alleluia 7," Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994, and the Taizé Community
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GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew. **C:** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

MESSAGE - "Forgiving" Rev. Brian Hooper

HYMN OF THE DAY - "Blessed Be the Name" Heri ni jina



1 He - ri ni ji - na, he - ri ni ji - na, he - ri ni ji - na la Ye - su.
2 Twe - nde kwa Ye - su, twe - nde kwa Ye - su, twe - nde kwa Ye - su mbi - ngu - ni.
1 Bless - ed be the name, bless - ed be the name, bless - ed be the name, Je - sus' name.
2 Let us go to Je - sus, let us go to Je - sus, let us go to Je - sus in heav'n.



He - ri ni ji - na, he - ri ni ji - na, he - ri ni ji - na la Ye - su. *A - mi - ni!*
Twe - nde kwa Ye - su, twe - nde kwa Ye - su, twe - nde kwa Ye - su mbi - ngu - ni.
Bless - ed be the name, bless - ed be the name, bless - ed be the name, Je - sus' name. *Be - lieve!*
Let us go to Je - sus, let us go to Je - sus, let us go to Je - sus in heav'n.



Al - le - lu - ya, al - le - lu - ya. He - ri ni ji - na la Ye - su. *A - mi - ni!*
Al - le - lu - ya, al - le - lu - ya. Twe - nde kwa Ye - su mbi - ngu - ni.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Bless - ed be the name, Je - sus' name. *Be - lieve!*
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Let us go to Je - sus in heav'n.



Al - le - lu - ya, al - le - lu - ya. He - ri ni ji - na la Ye - su.
Al - le - lu - ya, al - le - lu - ya. Twe - nde kwa Ye - su mbi - ngu - ni.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Bless - ed be the name, Je - sus' name.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Let us go to Je - sus in heav'n.



Text: East African traditional, as taught by Deogratias Mahamba
Music: HERI NI JINA, East African traditional; arr. hymnal version
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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

L: Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need, responding to each petition with the words “hear our prayer.”

A brief silence.

L: God of open arms, make Christians into signs of your gracious welcome, to both members and newcomers, whether meeting physically or digitally. Strengthen faith through Bible studies and Sunday schools, confirmation classes and youth ministries, and nurture new ventures for education and growth. Bless bishops, pastors, and deacons for their work in this unprecedented time. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: God of lands and seas, continue your care for your creation. Where human selfishness has brought ruin and destruction, we ask you to heal and renew your earth. Preserve the lands from fire and storm. Protect the sources of food that your creatures need for life. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: God of justice, lead the nations away from the ways of violence. Guide the United Nations and other organizations that seek reconciliation across national borders. Show families, neighborhoods, and nations how to welcome diversity while sharing common ground. Preserve our election season from abuse and rancor. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: God of our homeland, visit the American cities that are addressing local racism. Stand with both protesters and police, that civil society may be preserved and improved. Bring both healing and justice to our land. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: God of the sufferers, visit prisons and care homes with health and hope. Free victims of human trafficking and forced labor. Deliver all who are bound by debt. Free all who hunger and provide safety to migrants. Protect firefighters and first responders. Heal the sick, especially those we name here before you: Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: God of goodness, once more we beg for a way through the pandemic. Comfort the afflicted. Support medical workers. Prepare a vaccine. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

- L: Whether we live or whether we die, we are yours. We thank you for those who have led us in the faith. Hold us with them in your everlasting love. Lord, in your mercy,
C: **hear our prayer.**
L: All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.
C: **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

- C: **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.**

SHARING THE PEACE

- P: The peace of Christ be with you always.
C: **And also with you.**

OFFERTORY *(Thanks for sharing your gifts. Offering envelopes can still be mailed to the church, you can use the GIVE + app found on the resource tab at ssmelca.org or you may wish to sign up for Simply Giving to have your offering scheduled on an automatic basis.)*

OFFERING PRAYER

- L: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
C: **Amen.**

BLESSING

- P: Mothering God,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.
C: **Amen**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE - Fugue in G Minor by J.S. Bach BWV 578

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KEEP THESE SSM MEMBERS IN PRAYER

Joyce Gagliano, Sue Herman, Tom Hoffman, Sue Jarchow, Lynda Johnson, Ken & Carolyn Kahl, Vic & Sandy Peterson, Teri Peterson, Patrick Rafalski, John Rech, Joan Retzlaff, Ron Ropel, Rob Rutzen, Karl Simley, John Winter. Fred and Erin Ankebrant at the passing of Fred's Father. Larry and Sandy Petricek at the passing of Larry's cousin.

PRAY FOR OUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Roberta Henrichs, sister-in-law of
Joan Retzlaff
Laurence Freemont, friend of SSM
Katie Stull, granddaughter of Phil &
LaVerne Morgan
Jane Janicki, sister of the Winter Family
Jerelie Caston, daughter of Joan Retzlaff
Nancy & Mike Andritsch, sister/brother in law
of Barbara & Dan Davies
Josh Knapp, friend of Amy Billman
Linda Radike, friend of Julie Herman
Karen Stolz, neighbor of Julie Herman
Roger & Kathy Blanchard, cousin of Bob
Lieske
Billy Waters, husband of Darlene Waters &
Stepdad of Lori Salas
Mike Derrick, nephew of Ron & Carole Ropel
Daniel Kilimann, son of Joy Kilimann
Carson Wudtke, grandson of Dan & Barb
Davies
Sharon West, friend of Lynda Johnson
Ted P., brother-in-law of Gail Jakus
Jay Lessing, friend of LaVerne Morgan
Jeanne Jimenez, daughter of Shirley Rau
Cindy Molter, mother of Fred Ankebrant
Mark Molter, uncle of Fred Ankebrant
Ashton Miller, nephew of Jenny & Kurt Koeff
Terry Betchner, friend of Dianne Niese
Beth Klosinski, daughter of Linda Schmidt
Tom Ervin, former father-in-law of Shelly
Rosenstock
The Lynn Gillen Family, granddaughter to Fred &
Carol Mueller

Dawn Salopek, sister of Karen Miller
Janet Heino, great aunt of Stephanie Falksen
Tinsley Marie, great granddaughter of Sue
Herman
Cameo Abifarin, friend of Julie Herman
Cathy & Mark Kossow, friends of Lynda
Johnson
Tippecanoe's "Larry under the bridge", friend
of the Homeless
Katie Manzeck, friend of Carol Manning
Susan White, sister of Sally Kowalewski
Jon Kowalewski, husband of Susan
Kowalewski
Lauryn Ramintho, great-granddaughter of
Karen Miller
Lucy Copeland, granddaughter of Dianne
Niese
Liane Guthrie, daughter of Dianne Niese
Leroy Robinson, father of Linda Schmidt
Maria Hill, friend of Lynda Johnson
Steve, son of Louise Becker
Ann Scorzynski, friend of LaVerne Morgan
Kristin White, daughter of Sue Herman
Laura Sussman, mother of Kimberly Carroll
Diane Schauer, friend of Carol Manning
Louie Baumgartner, son-in-law of Bob Lieske
Richard Kurcharski, father of Jenny
Resterhouse
Robert Goist, friend of Denise Sanders
Sharon Maschke, sister in law of Pam Maschke
Finn Morgan, great-grandson of Shirley & Bob
Lieske