

September 6th Worship  
14<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

### **Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of  
creation.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of  
one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Faithful God,

**have mercy on us.**

**We confess that we are captive to sin  
and cannot free ourselves.**

**We turn from your loving embrace  
and go our own ways.**

**We pass judgment on one another  
before examining ourselves.**

**We place our own needs before those of our  
neighbors.**

**We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves.**

**Make us humble, cast away our transgressions,  
and turn us again to life in you  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

**Amen.**

God hears the cries of all who call out in need,  
and through his death and resurrection,  
Christ has made us his own.

Hear the truth that God proclaims:

Your sins are forgiven in the name of † Jesus  
Christ.

Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness  
to do God's work in the world.

**Amen.**

### **Blessing of the Brains & Backpacks**

#### **Students**

God learning & growing – Bless our brains, our backpacks, our school supplies, our masks, and our tablets.  
Help us learn about the world you have made & give us patience when it is hard. Protect us and our families &  
remind us you are with us always. AMEN

#### **Teachers**

God our teacher – Bless our brains, our technology, and our creativity this year. Remind us of the grace we have  
already received, as we embody that for our students. We are scared and anxious this year. Give us hope. Be  
near to us this year. AMEN

#### **Support Staff**

God who sees the needs of all – so much of our work is unseen, just as so much of your work is unseen. Bless  
our brains, our PPE, and our resourcefulness, as we tend the needs of the students, faculty, & administration in  
our schools. Protect us as we go through our days. AMEN

#### **Administrators**

God our leader – Bless our brains, our decisions, our care for our staff and students this academic year. The  
weight of all is on our shoulders. Be near us, guiding us with your wisdom. AMEN

#### **Parents**

God our creator – This isn't the way any of us would have wanted this schoolyear to be. Help us to go about this  
year with grace. Grace for our children, grace for their teachers, and grace for ourselves. Give us ears to hear the  
hopes, joys, fears, and concerns of our children. Give us arms to embrace when an embrace is needed. AMEN

#### **Prayer of the Day**

O Lord God, enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy. Give us what we need as your  
church, to be what schools and families need as they enter this school year. Without your help, we mortals will  
fail; with your help, we mortals will get through this, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. AMEN

## Lesson – Romans 13:8-14

<sup>8</sup>Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup>The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet”; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>10</sup>Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

<sup>11</sup>Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; <sup>12</sup>the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; <sup>13</sup>let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. <sup>14</sup>Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

## Gospel – Matthew 18:15-20

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>15</sup>“If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. <sup>16</sup>But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup>If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. <sup>18</sup>Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

## Message

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Two weeks ago our Gospel text from Matthew chapter 16 used a phrase that we hear again this week. Two weeks ago, it was Jesus in his asking the disciples what people are saying about him, and then what it is THEY are saying about him, when Peter proclaims he is the Messiah.

On that proclamation Jesus declares he will build his church. He goes on to tell Peter, “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven. And whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven.

Whatever you bind will be bound and whatever you loose will be loosed.

This week, Jesus again is talking to his disciples as they are going to be the church. There's going to be times where people are upset with you and people say things about, and you'll need to point out the faults of another.

And he says again, “truly, I tell you. Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven. And whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

Two weeks ago on our zoom fellowship, following worship, one of you asked, “Pastor, what does that mean? What does that word loosed mean?”

It means to let go of. Whatever you hold on tightly to here on earth, whatever you refuse to let go of, you will continue to hold on tightly to and refuse to let go of in heaven. But whatever you do let go here on earth you will be letting go of in heaven.

Now, our minds want to immediately go to the physical things in life. I like my possessions. I love my things. I have my convictions. I am going to hold onto those. I want those things to come with me to the Kingdom of Heaven. Why would I loose them here on earth to not have them in heaven?

People of God, you and I, this isn't about those things. Jesus, isn't telling his disciples about those physical things. He isn't telling them about those things that they are passionate about. He isn't talking about their convictions

He's talking to them about those things that need to be forgiven.

Two weeks ago, "I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven," and the keys are forgiveness.

This week talking to his disciples about when they will become the church and birth a church they will need to forgive. People aren't going to like what it is that they think the church ought to be and they're going to say awful things. They're going to need to point out the faults of the things that people have said about them. And, they'll need to forgive because if they refuse to let go of that need to forgive it will follow them.

But, what we let go of on earth will be loosed in heaven. Jesus is giving you and I a lesson in forgiveness. We need to hear that lesson. As people of faith, you and I, we need to hear the importance of that. We need to hear that it is not good to take things to the grave with us. We need to hear the importance of asking it. We need to hear the importance of giving it. IT being - forgiveness.

We've talked about the power of an apology before, but to be asked for forgiveness, and to ask for forgiveness, is a world changing moment. To loose that thing that we need to loose is a powerful thing that You and I, as people of faith, or if you are tuning in to worship with us for the very first time, it's a powerful thing we need to utilize because Jesus isn't simply talking about forgiveness, but rather the power that forgiveness has in community.

Jesus doesn't tell his disciples. "I want you to go and if there's a thing that is bothering you, just go by yourself and say you're sorry, and go on your way." He's saying, "bring someone with you. Bring a witness to the powerful moment that is forgiveness. Bring a witness, bring someone with you into that powerful moment that is reconciliation, because in that...is hope

In that is hope for the larger community. In that is hope for a relationship that you might've been concerned about. In that is hope for a future. That if we don't realize the need to loose that thing, it will keep us bound.

We said as much in our confession and forgiveness. "We are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves." We are bound to sin and cannot loose ourselves. It needs, it demands, relationship. Jesus, in talking to his disciples in this gospel text and the gospel text two weeks ago, Jesus demands his disciples seek out community, and relationship, and reconciliation, and all the beautiful things and hurtful and painful things that come with it.

It's not easy and I'm not telling you, Jesus isn't telling you, to flippantly go and loose that thing that really needs some serious attention. Jesus doesn't tell us to take this lightly. No, Jesus says, "bring someone with you. Don't go alone. Bring a witness to this. Someone to make sure it goes okay.

How much do we need this gift of forgiveness in our world, in our church, in our homes right now?

Man, getting ready to send Olivia to school again for the first time in nearly six months. We've had so many moments, like many of you parents out there I'm sure, where you had been at your wit's end. Where, if you could have, you would have started the school year June 1st just to get that normalcy, to get that break. And

kids if you're hearing this, know that your parents love you so much. Nothing, absolutely nothing that they have said in the last six months changes that love that they have for you.

Jesus calls us into forgiveness. And in forgiveness, he calls us into relationship. He calls us into a communal hope, a communal belief that this thing that we are going through can and will be better. He calls us into this communal act of making ourselves whole again.

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I'm there among them.”

Jesus calls his disciples to go and seek out reconciliation because when two or more will be gathered, God is present in it. When two or more are gathered, having that difficult reconciliation conversation, Jesus is there among them.

To lose something is to forgive - to let it go, to not take it with you, to not let it weigh you down, not carry it wherever you go, but rather let go of it through the reconciliation act of forgiveness. Because as much as this world needs love this world needs forgiveness and where two or three are gathered, Jesus is there

Thanks be to God. Amen.

## **Apostle's Creed**

### **Prayers**

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

*A brief silence.*

Unite your church, O God. Grant us the gifts of repentance and reconciliation. Bless the cooperative work of churches in this community. Strengthen ecumenical partnerships; guide the work of the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Protect your creation, O God. Teach us ways that do not harm what you have entrusted to our care. Renew and enliven places suffering from drought, flood, storms, or pollution. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Turn nations and leaders from ways that lead to death. Shape new paths toward peace and cooperation, teaching us to recognize one another as neighbors. Guide legislators, civil servants, judges, and police toward laws that protect the well-being of all. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Tend to all in need of your compassion. Hear the cries of those awaiting justice and those yearning for forgiveness. Give community to the lonely and neighbors to the outcast. Shelter all who are vulnerable in body, mind, or spirit. We lift up those who are in our hearts and on our minds, both silently and aloud. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Sustain us in our work, O God, and give work to those who need it. Shape societies to ensure fair treatment for all who labor. Help us to love our neighbors in and through our work. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

We remember with thanksgiving those who have died in faith. As you equipped them, equip us with your protection and power, until with them we see your salvation. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **Lord's Prayer**

### **Blessing**

Mothering God,  
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,  
bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.  
**Amen.**

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Remember the poor.

### **Thanks be to God**

### **At Home Communion Liturgy**

+ WORDS OF INSTITUTION +

(Holding the bread) In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, given for you Do this for the remembrance of me."

(Holding the cup) Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me." When we eat this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

(Tear the bread, share with each person – invite them to dip into the cup of wine/grape juice) +

LORD'S PRAYER +

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION + In the mystery of Christ's resurrection, you shine light into the darkness, provide water that brings new life, and give bread that nourishes your people and frees us from our fear. Help us be witnesses of the resurrection and empower us to show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. AMEN +

BLESSING EACH OTHER + Using your pointer finger, dip it in the bowl of water, and make the sign of the cross on another's forehead or the back of their hand saying, "Child of God, marked as God's own, Jesus love you and will love you forever." Take turns until each household member has been blessed.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS! ANNOUNCEMENTS! ANNOUNCEMENTS!**

### **Sanctuary Open for Prayer**

Have you been feeling a disconnect from church, and perhaps a visit to church may be the salve your weary soul needs? On Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10 am – 12 pm and 2 pm – 4 pm the sanctuary will be open, with properly spaced areas, for folks to come in and have a moment of prayer.

As you enter the building you will be greeted by a bottle of hand sanitizer, followed by a stand with masks on it. If you don't have a mask, you will need to wear one.

As you enter the sanctuary, you will find 3 locations for you to choose from for a time of prayer: By the stained-glass windows, by the Prayer Wall, and by the Baptismal Font.

### **MASKS! MASKS! MASKS!**

Masks have finally arrived and we are excited to see them around town! If you would like a mask please contact the church office. They are free, but we will appreciate a free-will gift towards the purchase of future masks!

## **65 for 65 Appeal Update**

We have officially surpassed 65 donors for our 65 for 65 Anniversary Appeal to the tune of nearly \$20,000. And we can't express enough the gratitude that we have for all of you. As you know those funds will be used for the purchase of the chairs for the sanctuary.

If you would like to continue to give to the "65 for 65 Anniversary Appeal" you are more than welcome to do that. If you would like to do that by purchasing a chair, or a row of chairs, or a section of chairs, you can absolutely do that. If you'd like to do that through the purchase of a pew as a piece of the last 57 years of ministry here at Good Shepherd, you can do that as well. If you want a pew, and don't want to pay for it, we can accommodate that as well.

**Any funds raised over the cost of the chairs will be put towards the remaining balance on the Boiler Loan from the Good Shepherd Endowment Fund.**