

st. John's

Serving Christ & Community! Serving you!



Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

September 12/13, 2026

As We Gather

It often irritates us when a kindness extended to others is not returned. When we fail to forgive others as we have been forgiven, something greater is at stake. In the parable of the unforgiving servant, Jesus ties together the forgiveness we receive from God and the forgiveness we offer to others in His name. That connection becomes prayer in the words of the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Part of this is the reminder of the great debt of sin of which we have been forgiven and of the petty things we cling to and refuse to forgive of our brothers. While this might seem to lay a burden upon the Christian, it is instead the call to live out what is the ground and center of our relationship with God in our daily lives with others. This treasure of forgiveness only grows in us as we apply it and give it away to others.

8:00 & 10:30- Bell Choir

"The Timeless Canon"

arr. Sandra Eithun

5:30- Chimes and Prelude

Please Stand

Opening Hymn

"Come, Christians, Join to Sing"

Verse 1

Come Christians join to sing
Alleluia amen
Loud praise to Christ our King
Alleluia amen

Let all with heart and voice
Before His throne rejoice
Praise is His gracious choice
Alleluia amen

Verse 2

Come lift your hearts on high
Alleluia amen
Let praises fill the sky

Alleluia amen

He is our Guide and Friend
To us He'll condescend
His love shall never end Alleluia amen

Verse 3

Praise yet the Lord again
Alleluia amen
Life shall not end the strain
Alleluia amen
On heaven's blissful shore
His goodness we'll adore
Singing forevermore Alleluia amen

Invocation and Call to Worship

P In the Name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen

Confession and Absolution

P Since we are here assembled to hear God's Word, to call upon Him in prayer, and to receive the body and blood of Christ, let us first think of our unworthiness; confess before God our sins of thought, word, and deed; and acknowledge also that we, by our own strength, cannot free ourselves from our sinful nature or the sins we have committed. Therefore, let us take refuge in the infinite mercy and grace of our heavenly Father, seeking and imploring Him to behold us through Jesus Christ, saying:

C **God have mercy on me, a poor, sinful being, forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and grant to me the Holy Spirit that I may amend my sinful ways; through Jesus Christ, my Lord, I pray. Amen.**

P God, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to life everlasting. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P He who began this good work within you will bring it to completion on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

Please be Seated

Old Testament Reading

Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵ When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." ¹⁶ So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died: ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.'" And now, please

forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.” Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.” ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ²¹ So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle

Romans 14:1-12

14 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ² One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³ Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

⁵ One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶ The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. ⁷ For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. ⁸ For 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. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; ¹¹ for it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall confess to God.”

¹² So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God**

8:00 & 10:30- Bell Choir

"Blessed Assurance"

arr. Dennis Robert

Please Stand

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eighteenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord**

Holy Gospel

Matthew 18:21-35

²¹ Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" ²² Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times. ²³ "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵ And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰ He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. ³² Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord

C Praise to You, O Christ

The Apostles Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ✠ everlasting. Amen.

Please Be Seated

Sermon Hymn

“Freely Freely”

Verse 1

God forgave my sin in Jesus' name
I've been born again in Jesus' name
And in Jesus' name I come to you
To share His love as He told me to

Chorus

He said freely freely
You have received
Freely freely give
Go in My name
And because you believe
Others will know that I live

Verse 2

All pow'r is giv'n in Jesus' name
In earth and heav'n in Jesus' name
And in Jesus' name I come to you

To share His pow'r as He told me to

Chorus

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Sermon “Living in Light of Christ’s Eternal Rule” (Romans 14:1-12)

Introduction: The rule of Christ is woven into the details of our daily lives.

I. God has woven our daily lives into his loving rule.

II. We can forget about the loving rule of God.

III. God forgives us in Christ and invites us to love one another in him.

Conclusion: We live now no longer *for ourselves* but *for the purposes of God*.

Responsive Hymn

“Find Us Faithful”

Chorus

Oh may all who come behind us
Find us faithful
May the fire of our devotion
Light their way
May the footprints that we leave
Lead them to believe
And the lives we live
Inspire them to obey
Oh may all who come behind us
Find us faithful

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Offering (Please place in the Box located in the Narthex)



Prayer of the Church

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ and for all people according to their needs.

P Grant us, O Lord, wisdom to consider the manifold sins Your grace has forgiven and courage to show this forgiveness to others in Your name. Keep us from being stingy with the mercy You have so generously shown to us in Jesus Christ, our Lord, and teach us not to count the cost of forgiving. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Give boldness to Your church, that we who know the Gospel of Jesus Christ crucified and risen proclaim it to the ends of the earth. Bless the pastors who faithfully deliver these gifts to us in Word and Sacrament and the church workers who serve us in Your name. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Deliver us, O Lord, from the burden of those who would lead us without the wisdom and counsel of Your Word and give to us in this land and throughout the world leaders who will act with integrity and justice to all. Bring peace to the troubled regions of our world and help us to work together for the common good. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Bless this congregation and all missions and mission fields with an abundance of Your Holy Spirit, that the work of Your kingdom would prosper among us for the glory of Your holy name. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Deliver, O Lord, the troubled in mind, the wounded in body, and those whose spirits despair, that by Your healing and strength they endure the day of their trial and be kept safe in Your arms to everlasting life, **[and especially for . . .]**. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

- P** Give Your blessing to the homes in which Your people dwell, to the married and single, to those with children, and to those whose desire for a child has not been fulfilled, that in every place and at every time we rejoice in Your goodness in ordering all things for our good. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Deliver us, O Lord, from every temptation that would befall us and teach us to lean upon Your strength and to be covered with the righteousness of Christ when the devil comes seeking whom he may devour. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** You know our needs and have promised to give us all things needful for this life and to bring us to everlasting life. Grant us also grateful hearts that we be cheered by Your mercies, new every morning, and live and rest in Your peace; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

LSB 179

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C **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
forever and ever. Amen.**

Closing Hymn

"Trust and Obey"

Verse 1

When we walk with the Lord
in the light of his word,
what a glory he sheds on our way!
While we do his good will,
he abides with us still,
and with all who will trust
and obey.

Chorus

Trust and obey, for there's
No other way
to be happy in Jesus,
but to trust and obey.

Verse 2

Not a burden we bear,
not a sorrow we share,
but our toil he doth richly repay;
not a grief or a loss,
not a frown or a cross,
but is blest if we trust and obey.

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Chorus

Verse 3

But we never can prove
the delights of his love
until all on the altar we lay;
for the favor he shows,
for the joy he bestows,
are for them who will trust
and obey.

Chorus

Verse 4

Then in fellowship sweet
we will sit at his feet,
or we'll walk by his side in the way;
what he says we will do,
where he sends we will go;
never fear, only trust and obey.

Chorus

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen

Silent Prayer: Holy Jesus, because you lived and died for me, grant me your Holy Spirit that I may no longer live *for myself* but *for the purposes of God*. Amen.

Announcements

Postlude

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