

The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

1-2 August 2020

The SERVICE of EVENING and MORNING PRAYER

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

Dearly beloved, we have come together in the presence of Almighty God our heavenly Father, to set forth his praise, to hear his holy Word, and to ask, for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and our salvation. And so that we may prepare ourselves in heart and mind to worship him, let us with penitent and obedient hearts confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION of SIN

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: Glory to God in the highest,

All: **and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father;
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

FIRST READING

Gensis 32: 22-31

That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. Jacob was left alone;

Then a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved." The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip.

Here ends the Reading.

Sit PSALTER **Psalm 85: 7-13** *read responsively observing the verse*

Show us your mercy, O Lord, *
and grant us your salvation.

**I will listen to what the Lord God is saying, *
for he is speaking peace to his faithful people
and to those who turn their hearts to him.**

Truly, his salvation is very near to those who fear him, *
that his glory may dwell in our land.

**Mercy and truth have met together; *
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.**

Truth shall spring up from the earth, *
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

**The Lord will indeed grant prosperity, *
and our land will yield its increase.**

Righteousness shall go before him, *
and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Sit SECOND READING

Matthew 14: 22-33

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them.

And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Here ends the Reading.

MEDITATION

Stand The APOSTLES' CREED

Officiant: I believe in God,

All: **the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He 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,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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.**

The PRAYERS

Officiant God be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Officiant Let us pray.

Officiant and People

**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,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS & THANKSGIVINGS - Form II

BCP p. 386

I ask your prayers for God's people throughout the world; for Justin the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael our Presiding Bishop and Kevin our Bishop;

for the Diocesan staff; for all ministers and people; for this parish family and for all who remain isolated from their community of faith.

Pray for the Church.

I ask your prayers for peace; for goodwill among nations; and for the well-being of all people. for Donald, the President of the United States, the Congress, Thomas our Governor, and Sarah, mayor of our Borough.

Pray for justice and peace.

I ask your prayers for the poor; for those suffering from financial anxiety and fear for their livelihood; the hungry, the oppressed, and those in prison, especially Justin and Mitch; for the sick, the infirm and the elderly, especially Addison, Rob, Russ and Libby.

Pray for those in any need or trouble.

I ask your prayers for all who seek God, or a deeper knowledge of him.
Pray that they may find and be found by him.

I ask your prayers for teachers and school administrators.
Pray that they may find creative new ways for educating our children and youth.

I ask your prayers for the departed, especially those killed by violent acts and those who succumbed to the coronavirus.

Pray for those who have died.

Praise God for those in every generation in whom Christ has been honored.
Pray that we may have grace to glorify Christ in our own day.

Let your continual mercy, O Lord, cleanse and defend your Church; and, because it cannot continue in safety without your help, protect and govern it always by your goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING & DISMISSAL

Let us go forth in peace rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. Alleluia, alleluia!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!

SHARING HOLY COMMUNION

After the Dismissal, 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.

Please remember the protocol of distancing while proceeding to receive the elements, and returning to your seat. Remember that "Slow, Meditative and Prayerful Solemnity" are hallmarks of the Spiritual Life, especially in approaching the Divine presence in the Sacrament.

+ SOCIAL DISTANCING of SIX FEET - will continue to be observed as individuals process to receive the Sacrament.

+ INDIVIDUAL ELEMENTS - are provided on two separate tables. Consecrated wafers are provided on the left in paper containers. You may consume the wafer, then dispose the paper container in the basket provided. Then you may proceed to the table on the right which holds individual disposable cups of consecrated wine. If you wish to share in the wine, please take a cup and when consumed, place the empty cup in the basket provided.

Both 'golden' wine and 'purple' grape juice are offered.

+ RETURN - to your seats when finished for the conclusion of the service.

NOTE: Elements for Holy Communion were pre-Consecrated earlier this week following the protocol given us by the Bishop and held in reserve for four days. Gloves and masks were utilized in the preparation of the elements.

All papers and plastic cups will be properly and carefully disposed of following the service.

We offer thanksgiving for the ability of sharing again in the Holy Sacrament. For the immediate future, we will only be offering Communion the first Sunday of each month - rather like returning to earlier years in the Church's practice.

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 with the Words of Institution.

At the Fraction:

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.
repeat
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, receive our prayer.

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.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOLY COMMUNION - The Bishop has made protocols available for the public distribution of Holy Communion for parishes who remain in "The Green." On a limited trial basis, the first Sunday of each month the Sacrament will be offered following Evening and Morning Prayer for those who wish to remain and receive. Individual 'cups' for Communion wafers as well as disposable plastic cups of wine will be offered, with the Sacramental elements being consecrated and covered four days in advance.

PRIVATE COMMUNION - Nonetheless, it is still possible for Communion to be brought to individuals and families in their home, while observing the protocols. We invite you to contact Fr. Erb to arrange a convenient time for him to visit. (570) 241-2685 or rector@gracechurchhonesdale.org

FORWARD DAY BY DAY - The quarterly devotional book for August-October is available at the entrance of the Church in regular and large print versions.

BIBLE STUDY - Would you like to "Zoom" through the Bible? Several have asked if we could gather Virtually in a new way. Beginning this Tuesday, August 4th we will join together for 30-40 minutes at noon-ish. "Bring" your own sandwich. Interested? See Fr. Ed. We will begin with digging into Jesus' Sermon on the Mount - including The Beatitudes and The Lord's Prayer. A Zoom invitation will be sent to the Parish e-list.

PARISH "YARD" SALE - Get rid of all the stuff you have cleaned out of your attic, basement and garage these past months. We'll rent 8' tables on Ninth Street for \$15 each - this Saturday, August 8th. Let Fr. Erb know if you would like to reserve a space.

GRACE CHURCH
Proper 13-A

Honesdale, PA
1-2 August 2020

Genesis 32: 22-31
Psalm 85: 7-13
Matthew 14: 13-12

WRESTLING FAMILY, YOURSELF & GOD

+ + +

Grabbing your twin's ankle on the way out of the womb.
Stealing the same twin's inheritance,
 tricking your blind father in the process,
 at your mother's encouragement,
 running scared to your, well, less than honorable uncle's farm,
and in the journey dream of angels and God granting a blessing.
Then being tricked yourself by that same uncle
 as you've fallen in love with his youngest daughter,
 and after agreeing to work for seven years to gain her as his own,
 discovers that your uncle has made a switch in the night,
 and your wife is now the older sister.

So you agree to work another seven years for the hand of your true beloved.
And finally true love is sealed.
Another six years of hard labor and things are as well as could be expected.
Except.
Your cousins get jealous of your success with the herds.
So you hear God speaking, "Go back to your father's land -
 yes, where your brother is ranching."
You take your family and head back to your homeland - afraid.
Remember that your brother has threatened to kill you.
You send messengers to him with some gifts
 and are told on the messengers' return that your 'beloved' brother
 is approaching with four hundred men!
What else could he be planning but your demise.
So you send your wives - remember Rachel and Leah -
 your 2 concubines and your eleven children
 along the way, as you camp out by yourself -
 your fears, and your plotting defense, if there is any.

And you wrestle.
With yourself, your guilt, your brother's spirit, with this man -
 an angel, God, a spirit of Christmases past?
An equal opponent, you strive through the dark before dawn,
 and finally the match ends with neither party the victor -
 or both become the victor - God and Jacob.

+ 2 +

An injured hip to remind you of the incident the rest of your life,
and a blessing given - this time a legitimate blessing,
not like the one you stole from your brother.

Your brother - Did you forget about him?

The Lectionary does, for neither today or next week,
do we hear what transpires when those four hundred men
accompanying Esau come upon Jacob and his family.

And what becomes of Jacob, now named "Is-ra-el" - "Who Fought God"
for you have wrestled with God and survived.

As Israel still remains through her own struggles over the centuries,
Jacob/Israel did, too.

That morning, Jacob sees Esau and his army approaching.

He divides his family,

one concubine and her children first, the second and her children next;
Leah the first wife next, and Rachel the beloved with Joseph next.

Yes, that Joseph.

But Jacob, redeemed, penitent and a good husband and father goes first.

Genesis recounts that,

"Jacob went ahead of them and bowed down seven times as he approached his
brother. But Esau ran to meet him, threw his arms around him, and kissed him.
They both cried."

Genesis 33: 1-4

I'm surprised that a movie or a Broadway musical has never been written.

We do have "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream-Coat,"
but that story comes a few chapters down the road.

You may know that I have succumbed to addiction -

to Ancestry.com and her cousins, Geni.com, FamilySearch...

You find out more about your family than you ever wanted to know,
many skeletons in the Erb family closet.

And a fine novel to write when I retire.

Ask about the first gallows to be used in America.

I have pictures.

And no, Israel, that is Israel Erb, was not hung; his buddies were.

Israel, my great-great-grandfather died in jail - as accomplice to murder.

But my sister, brother-in-law and I discovered a few weeks ago,
in cemetery romps,

that Israel's children didn't abandon him, even with his conviction.

For his tombstone, next to his wife Sarah, reads at the head "Father."

But maybe they did get even, because the tombstone misspells his name!

A family joke, perhaps.

So, family dynamics.

+ 3 +

A father you wish you had learned from when a stupid teenager,
a brother not talking to,
a nephew who misunderstood an e-mail,
cousins who felt estranged over family burials.

We each have our own relationships to wrestle with.
But the promise of God is that God will wrestle in those moments with us.
We may have a hip to remind us of the encounter,
but we will also receive a blessing -
a forgiveness when asked,
and even arms wrapped around,
and tears of joy shed.

Perhaps even a novel to be written.
The step-sister,
well, we just won't go there, yet.
But you can.
Blessings.