

THE TWENTIFIRST SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

October 18th, 2026 – 9:30 AM

WELCOME



In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

✝ Preacher & Officiant – The Reverend Laura Esposito

✝ Liturgists – Bob and Zaida Durham

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Compassionate God, **we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Hear this good news: We have peace with God through ✝ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN: ELW#825 – You Servants of God

Prayer of the Day - Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

GOD'S HOLY WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 45: 1 - 7

¹Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him— and the gates shall not be closed: ²I will go before you and level the mountains; I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron; ³I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name. ⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name; I give you a title, though you do not know me. ⁵I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides me there is no god. I arm you, though you do not know me, ⁶so that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other. ⁷I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe; I the LORD do all these things. The Word of the Lord...**Thanks be to God!**



Psalm 96: 1 - 13

¹ Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

² **Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

³ Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.

⁴ **For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods.**

⁵ As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.

⁶ **Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

⁷ Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

⁸ **Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.**

⁹ Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

¹⁰ **Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king! The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity."**

¹¹ Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

¹² **Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD, for you come to judge the earth.**

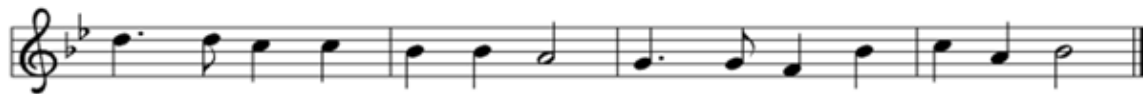
¹³ You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth.



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.
Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

HOLY GOSPEL

A Reading from the Holy Gospel of Matthew 22: 15 - 22; **Glory to You, O Lord!**

¹⁵ The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶ So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one, for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" ¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius.

²⁰ Then he said to them, "Whose head is this and whose title?" ²¹ They answered, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." ²² When they heard this, they were amazed, and they left him and went away. The Gospel of the Lord...**Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!**

SERMON – The Reverend Laura Esposito

HYMN: ELW#685 – Take My Life and Let it Be

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

† *We recognize all joining us virtually and give voice to any greetings or prayer requests.*

Seeking the Spirit of God who makes all things new, we pray for the church and the world.

A brief silence.

Living and true God, you inspire us to share the message of the gospel. Give your spirit of love to seminarians and those beginning their lives in ordained ministry.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We give you thanks for the majesty of our oceans. Protect the abundant life within them and sustain all those who work to preserve them. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We seek your wisdom in all things. Direct all who hold positions of authority around the world, that they act with compassion, seeking the good of all.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for all people who work in dangerous or degrading environments. Grant them safety and courage, and heal all those who are injured, sick, or suffering. Grace those from our families and community that we now name silently in our hearts, or out loud, with our prayers and your blessings. *(Please name silently or out loud).*

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We ask your blessing on those who do the quiet, unseen work of the church. Encourage them in their work of faith and labor of love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We seek Your divine wisdom and guidance in our search for a shepherd to lead us with humility, love, and grace. Lord, bless our search process, our call committee and open doors to reveal the right candidate to us. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

(Additional Petitions may be offered.)

We thank you for our ancestors who have been called home to you.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, as we gather our tithes and offerings, we acknowledge that all things belong to you. Everything we have comes from your hand, and we are merely stewards of your blessings. Help us to recognize your leadership over all aspects of our lives. May these gifts be used to further your kingdom, as a testament to our gratitude and trust in you. Guide us to be faithful stewards, using all that you have given us for your glory. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father: We praise you for the grace shown to your people in every age: and, at this end of all the ages, the gift of your Son, who proclaimed the good news in word and deed and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

And on the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest and pray unto you the prayer he taught us to pray -

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.

Invitation to Communion – Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

OUR TIME OF COMMUNION WITH THE LORD!

COMMUNION HYMN 1: Stir My Spirit

Stir my spirit, O Lord, I pray
Tune my ear that I might hear Your word.
Take pleasure in, be glorified by every step I take,
Build my life a temple for You, Lord.

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COMMUNION HYMN 2: O Lord You're Beautiful

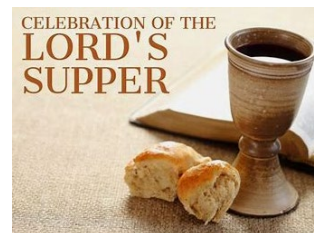
O Lord, You're beautiful, Your face is all I seek;
And when Your eyes are on this child, your grace abounds to me.

O Lord, You're wonderful, Your touch is all I need;
And when Your hand is on this child, Your healing I receive.

O Lord, please light the fire, That once burned bright and clear,
Replace the lamp of my first love that burns with holy fear.

O Lord, You're beautiful, Your face is all I seek;
And when Your eyes are on this child, Your grace abounds to me.

By Keith Green; c.1980 Ears to Hear Music, Adm. Capitol CMG Publishing; CCLI# 14514



COMMUNION HYMN 3: Glorify Thy Name

1. Father we love You,
We praise and adore You,
Glorify Thy name in all the earth.
Glorify Thy name, Glorify Thy name,
Glorify Thy name in all the earth.
2. Jesus we love You
We praise and adore You,
Glorify Thy name in all the earth.
Glorify Thy name, Glorify Thy name,
Glorify Thy name in all the earth.
3. Spirit we love You
We praise and adore You,
Glorify Thy name in all the earth.
Glorify Thy name, Glorify Thy name,
Glorify Thy name in all the earth.

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Closing Prayer - Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

Blessing - The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind, in the body of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit. **Amen.**

The God of grace ☩ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN: ELW# 821 - Shout to the Lord

CHORUS:

Shout to the Lord all the earth let us sing.
Power and majesty praise to the King
Mountains bow down and the seas will roar;
at the sound of Your name.
I sing for joy at the work of Your hands;
Forever I'll love You - forever I'll stand.
Nothing compares to the promise I have in You.

My Jesus, my Savior, Lord, there is none like You
All of my days I want to praise
the wonders of Your mighty love.
My comfort, my shelter, Tower of refuge and strength
Let every breath, All that I am,
Never cease to worship you
(CHORUS)

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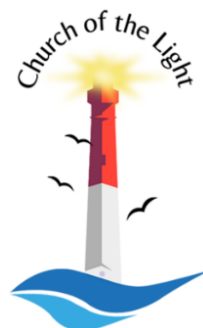
Song of Blessing

May God's blessing surround you each day,
As you trust God and walk in God's way.
May God's presence within guard and keep you from sin,
Go in peace, go in joy, go in love.

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Dismissal: Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.
Thanks be to God.

Notes:



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