

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 20th, 2020

Hymn of Ascent

“Closer to You”

All

Draw me closer to You
Draw me closer to You
Lord, throughout the day, when I've lost my way
And I don't know what to do
Draw me close to You, O Lord, I pray

Grant Your mercy and grace
Grant Your mercy and grace
Cleanse me from my sin, a new life to begin
Your Glory to proclaim
For mercy and grace, O Lord, I pray

Draw me closer to You
Draw me closer to You
Lord, through out the day, when I've lost my way
And I don't know what to do
Draw me close to You, O Lord, I pray

Draw me close to You
O Lord, I pray

Text and tune: Public domain

Invocation

Confession & Absolution

Pastor: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

People: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

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People: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

In silent prayer, we confess our sins to the Lord, seeking His cleansing forgiveness.

Pastor: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

People: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. 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 neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 20:1-16

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius^[a] a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ ⁵So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. ⁶And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’ ⁸And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ ⁹And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, ¹²saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’^[b] ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first last.”

The Apostles’ Creed

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

Sermon

Ezra 4:21-5:2 & Nehemiah 4:10-15 & 6:10-14

²¹ Therefore make a decree that these men be made to cease, and that this city be not rebuilt, until a decree is made by me. ²² And take care not to be slack in this matter. Why should damage grow to the hurt of the king?" ²³ Then, when the copy of King Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum and Shimshai the scribe and their associates, they went in haste to the Jews at Jerusalem and by force and power made them cease. ²⁴ Then the work on the house of God that is in Jerusalem stopped, and it ceased until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

5 Now the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them. ² Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak arose and began to rebuild the house of God that is in Jerusalem, and the prophets of God were with them, supporting them.

¹⁰ In Judah it was said,^[a] "The strength of those who bear the burdens is failing. There is too much rubble. By ourselves we will not be able to rebuild the wall." ¹¹ And our enemies said, "They will not know or see till we come among them and kill them and stop the work." ¹² At that time the Jews who lived near them came from all directions and said to us ten times, "You must return to us."^[b] ¹³ So in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in open places, I stationed the people by their clans, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. ¹⁴ And I looked and arose and said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes." ¹⁵ When our enemies heard that it was known to us and that God had frustrated their plan, we all returned to the wall, each to his work.

¹⁰ Now when I went into the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home, he said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple. Let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you. They are coming to kill you by night." ¹¹ But I said, "Should such a man as I run away? And what man such as I could go into the temple and live?^[a] I will not go in." ¹² And I understood and saw that God had not sent him, but he had pronounced the prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. ¹³ For this purpose he was hired, that I should be afraid and act in this way and sin, and so they could give me a bad name in order to taunt me. ¹⁴ Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, O my God, according to these things that they did, and also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who wanted to make me afraid.

Prayer

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.

Benediction

Closing Hymn

“Rock of Ages”

Hymn 761



1 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, Let me hide my - self in Thee;
2 Not the la - bors of my hands Can ful - fill Thy Law's de-mands;
3 Noth - ing in my hand I bring; Sim - ply to Thy cross I cling.
4 While I draw this fleet - ing breath, When mine eye - lids close in death,



Let the wa - ter and the blood, From Thy riv - en side which flowed,
Could my zeal no res - pite know, Could my tears for - ev - er flow,
Na - ked, come to Thee for dress; Help - less, look to Thee for grace;
When I soar to worlds un-known, See Thee on Thy judg - ment throne,



Be of sin the dou - ble cure: Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.
All for sin could not a - tone; Thou must save, and Thou a - lone.
Foul, I to the foun-tain fly; Wash me, Sav - ior, or I die.
Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, Let me hide my - self in Thee.

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