



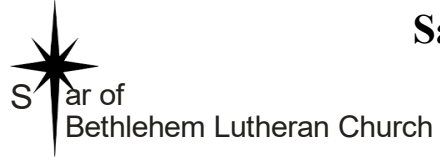
**NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE**

“The **LAST** will be
FIRST,
and the **FIRST** will be
LAST.”

Matthew 20:16



**NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE**



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Pastor Michael Foley

Worship Service

Sunday, September 24th, 2023 10:00 a.m.

The Seventeenth Sunday after PENTECOST

Theme of the day: What is God like? Over the next four Sundays, the Church hears Jesus tell four parables which reveal characteristics of our God. Today's lesson causes us to ask: Is God fair? No, he's not. He doesn't give us what we deserve, and that's called mercy. In fact, he gives us what we don't deserve, and that's called grace.

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our friends and visitors! Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church is eager to share with you the blessings of its Christ-centered ministry. If you are a new or long-time resident of the Central Coast looking for a church home, we invite you to meet with us at the close of this worship service or at your convenience. All are welcome to stay for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Families are encouraged to worship together. If you need to step out with your children, the service can be seen and heard in the fellowship hall or narthex area. Feel free to enter and return at any time.

OUR MISSION

Our congregation exists for the purpose of "HOLDING OUT THE WORD OF LIFE." This is accomplished by faithfully preserving and proclaiming all of God's inerrant word, and administering the Sacraments as they were instituted by Christ.

OPENING HYMN: # 560 “Your Works, Not Mine, O Christ”

♪ **Your works, not mine, O Christ, speak gladness to this heart;
they tell me all is done, they bid my fear depart.
To whom but you, who can alone
for sin atone, Lord, shall I flee?**

**Your blood, not mine, O Christ, can heal my sinful soul;
your wounds, not mine, contain
the balm that makes me whole.
To whom but you, who can alone
for sin atone, Lord, shall I flee?**

**Your cross, not mine, O Christ, has borne the dreadful load
of sins that none could bear but the incarnate God.
To whom but you, who can alone
for sin atone, Lord, shall I flee?**

**Your death, not mine, O Christ, has paid the ransom due;
ten thousand deaths like mine would have been all too few.
To whom but you, who can alone
for sin atone, Lord, shall I flee?**

Please stand for last verse:

**Your righteousness, O Christ, alone can cover me;
no other righteousness can set a sinner free.
To whom but you, who can alone
for sin atone, Lord, shall I flee?**

Minister: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and
the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Congregation: **And also with you.** (*spoken*)

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love
and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and
deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess
our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth.
In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve
to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray:
Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me
from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: Amen.

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

C: Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Bless - ed are
they who take ref - uge in him. Your Word, O Lord, is e -
ter - nal; it stands firm in the heav -
ens. Your faith - ful - ness con - tin - ues for -
ev - er. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.
Bless - ed are they who take ref - uge in him.

M: Lord God, you call us to work in your kingdom and promise to reward us according to your grace. Help us to rid our minds of worldly expectations and rejoice that you freely pour out the blessings of salvation to all people; through the merits of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C:  Amen.

Please be seated.

FIRST LESSON: Romans 9:6-16

⁶This does not mean that God's word has failed, because not all who are descended from Israel are really Israel, ⁷and not all who are descended from Abraham are really his children. On the contrary, "Your line of descent will be traced through Isaac." ⁸This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are counted as his descendants. ⁹For this is what the promise said: "I will arrive at this set time, and Sarah will have a son."

¹⁰Not only that, but Rebekah also had children by one man, our forefather, Isaac. ¹¹Even before the twins were born or did anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose in election might continue—¹²not by works but because of him who calls us—it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger." ¹³Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

¹⁴What will we say then? Does this mean that God is unjust? Absolutely not! ¹⁵For God says to Moses:

I will show mercy to whom I show mercy,
and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.

¹⁶So then, it does not depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy.

PSALM OF THE DAY: Psalm 27

Refrain



The Lord is my light and my sal - va - tion — of whom shall I



be a - fraid, of whom shall I be a - fraid?

Psalm tone



Hear my voice when I call, O LORD;*
be merciful to me and answer me.

**Do not hide your face from me,*
do not turn your servant away in anger;
you have been my helper.**

**Do not reject me or forsake me,*
O God my Savior.**

Refrain

**Though my father and mother forsake me,*
the LORD will receive me.**

**I am still confident of this:*
I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.**

**Wait for the LORD;*
be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

Verse of the Day:

M: Alleluia. Indeed, it is by grace you have been saved, through faith
— and this is not from ourselves, it is the gift of God. Alleluia.
(Ephesians 2:8)

C: ♪ Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
These words are written that we may believe
that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 20:1-16

**“Indeed the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out
early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard.
²After agreeing to pay the workers a denarius for the day, he sent
them into his vineyard.**

³He also went out about the third hour and saw others standing unemployed in the marketplace. ⁴To these he said, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will give you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour and did the same thing. ⁶When he went out about the eleventh hour, he found others standing unemployed. He said to them, ‘Why have you stood here all day unemployed?’

⁷“They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’

“He told them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸When it was evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last group and ending with the first.’

⁹“When those who were hired around the eleventh hour came, they each received a denarius. ¹⁰When those who were hired first came, they thought they would receive more. But they each received a denarius too. ¹¹After they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner: ¹²‘Those who were last worked one hour, and you made them equal to us who have endured the burden of the day and the scorching heat!’

¹³“But he answered one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not make an agreement with me for a denarius? ¹⁴Take what is yours and go. I want to give to the last one hired the same as I also gave to you. ¹⁵Can’t I do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶In the same way, the last will be first, and the first, last.”

HYMN: # 582 “Not unto Us”

♪ Not unto us, not unto us be glory, Lord;
not unto us but to your name be praise;
not unto us but to your name all honor be giv’n
for matchless mercy, forgiveness, and grace.

Amazing grace—that chose us ere the worlds were made;
amazing grace—that sent your Son to save;
amazing grace—that robed us in your righteousness
and taught our lips to sing glory and praise.

O faithful love—that shepherded through faithless years;
forgiving love—that led us to your truth;
unyielding love—that would not let us turn from you
but sent us forth to speak pardon and peace.

**Not unto us but to your name be glory, Lord,
for grace so rich, so wide, so high, so free.
Abide with us till trav'ling days are over and done,
and pilgrim feet lead us home, Lord, to you.**

SERMON: Isaiah 55:1-5

**Hey, all of you who are thirsty, come to the water,
even if you have no money!**

Come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

²Why do you spend money on something that is not bread?

Why do you waste your labor on something that does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good.

Satisfy your appetite with rich food.

³Turn your ear toward me, and come to me.

Listen, so that you may continue to live.

**Yes, I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
the faithful mercies promised to David.**

**⁴Look, I appointed him as a witness for peoples,
a leader and commander of peoples.**

**⁵Look, you will call out to a nation you do not know,
and a nation that does not know you will run to you,
on account of the LORD your God,
because of the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.**

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**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.**

**He descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit;
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

HYMN: # 581 “Lord, ‘Tis Not That I Did Choose You”

**♪ Lord, ’tis not that I did choose you;
that, I know, could never be,
for this heart would still refuse you
had your grace not chosen me.
You removed the sin that stained me,
cleansing me to be your own;
for this purpose you ordained me, that I live for you alone.**

**It was grace in Christ that called me,
taught my darkened heart and mind;
else the world had yet enthralled me,
to your heav’nly glories blind.
Now I worship none above you; for your grace alone I thirst,
knowing well that, if I love you, you, O Father, loved me first.**

**Praise the God of all creation,
praise the Father’s boundless love.
Praise the Lamb, our expiation,
Priest and King enthroned above.
Praise the Spirit of salvation, him by whom our spirits live.
Undivided adoration to the great Jehovah give.**

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

C: 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.

**M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace.
Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and (+) give you peace.**

C: ♪ Amen. Amen. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: # 558:1,6,10 "Salvation unto Us Has Come"

**♪ Salvation unto us has come by God's free grace and favor;
good works cannot avert our doom,
they help and save us never.
Faith looks to Jesus Christ alone,
who did for all the world atone; he is our one Redeemer.**

**Since Christ has full atonement made
and brought to us salvation,
each Christian therefore may be glad
and build on this foundation.
Your grace alone, dear Lord, I plead,
your death is now my life indeed,
for you have paid my ransom.**

**All blessing, honor, thanks, and praise
to Father, Son, and Spirit,
the God who saved us by his grace; all glory to his merit!
O Triune God in heav'n above,
you have revealed your saving love;
your blessed name be hallowed!**

WELS CONNECTION

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FLOWERS for today's service were given to the glory of God by the Evers on the occasion of Laura's birthday.

PRAYERS: Remember to pray for: Shawn Lozano, John Velasques, little Elias, Dennis Douglas, Bob Ward, George Caravana, Molly Webb (and brother, Jim), Helen Marten, Doug Ward, Kathy Jones, Art Amarillas, Roberta Gowin, Melinda Brown, Alice Taubman, Monica, Louise Perry, Rylan Downs, Sam Daugherty, Jeff Brown, Aaron Taubman, Judy Washburn, Jerry Yonke, and Sandy Murphy.

BIBLE STUDIES: While we do meet in person for our weekly Bible Classes (Sundays at 9:00 a.m.; Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.), we also continue to "Zoom" all our studies. If you want to be included in the weekly e-mail with the zoom codes and print-outs, please let Pastor Foley know.

STAR CHURCH DIRECTORY: To participate in our online church directory please fill out and return the blue information sheets (in the narthex). Once you have access, you will be able to edit your information (or you can ask Pastor Foley to do so).

To view and use the directory online, go to:

members.instantchurchdirectory.com

Follow the prompts under "Sign In" to "Create a login now."

To view and use the directory on your smartphone:

download the App for "Instant Church Directory"

*** You will need to use your e-mail address as listed in our directory to create a log-in the first time you use the directory online and via the mobile app.

LWMS RALLY here Saturday, October 14, 8:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

THIS WEEK

Tuesday ESL (English as a Second Language), **6:00 p.m.**

Thursday Bible Class, **10:00 a.m.**

ESL, **6:00-7:30 p.m.**

Sunday Bible Class & Sunday School, **9:00 a.m.**

Worship with Holy Communion, **10:00 a.m.**

