

The Liturgy of the Word | August 2, 2020
The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost: Proper 13, Year A
Explanations of the service can be found at the end of the bulletin

Entrance Rite

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People ***And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.***

COLLECT FOR PURITY

The Celebrant may say

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

Glory To God In The Highest (*Gloria*)

Cahvary Service
Thomas Pavlechko

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and
peace to God's peo - ple on earth. Lord... God, heav - en - ly King, al -
might - y God and Fath - er, we wor - ship you, we... give you thanks, we
praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly
Son... of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, you
take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;
you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fath - er re -
ceive... our prayer. For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One,
you a - lone are the Lord, you a - lone are the Most High Je - sus
Christ with the Ho - ly Spi - rit in the glo - ry of
God the Fath - er. A - men.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People ***And also with you.***

Celebrant Let us pray.

Let your continual mercy, O Lord, cleanse and defend your Church; and, because it cannot continue in safety without your help, protect and govern it always by your goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. ***Amen.***

The Lessons

FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:1-5

Thus says the Lord: "Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you."

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People ***Thanks be to God.***

PSALM 145:8-9, 15-22

⁸ ***The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, ****
slow to anger and of great kindness.

⁹ ***The Lord is loving to everyone ****
and his compassion is over all his works.

¹⁵ ***The Lord upholds all those who fall; ****
he lifts up those who are bowed down.

¹⁶ ***The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord, ****
and you give them their food in due season.

¹⁷ ***You open wide your hand ****
and satisfy the needs of every living creature.

¹⁸ ***The Lord is righteous in all his ways ****
and loving in all his works.

¹⁹ ***The Lord is near to those who call upon him, ****
to all who call upon him faithfully.

²⁰ ***He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; ****
he hears their cry and helps them.

²¹ ***The Lord preserves all those who love him, ****
but he destroys all the wicked.

22 *My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord; *
let all flesh bless his holy Name for ever and ever.*

SECOND READING: Romans 9:1-5

I am speaking the truth in Christ-- I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit-- I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh. They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

THE HYMNAL 304

I Come with Joy

VERSE ONE

Unison or harmony

1 I come with joy to meet my Lord, for -
2 I come with Chris - tians far and near to
3 As Christ breaks bread and bids us share, each
4 And thus with joy we meet our Lord. His
5 To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound, we'll

1 giv - en, loved, and free, in awe and won - der
2 find, as all are fed, the new com - mu - ni -
3 proud di - vi - sion ends. That love that made us
4 pres - ence, al - ways near, is in such friend - ship
5 go our dif - ferent ways, and as his peo - ple

1 to re - call his life laid down for me.
2 ty of love in Christ's com - mun - ion bread.
3 makes us one, and stran - gers now are friends.
4 bet - ter known: we see, and praise him here.
5 in the world, we'll live and speak his praise.

GOSPEL: Matthew 14:13-21

Deacon The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People ***Glory to you, Lord Christ.***

Jesus withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Deacon The Gospel of the Lord.

People ***Praise to you, Lord Christ.***

REFLECTION

THE REV. CURT NORMAN

Sermon Notes

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."
(Matthew 3:1-2)

"... and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matthew 3:6-7)

"Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" (Matthew 11:5)

"Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (Matthew 3:10)

"His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire" (Matthew 3:12)

"... the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them" (Matthew 11:5)

"... among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matthew 11:11)

"Since the time [From the days] John the Baptist came until now, the kingdom of heaven has been going forward in strength [advancing forcefully; or subject to violence; suffering violent attacks], and forceful [or violent] people have been trying to take it by force [lay hold of it; or attack it]." (differing translations of Matthew 11:12)

Public Domain artwork used in sermon

John the Baptist with child Jesus, in the painting *The Holy Children with a Shell* by Bartolomé Esteban Perez Murillo

The Beheading of St John the Baptist, 1608 (Valletta Co-Cathedral, Malta)

St. John the Baptist Preaching, c. 1665, by Mattia Preti

Verrocchio, Leonardo da Vinci - *Battesimo di Cristo*

The Preaching of St. John the Baptist by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1566

Juan Fernández de Navarrete - *St John the Baptist in the Prison*

Mattia Preti - *St John the Baptist before Herod*

THE NICENE CREED

All stand.

We believe in one God,

***the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.***

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

***the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.***

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

***he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.***

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again

***in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven***

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

***He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.***

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

*who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.*

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE: FORM III

Father, we pray for your holy catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;
That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;
That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest;
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

Lord Jesus Christ, we pray for you to put an end to the coronavirus pandemic, and the hate-filled divisions in our nation.

In the St. John's family, we pray for Heather, Suzanne, Sue, John, Scott, Gail, Donald, Brenda, Judy, Brian, Mike, Shirley, Nancy, Keith, Al & Jane, Sharon, Sallie, David & Nanette, Rod, Dave, Karen, Ted, Curt, Pam, and the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan.

For those celebrating birthdays this week: especially Tom Lynes and Dan Hoffman.

For those celebrating wedding anniversaries, especially Amy & Ben Denay, Sue & Richard Marquardt.

Watch over your children, O Lord, as their days increase; bless and guide them wherever they may be. Strengthen them when they stand; comfort them when discouraged or sorrowful; raise them up if they fall; and in their hearts may your peace which passes understanding abide all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favor look upon you, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace; that you may faithfully live together in this life, and in the age to come have life everlasting. *Amen.*

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

Hasten, O Father, the coming of your kingdom; and grant that we your servants, who now live by faith, may with joy behold your Son at his coming in glorious majesty; through Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

The Deacon or Celebrant says

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People

Most merciful God, we confess that 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 are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The Bishop, when present, or the Priest, stands and says

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. *Amen.*

THE PEACE

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People ***And also with you.***

Then the Ministers and the People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

The Celebrant says

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. *Ephesians 5:2*

At St. John's, financial stewardship is an important component of a balanced spiritual life. Returning to God from that which God has given us is a tangible way to express our faith. When each of us gives as each of us is able, together we will discover an abundance to support our ministry and mission in and beyond Old Town Saginaw, Michigan.



Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. – 1 PETER 4:10

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

The Eyes of All Wait Upon Thee

THE LORD'S PRAYER

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People and Celebrant

*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 SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

In union, blessed Jesus, with the faithful gathered at every altar of your Church where your blessed Body and Blood are offered this day, I long to offer praise and thanksgiving, for creation and all the blessings of this life, for the redemption won for us by your life, death, and resurrection, for the means of grace and the hope of glory. I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament, and, since I cannot at this time receive Communion, I pray you to come into my heart. I unite myself with

*you and embrace you with all my heart, my soul, and my mind. Let nothing separate me from you; let me serve you in this life until, by your grace, I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace.
Amen.*

THE GRACE

The Officiant then says

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. ***Amen.*** *2 Corinthians 13:14*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People

Thanks be to God.

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ENTRANCE RITE

Typically, when Episcopalians gather for public worship on a Sunday, we have a service of Communion, also known as the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. We do this because this is the way Christians have worshiped since the earliest days of the Church. When Jesus instituted the first eucharist at the Last Supper, he commanded all of his followers to continue the practice. It is the clearest, strongest way we know to tell the story of Jesus' death and resurrection, and to maintain our bond with him and with one another.

Episcopal worship is structured, and it uses *The Book of Common Prayer* as its source. The texts and patterns of worship in the prayer book are derived from the earliest surviving texts of ancient Christian worship, updated and expanded as times and circumstances have changed. The common words of the prayer book express our most deeply held beliefs, keep us connected to the timeless elements of Christian tradition, and allow us to participate as more than just listeners.

A eucharistic service has two main parts. The first part is known as the "Service of the Word" or the "Liturgy of the Word." The word *liturgy* means *the work of the people*. In the Liturgy of the Word we gather in the Lord's name, proclaim and respond to the Word of God, and pray for the world and the church. We do this, not as a group of spectators watching a group of performers, but as the people of God acting together, each with their appointed part to play.

We begin with the gathering rite. Now that we are assembled in one place, those people who have designated roles in the service enter in procession while we all sing praise to God. The procession allows everyone to take their appointed places, while at the same time helping the service begin on a note of dignity and reverence. When all are ready, the minister in charge of the celebration, known as the celebrant or presider, begins a dialogue of praise with the congregation. This is known as the Opening Acclamation. After an optional prayer to prepare us for worship, we commonly sing a second hymn of praise which has been used for centuries in the gathering rite. It is known by its opening words "Glory to God." The gathering rite concludes with a prayer, or collect, that reflects the themes of this particular Sunday.

THE LESSONS

In this part of the Liturgy of the Word we sit in order to listen to readings from the Bible. It is our custom to stand, sit, or kneel at different parts of the service. Most of these postures are optional, but we find them useful in helping to worship with our bodies and not just our minds. Typically, we follow the biblical Jewish and Christian traditions of standing to praise God and to pray, sitting in order to listen, and kneeling in order to express penitence or devotion. If you have a physical condition which makes any of these difficult, you are always welcome to adopt a more comfortable position. You may also notice that some people engage in various acts of personal devotion, such as bowing or making the sign of the cross. These also are optional, used by some in order to enhance their individual experience of worship.

We use a fixed pattern of scripture readings, called a lectionary, that allows us to hear most of the Bible within a three-year period. This makes sure that nothing important is left out, and that preachers don't overlook some passages in favor of others.

It has long been a tradition among Christians that lay people read the first lessons. We all participate in singing or saying the psalm together. The Psalms are the ancient hymnal of the Jews, and Christians have always continued to use them. The final reading at a eucharistic service is always from one of the four gospels. Christians have long given special importance to the gospels because that is where we hear directly the words and actions of Jesus. We express this importance by having an ordained minister do this reading, and by standing when we listen to it. If there is a deacon present, it is always the deacon's prerogative to do the gospel reading.

After the sermon, which is always based on at least one of the scripture readings, we conclude our response to God's Word by standing and saying together the Nicene Creed. This summary statement of Christian belief was adopted by the undivided church in the fourth century and is one of the oldest texts of Christian worship.

In the last portion of the Liturgy of the Word, we pray for the church and for the world, and make our final preparation for the Communion part of the service. Our prayers always include the entire universal Church, the nation, the welfare of the world, the concerns of the local community, those who suffer or are in trouble, and those who have died. We usually use a pattern of prayer that allows everyone in the congregation to make responses. When the prayers are concluded, we say together a general confession of our sins and listen as the celebrant pronounces God's forgiveness. Then we are prepared to exchange God's Peace, in which we briefly greet those nearby in the name of the Lord. The ancient custom of passing the Peace expresses our unity in Christ and our readiness to receive Communion. It marks the end of the Liturgy of the Word.

HOLY COMMUNION (not part of this particular service)

We begin the Liturgy of the Table, or Holy Communion, by accepting the people's offerings of bread, wine, money, and other gifts. Since there are no words being spoken at this time, it is also a good time for an offering of music, such as an anthem from the choir. The preparation of the bread and wine on the altar is one of the traditional roles of the deacon, if there is one present. Either leavened or unleavened bread may be used. We use actual wine just as Jesus did and as he commanded us to do. A little water is generally added to reduce the strength of the wine and to symbolize the water that poured out of Jesus' side after his crucifixion. We typically use vessels made from precious metals as a way of honoring the importance of communion. We use linen cloths on the altar or holy table in ways which are very similar to the way in which you might use linen or other special napkins and tablecloths at a fancy dinner party. In fact, both scripture and Christian tradition often compare communion to a great heavenly banquet or feast of all the saints.

The word *eucharist* means *to give thanks*. In every communion service Christians tell the story of God's creation and God's saving act of redemption by the sending of Jesus. We focus on the death and resurrection of Jesus which is the heart of the Christian faith. We listen to his oldest recorded words at the Last Supper with his disciples, in which he commanded us to continue the tradition he was beginning. You will find the clearest expression of the meaning of communion by listening carefully to the words of the service.

The one who presides over eucharist is always an ordained person known as a presbyter or priest. In the earliest centuries of the church, the bishop, or chief pastor, would always preside, but soon the church grew too large for one person to do this. So the bishop ordains and delegates priests to celebrate the eucharist in each local congregation. The three-fold order of the ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons goes back to the beginnings of the church; that is why Episcopalians and others retain these orders to this day.

As the words and action at the altar unfold, they do so according to a four-fold pattern first used by Jesus when he miraculously fed the multitudes with bread and fish, and also used again at the Last Supper. First he *took* the bread. Then he *gave thanks* over the bread. He *broke* the bread, and finally he *gave* it to the people. As we involve ourselves in the drama of communion, together we remember what happened in such a vivid way that this memory is brought right back into the present moment.

Through all of our prayers, we believe that God has now transformed the bread and wine so that Christ is truly present in them. Together they are an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace - the traditional definition of a sacrament. Every baptized Christian is encouraged and invited to receive communion by coming forward near the altar. The ushers will guide you. You may either stand or kneel. The celebrant will first bring a wafer of bread to you, placing it on your outstretched hands for you to eat. Then the deacon or a lay eucharistic minister will bring round the chalice of

wine. It has always been Christian practice to drink communion wine from this common cup, and you may do so by grasping the chalice at the bottom and tipping it slowly. Though there are no recorded cases of any illness ever being spread through the common cup, we recognize that some may prefer not to drink from it for various reasons. You are welcome to receive the bread only (and not the wine), or to have the minister dip your bread in the chalice and then place it on your tongue, or to take your piece of bread and dip it yourself into the chalice. After you have received communion, you may return to your seat.

The deacon (or priest) clears the altar in much the same way as you might clear your own table after dinner, removing the dishes and cloths and eating or storing any leftovers. In church, we generally consume any leftover bread and wine immediately. Occasionally some is reverently put aside to carry to those who have not been able to attend the service. The celebrant then leads everyone in saying a post-communion prayer, followed by a hymn and a closing procession. The final act of our common worship is the dismissal, which formally closes the worship with a call for us to go as Christ's servants out into the world. It reminds us that the purpose of worship is not simply to encourage and build ourselves up, but for all of us to be empowered and sent forth as ministers of Christ.

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