

St. Matthew's New Life Lutheran Church
Worshiping at Dearing Chapel
12355 Fort Caroline Road

September 13, 2020
Twenty fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Introduction to the day

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

GATHERING SONG

HOLY IS THE LORD

PRAISE BAND

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS WITH KYRIE

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Faithful God,

have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of ✝ Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world.

Amen.

KYRIE

- 1 Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
- 2 Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
- 3 Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O Lord God,

merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

L: A reading from Genesis.

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13

- ⁸LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;
⁹**you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.**
- ¹⁰You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.
- ¹¹**For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.**
- ¹²As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.
- ¹³**As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.**

L: A reading from Romans

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.
Alleluia, alleluia. Alleluia.
Alleluia, alleluia.**

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

Glory to you, O Lord.

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *Forgive Our Sins As We Forgive*
(Alt tune #758)

ELW 605

1 "Forgive our sins as we forgive,"
you taught us, Lord, to pray;
but you alone can grant us grace
to live the words we say.

2 How can your pardon reach and bless
the unforgiving heart
that broods on wrongs and will not let
old bitterness depart?

3 In blazing light your cross reveals
the truth we dimly knew:
how trifling others' debts to us;
how great our debt to you!

4 Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls
and bid resentment cease;
then, by your mercy reconciled,
our lives will spread your peace.

A: We confess our common faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed:

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

Brief silence

You welcome us when we are weak in faith. Uphold your church throughout the world; make it a place of welcome. Strengthen faith through Bible studies and Sunday schools,

confirmation classes and youth ministries. Nurture new ministries of education and growth (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

The heights of the heavens show us the vastness of your steadfast love. Have compassion on your creation. Where human selfishness has brought ruin and destruction, we look to you to heal, renew, and redeem your world. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Make your ways known to the nations. Speak kindness to our bitter grudges. Settle our hearts when we want to settle accounts with violence. Bless our leaders with patience and wisdom (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Bring healing and justice wherever harm is dealt. Provide vindication for all who are oppressed. Free victims of human trafficking and forced labor; deliver all who are bound by debt. Feed all who hunger, and guard refugees fleeing famine, poverty, and war. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Teach us to forgive. Remind us that you do not always accuse us. Still our tongues when we are tempted to pass judgment and argue over opinions. Make this congregation a community of mercy for one another and for all our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Whether we live or whether we die, we are yours. We thank you for those who have showed us faithfulness, for the knees that taught us how to bow to you and the tongues that taught us to praise you (*especially John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, whom we commemorate today*). Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Peace (*We share the peace by texting/ emailing a loved one to offer the blessing of the peace that only Christ can give.*)

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING *We thank everyone who has sent their gifts and tithes to the church during this time of physical distancing when we can't meet together. If you are able gifts can be mailed to the church at P.O. Box 350119, Jacksonville, Florida 32235.) Online giving is available on our website, stmatthewsjax.org.*

Offering Prayer

Let us pray. Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things.

You have set before us these gifts of your good creation. Prepare us for your heavenly banquet, nourish us with this rich food and drink, and send us forth to set tables in the midst of a suffering world, through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Offertory

ELW# 187

**Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.**

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.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

Mothering God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.

Amen.

SENDING SONG

PRAISE BAND

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Remember the poor.

Thanks be to God.

Announcements

The Altar Flowers are Presented by Sher Holy in honor of her daughter Kimberly's Birthday!! Happy Birthday Kimberly!!!!!!

Save the date!!!!

We hope to return to in person worship on September 27th, 2020. Pastor Ellen will contact the congregation in the coming days.

November 15th after our worship service will be our Congregational Meeting. Please mark your calendars!!!!!!

Our church office has moved!!!!!! The address of the new office is.....

**St. Matthew's Lutheran Church
12086 Ft. Caroline Rd.
Suite 404
Jacksonville, Fl. 32225**

Please note, our mailing address is the post office box.....

**St Matthew's Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 350119
Jacksonville, Fl. 32235**

Prayer Concerns:

Please pray for Odean Allen and family as they mourn the passing of Odean's brother Bob.

Please pray for strength and healing for Michael and Shirley Farrell's niece Lindsay and her family as she continues to heal from a recent illness.

We are asking for prayers for Doctor Bork as he continues to recuperate.

Please pray for David Allen as he recovers from surgery.

Please pray for Gam Shae as he continues to recuperate from recent medical procedures.

Please keep JoAnn McFeeters in your daily prayers as she continues to recuperate at home.

Pastor Ellen has asked to please keep Sharon Dorr, a friend and colleague, in your prayers. She has been ill, and is need of prayers for strength and healing.

The Beall family has asked for continued prayers of strength and healing for Linda.

Sharon Adkins has asked for prayers for her and her family as a close family member is receiving treatments for cancer.

Vivienne Ather has asked for prayers for her family, especially Munira as she returns to school.

If you have a need of prayers for you or a loved one, please contact Pastor Ellen at (904)-318-5436 or the church office at (904)-744-5333. In addition, you can email the church at stmaelca@bellsouth.net

OUR MEMBERS

Michelle Pearson	Tillie Herbert
Terry McFeeters	Jo Ann McFeeters
Vilma Griffiths	Jessamyn Sanders
The Lawrence Family	Lewis Family
Sharon Adkins	Ava Hester
Vivienne Ather	Munira Ather

OUR RELATIVES

Dorothy Ruiter	(Teresa Koufonikos)
Michael Koufonikos	(Teresa Koufonikos)
Thomas DeYoung	(Teresa Koufonikos)
Theresa Castle	(Theresa Rehm)
Peyton Kendall	(Theresa Rehm)
Kasey Strong	(Shirley Farrell)
Lindsay Weeks	(Shirley Farrell)
Charlie Scheil	(Mark and Carolyn Keister)
Emerson	(Lucy Blahy)
Sonia	(Vivian Ather)

OUR FRIENDS

Duane	(Bob Tano)
Marie Colegate	(Richard and Linda Beall)
Wes Johnson	(The Tano Family)
Sharon Dorr	(Pastor Ellen)

SERVING IN THE MILITARY

Chris Ather-U.S.
Steven Baker-Iraq
Lyndsey Buckle-U.S
Hickory Burns-U.S.
Tim Connor-U.S.
Kevin Kahl-U.S.
Mica Langley-U.S. .
Liam Steinke-U.S.
Linda Kramer-U.S
Joshua Lambert-U.S.
Sarah Schaet-U.S
Jeremiah Nelson-Deployed
Nathan Christel-Deployed
Tabitha Lambert-Germany