September 20, 2020

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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**GREETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP** (Based on Psalm 105:1-6)

Pastor: A new week is born; a new day begins.

**Congregation: We gather to renew our spirits and refresh our hearts.**

Pastor: Give thanks to the Lord! Call upon God’s name.

**Congregation: We will rejoice and sing praises that tell of God’s wonderful works.**

Pastor: Give thanks for the past and with hope, look to the future.

**Congregation: God fills us with joy for today and strength for tomorrow.**

***All: Come! Let us worship our God.***

**HYMN *Step by Step***

(Sing through 2 times)

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**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

***All: Great God, we come to you now, in the spirit of confession, knowing that at times we fall short of following your way. At times, we are self-centered and think only of how events affect us, and we view the world as unfair. We do not always celebrate when others receive blessings that we do not. At times, we feel that we deserve more and others deserve less. Forgive us, O God, when we cannot see our neighbors in your light and love. Forgive us, O God, when we are concerned about “fairness” and “being right” rather than justice and having compassion. Help us to celebrate, as well as bear one another’s burdens. In the name of Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Amen.***

**ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

Pastor: Sisters and brothers in Christ, hear the good news: The last will be first and the first will be last in the reign of God, but no one will be forgotten. Paise the Lord, for our sins are forgiven!

***All: Thanks be to God for the gift of grace.***

**OLD TESTAMENT READING *The Lord Hears Your Complaining* Exodus 16:2-15**

**2**The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. **3**The 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.”

**4**Then 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. **5**On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days.” **6**So 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, **7**and 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?” **8**And 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.”

**9**Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, ‘Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining.’” **10**And 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. **11**The 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.’”

**13**In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. **14**When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. **15**When 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.

**GOSPEL READING *Are You Envious of God’s Generosity?* Matthew 20:1-16**

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. **2**After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+20%3A1-16&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-23793a)] he sent them into his vineyard. **3**When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; **4**and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. **5**When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. **6**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?’ **7**They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ **8**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.’ **9**When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. **10**Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. **11**And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, **12**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.’ **13**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? **14**Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. **15**Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ **16**So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

**SERMON Rev. Laura C. Bair**

**PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD’S PRAYER**

***All: 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And, lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.***

**OFFERING INVITATION**

Pastor: Let us each give, as each is able, according the blessings God has given each of us and dedicate them the Lord’s work, using the Offertory Prayer printed in our bulletins.

**OFFERTORY PRAYER**

***All: O God, most merciful and gracious, of whose bounty we have ALL received: accept, we pray, this offering of your people. Remember in your love those who have brought it and those for whom it is given; and so follow it with your blessing that it may promote peace and goodwill among all people and advance the realm of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.***

**HYMN *Christ Beside Me***



**BENEDICTION**

Pastor: Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness.

 Be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good.

 Render to no one evil for evil.

 Strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak.

 Help the afflicted; honor all people.

 Love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit

***All: Amen.***