

October 4, 2020
 Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
 World Communion Sunday

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PRELUDE

At the Lord's Table (Marks)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Beloved People of God, come away from the rush and worry of the world to find nourishment for your souls. Christ invites us to his Table of love to feast with Christians, near and far. We rejoice that there is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

HYMN

Holy, Holy, Holy

1. Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!
 2. Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly! all the saints a - dore Thee,
 3. Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly! though the dark - ness hide Thee,
 4. Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!

Ear - ly in the morn - ing our song shall rise to Thee:
 Cast - ing down their gold - en crowns a - round the glass - y sea;
 Though the eye of sin - ful man Thy glo - ry may not see,
 All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea;

Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly! Mer - ci - ful and might - y!
 Cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim fall - ing down be - fore Thee,
 On - ly Thou art ho - ly; there is none be - side Thee,
 Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly! Mer - ci - ful and might - y!

God in Three Per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!
 Who wert, and art, and ev - er - more shalt be.
 Per - fect in power, in love, and pu - ri - ty.
 God in Three Per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty! A-MEN.

OLD TESTAMENT READING - Exodus 20:1-20 (New International Version)

And God spoke all these words:

² “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

³ “You shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ “You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷ “You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

⁸ “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

¹² “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³ “You shall not murder.

¹⁴ “You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ “You shall not steal.

¹⁶ “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

¹⁷ “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

¹⁸ When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance ¹⁹ and said to Moses, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die.”

²⁰ Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning.”

GOSPEL READING - Matthew 21:33-46 (NIV)

³³ “Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. ³⁴ When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.

³⁵ “The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. ³⁶ Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. ³⁷ Last of all, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said.

³⁸ “But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him and take his inheritance.’ ³⁹ So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

⁴⁰ “Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”

⁴¹ “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end,” they replied, “and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.”

⁴² Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:

“The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?”

⁴³ “Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. ⁴⁴ Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.”^[b]

⁴⁵ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus’ parables, they knew he was talking about them. ⁴⁶ They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet.

SERMON

Rev. Laura C. Bair

PRAYER OF CONFESSION¹

All: Lord Jesus Christ, on the cross you let your body be broken and your blood be shed. So often when we celebrate communion, we fail to remember our promise to follow you to the cross and the empty grave - to live humbly and sacrificially as well. Help us to live in ways that glorify you. Sometimes we simply go through the motions with the bread and cup. Other times we think your gift comes only to us, rather than people, everywhere. We might think we can't come to the table because we don't deserve your love. We might pretend we are such good people we don't need your grace. Today on World Communion Sunday, we pause to pray in silence, asking that you forgive us for our sins – those we commit knowingly and unknowingly, those we commit as individuals and those we commit in community...

SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS²

Pastor: Beloved of God, return to the Lord with joy and gladness. Sing a song of redemption. Let bitterness and sorrow be no more. In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

All: Great is God's faithfulness! Thanks be to God!

SPECIAL MUSIC

Great is Thy Faithfulness

Dr. Troy Winemiller

¹ Hardwick, Chip. Confession. *A Pastor's Workshop*. <https://thepastorsworkshop.com/prayers-of-confession-on-communion/>

² Bracken-Long, Kimberly. Assurance of Forgiveness, *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1*, Westminster John Knox Press.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Pastor:

And so, we gather now,
at the table of our Savior.
We come from many places,
differing in age, differing in race,
differing in orientation, politics and even religion.
As we come together around the table
we discover that our differences are not something we tolerate
but that our differences are indeed a blessing,
the more difference we bring, the more fully we experience
the presence of the Sacred in our midst.
So come, children of God, just as you are.

Wherever you are on this journey of life, you are welcome here,
here in this place, here in this community, here at this table.
Come, children of God,
come, and let us remember
the Story of God's Great Faithfulness in Christ.

We remember the stories that God Jesus' friends tell,
stories of bread broken and shared, feeding a multitude,
stories of being gathered together, enemy and friend, around tables,
stories of unlikely guests revealing the face of the sacred.

It was on a night of both celebration and betrayal
that he took the leftover bread on the table,
blessed it and broke it;
reminding his friends that it is
in the breaking that we become whole,
in losing our lives that we find them,
in serving that we are served.

As the grain scattered becomes one in the loaf,
when we eat this bread, we become one with one another.

He then, took also took the leftover cup on the table,
poured out and shared it,
remembering with them, the life-giving breath
even now pounding a rhythm through our veins,
the breath of life from whence we come,
the breath that precedes and follows all that we can see and cannot see.

As the grapes find life in the vine,
when we drink this cup,
we become at one with the source of life itself.
And so, we pray together:

All:

Come, holy Spirit, come. Bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be open, that we might recognize the risen Christ in our midst, indeed in one another. Come, holy Spirit, come. Amen.

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

THANKSGIVING & OFFERTORY

All: *Lord of grace and forgiveness, who gave everything and spared nothing to make us your own, as represented in this Holy Meal, we offer back to you what you have so freely given to us. Let over very being, all that we say and do, all that we think and plan and consider, as well as the giving of our financial tithes and offerings, be pleasing to you, Creator, Provider, and Savior, in whose name we pray. Amen.*

BENEDICTION³

Pastor: The Banquet of God's love has been given to you.
 You have received blessing upon blessing.
 Go now into the world in which noise and confusion reign.
 Bring peace and hope in Christ's Name to all you meet.
 God's peace and God's love be with you now and always.

All: *Amen!*

POSTLUDE *The Presence of the Lord is Upon Us* (Brandt)

³ Townley, Nancy C. Benediction: Worship Connection: October 4, 2020. *Ministry Matters*.
<https://www.ministrymatters.com/worship/entry/1717/worship-connection-october-4-2020>