

Welcome to Worship at
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI
Pentecost 3 - June 21, 2020

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

Hymn #249 - "God of Mercy, God of Grace"

**God of mercy, God of grace,
Show the brightness of your face.
Shine upon us, Savior, shine;
Fill your Church with light divine,
And your saving health extend
To the earth's remotest end.**

**Let the people praise you, Lord!
Be by all that live adored.
Let the nations shout and sing
Glory to their Savior King,
At your feet their tribute pay,
And your holy will obey.**

**Let the people praise you, Lord,
Then enjoy your rich reward!
God to us his blessing give,
We to God devoted live,
All below and all above
One in joy and light and love.**

Confession of Sins:

P: Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

C: **Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace and**

forgiveness for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. O Lord, have mercy on us!

P: Upon this your confession, I as a called servant of Christ and His Word announce to you the grace of God, and in the place of and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

First Lesson: Hosea 5:15 - 6:6

I will go. I will return to my place until they admit their guilt and seek my face. In their distress they will earnestly seek me. Come, let us return to the Lord. For he has torn us to pieces, but he will heal us. He has struck us, but he will bandage our wounds. After two days he will revive us. On the third day he will raise us up, so that we may live in his presence. Let us acknowledge the Lord. Let us pursue knowledge of the Lord. As surely as the sun rises, the Lord will appear. He will come to us like a heavy rain, like the spring rain that waters the earth. What am I going to do with you, Ephraim? What am I going to do with you, Judah? For your faithfulness is like a morning mist, like early dew that disappears. That is why I cut them to pieces by means of the prophets. I killed them with the words of my mouth. The judgments against you go forth like the light. For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God, rather than burnt offerings. (EHV)

Psalm 119c:

Refrain: Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

**Oh, how I 'love your law!
I meditate on it 'all day long.**

**I have more insight than all my 'teachers.
For I meditate on your 'statutes.**

**I have more understanding than the 'elders,
For I obey your 'precepts.**

Refrain: Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

**I have kept my feet from every 'evil path
So that I might o'bey your Word.**

**I have not departed ‘from your laws,
For you yourself have ‘taught me.**

**How sweet are your words ‘to my taste,
Sweeter than honey to my mouth!**

**Glory be to the Father and ‘to the Son
And to the Holy ‘Spirit,
As it was in the be’ginning,
Is now, and will be forever. ‘Amen.**

Refrain: Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

Second Lesson: Romans 4:18-25

Hoping beyond what he could expect, he believed that he would become the father of many nations, just as he was told: “This is how many your descendants will be.” He did not weaken in faith, even though he considered his own body as good as dead (because he was about one hundred years old), and even though he considered Sarah’s womb to be dead. He did not waver in unbelief with respect to God’s promise, but he grew strong in faith, giving glory to God and being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.” Now the statement “it was credited to him” was not written for him alone, but also for us to whom it would be credited, namely, to us who believe in the one who raised our Lord Jesus from the dead. He was handed over to death because of our trespasses and was raised to life because of our justification. (EHV)

Verse of the Day: Alleluia. God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Alleluia.

Gospel: Matthew 9:9-13

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting in the tax collector’s booth. He said to him, “Follow me.” Matthew got up and followed him. As Jesus was reclining at the table in Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners were actually there too, eating with Jesus and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” When Jesus heard this, he said to them, “The healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do. Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ In fact, I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” (EHV)

The 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 #339 - *"Today Your Mercy Calls Us"*

**Today your mercy calls us
To wash away our sin.
However great our trespass,
Whatever we have been,
However long from mercy
Our hearts have turned away,
Your precious blood can wash us
And make us clean today.**

**Today your gate is open,
And all who enter in
Shall find a Father's welcome
And pardon for their sin.
The past shall be forgotten,
A present joy be giv'n,
A future grace be promised:
A glorious crown in heav'n.**

**Today our Father calls us;
His Holy Spirit waits.
His blessed angels gather
Around the heav'nly gates.**

No question will be asked us
How often we have come;
Although we oft have wandered,
It is our Father's home.

O all-embracing Mercy,
O ever-open Door,
What should we do without you
When heart and eye run o'er?
When all things seem against us,
To drive us to despair,
We know one gate is open,
One ear will hear our prayer.

The Sermon: Matthew 9:9-13
 "Our Merciful Master"

In the Book of Proverbs, Solomon wrote, "*Do not allow **mercy and truth** to leave you. Fasten them around your **neck**. Write them on the tablet of your **heart**. Then you will find **favor and approval** in the eyes of God and man.*" How **merciful** are you? Do you find it **easy** to forgive others, even those who **despise** you? If you don't, then remember the words of St. James who wrote, "*There will be judgment **without mercy** on the one who has not **shown mercy**.*" When it comes to being kind, forgiving, and **merciful** to others, we can use all the help we can get. So today, let's consider **Our Merciful Master**, and take some lessons from the greatest of all teachers, our Lord Jesus Himself.

The mercy of our Savior knows **no bounds**. We can begin to see that in His treatment of **Matthew**, the tax collector. I guess tax collectors have **never** been too popular, not even today, but in the days of the Roman Empire they were considered to be the very **bottom** of the barrel - the **dregs** of society. And there was a good reason for it too. The Roman government had established "tax farmers" who would **bid** for the right to collect taxes in a specific area of the empire. They paid a flat rate for that privilege. But then to recoup their fee with **profit**, they would **sub-let** their area to several "**chief** tax collectors." They in turn would hire **publicans** to do the actual collecting, and if they could charge a **higher** amount than was **necessary** and get away with it, the profit was theirs to **keep**! It's easy to see how **many** of those tax collectors gave in to the **temptation**, and thus earned a bad reputation for **all** tax collectors.

We don't know whether Matthew was an **honest** collector, or a **dishonest** one, but in either case, he would still have been considered a **bad character**. And he had **another** strike against him. In the other Gospels, Matthew is referred to as **Levi** - his **Jewish** name. For a **Jew** to collect taxes from his own people in order to support the **Roman** government - which they **hated** - marked him as a **traitor**. It was almost unforgivable.

But notice the **mercy** of our Master. Jesus **called** Matthew to be one of His 12 special disciples. He didn't ask about Matthew's background, or family, or occupation. It was enough for Jesus to know that Matthew was a **sinner**, who needed His **help**. **Matthew's** attitude here is interesting too. He writes, "*(Jesus) said to him, 'Follow me.'* Matthew got up and **followed him**" - an interesting response! He didn't worry about losing his **job**, or how he would feed his **family**. He was confident that Jesus would provide **solutions** to those problems. And notice how **humble** Matthew is throughout his account of what happened. Luke tells us that when Matthew followed the Lord, he **left everything!** And the **dinner** which followed wasn't just a little **snack**, it was a great **feast** - and it was all held at Matthew's **house**, and at Matthew's **expense**.

We can **learn** from Matthew. When Jesus shows mercy toward **us**, we ought to receive it **gladly**. There is no need to question whether His mercy will be **beneficial** for us - we know it **will** be. And His mercy deserves a positive **response**. We can't do exactly what Matthew did - by inviting Jesus to physically come and enjoy a feast with us - but we can humbly recognize Him as **Our Merciful Master**. When Jesus forgives **sin** in our lives, we can show Him that we **appreciate** that mercy, by **not repeating** those sins again.

God had shown great mercy to Matthew by bringing Him into a closer relationship with Jesus. And now that Matthew knew what it meant to be a follower of Christ, and had personally **experienced** His mercy, he wanted to **share** that joy with his co-workers. That was done by means of a **feast** to which both tax collectors, and also Jesus and His disciples, were invited.

We need to realize that **eating** together was an expression of **fellowship** in their society. So, when Jesus attended this feast, the **implication** was that Jesus belonged to that **crowd** - tax collectors, adulterers, and "sinners" in general. After all, a person is known by the **company** he keeps. So, when the Pharisees saw what was happening they were pretty **upset**. But instead of going directly to **Jesus** for an explanation, they asked His **disciples**, "*Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?*" The disciples were probably pretty embarrassed, and

didn't really have an answer for that question - but Jesus did. He said, "*The healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do.*" Basically He was saying, "Where else **should** I be?" Even the Pharisees had recognized that the group Jesus was among was spiritually **sick**, and that they needed **help**. Jesus was **not** there to **fellowship** with them - He was there to **help** them - to lead them to the same understanding of His **mercy** which Matthew had already experienced. It should have been clear that the **greatest sinners** would need the **most help**.

Yet, too often we react just as the Pharisees did. We look down our self-righteous noses at those who supposedly sin more than we do. Who are we to judge that? God says that even **one sin** is enough to condemn us. So, when we look at others and say, "Why don't they **give** more to the church? - or why don't they offer to **help** with some of the organizations? - or why don't they get their lives **in order**?" then we need to remember the mercy which **Our Merciful Master** showed toward the despised tax collectors. Remember it, because it's the **same** mercy which He continues to show to **us**, and He wants us to follow His example by showing **mercy** to **others**.

The Pharisees thought they were really on top of God's Word, but Jesus showed them how **shallow** their understanding really was. He backed up His actions with the **Scriptures**. Jesus said, "*Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.'*" Perhaps you recognized that as a quote from our Old Testament lesson for today. In the Old Testament, sacrifices were **required** for receiving the forgiveness of sins. Such sacrifices foreshadowed the **ultimate** sacrifice which the Messiah would make when He died on the **cross** to bring forgiveness to all people. Typical sins in **Hosea's** day included idolatry, robbery, and murder. That sounds a lot like **today**, doesn't it? I guess the more things change, the more they stay the same. In view of the fact that those sins **recurred** again and again in God's people, the sacrifices which they brought to Him were **no good** at all. In fact, they were a **mockery** of God. The people were only going through the **motions** - there wasn't a real change of **attitude** - or a movement **away** from **sin** in their hearts.

That's exactly the way the **Pharisees** were acting. They were so worried about the **form** of worship that they forgot about the **substance** of worship. Offering sacrifices twice a day, tithing, and doing no work on the Sabbath were all things in which the Pharisees prided themselves. But Jesus wanted them to see that such things were only **secondary** in importance. God wants us to show **mercy** to others, as **Jesus** did. Were the Pharisees showing mercy toward the tax collectors? No way! Jesus was pointing out that the Pharisees needed to carry out some **self-**

examination. They needed to understand what God **really** wanted, and then put it into **practice** in their own lives, as a reproof for their own faults.

That's something which can easily crop up in **our** worship too. For example, do we **think about** what we are doing as we go through the liturgical portion of our worship services, or have those things become so familiar to us that they are now only **meaningless repetition**? Do we listen **attentively** to the Scripture readings and the sermon, or are our minds continually **wandering off** into other thoughts? Do we sing the hymns with **zeal** and **meaning**, or do we only remember what a nice (or perhaps unfamiliar) melody they had? If we are only going through the **motions** in our worship, then we are guilty of **formalism** too - just like the Pharisees. If there is no **meaning** to our worship, then it too is little more than a **mockery** of God.

Yet, even if that would prove to be true, there is still **comfort** for us - comfort in knowing that Jesus had shown **mercy** to the Pharisees by calling their formalism to their attention, and giving them the opportunity to **change** their attitudes. Unfortunately for them, they **ignored** Jesus' efforts. Dear friends, when Jesus shows such mercy toward **us**, pointing out our **sins** through His holy Word, may we follow the example of **Matthew** instead of the **Pharisees**. May we gladly **accept** the mercy of our God - may we **apply** it in correcting our lives - and may we also **share** the mercy of **Our Merciful Master** with others. Amen.

Prayers:

Heavenly Father, on this **Father's Day**, I ask You to make me a good Christian **parent**. Teach me to understand my children **better**, to listen **patiently** to what they say, and to answer all their questions with **kindness**. Keep me from **interrupting** them, talking **back** to them, or **contradicting** them. Make me as courteous to **them**, as I want **them** to be to **me**. Give me the **courage** to confess my **sins** against my children, and to ask their **forgiveness** when I know that I have **wronged** them.

May I not hurt the **feelings** of my children. Forbid that I should **laugh** at their mistakes, **ridicule** them, or be **sarcastic** with them. Let me be an example of **honesty** for them, not tempting them to **lie** or **steal** through my own **dishonest** actions. **Guide** me hour by hour that I may demonstrate by all I say and do, that **honesty** is always the **best** policy. Help me to see the **good** things they do, and give me words of **praise** for them when they have done what is **right**.

Help me to **grow** with my children. Keep me from judging them according

to the standards of **adult** behavior, but rather, remind me that because they **are** children, they will **act** like children. Don't allow me to **rob** them of the opportunity to wait on **themselves**; to **think**, to **choose**, and to make some **decisions** for themselves. May I grant them all their requests which are **reasonable**, and have the courage always to **withhold** a privilege which I know would be **harmful**. Lord, make me so **fair** and **just**, so **considerate** and **compassionate** to my children, that they will have a genuine **esteem** for me. Make me worthy of being **loved** and **imitated** by my children. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer:

**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.**

Hymn #460 - "How Can I Thank You, Lord"

**How can I thank you, Lord,
For all your loving-kindness,
That you have patiently
Borne with me in my blindness!
When dead in many sins
And trespasses I lay,
I kindled, holy God,
Your anger ev'ry day.**

**It is your work alone
That I am now converted;
O'er Satan's work in me
You have your pow'r asserted.
Your mercy and your grace
That rise afresh each morn
Have turned my stony heart**

Into a heart new-born.

**Lord, you have raised me up
To joy and exultation
And clearly shown the way
That leads me to salvation.
My sins are washed away;
For this I thank you, Lord.
Now with my heart and soul
All evil I abhor.**

**Grant that your Spirit's help
To me be always given
Lest I should fall again
And lose the way to heaven.
Grant that he give me strength
In my infirmity;
May he renew my heart
To serve you willingly.**

**O Father, God of love,
Now hear my supplication;
O Savior, Son of God,
Accept my adoration;
O Holy Spirit, be
My ever faithful guide
That I may serve you here
And there with you abide.**

P: Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel. 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.

The Blessing:

P: 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.

Hymn #596 - *“Let Me Be Yours Forever”*

**Let me be yours forever,
My faithful God and Lord;
Let me forsake you never
Nor wander from your Word.
Lord, do not let me waver
But give me steadfastness,
And for such grace and favor
Your holy name I'll bless.**

**Lord Jesus, my salvation,
My light, my life divine,
My only consolation,
To you I all resign,
For you have dearly bought me
With blood and bitter pain.
Let me, since you have sought me,
Eternal life obtain.**

**O gracious Holy Spirit,
My comforter and guide,
Grant that in Jesus' merit
I always may confide,
Him to the end confessing
Whom I have known by faith.
Give me your constant blessing
And grant a Christian death.**