

LARGE PRINT

Worship Celebration

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 17, 2023 + 9 AM

We Gather as God's Children

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Praeludium und Fuga in F, BWV 556

Johann Sebastian Bach

+ Call to Worship

Give praise to God!

Praise the Lord, for it is God who saves

It is God who forgives

It is God who delivers

Give thanks and praise to the Lord

+ Prayer of Confession

Gracious and loving God,

you lived for us--we have not lived for you.

You have forgiven us--we have not forgiven others.

You have loved us--we have not loved ourselves

nor have we loved one another.

Take pity on us and forgive us, God.

Help us to forgive.

Help us to live for you.

Help us to love through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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+ Hymn

Take My Life, and Let It Be

UMH 399

We Grow in God's Word

With disciples of every time and place,
let us listen for the word of God among us.

Our ears and hearts are open.

First Lesson — Romans 14.1-12 (NRSVUE)

14 Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. **2** Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. **3** Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. **4** Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

5 Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. **6** Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

7 For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. **8** If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. **9** For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. **10** Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. **11** For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

12 So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Second Lesson — Matthew 18.21-35 (NRSVUE)

21 Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” **22** Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³ “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ 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.’

²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ 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. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ 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 word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

“Lest I Forgive”

Celebrating Our Baptismal Covenant

Siblings in Christ: through the sacrament of baptism
God’s Spirit initiates us into Christ’s holy church,
incorporates us into God’s saving work,
and gives us new birth through water and the Spirit.

This morning, we come to the waters to baptize these children
and to renew our commitments to Christ who has raised us,
to the Spirit who has birthed us,
and the Creator who is making all things new.

On behalf of the whole church, I ask you,
Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness,
reject the evil powers of this world and repent of our sin.

I do.

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives us
to resist evil, injustice, and oppression
in whatever forms they present themselves.

I do.

Do you confess Jesus Christ as our Savior,
put our whole trust in God's grace,
and promise to serve Christ as Lord,
in union with the church which Christ has opened
to people of all ages, abilities, identities, races, and cultures.

I do.

Will you be living witnesses to the gospel, individually and together,
wherever you are, and in all that you do,
nurturing these children in Christ's holy Church,
that by your teaching and example they may be guided
to accept God's grace for themselves,
to profess their faith openly and to lead a Christian life?

I will.

Do you, as Christ's body, the Church reaffirm both your rejection of
sin and your commitment to Christ, remaining faithful members of
Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the
world? ***We do.***

Will you nurture one another in living the faith of the church
and include Lydia and Rosalee Norman into your care?

***With God's help, we will proclaim the good news
while living out the gospel of Jesus Christ.***

***We will embrace Lydia and Rosalee with a community
of faith, hope, and love,***

***that they may grow in their trust of God
and grow in their service in the world.***

We will pray for them in their journey of faith among us.

All Children of God and Children of the water,
Let us join together in professing the Christian faith
as contained in the Scriptures of the Hebrew Bible
and the New Covenant.

Do you believe in God the Father?

***I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.***

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

***I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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;
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.***

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

***I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy universal church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.***

The Spirit of the Lord is with us. ***Even so, come, Lord Jesus!***

Almighty God, the life you birth in us

by baptism into Jesus Christ will never die.

Your love never fails. Your mercy is everlasting.

Your justice perseveres.

Your healing river flows. Your Spirit blows where you will.

Your mighty acts cannot be stopped, God!

But sometimes, we try.

We attempt to interrupt what you are doing,

we redirect the winds of the Spirit,
or we walk so far away from the life-giving stream
that we do not hear its sound,
and we forget its power. We parch ourselves.

We are dry and thirsty, O God. Come, refresh us!

Come upon us, Holy Spirit! ***Come upon us, Holy Spirit!***

Come upon these waters. ***Come upon these waters.***

Let these waters be to us drops of your mercy and grace.

Let these waters remind us of your righteousness and justice.

Let these waters renew in us your resurrection power in Christ.

Let these waters make us long

for your life and your beloved community.

Most Holy God, Abba, Father! ***Glory to you!***

Jesus Christ, Savior, Lord! ***Glory to you!***

Spirit of fire, Spirit over the waters, Spirit of holiness! ***Glory to you!***

Eternal God, One in Three and Three in One!

Pour out your Holy Spirit,

To bless this gift of water and those who receive it,

To wash away their sin

And clothe them in righteousness

Throughout their lives,

That, dying and being raised with Christ,

They may share in his final victory.

All glory is yours, now and forever. Amen.

Baptism with the Laying on of Hands

Lydia Ryann Norman and Rosalie Noelle Norman were born on March 3, 2023 to Melissa and Tyler Norman, Their Godparents are Kyle Haag, Rachel Bilderback, Amber Swaffield, and Brandon Norman. Rick & Laura Haag and Ellen Norman are the proud Grandparents.

Lydia Ryann Norman, I baptize you in the name of the Father,
and the son, and the Holy Spirit.

Rosalee Noelle Norman, I baptize you in the name of the Father,
and the son, and the Holy Spirit.

Members of the household of God,
Lydia and Rosalee Norman are commended
to your love and care.

Do all in your power to help increase their faith,
confirm their hope, and perfect them in love.

***Children of God by water and the Spirit,
we open our hearts to you,
we welcome you and affirm you as part of God's new creation.
With joy and thanksgiving, we welcome you
as a members of the family of God and Christ's holy church
as we renew our commitments with you.***

Blessing

The God of all grace,
who has called us to eternal glory in Christ,
establish you and strengthen you
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
that you may live in grace and peace. Amen.

Hymn

Come Thou Font of Every Blessing

UMH 400

Prayers of the People & The Lord's Prayer

Opportunities for Ministry

and Invitation to Give Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

It is Well with My Soul

arr. Tom Fettke

Doxology

UMH 95

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

Prayer of Thanksgiving

***O God, we thank you for these gifts.
Multiply them, and enable the work of love
and the righteousness of your kingdom
in the world.
We thank and praise you. Amen.***

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We Go Out to Serve in God's Name

+ Hymn

Amazing Grace (vv. 1, 4-6)

UMH 378

Commissioning the "Help Build Hope" Mission Team

All who take upon themselves the name of Christ
are called into ministries of love and service
by the example of Christ.

As these members of our community work together
in our neighborhood,

we pray the blessings of God and this community
upon their ministry.

***We recognize you as ambassadors of this congregation,
and dedicate you to serve in the name of Jesus Christ.***

***Through our prayers, we will be united with you in your ministry.
May God richly bless your labors.***

+ Benediction

Postlude

Ellacombe

arr. Albert Travis

***Our service of worship is ended.
Our worship through service now begins.***