

Ante Communion Service: July 16, 2023: Proper 10A

Celebrant: Blessed be the one, holy and living God!

People: **Glory to God for ever and ever!**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A moment of silence for self-reflection

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

God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

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

Let us pray together: **O Lord, mercifully receive the prayers of your people who call upon you, and grant that they may know and understand what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to accomplish them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

First Reading **Isaiah 55:10-13**

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;
and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 65:1-14 *Te decet hymnus*

1 You are to be praised, O God, in Zion; *
to you shall vows be performed in Jerusalem.

2 To you that hear prayer shall all flesh come, *

because of their transgressions.

3 Our sins are stronger than we are, *

but you will blot them out.

4 Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your courts to dwell there! *

they will be satisfied by the beauty of your house, by the holiness of your temple.

5 Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation, *

O Hope of all the ends of the earth, and of the seas that are far away.

6 You make fast the mountains by your power; *

they are girded about with might.

7 You still the roaring of the seas, *

the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of the peoples.

8 Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs; *

you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy.

9 You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous; *

the river of God is full of water.

10 You prepare the grain, *

for so you provide for the earth.

11 You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges; *

with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.

12 You crown the year with your goodness, *

and your paths overflow with plenty.

13 May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing, *

and the hills be clothed with joy.

14 May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak themselves with grain; *

let them shout for joy and sing.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end. Amen.

Second Reading

Romans 8:1-11

There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you.

Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel

Matthew 13:1-9,18-23

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!"

"Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away.

As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Sermon

Hymn

Be Thou My Vision

*Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart; naught be all else to me, save that thou art.
Thou my best thought, by day or by night, waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.*

*Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word; I ever with thee, and thou with me, Lord.
Thou my great Father, and I thy true son, thou in me dwelling and I with thee one.*

*Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise; thou mine inheritance, now and always.
Thou and thou only, first in my heart, my king of heaven, my treasure thou art.*

*My king of heaven, my vict'ry won, may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heav'n's Sun!
Heart of my heart, whatever befall, still be my vision, O Ruler of all.*

Apostles' 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 to the dead. 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 of the People

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church,
those in need, and all of God's creation. In peace, we pray to you, Lord God. *Silence*

For this community, the nation, and the world;

For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For the peace and unity of the world;

That a spirit of respect may grow among nations and peoples.

For all who love and trust in God, that divisions may cease;

And that all may be one, as you and the Father are one.

For the just and proper use of your creation;

That we may treat your creation with the love of the Creator.

We honor and pray for our Indigenous neighbors.

That we may dwell together in respectful harmony.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;

For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

Silence. Hear us, Lord;

For your mercy is great.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life. *Silence.*

We will exalt you, O God our King;

And praise your Name for ever and ever.

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom. *Silence.*

Lord, let your loving kindness be upon them.

May they rest in your peace eternally.

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we pray together:

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

We pray together for Christ's presence:

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the bread and wine.

I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul.

Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my heart.

I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you.

Amen.

Celebrant: While we long to receive the sacrament of Christ's Body,

People: **We become the sacrament of Christ's Body.**

Celebrant: Let your lives be manna to feed our hunger for communion.

People: **The love we share becomes bread for the world.**

Blessing May Christ, the Son of God, be manifest in you, that your lives may be a light to the world; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be in you, among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Dismissal Go in peace and hope and joy to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, Alleluia!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!

The Lord Bless You and Keep You [Lutkin]

Acapeldridge