

Service of Daily Prayer

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Athens Lutheran Church - Athens, TN – September 20, 2020

As We Gather

We find it hard not to notice others—what they have, what they earn, and how they live. What is worse, however, is that we constantly compare ourselves to others. Most of the time we figure that we are on the short end of the stick. But when it comes to the kingdom of God, there is no room for quick comparisons. Instead, we stand in awe of God’s rich mercy and generous grace. This is far more than we deserve. If we insist upon comparing our situation to others and complaining, God’s response is clear. Take what you have been given and leave. But if we let go of the comparisons, we find ourselves blessed beyond measure with His forgiveness, life, and salvation.

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Versicles

In the morning, O Lord, You hear my voice;
in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for You and watch.
My mouth is filled with Your praise,
and with Your glory all the day.
O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare Your praise.
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.

Reading

Isaiah 55:6–9
Seek the Lord while He may be found.

Reading

Philippians 1:12–14, 19–30
Let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ.

Reading

Matthew 20:1–16
The last will be first and the first will be last.

Final Reading Response

LSB 238

- L** In many and various ways, God spoke to His people of old by the prophets.
- C** But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.

Apostles' Creed

- C** I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence 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.

Koine Worship Song - Go My Children with My Blessing

Sermon

Rev. Don Coulter

Time of Prayer

Lord's Prayer

- P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:
- 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.

Prayer of the Day

Lord God, heavenly Father, since we cannot stand before You relying on anything we have done, help us trust in Your abiding grace and live according to Your Word; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

In the morning

Almighty God, merciful Father, who created and completed all things, on this day when the work of our calling begins anew, we implore You to create its beginning, direct its continuance, and bless its end, that our doings may be preserved from sin, our life sanctified, and our work this day be well pleasing to You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Luther's Morning Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Benedicamus

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Benediction

Then go joyfully to your work.

Stewardship Sentence

Matthew 20:9 – *“And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius.”* Behold the generosity of God! He gives out of His grace, not what we deserve to receive. Living a godly life means living in imitation of God, and His generosity is surely one of the foundations of God's being.

Lectionary Summary for Next Week - September 27, 2020

Ezekiel 18:1–4, 25–32; Philippians 2:1–4 (5–13) 14–18; Matthew 21:23–27 (28–32)

The Cross of Christ Opens to Us the Way of Repentance to Life with God

The way of the Lord is righteous and just: *“the soul who sins shall die”* (**Ezek. 18:4**). However, because the Lord has *“no pleasure in the death of anyone”* (**Ezek. 18:32**), He calls sinners to repentance and faith in His gracious forgiveness of sins. The man who is thus turned away from his wickedness, who henceforth lives by the grace of God, *“shall surely live; he shall not die”* (**Ezek. 18:28**). This way of repentance has been opened for us by the cross of Christ. In the righteousness of faith and love, *“he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death”* (**Phil. 2:8**), and He was vindicated in His resurrection from the dead. Indeed, *“God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name”* (**Phil. 2:9**). He has given us this name in our Baptism into Christ, in whom we now

“shine as lights in the world” (**Phil. 2:15**). He uses the authority that He has received from His Father (**Matt. 21:23–27**) to preach a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, by which even *“the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God”* (**Matt. 21:31–32**).

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