

September 19th, 2021 Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost – Email/At Home Missal

The ZOOM link for today's service, which opens at 9.30 am on September 19th, 2021, can be found here:

Sunday Worship September 19th, 2021 09:30 am ZOOM room opens; service begins at 10:00 am.

Click here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87943072549?pwd=RUl5UDlucjdGK3kxTmYvWHBmeXAvQT09>

Meeting ID: 879 4307 2549

Passcode: 768271

You don't have to have a computer or internet to connect to any of our church Zoom services; you can also just call in on one of these numbers (long distance charges may apply): (All Canadian numbers). You can also access the ZOOM from your telephone by using the "One tap mobile" option:

+17789072071,,87943072549#,,,,*768271# Canada

+12042727920,,87943072549#,,,,*768271# Canada

Dial by your location:

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

+1 204 272 7920 Canada

+1 438 809 7799 Canada

+1 587 328 1099 Canada

+1 647 374 4685 Canada

+1 647 558 0588 Canada

Meeting ID: 879 4307 2549

Passcode: 768271

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87943072549>

PASTORAL VISITS: Please know that our Interim Pastor Chun Zhang is available for safe visits with social distancing requirements in place, and also for telephone visits. Please reach out to him by calling the church office at 519-653-4721 to arrange a visit.

Thanksgiving for Our Presence on This Land:

Click Here: <https://youtu.be/SqEZLBrAu4c>

Gathering Hymn: 'Come and Join Us' *(Bradley Moggach – vocal and piano)*

Click here: <https://youtu.be/f5QzyBgW3Fg>

Greeting:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all, in your home and in mine.

Prayer of the Day:

O God, our teacher and guide, you draw us to yourself and welcome us as beloved children. Help us to lay aside all envy and selfish ambition, that we may walk in your ways of wisdom and understanding as servants of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

The First Reading: Jeremiah 11:18-20

It was the LORD who made it known to me, and I knew;

then you showed me their evil deeds.

But I was like a gentle lamb

led to the slaughter.

And I did not know it was against me

that they devised schemes, saying,

“Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,
 let us cut him off from the land of the living,
 so that his name will no longer be remembered!”
 But you, O LORD of hosts, who judge righteously,
 who try the heart and the mind,
 let me see your retribution upon them,
 for to you I have committed my cause. (NRSV)

Word of God, Word of Life. **C: Thanks be to God.***

Psalm: 54

Save me, O God, by your name;
 in your might, defend my cause.

**Hear my prayer, O God;
 give ear to the words of my mouth.**

For strangers have risen up against me, and the ruthless have sought my life,
 those who have no regard for God.

**Behold, God is my helper;
 it is the Lord who sustains my life.**

Render evil to those who spy on me;
 in your faithfulness, destroy them.

**I will offer you a freewill sacrifice
 and praise your name, O LORD, for it is good.**

For you have rescued me from every trouble,
 and my eye looks down on my enemies.*

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The Second Reading: James 3:13--4:3, 7-8a

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. (NRSV)

Word of God, Word of Life. **C: Thanks be to God.***

Gospel Acclamation: ‘Listen, Listen to the Gospel Message....’ (Bradley Moggach – piano)

Click here: # <https://youtu.be/X2jHYEsLg8A>

The Holy Gospel according to Mark 9:30-37

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus and the disciples went on and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will

kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.” But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.” Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.” (NRSV)

The Gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.***

Sermon (Imaging Interim Pastor Chun Zhang’s voice here😊)

Are you proud of being a Christian?

How proud?

Is it great to be a Christian?

How great?

Yes, I am very proud of being a Christian too. And I also truly believe that it is the greatest thing in the world to be a Christian.

If you share the same answers as I do. It shows that we are truly followers of Jesus Christ.

Why? Because Jesus’ disciples shared the same answers as we do.

In today’s Gospel reading Jesus and his disciples were traveling through Galilee, and Jesus was teaching his disciples about how the Son of Man was going to be betrayed, and be killed, and in three days he would come back to life; but that the disciples did not understand his difficult theological manifestation, nor cared about it too much.

Instead, they believed that they were following the greatest leader ever and they believed that they were also great and they wanted to know who’s the greatest among them.

Jesus knew what they were arguing about, and it bothered him so much that he had to call twelve of them together and tried to teach them something about greatness. Jesus said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."

And then taking a little child and having him stand among them, he took the child in his arms and said to them: “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, does not welcome me, but the one who sent me.

Jesus called the twelve away from their arguments about who is the greatest, and who deserves the most. And he helped his disciples to shift their attention from themselves to a child.

But why use children as an example? Aren’t children always the center of our attention and apples of our eyes? Well, in order to understand Jesus, we have to put our feet into his shoes. At the time of Jesus, children were not valued in the way they are today.

Children were not the most important persons in their families, nor were they considered to be the greatest members of their society. It is simply because there were just too many and many of them didn’t make it to their adulthood.

At Jesus' time, children were expected to be obedient to their parents and to help the family earn its living, and to do what the adults expected them to do. Their needs were subordinate to the needs of the adults and their role in the family was petty and low.

So Jesus was not talking about a cute boy everybody loved. He was talking about those people who are not highly regarded; those without a place of their own; those who are dependent; those whose voices are not heard; and those who are seen as the least important, by people, by us, and by our society.

What Jesus was talking is that life in the Kingdom of God is not about being the greatest, or the first, but rather about seeing other people as important.

Being number one in God's kingdom is not about conquering or overcoming another. It's about putting others first. It's about the love of an almighty God who stoops down to a sinful world to be beaten, mocked, and killed so that a lost one like me might be found so that a broken one like me might be made whole so that a wanderer like me might have a home to go to.

And even further, greatness in Jesus' eyes is not just by the fact that we serve others, that we pour out our time and our talent for the sake of others. Greatness in the eyes of Jesus is found in the willingness of his disciples to receive, to accept, and indeed to really welcome those they would normally consider un-receivable, unacceptable, and unwelcome.

That is what Christ did when he lived and died for us. He made that which was unholy holy, and he made that which was sinful clean.

There is a poem about the attitude that Jesus calls those who bear his name to have. It goes like this:

When I say..."I am a Christian"
I'm not shouting "I am saved"
I'm whispering "I was lost"
That is why I chose this way.

When I say ..." I am a Christian"
I don't speak of this with pride.
I'm confessing that I stumble
and need someone to be my guide.

When I say..."I am a Christian"
I'm not trying to be strong
I'm professing that I'm weak
and pray for strength to carry on.

When I say..."I am a Christian"
I'm not bragging of success.
I'm admitting I have failed
and cannot ever pay the debt.

When I say..."I am a Christian"
I still feel the sting of pain
I have my share of heartaches
Which is why I speak His name.

When I say..."I am a Christian"
I do not wish to judge.
I have no authority.

I only know I'm loved.

Who do we find to be less than ourselves this day? Who in our family do we feel superior to? Which brother or sister do we regard as somehow less acceptable than they ought to be? What relative do we turn away at the door because of some real, or imagined offense? Who does our community scorn and reject? Who is looked down upon for reasons of class, or color, or religion, or wealth, or culture?

A life lived according to Jesus is a life of opening one's arms and welcoming people into our embrace, and showing them that we care. Amen.

Hymn of the Day: 'As the Grains of Wheat' (Bradley Moggach – vocal & piano)

Click here: <https://youtu.be/tHSIRnAd758>

As the Grains of Wheat; ELW # 465; Text: Didache, 2nd cent.; Marty Haugen; Text © 1990 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission Under One License # A727610)

Prayers of Intercession:

Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

God of community, we pray for the church around the world. Unite us in our love for you. Help us overcome our divisions, that we are encouraged to work together for your sake. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, we pray for this hurting earth. Awaken in us a new desire to care for this world and empower us to support agencies, organizations, and individual efforts to heal our environment. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of cooperation, we pray for nations of the world embroiled in conflict. Inspire leaders to listen to each other and work towards peaceful solutions to disagreements. Protect the vulnerable, especially children, who cannot find safety in their home or country. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of comfort, we pray for all who live with mental or physical illness. Help them find appropriate care. Bring healing and wholeness when the path forward seems bleak. We especially pray for Bill, Don, Tammy, Alice, Don, Lynn, Sharon, Bryan and Sherrie. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of compassion, we pray for the young people of this congregation. Renew in us your call to welcome the children in our midst. As they grow, strengthen their faith and our commitment to them. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of consolation, we give you thanks for our loved ones who have died and pray for all who grieve today. Shine your grace on all your saints. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Share the peace of Christ:

The Peace of Christ be with you always, in your home and in mine, and throughout God's creation.

You are invited to prepare your table with bread and wine, or crackers and juice, whatever is available to you, so that you may participate in the meal.

Meal: Click here for the communion liturgy from worship on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/-RnRfJoYmjs>

Prayer after Communion:

Lord of life,
 in the gift of your body and blood
 you turn the crumbs of our faith into a feast of salvation.
 Send us forth into the world with shouts of joy,
 bearing witness to the abundance of your love
 in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen

Blessing:

People of God,
 you are Christ's body,
 bringing new life to a suffering world.
 The holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
 bless you now and forever.
Amen.

Sending Hymn: ELW # 543 'Go, My Children, with My Blessing' (Bradley Moggach – piano)

Click here: <https://youtu.be/paeLiwar3Hg>

*(Title: Go, My Children, with My Blessing; Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, b. 1919, alt.; Text © 1983 Concordia Publishing House; All rights reserved.
 Music: Welsh Traditional, Samuel S. Wesley, 1810-1876; Outside USA: Arr. from The English Hymnal, © Oxford University Press 1906 All rights reserved. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

Dismissal:

Go in peace. The living Word dwells in you.
Thanks be to God.

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