

**Pentecost 23, November 8, 2020, Order of Worship**

**Greeting**      In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Call to Worship** *Psalm 70* ***Hasten, O God, to save me; O Lord, come quickly to help me. May those who seek my life be put to shame and confusion; may all who desire my ruin be turned back in disgrace. May those who say to me, "Aha! Aha!" turn back because of their shame. But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation always say, "Let God be exalted!" Yet I am poor and needy; come quickly to me, O God. You are my help and my deliverer; O Lord, do not delay.***

**Confession and Forgiveness**

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God (and of one another):

**C: Holy One, we confess that we are not awake to your presence. We are not faithful in using your gifts. We forget the least of our siblings. We do not see your beautiful image in one another. We are infected by sin that divides your beloved community. Open our hearts to your coming, open our eyes to see you in our neighbor, open our hands to serve your creation. Amen.**

P: God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them so that, as we accept the wonder of your gifts of abundance, we may give thanks for your rich bounty and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant. **Amen.** (from *Sundays & Seasons*, 2019 Augsburg Fortress)

**Opening Hymn**      ***O God, Our Help in Ages Past*** (public domain)      LBW 320, ELW 632

***O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:***

***Before the hills in order stood or earth received its frame,  
From everlasting you are God, to endless years the same.***

***A thousand ages in your sight are like an evening gone,  
Short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.***

***Time, like an ever-rolling stream, soon bears us all away;  
We fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.***

***O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,  
Still be our guard while troubles last and our eternal home!***

**The Kyrie** In peace, let us pray to the Lord. For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord. For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord. For all these things we pray: Lord, have mercy. Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. **Amen.**

**Prayer of the Day** O God of justice and love, you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**A reading from Amos, the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter (5:18-24)** Note: In the days of Amos, people thought that “the day of the Lord” would be a time of great victory, but Amos announced that it would be a day of darkness, not light. He said that corporate worship, even with its words of praise, is no substitute for obedience. The Lord demands justice and righteousness in the community.

*Woe to you who long for the day of the Lord! Why do you long for the day of the Lord? That day will be darkness, not light. It will be as though a man fled from a lion only to meet a bear, as though he entered his house and rested his hand on the wall only to have a snake bite him. Will not the day of the Lord be darkness, not light—pitch-dark, without a ray of brightness? I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies. Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them. Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. But let justice roll on like a river, and righteousness like a never-failing stream! Word of God, word of life.*

**Hymn** *Let Justice Flow Like Streams* (CCLI #706169)

ELW 717

You may sing to *Blest Be the Tie That Binds*

*Let justice flow like streams of sparkling water, pure,  
Enabling growth, refreshing life, abundant, cleansing, sure.*

*Let righteousness roll on as others' cares we heed,  
An ever-flowing stream of faith translated into deed.*

*So may God's plumb line, straight, define our measure true,  
And justice, right, and peace pervade this world our whole life through.*

**A reading from First Thessalonians, the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter (4:13-18)** Note: Some of the Thessalonians are worried that Christians who have already died will be excluded from the resurrection to eternal life when Christ comes again. Paul reassures them that *all* Christians, living or dead, will be raised into everlasting life with Christ.

***Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like others, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.***

Word of God, word of life.

**Alleluia Alleluia! Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia!**

**The holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter (25:1-13)**

*[When Jesus had finished talking about the day of the Lord's return, he said] At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight the cry rang out: "Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!" Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out." "No," they replied, "there may not be enough for both us and you. You go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves." But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. Later the others also came. "Sir! Sir!" they said. "Open the door for us!" But he replied, "Truly I tell you, I don't know you." Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour. The gospel of the Lord.*

**Sermon begins on page 6**

**Hymn of the Day      *Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers* (public domain)  
You may sing to *O Savior, Precious Savior***

LBW 25, ELW 244

*Rejoice, rejoice believers, and let your lights appear;  
The evening is advancing, and darker night is near.  
The bridegroom is arising and soon is drawing nigh.  
Up, pray and watch and wrestle; at midnight comes the cry.*

*The watchers on the mountain proclaim the bridegroom near;  
Go forth as he approaches, with alleluias clear.  
The marriage feast is waiting; the gates wide open stand.  
Arise, O heirs of glory; the bridegroom is at hand.*

*Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;  
Arise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this benighted sphere.  
With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see  
The day of earth's redemption that sets your people free!*

### The Apostle's Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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 (from *Sundays and Seasons*, ELCA worship guide)

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

Holy God, rouse us to deep praise as we come before you in worship. Stir our spirits and our hearts as we celebrate your glory from our community. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Great Judge over all, let justice roll down like waters over this world. Reign in the courtrooms of every land, in the hearts of those who guard the law and those who stand accused of crimes. Be present in cases where we long for both justice and mercy to prevail. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy Spirit, console those who feel lonely or abandoned. Share the hours of those who live and eat alone. Comfort those who have no family or few friends, and those who struggle with their identity and place in this world. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Merciful God, be with all who are observing Veterans Day. Guard the lives of active duty and retired military personnel. Comfort all who mourn those who have died in the line of duty. Heal the wounds, both physical and mental, experienced by service members, and heal the warring madness of this world we live in. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Loving God, walk with all whose lives have been disturbed or destroyed by events of this year: natural disasters, the coronavirus, demonstrations and protests, along with "normal" ills and accidents. Bring healing interventions, peace, and safety. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Eternal God, we pray in thanksgiving for the lives of all who have died. Remind us of the frailty and shortness of our own lives, and inspire us to use them for the building up of your kingdom. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray, **Our Father . . . .**

**Closing Hymn**            *Blessed Assurance* (public domain)

ELW 638

*Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.*

**Refrain:**            *This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long. (Repeat)*

*Perfect submission, perfect delight, visions of rapture now burst on my sight;  
Angels descending bring from above echoes of mercy, whispers of love. Refrain*

*Perfect submission, all is at rest; I in my Savior am happy and blest,  
Watching and waiting, looking above, filled with his goodness, lost in his love. Refrain*

**Benediction:** 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. Amen.