

[Worship in the Home: Sunday, August 2, 2020](#)

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Worship in the Home

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary 18

August 2, 2020

In this time of world-wide crisis, congregations throughout this church are not able to gather for worship as the body of Christ. While you cannot be together in person, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer. We offer this brief resource as an aid for prayer in the home. As with our prayers in the gathered assembly for worship, you are encouraged to prepare or adapt them locally for your context.

In today's first reading God invites all who are hungry or thirsty to receive food and drink without cost. Jesus feeds the hungry multitude and reveals the abundance of God. At the eucharistic table we remember all who are hungry or poor in our world today. As we share the bread of life, we are sent forth to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry.

The Prayer of the Day may be prayed.

Let us pray.

Glorious God, your generosity waters the world with goodness, and you cover creation with abundance. Awaken in us a hunger for the food that satisfies both body and spirit, and with this food fill all the starving world; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 55:1-5

God invites Israel to a great feast at which both food and drink are free. God also promises to make an everlasting covenant with all peoples, with promises that previously had been limited to Israel. As David was a witness to the nations, these nations shall now acknowledge the ways in which God has glorified Israel.

¹Ho, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.

²Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.

³Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may **live**.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁴See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.

⁵See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel,
or the Lord has glorified you.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: 145:8-9, 14-21

⁸The Lord is gracious and full¹ of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in¹ steadfast love.

⁹Lord, you are¹ good to all,
and your compassion is over¹ all your works.

¹⁴The Lord upholds all¹ those who fall
and lifts up those who¹ are bowed down.

¹⁵The eyes of all wait upon¹ you, O Lord,
and you give them their food¹ in due season.

¹⁶You open¹ wide your hand
and satisfy the desire of every¹ living thing.

¹⁷You are righteous in¹ all your ways
and loving in¹ all your works.

¹⁸You are near to all who¹ call upon you,
to all who call upon you faithfully.

¹⁹You fulfill the desire of¹ those who fear you;
you hear their¹ cry and save them.

²⁰You watch over all¹ those who love you,
but all the wicked you¹ shall destroy.

²¹My mouth shall speak the praise¹ of the Lord;
let all flesh bless God's holy name forever and ever.

Second Reading: Romans 9:1-5

This begins a new section in Paul's letter in which he will deal with the place of Israel in God's saving plan. He opens by highlighting how Israel's heritage and legacy include being God's children, having God's covenants, being given God's law, participating in worship of God, and receiving divine promises.

¹I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit—

²I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh. ⁴They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the **worship**, and the promises; ⁵to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Matthew 14:13-21

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

After John the Baptist is murdered, Jesus desires a time of solitude. Still, his compassion for others will not allow him to dismiss those who need him, and he is moved to perform one of his greatest miracles.

¹³Now when Jesus heard about the beheading of John the Baptist, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. ¹⁵When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." ¹⁶Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." ¹⁷They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." ¹⁸And he said, "Bring them here to me." ¹⁹Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. ²¹And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection

Having read these readings, think of this:

The primary biblical symbol of the mercy of God is food. In the Exodus story, God sustains the people with manna and water from the rock. In the Psalms, God is praised in this way: "You open wide your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing." And when the people were in trouble, the prophet Isaiah gave the promise of water, wine, milk, and bread, without price: hunger and thirst, both really and metaphorically, have an answer in God. These stories are part of the stunning inheritance of the Jews, the covenants of mercy, of which Paul speaks. But because of the compassion of Jesus Christ we people of the nations, we people who are right now deeply hungry for hope, are ourselves grafted into the promise of these stories. They are also for us. Turn to God with your hunger for hope. And then, empowered by our bread-giving Lord, we are turned to the needy world around us: "you give them something to eat."

If you have a hymnal (or using the graphic below), you might now sing or read "O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 658) and "Break Now the Bread of Life" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 515).

[O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts](#)

[Break Now the Bread of Life](#)

Confident of God's care and upheld by the Spirit, let us pray for all who are in need, responding to the words "Lord, you are good to all" with the phrase, "hear our cry and save us."

A brief silence.

O God our Savior, bless your church around the world. Where believers must be isolated from one another, be present to through your gracious word. Give to our bishops, pastors, deacons and congregational leaders wisdom for their tasks in this challenging time.

A brief silence.

Lord, you are good to all:

hear our cry and save us.

O God, Redeemer of all, bless the Jewish people with your covenant promises. Bring an end to global anti-Semitism, and strengthen ties of cooperation and friendship between Christians and Jews.

A brief silence.

Lord, you are good to all:

hear our cry and save us.

O God, Creator of a wondrous earth, protect the glories of your seas and lands. Replenish ground water supplies, refresh lakes and ponds, send rains where there is drought, and shelter forests from wildfires.

A brief silence.

Lord, you are good to all:

hear our cry and save us.

O God, Sovereign of the world, form the leaders of nations to strive for justice for all. Guide our government in dealing with China. Strengthen the world's democracies. Bring an end to racism in our society. our elected officials in how to govern with integrity.

A brief silence.

Lord, you are good to all:

hear our cry and save us.

O God, Storehouse of goodness, visit all who face the coronavirus, especially those who are incarcerated. Give us, O Lord of life, a vaccine. Assist all who face eviction from their residence. Bring wholeness and healing to those who suffer in body or spirit, especially those whom we name here:

A brief silence.

Lord, you are good to all:

hear our cry and save us.

O God, Giver of bread, teach us how to feed the hungry: the children starving in war zones, the families who cannot afford groceries, the homeless on our streets, the farmers devastated by pestilence. Give to all creatures their food in due season.

A brief silence.

Lord, you are good to all:

hear our cry and save us.

O God, Lover of our souls, receive now the petitions of our hearts.

A longer period of silence.

Lord, you are good to all:

hear our cry and save us.

O God, everlasting mercy, we praise you for the lives of all who have died in the faith, especially this week Dominic and all who, like him, preached your word with power. At the end, bring us with all your saints to your heavenly banquet.

A brief silence.

Lord, you are good to all:

hear our cry and save us.

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

If you have a hymnal (or using the graphic below), you might now sing or read "The Church of Christ, In Every Age" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 729); "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 807).

[Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing](#)

Then conclude with these prayers:

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

O Word of God incarnate, O Wisdom from on high,

O Truth unchanged, unchanging,

We praise you for the radiance that from the hallowed page,

A Lantern to our footsteps, shines on from age to age.

Amen. (ELW #514, stanza 1)

Offering

Please remember to mail in your offerings so that Grace can continue to serve you.

Offering Prayer

God of goodness and growth, all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is as firm as the Heavens. Water and word, wine and bread: these are signs of your abundant grace. Nourish us through these gifts, that we might proclaim your steadfast love in our communities and in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song. **Amen.**

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.
Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless us now and forever.

Amen.

Due to copyright restrictions, we are only able provide downloadable hymns that are in the public [domain](#). Other suggestions provided above may be found in Evangelical Lutheran Worship. To purchase a copy of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* for the home, visit the [Augsburg Fortress website](#) or call 1-800-328-4648.

Devotional Music Links: For your individual or group devotion, you may choose to listen to the following choral recordings made available through Augsburg Fortress: "[Bread for the World](#)"; "[The Fullness of God](#)"; "[Jesus Feed Us](#)."

Readings for the Week:

Monday Psalm Psalm 78:1-8. **Tuesday** Acts 2:37-47. **Wednesday** Exodus 16:2-

15. Thursday Psalm 85:8-13. **Friday** Acts 18:24-28. **Saturday** (commemoration of Dominic, founder of the Order of Preachers [Dominicans], died 1221) 1 Kings 18:41-46. **Tenth Sunday after Pentecost** 1 Kings 19:9-18; Psalm 85:8-13; Romans 10:5-15; Matthew 14:22-33.

Daily Prayer Resources are available, including simple forms of Morning, Evening, and Night Prayer; Responsive Prayer; and prayers for mealtimes and other occasions.

Reflection material: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw

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Please keep in your prayers this week: Kevin Johnson, Barbara Metzger, Rob Johnson and Steve Lindberg (Streeter Family Friend's & Kin), Noah Klenken (Fred Fixsen's Nephew), Ellsa Sorenson, Cal Curtis & Patty Thompson (Carole Holten's Son-in-Law & Sister), Bill Warner, David Warner, Emily (Ben & Casey's Daughter), Terry Newgard.

Friends & Family of: Mary Patterson who passed away last week.

Pastor's message for July 28, 2020

"Calling on the Doctor of Life"

Now go back with me in time some two thousand years. Watch as a gentle man takes children in his arms and makes them feel important. Watch as He reaches out to the sick and dying, and brings them healing and wholeness. Listen to Him teach about forgiveness, and grace, and loving your enemies. And hear him say, "I have come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly."

Today, I would like to focus on Dr. Life. And it is true, Jesus Christ brings us abundant life. How does he do it? He does it by helping us cope with those things that bring death to the human spirit.

FOR EXAMPLE, HE HELPS US COPE WITH OUR FEARS. Does anyone know what it is to live a fearful life? Some people do. They miss out on the joy of living because they live in a prison of anxiety.

There was a story from St. Louis about Karen Hickey, a 22-year-old secretary who had often wondered how it felt to be handcuffed. She found out the hard way. She tried on some old handcuffs her boss had brought to the office. Unfortunately, she forgot to ask if the boss had a key to the cuffs. She remained handcuffed for two hours until firemen working with electric cutters freed her.

There are people who live their entire lives in handcuffs, as it were, because of fear. and they never realize that Christ has the key.

Such fears are inconvenient. Other are downright painful. Have you ever known anyone so shy that just being around people caused them all kinds of anxiety? The experience can be almost suffocating. Think how much joy they miss in life. Then there are others who shrink away from life in general. They avoid new experiences. They're afraid of making decisions. In fact, some people are terrified to make decisions. They'll look for a sign. They'll do anything to keep from having to confront life head on. They're afraid of making any significant change in their life – even a change to their benefit. That's a terrible way to live.

If I'm talking to you, Jesus wants to help you break out of that prison of fear. He wants to help you get rid of those handcuffs of anxiety. He wants to help you live your life to the fullest. That's one way He gives us life abundant. He helps us cope with our fears.

HE ALSO HELPS US DEAL WITH OUR GUILT AND REGRET. Nothing can rob life of its joy, and its zest, like carrying a burden of guilt. Have you ever felt a burden of guilt? It is a heavy burden, indeed. Some of us feel guilty and don't even know it. We think we are just afraid. But our fear is very specific - the fear of exposure. That fear gnaws at us day and night.

Others of us have a deep feeling of regret. In the spring of 1959, an Air Force major entered a Texas mental institution for the second time. He had tried to commit suicide twice, and he had been arrested for forgery and robbery. For years he had been drinking heavily, and his marriage had disintegrated. Yet only fifteen years before, he had been a model officer headed for a promising career. One momentous event precipitated the major's plunge. He flew the lead plane over Hiroshima when the first atom bomb was dropped. Shortly afterward, he began to see throngs of Japanese men, women, and children chasing him in his dreams, and his own life began to collapse. The psychiatrist who treated him said the major was subconsciously trying to provoke punishment from society to atone for the guilt he felt over Hiroshima and other acts. Unresolved guilt was destroying his life.

Yes, guilt is a bigger problem that many of us are prepared to recognize. And there is only one place that guilt can be permanently unloaded – and that is at the foot of the cross. Yesterday is gone forever, Christ says to us. "Though your sin be as scarlet, it shall be as white as snow."

Christ helps us cope with our fears. He frees us from our guilt. ALL IN ALL, HE HELPS US GET OUR LIVES INTO PERSPECTIVE.

That's a major reason why many of us do not have abundant life. We're running after the wrong things. We have abundant life confused with having lots of stuff. And stuff can never bring happiness.

A rich man named Carl loved to ride his horse through his vast estate to congratulate himself on his wealth. One day on such a ride, he came on Hans, an old tenant farmer who had sat down to eat his lunch in the shade of a great oak tree. Han's head was bowed in prayer. When Hans looked up, he said, "Oh, excuse me, Sir. I didn't see you. I was giving thanks for my food."

"Hmph!" snorted the rich man, Carl. He noticed the coarse dark bread and cheese which made up the old man's lunch. "If that were all I had to eat, I don't think I would feel like giving thanks."

"Oh," replied Hans, "it is quite sufficient. But it is remarkable that you should come by today, Sir. I...I feel I should tell you; I had a strange dream just before awakening this morning."

"And what did you dream?" Carl Asked with an amused smile.

The old man answered, "There was beauty and peace all around, and yet I could hear a voice saying, 'The richest man in the valley will die tonight.'"

"Dreams!" cried Carl. "Nonsense!" He turned and galloped away.

Hans prayed as he watched horse and rider disappear.

Die tonight, Carl mused. It was ridiculous, of course! No use his going into a panic. The best thing to do about the old man's dream was to forget it. But he couldn't forget it. He had felt fine, at least until Hans described his stupid dream. Now he didn't feel too well. That evening he called his doctor, who was also a personal friend. "Could you come over?" he asked. "I need to talk to you." When the doctor arrived, Carl told him the old man's dream – how the richest man in the valley would die that night.

"Sounds like poppycock to me," the doctor said, "but for your peace of mind, let's examine you." A little later, his examination complete, the doctor was full of assurances. "Carl, you're as strong and healthy as that horse of yours. There's no way you're going to die tonight." Carl thanked his friend, and told him how foolish he felt for being upset by an old man's dream.

It was about 9 a.m. when a messenger arrived at Carl's door. "It's old Hans," the messenger said. "He died last night in his sleep."

Do you know what it is to be truly rich? If not, I want to introduce you to Dr. Life. He will help you cope with your fears. He alone can release you from your guilt. He can help you center your life on those things that really matter. AMEN!

'S.D.G.'