



Sunday, September 15, 2024

Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost

Welcome to The Beloved Community at The Trees, an Episcopal faith community exploring together what a life of faith “outside of a church” may be. Through our faith in Jesus Christ, we believe that all people are God’s beloved and all are welcome, regardless of race, gender identity, sexual identity, ability, faith background, or belief.

Blessing of the Water

Celebrant We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water. Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life. We thank you, Father, for the water of Baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit.

Now bless this water, we pray you, that it may be a sign to us of our Baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

An Offering of Song

Sanctuary (a Shaker hymn)

Lord, prepare me to be a Sanctuary
Pure and holy, tried and true
With thanksgiving I’ll be a living
Sanctuary for You!

Opening Acclamation

Celebrant Blessed be God!
Almighty Creator, incarnate Word, abiding Spirit.

People **And blessed be God’s presence, now and forever.**

The Collect for Purity

Celebrant Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from you 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 Christ our Lord. ***Amen***

The Collect

Celebrant God be with you.
People **And within you.**
Celebrant Let us pray.

O God, because without you we are not able to please you, mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. ***Amen.***

An Offering of Song

Come and Seek the Ways of Wisdom (text by Ruth Duck, b. 1947)

Come and seek the ways of Wisdom, she who danced when earth was new.
Follow closely what she teaches, for her words are right and true.
Wisdom clears the path to justice, showing us what love must do.

Listen to the voice of Wisdom, crying in the marketplace.
Hear the Word made flesh among us, full of glory, truth, and grace.
When the word takes root and ripens, peace and righteousness embrace.

Sister Wisdom, come, assist us; nurture all who seek rebirth.
Spirit guide and close companion, bring to light our sacred worth.
Free us to become your people, holy friends of God and earth.

The First Lesson

Proverbs 1:20-33

Reader A reading from Proverbs.

Wisdom cries out in the street;
in the squares she raises her voice.

At the busiest corner she cries out;
at the entrance of the city gates she speaks:
“How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple?
How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing
and fools hate knowledge?
Give heed to my reproof;
I will pour out my thoughts to you;
I will make my words known to you.
Because I have called and you refused,
have stretched out my hand and no one heeded,
and because you have ignored all my counsel
and would have none of my reproof,
I also will laugh at your calamity;
I will mock when panic strikes you,
when panic strikes you like a storm,
and your calamity comes like a whirlwind,
when distress and anguish come upon you.
Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer;
they will seek me diligently, but will not find me.
Because they hated knowledge
and did not choose the fear of the LORD,
would have none of my counsel,
and despised all my reproof,
therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way
and be sated with their own devices.
For waywardness kills the simple,
and the complacency of fools destroys them;
but those who listen to me will be secure
and will live at ease, without dread of disaster.”

Reader The words of holy scripture.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Quiet Reflection on the Reading

The Psalter

Psalm 19

The heavens declare the glory of God, *
and the firmament shows his handiwork.

**One day tells its tale to another, *
and one night imparts knowledge to another.**

Although they have no words or language, *
and their voices are not heard,

**Their sound has gone out into all lands, *
and their message to the ends of the world.**

In the deep has he set a pavilion for the sun; *
it comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to run its course.

**It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens
and runs about to the end of it again; *
nothing is hidden from its burning heat.**

The law of the LORD is perfect
and revives the soul; *
the testimony of the LORD is sure
and gives wisdom to the innocent.

**The statutes of the LORD are just
and rejoice the heart; *
the commandment of the LORD is clear
and gives light to the eyes.**

The fear of the LORD is clean
and endures for ever; *
the judgments of the LORD are true
and righteous altogether.

**More to be desired are they than gold,
more than much fine gold, *
sweeter far than honey,
than honey in the comb.**

By them also is your servant enlightened, *
and in keeping them there is great reward.

**Who can tell how often he offends? *
cleanse me from my secret faults.**

Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins;
let them not get dominion over me; *
then shall I be whole and sound,
and innocent of a great offense.

**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my
heart be acceptable in your sight, *
O LORD, my strength and my redeemer.**

Quiet Reflection on the Reading

The Second Lesson

James 3:1-12

Reader A reading from James.

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits.

How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, but no one can tame the tongue-- a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

Reader The words of holy scripture.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Quiet Reflection on the Reading

The Gospel

Mark 8:27-38

Deacon The holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Mark.

People **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.” And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

Deacon The good news of our Savior.

People **Praise be to Christ.**

Quiet Reflection on the Reading

Children's Message

Children are invited to participate in a short reflection on today's readings.

Lectionary Discussion

- 1) *What did I learn about God from this week's readings?*
 - 2) *What did I learn about love from this week's readings?*
 - 3) *What did I learn about community from this week's readings?*
 - 4) *What did I learn about myself from this week's readings?*
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The Nicene Creed

People

We believe –

In the One God:

Source of all,

ruler of all,

maker of heaven and earth:

of all things seen or unseen.

And in one Lord:

Jesus of Nazareth,

Christ the Messiah,

the only-born Word of God;

eternally issued of that of the One:

God of God, light of light, true God of true God;

issued, not made:

the same being as the One;

and through whom all things are made;

That for us mortals

and for our salvation

came down from heaven;

and was made flesh

of the Holy Spirit

and the Virgin Mary;

and became human;

Was also crucified, for our sake,

under the reign of Pontius Pilate:

and suffered, and was buried;

and arose on the third day,

in accordance with the scriptures,

and went back up into heaven;

and sits in power beside the One:

and shall come again, in glory,
to judge those living and dead;
and whose presence shall have no end.
And we believe in the Spirit:
the Holy,
the Lord,
and the lifegiving;
that pours forth of that of the One:
that with One and Word together
we worship and glorify as God;
that speaks in the prophets.
In one holy, universal, and missionary church:
we accept one baptism for the forgiveness of sins;
we await the raising of the dead,
and the life of the age soon to come.
Amen.

Prayers of the People

Celebrant In peace and in faith, let us offer our prayers to God. We remember those among us and those we love in our prayers; especially Anthony, Catherine, Gregory, Kathy, Laurie, and Paul.

You are invited to share your prayers aloud or silently in your heart. After each prayer is shared aloud, the following response is said.

This is my prayer.

This is our prayer.

After all prayers have been shared.

Celebrant God of love and mercy,

People **Hear our prayer.**

Celebrant O Lord our God, accept the fervent prayers of your people; in the multitude of your mercies, look with compassion upon us and all who turn to you for help; for you are gracious, O lover of souls, and to you we give glory, our most holy, glorious and undivided Trinity, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Confession of Sin

Celebrant Therefore let us confess our sins to almighty God.

A moment of silence for private prayer.

People

**Almighty and most merciful God;
maker of all, judge of all:
We confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbor as ourselves.
We are deeply sorry and we earnestly repent.
Have mercy upon us, most merciful Lord,
for the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ:
Forgive us our sins.
And grant that we may ever hereafter
serve and please you in newness of life;
to delight in your will, and walk in your ways,
to the honor and glory of your name.
Amen.**

Absolution

Celebrant

May almighty God have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in eternal life, through Christ our Savior. *Amen.*

The Peace

Celebrant

May the peace of God be ever with you!

People

And within you.

Announcements

During this time we will share announcements for The Beloved Community at The Trees and others.

The Offering

Celebrant

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

You are invited to share your gifts, financial or other, with the gathered community. During this time of preparation for the Holy Community, you are also invited to remember your baptism.

An Offering of Song

Will You Come and Follow Me (text by John I. Bell, b. 1949)

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,
Will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

Will you love the you you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?

Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

The Holy Communion

Eucharistic Prayer H

Celebrant God be with you.

People **And within you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them up to the Lord!**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is good and right that we do so.**

Celebrant It is very good, right, and our joyful task, always and everywhere
to lift thanks up to you, O Lord, our holy Creator, almighty, everlasting God.

For you alone are the one God, the font of all being and the form of all good,
resting beyond time and forever.

That through Christ your eternal Word brings all things into being: sun, moon and stars; earth, wind and waters; and every living thing. That makes all that is made, and breathes life into the earth.

And so raising our voices with angels and archangels and all the chorus of heaven who forever exalt your glory, we praise you rejoicing as we say:

Celebrant and People

Holy, holy, holy,

Lord God of all power and might:

Heaven and earth are full of your glory;

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest!

Celebrant

Most holy and gracious God, in your infinite love you made us in your own image.

And when we fell into sin and met with evil and death, you did not abandon us. For you are the Lord our God. You called your people as a light to the nations. You led them out of bondage and into a new land. You handed down the law, and spoke in the prophets.

And then, in the fullness of time, you in your mercy sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Word, to be born for our sake: to live and die as one of us; to reconcile us to you. Born of a woman, of our very nature, Jesus taught the law, healed the sick, and fed the poor.

And when the time had come, Jesus stretched out arms upon the cross, and died for our salvation. Almighty God, in Christ you bring us out of error into truth, out of sin into grace, out of death into life.

For in the night before God died for us, Jesus took bread; and after giving thanks, our Lord broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

Likewise after supper, Jesus took the cup, and after giving thanks, the Lord gave it to them, saying, "Drink of this, all of you: for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and the many for the forgiveness of sins. As often as you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore O God our heavenly Maker, offering to you your own from your own, we here celebrate the sacrament of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Celebrant

And we beg you, most merciful God, to hear us, and of your almighty goodness to pour out your Holy Spirit upon us, to bless and sanctify these your creations of bread and wine: that they may be to us the body and blood of your only-born Word, our Saviour Jesus Christ; and that we receiving them may share in that most blessed presence; so that we, and all those who share in your holy communion, may be filled with your grace and heavenly blessing, and in pure love and charity be made one body with Christ our Savior: that Christ may live in us, and we in Christ.

By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, our almighty Creator, time without end.

Amen!

Celebrant

And now as our Savior has taught us, let us pray:

Celebrant and People

Our Lord that is in heaven:

blessed be your name.

Your dominion come:

your will be done

on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us today our next day's bread:

and forgive us our sins,

as we forgive those who sin against us.

And leave us not prey to temptation:

but deliver us from evil.

For yours is the dominion: the power and the glory,

for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

A period of silence is kept.

Celebrant

Alleluia! The bread of life!

People

Alleluia!

Celebrant The gifts of God for the people of God!
Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and
feed on God in your heart by faith, with thanksgiving.

Time for Prayer and Reflection

We will observe a few moments of quiet for personal prayer and reflection following the Eucharist. You are invited to pray where you are or move about the space. Deacon Dan is available for healing prayers and anointing during this time.

Post Communion Prayer

People **Almighty and everliving God, we earnestly thank you for feeding us, in this holy sacrament, with the spiritual food of the most blessed presence of our Saviour Jesus Christ; and for assuring us thereby of your favor and goodness towards us; and that we are living members of the body of Christ, the blessed assembly of all faithful people; and may also share, through hope, in your everlasting reign. And we humbly ask you, our heavenly Maker, so to assist us with your grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as you have prepared for us to walk in; through Christ our Savior, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, time without end. Amen.**

The Blessing

Celebrant You are one in whom Christ delights and dwells.
You live in the strong and unshakeable kingdom of God.
The kingdom is not in trouble, and neither are you.

And the blessing of God almighty,
our most holy, glorious and undivided Trinity,
be among you this day, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Prayer for Our Shared Meal

Blessing over Food at Easter from The Book of Occasional Services 2022

Deacon Blessed are you, O Lord our God; you have given us the risen Savior to be the Shepherd of your people:
Lead us, by him, to springs of living waters, and feed us with the food that endures to eternal life;
where with you, O Father, and with the Holy Spirit, he lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Dismissal

Deacon Let us go forth in peace to love and serve the Lord!

People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

You are invited to join our community for a shared meal of soup/salad and bread immediately following our worship service.

We are grateful for our sending parish, The Church of the Nativity, Raleigh, which supports our community through their prayers and the sharing of their resources.

We are grateful for the use of The Trees, graciously provided to us at no cost by St. Philip's Episcopal Church, Durham.

We acknowledge that we are gathering on the ancestral territory of the Eno, the Tuscarora, the Occaneechi, and others.

We are grateful that you are with us. Your presence is a gift to The Beloved Community at the Trees, and that is enough. If you would like to support our community in other ways, you can do so by scanning the QR Code below and learning more about additional ways to give.



The Beloved Community at The Trees

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