

Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost

August 21st, 2022

Introduction to the Day

Remember the sabbath day. Call the sabbath a delight. This is the Lord's day, and the Lord will do for us what the Lord does: feed us, forgive us, help and heal us. Rejoice at all the wonderful things God is doing.

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 "Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty"

#533 vs. 1,2,5

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

O God, mighty and immortal, you know that as fragile creatures surrounded by great dangers, we cannot by ourselves stand upright. Give us strength of mind and body, so that even when we suffer because of human sin, we may rise victorious through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Reading: Hebrews 12:18-29

¹⁸You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, ¹⁹and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. ²⁰(For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death.") ²¹Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear." ²²But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, ²³and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

²⁵See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking; for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven! ²⁶At that time his voice shook the earth; but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven." ²⁷This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of what is shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. ²⁸Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe; ²⁹for indeed our God is a consuming fire.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Message

Gospel: Luke 13:10-17

10Now [Jesus] was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. 11And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. 12When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." 13When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. 14But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the sabbath day." 15But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? 16And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?" 17When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing.

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.

Many of us are able to think back to a day when Sunday was a truly sacred day in the week. We remember the days when shops were closed, mom didn't cook, and Sunday sports for children were unthinkable.

We remember the lengths we would go to in order to protect the sanctity of the Sabbath. To keep the Sabbath Holy was to do no work. Absolutely nothing.

Even as a child myself, I remember at least a little bit the days of the Sabbath being a day of nothing. It was rare that I had traveling sports tournaments that lingered into Sunday. And, if they did, Sunday games weren't until afternoon, so that church could happen.

I would remind my parents frequently as a child that the Bible says we aren't supposed to work on the Sabbath, and that includes chores.

That is the understanding of the Sabbath day that the Leader of the Synagogue has when he approaches this situation.

It would do us some good to take a step back and see just how this whole story plays out.

Jesus is in the Synagogue. Perhaps preaching and teaching, maybe just listening.

This woman who has been crippled for 18 years is also there.

Why? Because that is where they should be. They are in worship. They are good practicing Jews. And Jesus sees her. She is hunched. Perhaps appears in pain. And he calls her over to him.

"Woman, you are set free from your ailment."

The Leader of the Synagogue becomes indignant because Jesus had cured on the Sabbath.

Pause. He is mad at Jesus here. But, notice who he scolds...

"...kept saying to the crowd." His problem is with the work that Jesus does on the Sabbath, but it is the crowd that he scolds.

Why? Because as a Leader in the Synagogue, he has power. And, seeing that Jesus is curing people in his synagogue he feels the power that he as start to slip through his fingers.

This Gospel text wants us to think that this is about the Sabbath day and keeping it Holy. And that is the trick the Leader of the Synagogue is trying to play. But, notice when he scolds the crowd what it is that he says. "There are six days on which work ought to be done, come on those days and be cured."

Rewind. Does it say that the woman came to the Synagogue with the intention of being healed? No. It only says that she appeared. Just as everyone else in the synagogue had come to worship and hear preaching and teaching, so had she. But it was Jesus that noticed her. It was Jesus that saw her need. It was Jesus that cured her. He did the work that is in question.

I would argue that the Synagogue Leader is none too worried about Sabbath practices, at least not in this situation. The Leader of the Synagogue is more concerned with who can and cannot come and receive God's grace and mercy.

Any of you who have ever woken on a Sabbath day know the work that goes into simply standing up. We all know enough about the human body that in the process of standing up we have already done what would constitute work. Now, imagine (and for some this will be easier to imagine than others) being crippled for 18 years where all you are able to see is the dirty feet of those around you. It took an incredible amount of very likely painful work for that woman to simply get to the synagogue on that day. Because that is what she needed to do.

And Jesus knows it. He calls the Leader of the Synagogue on the hypocrisy of his anger. "You hypocrites. Have you not untied your ox and donkey and brought them to the manger to eat and drink." Jesus knows that each one of us justifies our own amount of Sabbath work because those things are things that need to happen.

The point that Jesus is making is that healing is what this woman needs...just as much as food and drink is what the ox and donkey need.

It is the hope of the Leader of the Synagogue to put up the barrier of accessibility for this woman and anyone like her. He knows the difficulty it would be create for them to come to the synagogue more than just on the Sabbath. And, he knows the difficult situation not coming on the Sabbath might create for them.

But Jesus meets the needs of God's people. Jesus does not concern himself with what church or society or popular opinion might tell him. He goes and does the work that needs to be done, and the rest will sort itself out. And that is what he calls us to as well.

Just last week was the message that God's peace, comfort, and hope is a peace, comfort, and hope intended for all people, and not most. AND, if we settle for peace, comfort, and hope for most, while sacrificing those things for the marginalized, we are doing it wrong.

Jesus here illustrates that point. The grace and mercy of God's love knows no bounds. It does not adhere to popular opinion or the way we think things ought to be. It heals on the Sabbath. It sees a problem and addresses it. It leaves the 99 to tend to the one. It loves radically and outrageously. It is countercultural.

It is for you. And, it is for those that you might think don't deserve it.

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.

A brief silence.

You crown your church with steadfast love and mercy. Guide us continually in our baptismal covenant to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. Use our diverse gifts in service to the whole people of God. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

You satisfy the needs of all creatures. Protect the habitats of fish and birds (*local bodies of water or wildlife refuges may be named*). Repair ecosystems damaged by misuse, neglect, or natural disaster, that all creation may thrive. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

You make your ways known to all people. Inspire the rulers and leaders of nations with your compassion and mercy. Raise up activists and community organizers to restore places affected by violence, poverty, and inequality. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

You provide justice for all who are oppressed and relief to all who are afflicted. Heal those who are bent over by addiction, depression, and anxiety. Set free all who cry out under the weight of mental, emotional, or physical distress (*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.

You call us to delight in the sabbath. Renew our bodies, minds, and spirits in this worshiping assembly. Give rest to all who lead our congregation in worship, study, and service (*congregational leaders may be named*). Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Generations bless your holy name. We give you thanks for the communion of saints who have gathered in prayer and praise in this place. Support us in your love until we rest forever in you. 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. With July being one of our most difficult months, both in expenses and revenue, there was much concern. Thanks to your generosity we were able to not only come out even, but we will be able to make a dent in the gap we've been chipping away at throughout the year. We continue to ask that you prayerfully consider a Bridge the Gap gift as we look at one more summer month before getting back into the program year in the fall.

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

“Go, My Children, with My Blessing”

#543 vs. 1,3

Dismissal

Go in peace. Love your neighbor.

Thanks be to God.