



It is written: 'As surely as I live,'  
says the Lord, 'every knee  
will bow before me; every tongue  
will acknowledge God.'

**Romans 14:11**

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**Our Savior Lutheran Church  
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost - September 17, 2023  
9:00 a.m. Worship Service**

**Prelude**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Prayer Concerns**

**Sharing of the Peace**

**Call to Worship (from Psalm 103)**

A: Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

**C: Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits.**

A: The Lord who forgives all our iniquity, who heals our diseases, who redeems our life, who crowns us with steadfast love and mercy,

**C: who satisfies us with good as long as we live. The LORD works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.**

**Gathering Hymn – On Eagle’s Wings – ELW #787 (Vickie)**

**Invocation**

L: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

## **Confession and Forgiveness**

L: Blessed be God, the one who forms us, † Jesus who bears the cross for us, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

**C: Amen.**

L: Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

*Silence for reflection.*

L: Steadfast and merciful God,

**All: you have revealed the ways of justice,  
yet we fail to follow you.**

**We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering.**

**We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others.**

**For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us.**

**For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation,  
forgive us.**

**For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor, forgive us.**

**Lead us back to you and set us on the right path;**

**in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

L: Beloved in Christ, God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.  
God's compassion is beyond compare.

In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.

In + Christ Jesus, we are already and always forgiven.

**C: Amen.**

## **Greeting**

L: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

**Hymn of Praise – We Plow the Fields and Scatter  
ELW # 681 vs 1 (Mary)**

## Prayer of the Day

A: O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness.

**C: Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will,**

A: through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## The Word

### **First Reading: Genesis 50:15-21**

<sup>15</sup>Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" <sup>16</sup>So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, <sup>17</sup>'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. <sup>18</sup>Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." <sup>19</sup>But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup>Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. <sup>21</sup>So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm 103:8-13**

<sup>8</sup>The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

**<sup>9</sup>He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever.**

<sup>10</sup>He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

**<sup>11</sup>For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;**

<sup>12</sup>as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us.

**<sup>13</sup>As a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.**

### **Second Reading: Romans 14:1-13**

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. <sup>2</sup>Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. <sup>3</sup>Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. <sup>4</sup>Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. <sup>5</sup>Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. <sup>6</sup>Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. <sup>7</sup>We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. <sup>8</sup>If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. <sup>9</sup>For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. <sup>10</sup>Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. <sup>11</sup>For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." <sup>12</sup>So then, each of us will be accountable to God. <sup>13</sup>Let us therefore no longer pass judgment on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of another.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## **Holy Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>21</sup>Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. <sup>23</sup>“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; <sup>25</sup>and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup>So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ <sup>27</sup>And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ <sup>29</sup>Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ <sup>30</sup>But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup>Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ <sup>34</sup>And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup>So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”.

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

**Message – Tim Leitner, SAM**

[https://youtu.be/-csebSozohA?si=4DkZW5LVyM7-l\\_s1](https://youtu.be/-csebSozohA?si=4DkZW5LVyM7-l_s1)

**Hymn of the Day – My Hope is Built on Nothing Less  
ELW #597 (Darlene)**

## The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
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,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come 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.

## Prayers of Intercession

L: Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

*A brief silence.*

A: We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood. Merciful God.

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought, relief to those who are suffering from floods and wildfires, and healing to rivers clogged with pollution. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger. Merciful God.

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: We pray for those who govern. Encourage those in positions of power to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle. Merciful God.

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, the disease of addiction, for those who are afraid or in harm's way. Protect all who cry out for mercy... Merciful God.

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: We pray for this congregation. Open our hearts to practice intentional invitation. Help us to forgive each other, practice patience, and choose welcome over judgement. Move us to care for those in our community seeking refuge and safety. Merciful God.

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: We give thanks for the saints who died in faith. Show us how to live faithfully, creatively, and lovingly in your church and world. Merciful God.

**C: receive our prayer.**

L: Remembering us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our hearts, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

**C: Amen.**

## **Offering**

**Offertory Hymn – Let the Vineyards be Fruitful - ELW #182**

### **Offertory Prayer**

A: God of power, God of plenty, all things belong to you.

**C: We bring your gifts to the table, that all might be fed.**

A: Form us into the body of your Beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**C: Amen.**

## The Great Thanksgiving

L: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## Words of Institution

### Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth, as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.

## Communion Distribution

### Post Communion Blessing

L: Now may the body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

**C: Amen.**

### Post Communion Prayer

A: Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word, Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts.

**C: Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied.**

A: In Jesus' name we pray.

**C: Amen.**



## **Benediction**

L: The God of glory, + Jesus Christ, name above all names,  
and the Spirit who lives in us, bless you now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## **Sending Hymn – Let There Be Peace on Earth (Melanie)**

1. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.  
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.  
With God as our Father, family all are we;  
Let us walk with each other, in perfect harmony.
2. Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now.  
With ev'ry step I take, let this be my solemn vow:  
To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.  
Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

## **Dismissal**

A: Go in peace. God is at work in us.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **Postlude**