

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

**Greeting** – The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be God,  
the one who forms us,  
✠ Jesus who bears the cross,  
the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

**Amen.**

Let us bow before God in humility,  
confessing our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Steadfast and faithful God,  
**you have revealed the ways of justice,  
yet we fail to follow you.  
We are overwhelmed  
by the world's violence and suffering.  
We are afraid to risk what we have  
for the sake of others.**

**For the harm we have caused,  
known and unknown, forgive us.  
For the unjust demands we place on others  
and your creation, forgive us.  
For the ways we turn away  
from you and our neighbor, forgive us.  
Lead us back to you  
and set us on the right path;  
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior.  
Amen.**

Beloved in Christ,  
God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.  
God's compassion is beyond compare.  
In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.  
In ✠ Christ, you are already and always forgiven.  
**Amen.**

**Gathering Hymn**

**"Baptized and Set Free"**

**#453**

**Prayer of the Day**

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Children's Message**

**Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew 18:21-35**

<sup>21</sup>Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

<sup>23</sup>"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; <sup>25</sup>and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup>So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' <sup>27</sup>And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' <sup>29</sup>Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' <sup>30</sup>But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly

distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup>Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ <sup>34</sup>And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup>So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

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.

The sermon for this Sunday is a question and answer covering the last 16 weeks of our Sermon Series on Discerning God’s Call in Scripture. Included here is a brief sentence or phrase synopsis of each of the sixteen weeks, starting with the most recent.

1. Paul’s vision is pretty clear. Go to those crying out. Acts 16:6-10
2. For the Council at Jerusalem, Word had gotten out. Lives were transformed. Did it really require a council? Acts 15:22-35
3. With Peter, we see what happens when we go to the unimaginable. Acts 11:1-18
4. For Saul it was eye-opening. For Ananias, it was terrifyingly Spirit-filled. Acts 9:1-19
5. The task of carrying out Jesus mission and ministry was more than the 12 could handle. The Seven were chosen. Acts 6:1-7
6. For Matthias it was all up to dice. And God deemed him fit. Acts 1:12-26
7. Jesus, for a moment, wonders if there isn't another way. Luke 22:39-46
8. Mary. Did She know? Clearly, She did. Luke 1:26-38
9. Jonah called to a scary place couldn't get far enough away at a fast enough pace! Jonah 1:1-17
10. Isaiah, cleansed of guilt and sin says, "Here I am, send me!" Isaiah 6:1-8
11. For Elijah, he was done. But God had other plans. 1 Kings 19:1-18
12. Saul offers a cautionary tale. It is not from US that power comes. 1 Samuel 28:3-25
13. Gideon heard the call, but couldn't believe it. He needed some assurance. Judges 6:36-40
14. Joshua needed a reminder. Be strong and courageous. God is with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:1-9
15. Moses was unsure, but a burning bush eased his mind. Exodus 3:1-12
16. Abram packed up and went. Genesis 12:1-19

Throughout the process, we have pondered the following Questions:

1. How do the people in the story hear God's call to them?
2. How open are they to God's call?
3. What might this passage say to our community of faith?

So, how do these texts speak to us as people of faith?

Where are they guiding us?

To which stories do we relate as a people, and as a community, of faith?

A summary of questions asked, and answers provided, will be included in next week's worship packet.

Thanks be to God.

AMEN

**Song of the Day**

**"10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)**

**Apostle's Creed**

**Prayers of Intercession**

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

*A brief silence.*

We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and healing to rivers clogged with pollution.

Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in positions of power to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, the disease of addiction, or otherwise afraid or in harm's way. Protect all who cry out for mercy (*especially*). Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

We pray for this congregation. Open our hearts to practice intentional invitation. Help us to forgive each other, practice patience, and choose welcome over judgment. Move us to care for those in our community seeking refuge and safety. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

We give thanks for the saints who died in faith. Show us how to live faithfully, creatively, and lovingly in your church and world (*like Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, whom we commemorate today*). Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

**Offering**

### **Offertory Prayer**

God of power, God of plenty,  
all things belong to you.  
We bring your gifts to the table,  
that all might be fed.  
Form us into the body of your Beloved,  
Jesus Christ, our Savior.  
**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**                      **#471 & #483**

#### **Prayer**

Blessed be your name, O God,  
for we have feasted on your Word,  
Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts.  
Strengthened by this food,  
send us to gather the world to your banquet,  
where none are left out and all are satisfied.  
**Amen.**

#### **Dismissal**

Go in peace. God is at work in you.  
**Okay! We will! Thanks be to God!**  
And all of Good Shepherd said...  
**AMEN!**

#### **Blessing**

The God of glory,  
✠ Jesus Christ, name above all names,  
and the Spirit who lives in you,  
bless you now and forever.  
**Amen.**

### **Sending Song**

**“Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee”**

**#836 vs. 1,3**

# September Financial Snapshot

## Your Generosity in Action:

Sunday of Welcome Back Weekend those in worship were challenged to come up with \$250 for the free-will donation Lemonade Stand put on by a couple of girls from Roosevelt. YOU far surpassed that goal and another \$250 was added for the playground fundraising efforts!

**THANK YOU!!**

Through September 13

Total Revenue **\$10,263**

3 Sunday offerings remain

Total Expenses **\$10,266**

Last year: \$19,931

Difference to date:

**-\$3**

## Lunch at Good Shepherd Senior Apartments

Would you like to join your friends at the apartments for lunch sometime? The cost is \$10 to dine in or \$11 for takeout. You must order by the Wednesday before the week you want to purchase lunch. (See menu on bulletin board.) If you have any questions, please call the church office (715-83-2959) or the GSSA office (715-834-3587).

**Reverend Robert Esse passed away** on August 13, 2023, in Green Valley, AZ after living with Alzheimer's disease for a number of years. He was lovingly surrounded by family and cared for by staff at La Via Memory Care and Emblem Hospice in his last days. Robert will be remembered as a beloved and loving father and grandfather, dedicated pastor, engaged community member, and caring friend and neighbor.

A funeral service will be held at Spirit Lutheran Church in Eau Claire on Thursday, Sept. 21 at 11:00 a.m. Visitation will be held at the church one hour prior to the service. Pastor Esse's complete obituary can be found online.

**Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Resource Center** has been moving into Sacred Grounds here at Good Shepherd. We could not be more excited to have them moving in!



It was a wonderful Welcome Back Weekend at Good Shepherd. Many projects completed and fellowship enjoyed on Saturday. Reflecting on Summer travel and blessing of vocations in worship with fun and fellowship after on Sunday. Delicious Ramone's Ice Cream, the Scout Troop brought inflatables, yard games, bubbles, and more!

And, because of YOUR generous response to the Lemonade Stand \$250 matching challenge, over \$500 will be going to the Roosevelt PTA playground efforts! THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone that was a part of it. It is so good to be back together!

