

Seventh Sunday After Pentecost
July 24, 2022

Introduction to the Day

Persistence in prayer is encouraged by Jesus and wins the attention of God when Abraham intercedes for Sodom. The life of the baptized—to be rooted and built up in Christ Jesus—is to be nurtured with prayer. God hears and answers prayer and so strengthens God’s own. “When I called, you answered me; you increased my strength within me.”

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose steadfast love endures forever.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,
**we confess that we have not followed your path
but have chosen our own way.
Instead of putting others before ourselves,
we long to take the best seats at the table.**

**When met by those in need,
we have too often passed by on the other side.
Set us again on the path of life.
Save us from ourselves
and free us to love our neighbors.
Amen.**

Hear the good news!
God does not deal with us according to our sins
but delights in granting pardon and mercy.
In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are
forgiven.
You are free to love as God loves.
Amen.

Gathering Hymn “Morning Has Broken”

#556

Greeting

The Grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and ever-living God, you are always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and you gladly give more than we either desire or deserve. Pour upon us your abundant mercy. Forgive us those things that weigh on our conscience, and give us those good things that come only through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Reading: Colossians 2:6-19

⁶As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

⁸See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. ⁹For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ¹⁰and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority. ¹¹In him also you were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision, by putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ; ¹²when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, ¹⁴erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it. [

¹⁶Therefore do not let anyone condemn you in matters of food and drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or sabbaths. ¹⁷These are only a shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. ¹⁸Do not let anyone disqualify you, insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, dwelling on visions, puffed up without cause by a human way of thinking, ¹⁹and not holding fast to the head, from whom the whole body, nourished and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows with a growth that is from God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Message

Gospel: Luke 10:38-42

¹[Jesus] was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."²He said to them, "When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

³Give us each day our daily bread.

⁴And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial."

⁵And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; ⁶for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.' ⁷And he answers from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' ⁸I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

⁹"So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? ¹²Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? ¹³If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ

Sermon

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

If you've raised children, or been around children, you know persistence. From the moment they are born, we hold children inches from our faces because that is all they can see (and because they smell good and we want to give them all of the kisses.) But, this engrains in their mind this constant availability of the parent or loved one. The person that will care for them. Much of our time holding them, we are in their face. And it is good.

As they age, that desire doesn't go away. When a child wants your attention, they will say your name, and even if you are the best multi-tasker on the face of the planet and you have indeed given them your full attention, if you don't say their name, they will continue to say your name until you do. They long to be acknowledged. And then, they'll get upset because it took so long.

They are persistent. No matter how many times you remind them that you can do two things at once, and that you don't need to say their name in order to be listening to them, they want to be acknowledged. They want to know that they are being heard.

Why? Because that relationship has been engrained in their mind from their very first day on earth.

Jesus, in our Gospel text is asked how we are to pray. First, he teaches them the Lord's Prayer. A prayer we know well. A prayer that, if we look at it, is applicable to just about any moment or experience in life where we feel we need to pray. But he doesn't stop there.

Jesus tells them a story. A parable if you will. Suppose you have a friend...

We've all got friends, we've maybe even got the friend that we would do this to. Say you've got a friend who comes to your home in the middle of the night asking for bread because they themselves have company. You will try to send this friend away telling them to leave you alone. Now, even though you are a friend, that will not be reason enough to give them what they need.

However, because of your friends persistence, or let's be real, it's the middle of the night, it isn't persistence, it is annoying. Because your friend is annoying and won't leave you alone, you will give them what they need.

Now, quick refresher: Our understanding of parables is that one of the characters is us, and another character is God. Jesus tells them this parable in response to their request: "Lord, teach us to pray." In essence, his short answer to their request is, "Pray this prayer, and pray it persistently, almost to the point of being annoying."

Because?

This is a relationship. And Jesus goes even further. "If your child asks for a fish, would you give a snake? Or, if they ask for an egg, would you give a scorpion?" No. You'd give them what they need.

The more and more we look at this, and wonder about this, and pick this apart, perhaps the more difficult it becomes to grasp it.

Because?

We think we know what we need. And yes, we are confronted with that word again. We think we know our needs. We ask and we ask and we ask, and when it doesn't go our way, even though we are told to ask and it will be given, we immediately go to the fact that we'd be given what we ask for. And in those moments, while we turn to a bit of anger and frustration perhaps, our questions change to why. Why? What? How?

Why did this thing happen?

What more could I have done?

How could a loving God do this?

And the difficult part, there aren't answers to those questions. At least not answers that necessarily make us feel better.

So, there is the call to be persistent to the point of being annoying.

Because just as babies, we are engrained to be in relationship with those who hold us close. So to is our relationship with God as people of faith. Beginning in our baptism we are held close to the face of God, seeing God in those around us.

This persistent pursuit of relationship goes both ways. Jesus telling his disciples to be persistent to the point of annoying is Jesus expressing God's desire for God's relationship with us. To know that we are called to persistent pursue that which we are called to pursue, and that when we feel like running the other direction, that God continues God's persistent pursuit of a relationship with us.

Thanks be to God.

AMEN

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

Trusting in God’s extraordinary love, let us come near to the Holy One in prayer.

Rooted and built up in Christ, we pray for the church. Embolden church leaders to take risks for the sake of the gospel, and equip the baptized to proclaim your extravagant love for the whole world. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Rejoicing in the works of your hands, we pray for the natural world. Make rivers and lakes, oceans and all waterways, sparkle with your radiance. Protect water sources (*local water sources may be named*) and strengthen those who defend them. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Interceding on behalf of the vulnerable, we pray for the peoples of the world. Inspire all rulers and governing authorities with your justice. Guide the work of legislators and public officials, that they advocate for the well-being of those they serve. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Persistent in prayer, we pray for our neighbors in need. To all who have hunger, give daily bread. To all who have bread, give hunger for justice. Open us to the cries of those who suffer (*especially for Gena, Peyton, Matt, Bob and Joanne, Jim and Sandy, Bob, Joe, Bill and Bonnie, David, Cassie, Keith and JoJo, Sherm and Mary, Frank and Heather, Verna, Bob and Sonja, Irene, Kathy, Val, Jacob*). Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Abounding in thanksgiving, we pray for this congregation. Bless the prayer and fellowship ministries in this place. Call us together in times of praise and blessing, trouble and sorrow, in your holy name. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Buried with Christ in baptism and raised with him to new life, we give thanks for your saints who rest in your eternal presence. Join our voices with theirs as we sing of your great glory. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Receive the prayers of your children, merciful God, and hold us forever in your steadfast love; through Jesus Christ, our holy Wisdom.

Amen.

Offering

Please see the graphic at the end of the worship packet for a snapshot of our current finances. We had good months in both May and June that have cut our gap roughly in half. However, July is going to be a larger month for expenses and we now have a better idea of what that will look like. Please prayerfully consider a Bridge the Gap gift to your church today!

Offertory Prayer

God of abundance:

you have set before us a plentiful harvest.

As we feast on your goodness,
strengthen us to labor in your field,
and equip us to bear fruit for the good of all,
in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

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

Communion

Prayer

Life-giving God,
through this meal you have bandaged our wounds
and fed us with your mercy.

Now send us forth to live for others,
both friend and stranger,
that all may come to know your love.

This we pray in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

Blessing

The God of peace,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you, comfort you,
and show you the path of life
this day and always.

Amen.

Sending Song **“Sent Forth By God’s Blessing”**

#547

Dismissal

Go in peace. Love your neighbor.

Thanks be to God.

Financial Snapshot

Where We Stand

Revenue as of July 13: **\$24,455**

Coming out ahead,
in one of most difficult months,
is very much in reach!

How We're Getting it Done

Regular Giving: **\$17,500**

Bridge the Gap Giving: **\$1,500**

Building Use Donations: **\$5,000**

What Remains in July

2022 avg monthly expenses:

\$26,340

Expenses as of July 13:

\$20,258

Larger Expenses still to come:

Payroll & Benefits

\$7509

Projected this July:

\$27,500

Our prayers and sympathies to Cindy Anderson Swingen and her family in the passing of her sister, Jan Stark, who passed away Sunday. Services are still being planned at this time.

We have been notified that Pastor Chuck Gavin has passed away. Visitation will be August 6 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. with a service at 1 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church. There will not be a lunch served.

Church Office Hours

Please be aware that the hours for the church office will now be 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

If you have prayer requests or needs that we can help with, please contact one of us.

pastorlcgsec@gmail.com or lcgseauclaire@gmail.com.