

St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield

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The Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost September 24, 2023

Color of the Day: Green - suggesting spiritual growth and maturity. There is nothing colorless about our need to grow and mature as disciples of Jesus Christ. That's why the "green meadow" time of the church year is so lengthy. Time must be given to encourage all worshipers to maintain their faith through the constant use of God's means of grace.

Opening Hymn #819 - Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good

Confession and Absolution Page 167

✠ ✠ ✠ Service of the Word ✠ ✠ ✠

Introit Page 168

Ps. 116: 12-13, 15-16; antiphon: Ps. 116:17

I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanks- | giving*
and call on the name | of the LORD.

What shall I render | to the LORD*
for all his bene- | fits to me?

I will lift up the cup of sal- | vation*
and call on the name | of the LORD.

Precious in the sight | of the LORD*
is the death | of his saints.

O LORD, I am your | servant;*

I am your servant, the son of your maidservant. You have | loosed my
bonds.

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.

I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanks- | giving*
and call on the name | of the LORD.

Kyrie Page 168

Hymn of Praise (Gloria In Excelsis) Page 170

Salutation & Collect of the Day Page 172

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.

Old Testament Reading Page 172

Isaiah 55:6-9

⁶“Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near;

⁷let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.

⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

Gradual Page 172

Ps. 34:9, 19, alt.

Fear the LORD, | you his saints,*

for those who fear him lack | nothing!

Many are the afflictions of the | righteous,*

but the LORD delivers him out | of them all.

Epistle Reading Page 172

Philippians 1:12-14, 19-30

¹²I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, ¹³so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ.

¹⁴And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

¹⁹for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, ²⁰as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.

²⁵Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

²⁷Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. ²⁹For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, ³⁰engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Choral Anthem

Alleluia & Verse (Common) Page 173

Matthew 20:1-16

1“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 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?’ 16So the last will be first, and the first last.”

Children’s Message

Hymn of the Day. #851 – *Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us*

The Sermon
Check out Pastor Bogs’ blog at: rabswritings.blogspot.com or Pastor Mendez’s blog at: pastormendez.blogspot.com.

1. What was the historical context in which Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians, and why was he in prison in Rome?
2. How did Paul experience divine providence while in prison, as mentioned in Philippians 1:12-14? How can we trust in God’s providence in our own adverse circumstances?
3. What is the role of prayer in Paul’s life and in the advancement of the Gospel, as described in Philippians 1:19-20? How can we strengthen our prayer life amid our trials?
4. What does it mean for Paul that “to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21), and how can we apply this perspective in our lives?
5. Why does Paul encourage the Philippians to live worthy of the Gospel (Philippians 1:27)? What does this mean for us today?
6. What is the relationship between unity in the church and the testimony of the Gospel, as mentioned in Philippians 1:27? How can we maintain

unity in our congregations?

7. What message of hope and comfort does Paul offer to believers in Philippians 1:6, 28-30? How can we apply this we facing opposition for our faith?
8. How can we follow Paul’s example in maintaining our joy in Christ despite difficulties, as emphasized throughout the letter to the Philippians?
9. To what extent can we identify with the struggles and challenges that Paul faced in his faith, and how can we find strength in our relationship with Christ, just as he did?
10. What is the significance of grace in suffering for the sake of Christ, and how can we live a life that honors God even in the midst of adversity?

Other Notes or Questions for Pastor:

Creed. Page 174/175

Prayer of the Church & Offering Page 175

Our First Fruits and Tithes are our regular, top priority, proportionate, grateful gifts to the Lord for the work of the Gospel. Our Offerings are special gifts for special causes over and above our tithes. This is an act of worship for members and friends of St. Matthew who are moved by God’s love to respond to the Gospel. Guests should not feel obligated to participate.

Offering & Offertory. Page 176

✠ ✠ ✠ *Service of the Sacrament* ✠ ✠ ✠

Preface Page 177

It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who after His resurrection appeared openly to all His disciples and in their sight was taken up into heaven that He might make us partakers of His divine life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus & Prayer of Thanksgiving Page 178

Lord’s Prayer and The Words of Our Lord. Page 179

Pax Domini and Agnus Dei Page 180

Distribution Page 181

Before partaking of the Lord’s Supper, we ask that you read our communion statement on the pew insert behind the Bible. Thank you.

Distribution Hymns #757 – *Lord, It Belongs Not to My Care*
#742 - *For Me to Live Is Jesus*
#618 - *I Come, O Savior, to Thy Table*

Post-Communion Canticle (Thank the Lord). Page 181

Post-Communion Collect and Benediction Page 183

Closing Hymn #917 - *Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise*