

16th Sunday after Pentecost
September 20, 2020
Living Faith Lutheran, Sechelt, BC

Please remember that our compliance with provincial and BC Synod Covid protocols does not permit singing (although humming quietly with lips closed is acceptable); speaking aloud (whispering or speaking very quietly is permitted); signing a waiver acknowledging any and all risks of attending in-person worship as well as providing one's name and phone number; wearing a mask inside the church building; and maintaining the prescribed physical distancing both inside and outside the building.

Pre-service music/Welcome/Announcements

GATHERING

Gathering Song #527 "Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now"

Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now

1 Lord Je - sus Christ, be pres - ent now; our
 2 Un - seal our lips to sing your praise in
 3 Then shall we join the hosts that cry, "O
 4 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, Son, and

hearts in true de - vo - tion bow. Your Spir - it send with
 end - less hymns through all our days; in - crease our faith and
 ho - ly, ho - ly Lord Most High!" And in the light of
 Ho - ly Spir - it, Three in One! To you, O bless - ed

light di - vine, and let your truth with - in us shine.
 light our minds; and set us free from doubt that blinds.
 that blest place we then shall see you face to face.
 Trin - i - ty, be praise through - out e - ter - ni - ty!

Text: attr. Wilhelm II, 1598–1662; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
 Music: HERR JESU CHRIST, DICH ZU UNS WEND, *Cantionale Germanicum*, Gochsheim, 1628

Apostolic Greeting

The grace of Christ, the love of God, and the companionship of the Spirit, be with us all.

Prayer of the Day

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

WORD

First Reading Exodus 16:2-15

²The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, "I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. ⁵On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days." ⁶So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, "In the evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, ⁷and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your complaining against the LORD. For what are we, that you complain against us?" ⁸And Moses said, "When the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the LORD has heard the complaining that you utter against him — what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the LORD."

⁹Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, 'Draw near to the LORD, for he has heard your complaining.'" ¹⁰And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. ¹¹The LORD spoke to Moses and said, ¹²"I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.'"

¹³In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁴When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat."

Second Reading Philippians 1:21-30

²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

²⁷Only, 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, ²⁸and 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. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well —³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Song of Acclamation #681 “We Plow the Fields and Scatter”

We plow the fields and scatter the good seed on the land,
but it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand,
who sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain,
the breezes and the sunshine, and soft refreshing rain.

*Refrain: All good gifts around us are sent from heav'n above.
We thank you, Lord, we thank you, Lord, for all your love.*

You only are the maker of all things near and far.
You paint the wayside flower, you light the evening star.
The winds and waves obey you, by you the birds are fed,
much more to us your children, you give our daily bread. *Refrain.*

We thank you, our creator, for all things bright and good,
the seedtime and the harvest, our life, our health, our food.
No gifts have we to offer for all your love imparts,
but what you most would reassure—our humble, thankful hearts. *Refrain.*

Holy Gospel Matthew 20:1-16 From “The Message” by Eugene Peterson

1 "God's kingdom is like an estate manager who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. **2** They agreed on a wage of a dollar a day, and went to work. **3**"Later, about nine o'clock, the manager saw some other men hanging around the town square unemployed. **4** He told them to go to work in his vineyard and he would pay them a fair wage. **5** They went. **6** At five o'clock he went back and found still others standing around.

He said, 'Why are you standing around all day doing nothing?' **7** 'They said, 'Because no one hired us.' "He told them to go to work in his vineyard.

8 "When the day's work was over, the owner of the vineyard instructed his foreman, 'Call the workers in and pay them their wages. Start with the last hired and go on to the first.' **9** "Those hired at five o'clock came up and were each given a dollar. **10** When those who were hired first saw that, they assumed they would get far more. But they got the same, each of them one dollar. **11** Taking the dollar, they groused angrily to the manager, **12** 'These last workers put in only one easy hour, and you just made them equal to us, who slaved all day under a scorching sun.'

13 "He replied to the one speaking for the rest, 'Friend, I haven't been unfair. We agreed on the wage of a dollar, didn't we? **14** So take it and go. I decided to give to the one who came last the same as you. **15** Can't I do what I want with my own money? Are you going to get stingy because I am generous?' **16** "Here it is again, the Great Reversal: many of the first ending up last, and the last first."

Sermon

Hymn of the Day #725 "When the Poor Ones"

When the Poor Ones *Cuando el pobre*



1 *Cuan-do el po-bre na-da tie-ne y aún re-par-le,*
 1 When the poor ones, who have noth-ing, still are giv-ing;
 2 When com-pas-sion gives the suf-f'ring con-so-la-tion;
 3 When our spir-its, like a chal-ice, brim with glad-ness;
 4 When the good-ness poured from heav-en fills our dwell-ings;



cuan-do al-guien pa-sa sed y a-gua nos da,
 when the thirst-y pass the cup, wa-ter to share;
 when ex-pect-ing brings to birth hope that was lost;
 when our voic-es, full and clear, sing out the truth;
 when the na-tions work to change war in-to peace;



cuan-do el dé-bil a su her-ma-no for-ta-le-ce:
 when the wound-ed of-fer oth-ers strength and heal-ing;
 when we choose love, not the ha-tred all a-round us;
 when our long-ings, free from en-vy, seek the hum-ble:
 when the strang-er is ac-cept-ed as our neigh-bor:

Refrain / Estribillo



Va Dios mis-mo en nues-tro mis-mo ca-mi-nar;
 We see God, here by our side, walk-ing our way;



va Dios mis-mo en nues-tro mis-mo ca-mi-nar,
 we see God, here by our side, walk-ing our way.

2 *Cuando alguno sufre y logra su consuelo,* 3 *Cuando crece la alegría y nos inunda,*
cuando espera y no se cansa de esperar, *cuando dicen nuestros labios la verdad,*
cuando amamos, aunque el odio nos rodee; *cuando amamos el sentir de los sencillos;*
 Estribillo Estribillo

4 *Cuando abunda el bien y llena los hogares,*
cuando alguien donde hay guerra pone paz,
cuando "hermano" le llamamos al extraño;
 Estribillo

Text: José Antonio Olivar, b. 1939; tr. Martin A. Seltz, b. 1951

Music: EL CAMINO, Miguel Manzano, b. 1934

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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 the Community

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

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 (*especially those who are threatened or martyred for their confession and their sharing of their faith*).

Gracious One, **hear our prayer.**

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. Gracious One, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Where we find envy and create enemies, you provide enough for all. Bring peace to places of conflict and violence *especially in parts of Africa, the Mideast, East Europe and South America where civil strife makes daily life impossible, and where the cry for equal justice is put down with force, torture and murder*). Inspire leaders with creativity and wisdom. Bless the work of negotiators, peacekeepers, and development workers.

Gracious One, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Reveal yourself to all in need as you are kind and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Accompany judges and lawyers, victims of crime and those serving their sentences in prisons. Give fruitful labour and a livelihood to those seeking or providing work, especially in these difficult days when so many have lost their jobs or watched their shuttered business fail. Gracious One, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Even beyond our expectations, you choose to give generously. Grant life, health, and courage to all who are in need (*especially those in our province, country and around the world who are facing fear, illness, lack of sufficient medical care; those recovering from surgery in hospitals; those ill at home or in hospice or care facilities; those who tend the sick, bandage the wounded, comfort the dying, and bring peace to the grieving. We also ask your healing presence upon those we know and love and worry about whose names we bring before you now in our hearts and or whisper with our lips. . . (Pause). . .*

Gracious One in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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 our loved ones in the joyful song around his throne. Gracious One, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Master, Guide, Friend and Brother. **Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

All are invited to bow, nod or make some gesture of peace and friendship to those around. Those at home or in other places with family or close and trusted friends are welcome to share a hug or kiss or other familiar expression of affection

Offering/Offertory Prayer

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. You have set before us these gifts of your good creation. Nourish us with this food and prayers, your hope and peace. Then send us forth, accompanied by you, to set tables in the midst of a suffering world, through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Saviour. **Amen.**

MEAL

God is with us always and everywhere, and that promise and confidence enables us to give thanks for all things. In particular, we give thanks for these gifts of bread and wine, the means by which God's mercy and lovingkindness comes to us and is given to us in, with and through the presence of Christ.

Opening Dialogue

God is with you. **God is also with you.**

Lift up your eyes and hearts to heaven. **We lift them to our God.**

Let us give thanks to our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Eucharistic (Thanksgiving) Prayer

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God.

You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,

so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world

to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command, his life-giving passion and death,
his glorious resurrection and ascension, and the promise of his coming again,
we give thanks to you, O God Almighty, not as we ought but as we are able;

we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving
and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants,
and these your own gifts of bread and wine,
so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ
may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace, and, receiving the forgiveness of sin,
may be formed to live as your holy people and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory in your holy church,
now and forever. **Amen,**

Let us pray the prayer Jesus taught us, remembering his mercy and grace toward 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.

Fraction (Breaking of the Bread)

The gifts of God for you, the beloved children of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Invitation to the Meal

Come and taste the mercy and grace of God. **We do so gladly.**

The wafer is placed into the upraised and stretched out hands of all who wish to receive the Bread of Life. Those who prefer to receive a blessing instead are asked to cross their arms in front of them. Out of respect for everyone present, please maintain distance between communicants both coming forward from and returning to your chairs. Thank you.

Musical Reflection during the sharing of the holy supper

Prayer after Communing

We give you thanks, generous God, that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare, the presence of our Lord Christ. Lead us from this place, forgiven and free, into your beloved vineyard to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst, guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

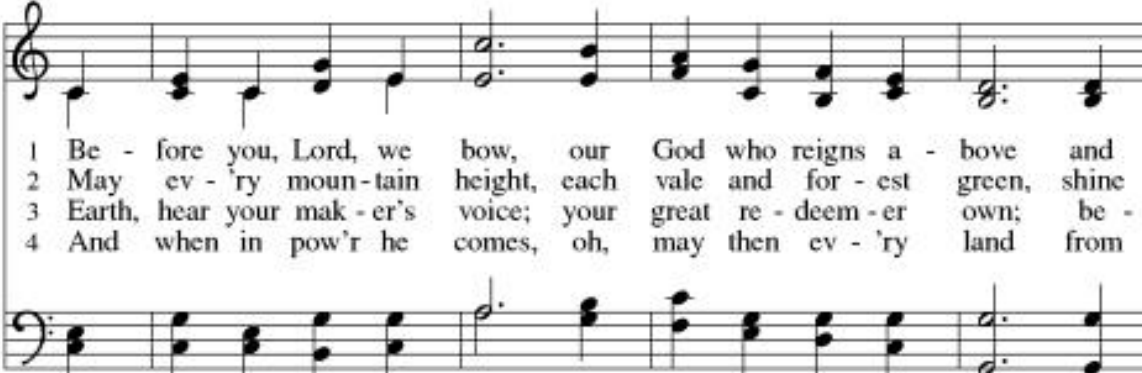
SENDING

Benediction

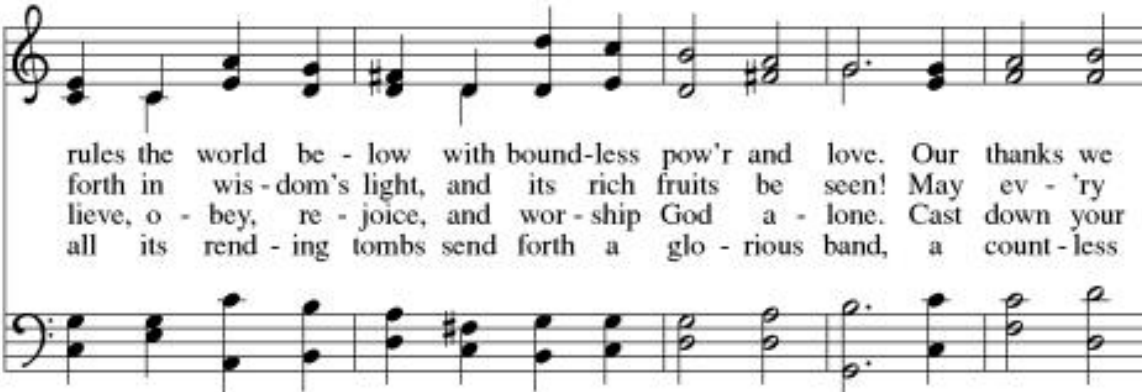
Mothering God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn #893 “Before You, Lord, We Bow”

Before You, Lord, We Bow



1 Be - fore you, Lord, we bow, our God who reigns a - bove and
2 May ev - 'ry moun - tain height, each vale and for - est green, shine
3 Earth, hear your mak - er's voice; your great re - deem - er own; be -
4 And when in pow'r he comes, oh, may then ev - 'ry land from



rules the world be - low with bound-less pow'r and love. Our thanks we
forth in wis - dom's light, and its rich fruits be seen! May ev - 'ry
lieve, o - bey, re - joice, and wor - ship God a - lone. Cast down your
all its rend - ing tombs send forth a glo - rious band, a count - less



bring in joy and praise, our hearts we raise, to you we sing!
tongue be tuned to praise and join to raise a grate - ful song.
pride, your sin de - plore, and bow be - fore the Cru - ci - fied.
throng, with joy to sing to heav'n's high king sal - va - tion's song!

Postlude

Dismissal

Go in peace. Remember to take care of the poor.

With God at our side, we will do that. . .and more.

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.