

The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

19-20 September 2020

**The SERVICE of EVENING and MORNING PRAYER
with HOLY COMMUNION**

ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRAYER CONCERNS & THANKSGIVINGS

OPENING SENTENCE

Stand *Officiant* Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
Philippians 1:2

Let us pray:

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION of SIN

Jesus said, "The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these."

Mark 12:29-31

Most merciful God,

All: **we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

*The priest offers Absolution.**Officiant:* Come, let us sing to the Lord; *

All: **let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving *
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.**

**For the Lord is a great God, *
and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are the caverns of the earth, *
and the heights of the hills are his also.
The sea is his, for he made it, *
and his hands have molded the dry land.**

**Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, *
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.**

**For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture
and the sheep of his hand. *
Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!**

Officiant God be with you.*All* **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

silence is held.

Grant us, Lord, not to be anxious about earthly things, but to love things heavenly; and even now, while we are placed among things that are passing away, to hold fast to those that shall endure; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Jonah 3: 10-4:11

When God saw what they 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?"

The Word of God.
Thanks be to God.

Sit PSALTER **Psalm 145: 1-8** *read responsively, observing the verse*

- 1 I will exalt you, O God my King, *
and bless your Name for ever and ever.
- 2 **Every day will I bless you ***
and praise your Name for ever and ever.
- 3 Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; *
there is no end to his greatness.
- 4 **One generation shall praise your works to another ***
and shall declare your power.
- 5 I will ponder the glorious splendor of your majesty *
and all your marvelous works.
- 6 **They shall speak of the might of your wondrous acts, ***
and I will tell of your greatness.
- 7 They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness; *
they shall sing of your righteous deeds.
- 8 **The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, ***
slow to anger and of great kindness.

EPISTLE READING

Philippians 1: 21-30

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.

The Word of God.
Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

"Come, Labor On"

Berthwick & Noble

Stand GOSPEL READING

Matthew 20:1-16

Jesus said, "For 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."

The Word of God.

Thanks be to God.

MEDITATION

Stand The NICENE CREED

Officiant: We believe in one God,

All: **the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

The PRAYERS

Officiant God be with you. *People* **And also with you.**
Let us pray.

All:

Our Father, who art in heaven...

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS & THANKSGIVINGS - Form III

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Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;

That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;

That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for Justin the Archbishop of Canterbury; Michael our Presiding Bishop;
Kevin our Bishop and all bishops, priests, and deacons;

That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for Donald the President; Thomas our Governor, Sarah our Mayor and all
who govern and hold authority in the nations and communities of the world;

That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;

That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on _____ and all who suffer from any grief or trouble;

That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed ☩ eternal rest;

Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;

May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others. *silence is held*

PRAYER of St. CHRYSOSTOM

BLESSING

Officiant: The grace of our Savior Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship
of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DAUGHTERS of the KING - Our St. Anne Chapter will meet today (Sunday) at 10:45 in the Parish Hall. We will continue our discussion of the book from the National Church, *Walk in Love*, and up-coming events such as the prayer vigil the Daughter's are doing.

BIBLE STUDY - "Zooming" through the Bible" has moved to Tuesday evenings at 7:00pm. Join us one day, or each week as your schedule allows. This week we finish Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. A Zoom invitation is sent to the Parish e-list each week.

BLESSING of the ANIMALS - Sunday, October 4th at 2:00. Send a photo with the name of your pet by Friday, Oct. 2nd for a special Virtual Grace service.

HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA - Saturday, October 10th - from 9:00-2:00 along 9th Street. Stay tuned for more information. If you'd like to volunteer, see Sue Erb.

HARVEST HAM DINNER - Tuesday, October 20th with take-outs only. We need your help in selling tickets before hand so we know how much food to order and prepare. See Sue Erb or Zach Wyckoff for info and tickets. Adults \$12; Children (under 10) \$8.

The PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

For those who need God's comfort and care: Richelle Stephens; Addison; Walter Barbe; George Varites; Dottie Ridgeway; those affected by wildfires and hurricanes.

The SHARING of HOLY COMMUNION

After the Blessing, those who wish to remain to receive the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood are welcome to remain.

MASKS - must remain in place throughout the celebration, except when individuals partake of the wafer and wine.

- + SOCIAL DISTANCING of SIX FEET - Please observe distancing while proceeding to receive the elements. Remember that "Slow, Meditative and Prayerful Solemnity" are hallmarks of the Spiritual Life, especially in approaching the Divine Presence in the Sacrament.
- + INDIVIDUAL ELEMENTS - are provided on separate trays. Consecrated wafers are provided in paper containers. Consume the wafer, then dispose the paper container in the basket provided. Then proceed to the right for individual disposable cups of consecrated (golden) wine and (purple) grape juice. Take a cup and when consumed, place the empty cup in the basket provided.
- + RETURN - to your seats when finished for the concluding Prayer.

THE CELEBRATION of HOLY COMMUNION

As the Confession and Absolution of Sin, as well as the hearing of the Gospel read and preached, have already been observed, the faithful are prepared for the sharing of the Sacrament. The elements for Holy Communion have previously been consecrated, though a symbolic consecration of the 'priest's host' and chalice will be observed for the celebration.

Celebrant: God be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give our thanks to God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

The Celebrant continues

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might:

Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blest is He who comes in the Name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The Celebrant continues.

Memorial Acclamation:

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

Prior to receiving:

We do not presume to come to this your table, O merciful God, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your many and great mercies. We are not worthy even to gather up the crumbs under your Table. Yet you always have mercy upon those who call upon you. Grant us, therefore, gracious God, so to eat this Bread and drink this Cup, that we may forever dwell in Christ, and Christ in us. Amen.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

All: **Faithful God, in the wonder of your wisdom and love**

**you fed your people in the wilderness with the bread of angels,
and you sent Jesus to be the bread of life.**

We thank you for feeding us with this bread.

May it strengthen us that by the power of the Holy Spirit

**we may embody your desire and be renewed for your service
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

GRACE CHURCH
PENTECOST 19 - A (RCL, track 2)

Honesdale, PA
19-20 September 2020

+ 2 +

Jonah 3:10 - 4:11
Psalm 145: 1-8
Philippians 1: 21-30
Matthew 20: 1-16

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

+ + +

A group of youth asked this priest,

“What’s this about purgatory?”

Somehow we had gotten into a discussion of the after-life

and we got onto purgatory, limbo, and the levels of hell.

“I was reading Dante’s *Inferno*; he talks about these different levels,”

one 17 year old observed,

I’ve learned that even Middle Schoolers are reading Dante.

Maybe it has to do with Dan Brown,

whose Professor Langdon movies were on TV the other night.

“I didn’t get all the way through yet,” this lad confessed.

As a self-professed Atheist; I scoffed at him - there is no such thing.

So we’ve spent a few weeks talking about Dante’s *Inferno*,

the “Divine Comedy.”

Instead of looking at Dante’s 9 levels of Hell,

I asked them to come up with a list of the 9 deadliest sins.

(Dante took the Seven Cardinal Sins -

which, by the way, are *not* in the Bible -

and re-worked them).

“What do you think are the worst sins?” I asked?

Let’s make a list and prioritize them.

And then we came up with the adequate punishment in Hell

for each of the sins we named and categorized.

Teens are really into sin, it seems, but let’s not go there.

Or maybe these youth were into appropriate punishments, who knows.

We got to Greed, somewhere in the middle between lying and genocide,

and they decided that they would be punished

by having everything they owned - their cell-phones especially -

taken away from them for their sin of Greed,

or we could call it avarice or even coveting.

Dante’s punishment is

that the greedy would have to carry around heavy weights

like Marley’s chains he forged in life in Scrooge’s epic.

Greed, avarice, coveting,
or in today's Gospel parable - Envy or Resentment.
Greed and that our early workers expected to get more than promised,
Anger that someone got what we worked hard for, or
Or just plain Resentment
of others getting what we don't think they deserve.
You choose what the Cardinal Sin is today.
I think, though, it's plain old Resentment and Anger.
What punishment do you think you'd write
in re-working Dante's *Inferno*.
Jonah resents the fact that God would spare the people of Nineveh,
how dare He?
God, that is. How dare God be so generous?
How could Jesus, or the Vineyard Owner.
Of course, we see through the guise -
they're all God.
All God did was do what He promised in each scenario.
and here was the work Jonah was sent to do -
to bring in the harvest of the Ninevites.

In Jesus' take, the Early Workers resented the fact that the Boss
paid them what they deserved and were promised.
God did nothing more than what was promised,
and continues to promise - from Creation to 2020 -
God offers justice, mercy and grace.
Justice is what is owed;
Mercy is a discount on the price;
and Grace is the price paid in full.
Or to today's Gospel context:
Justice is the pay promised at the beginning of the day;
Mercy is the same given to the middle of the day;
and Grace is that which is given at the last hour.
It's never too late to receive God's Grace,
when what we deserve is Justice.
Let's look at it through the eyes of God.
The early morning, and here are these eager, willing workers,
front of the line, first picked.
They were eager,
and they were willing to work the full day.

And as we see in the end, they were opportunists,
thinking of themselves more than thinking of others,
trying to benefit in spades out of the situation.

But, why were the Last Ones still standing around at the end of the day?

Maybe they could only get to the end of the line
because the First Ones pushed them out of the way.

Perhaps they were late because they were old, or infirm.

Perhaps they were late
because they were getting an aged parent settled for the day,
or caring for a sick child.

Perhaps they themselves were ill,
and just getting to the line was a struggle.

But who cares?

I want what's due me -
according to my reckoning:
their pay for one hour, and mine for 12 hours.

Who cares about them?

God does.

God cares for the one who came late taking care of the child,
or the aging parent;

God cares for the one who came late because of working a second job;
God cares for even the ones who complain and want more.

God even cares for those who resisted repentance
and cares especially when they listen and turn from their ways.

God cares even for Jonah.

After the whale, the grumping and the hrumphing.

Boy, am I glad that God cares for the Grumpy!

Jonah discovered that we are not responsible for other people,
we are only responsible for our own actions and reactions.

Jonah could only spread the Word of God.

It was up to the people of Ninevah to respond.

Not his responsibility.

The Gospel today is really that God doesn't play by our rule books.
Aren't you glad?

And as the people of Ninevah find out, it's never too late for Grace.

AMEN.