

Sunday Worship Service – September 18, 2022
Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Prelude Beth Hendricksen

Welcome and Announcements

Announcement – Messy Church

Lighting of the Altar Candles

Introduction to the Theme of the Bible Readings*

The natural focus of today's readings is stewardship. Jesus tells us the perplexing parable of the dishonest manager. We are reminded that it is important how we manage the many gifts God has given us, such as our time, talents, and treasures.

Prayer of Confession*

Forgive us when we squander your gifts and misuse our talents.

Forgive us when we protect our self-interests and neglect the needs of the world.

Forgive us when we act cleverly for our personal gain, and refuse to use our energies to help others.

Return us to you, Holy One, and heal our hearts with your wisdom and love. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Words of Forgiveness*

God meets us in our need and heals our failings. Rejoice and be glad because we are forgiven in the name of the + Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Opening Hymn "*Baptized and Set Free*" #453

- 1. We are people created, chosen by God.
 Then we're washed ever gently, in mercy and love.
 Sin has power no more. Jesus opened the door**

- to a fountain bringing healing and wholeness and more.
2. **We are fed and we're nourished, filled and refreshed.
Then our hunger returns and again we are blessed.
For whatever the need, God is greater indeed:
endless ocean, always deeper than all of our need.**
 3. **We are nourished by water, all living things,
and by life that the Spirit abundantly brings.
As we journey toward home, may your presence be known:
precious river, everflowing, now carry us home.**
 4. **We are nourished by water, all living things,
and by life that the Spirit abundantly brings.
As we journey toward home, may your presence be known:
precious river, everflowing, now carry us home.**

Sacrament of Baptism

Sharing of the Peace

Hymn of Praise "Jesus Loves Me" #595

1. **Jesus loves me! this I know, for the Bible tells me so;
little ones to him belong, they are weak, but he is strong.**
Refrain: **Yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me,
yes, Jesus loves, the Bible tells me so.**
2. **Jesus loves me! he who died heaven's gate to open wide;
he will wash away my sin, let his little child come in. (Refrain)**
3. **Jesus loves me! he will stay close beside me all the way;
when at last I come to die, he will take me home on high. (Refrain)**

Responsive Prayer – Blessing of the Backpacks

Loving God, we want to begin this new school year as we begin each day,
by acknowledging your presence among us with your blessing and
guidance.

**Watch over our students, the owners of these backpacks, as they take the
next steps in their education.**

Good Shepherd, you call each of these children by name to love you and love their neighbour, both throughout the school year and each day of life, by grace, through faith in you.

As these backpacks are filled with books, we ask that you also fill their lives to overflowing with your countless, daily blessings.

In all their daily schoolwork and activities...

we pray that these students grow in knowledge, wisdom, faith, and compassion.

When they feel overcome by stress or anxiety and their spirits seem low...

We pray that these students find comfort in your word and knowledge of your constant presence.

When they encounter sadness or grief, whether at school or at home...

We pray that these students will know that you provide the Spirit of comfort to all who are mourning.

When they face difficult decisions...

Remind them that you offer both guidance and forgiveness for those who call upon your name.

May their lives be a reflection of your love for them.

We pray that they would see your face in the face of friends, teachers, parents, and others who gather with them this year.

We gather here with these children in your name, Lord Jesus, welcoming you to the circle of love and togetherness that binds us in your name.

We pray that their faith in your promises is strengthened and that their faith shines as a witness to others of what it means to live as your beloved children.

With confident hope in God's watchful care, I bless these backpacks and their owners in the name of the +Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

May all of us, young and old, be strong in faith and filled with the Spirit that we might be a blessing in your world.

Almighty God, hear our prayer and accept our praise in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day*

Generous God, welcome us into your household, that we may bathe in the light of your grace. Inspire us with your word, that we may rejoice in the

glory of your ways. Strengthen us with your Spirit, that we may go forth to serve you, with passion and purpose, in all that we say, and in all that we do. Amen.

1 Timothy 2:1-7

The reading from the pastoral epistle from 1st Timothy offers insight into how early Christians understood many practical matters, such as church administration and worship. The church's focused prayer for others is an expression of the single-minded passion God has toward us in Jesus.

A reading from 1st Timothy, the 2nd chapter:

First of all, then, I ask that requests, prayers, petitions, and thanksgiving be made for all people. Pray for rulers and everyone who is in authority so that we can live a quiet and peaceful life in complete godliness and dignity. This is right and it pleases God our savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. There is one God and one mediator between God and humanity, the human Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a payment to set all people free. This was a testimony that was given at the right time. I was appointed to be a preacher and apostle of this testimony—I'm telling the truth and I'm not lying! I'm a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

Gospel Acclamation "Voice of Creation"

Voice of creation, open our ears to hear your word.

Source of salvation, open our hearts to hold your love.

Soul's inspiration, open our minds to know your grace.

Three in relation, transform our lives with your embrace. (repeat)

Gospel Reading: Luke 16:1-13

In the gospel reading from Luke, Jesus tells the curious story of a dishonest manager who cheats his employer and then is commended by him for having acted so shrewdly. Jesus wonders why his own followers are less creative and diligent in their stewardship given that they are managers of a far more valuable household.

The holy gospel according to Luke, the 16th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus also said to the disciples, “There was a wealthy landowner who, having received reports of a household manager mismanaging the property, summoned the manager and said, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give me a report of your administration because you can no longer serve as my manager.’

“The household manager thought, ‘What will I do now that my employer is firing me? I’m not strong enough to dig and too proud to beg. I know what I’ll do so that, when I am removed from my management position, people will welcome me into their houses.

“One by one, the manager sent for each of the landowner’s debtors.

The manager said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my employer?’

The debtor replied, ‘A hundred jars of olive oil.’

The manager said, ‘Take your contract, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’

Then the manager said to another, ‘How much do you owe?’

The answer came, ‘One thousand bushels of wheat.’

The manager said, ‘Take your contract and write eight hundred.’

“Upon hearing this, the landowner commended the dishonest manager for acting cleverly. People who belong to this world are more clever in dealing with their peers than are people who belong to the light. I tell you, use worldly wealth to make friends for yourselves so that when it’s gone, you will be welcomed into the eternal homes.

“Whoever is faithful with little is also faithful with much, and the one who is dishonest with little is also dishonest with much. If you haven’t been faithful with worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?

If you haven’t been faithful with someone else’s property, who will give you your own? No household servant can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be loyal to the one and have contempt for the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

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

Sermon

Hymn of the Day *"God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending"* #678

(to the tune "HYMN TO JOY" from #836)

1. **God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store:
nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door,
gifted by you, we turn to you, off'ring up ourselves in praise;
thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.**

2. **Skills and time are ours for pressing toward the goals of Christ, your Son:
all at peace in health and freedom, races joined, the Church made one.
Now direct our daily labor, lest we strive for self alone;
born with talents, make us servants fit to answer at your throne.**

3. **Treasure, too, you have entrusted,
gain through pow'rs your grace conferred;
ours to use for home and kindred, and to spread the gospel word.
Open wide our hands in sharing, as we heed Christ's ageless call,
healing, teaching, and reclaiming, serving you by loving all.**

Offering*

Generous God, pour out your Holy Spirit, and bless the gifts we return to you now. May they be as soothing ointment for a hurting and broken world. Bless the gifts of our lives, and inspire us to be clever and creative, as we share generously and give abundantly, the bounty we have received. In faithfulness and gratitude, we pray. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

The Lord's Prayer *(traditional spoken)*

**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.**

Sending Hymn “For the Fruit of All Creation” #679

1. **For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.
For these gifts to ev’ry nation, thanks be to God.
For the plowing, sowing, reaping, silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth’s safe-keeping, thanks be to God.**

2. **In the just reward of labor, God’s will be done.
In the help we give our neighbor, God’s will be done.
In our worldwide task of caring for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing, God’s will be done.**

3. **For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us, for the truths that still confound us,
most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.**

Blessing*

Go in peace

Go in love

Go in faithfulness to serve God in all that you say

And in all that you do.

In the name of the + Creator, Redeemer, and Comforter. Amen.

Sending

Go in peace, inspired by Christ to love and serve. **Thanks be to God!**

Postlude – Beth Hendricksen

Sources:

Bible passages (except where otherwise indicated) from Common English Bible (CEB).

Those parts of this worship service marked with an asterisk (*) are adapted from:

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