

**ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**Aitkin, Minnesota**  
**September 18, 2022**  
**The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost**  
**ONLINE ORDER OF WORSHIP**

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

## Introit

Your testimonies are righteous for- | ever;\*  
give me understanding that | I may live.

Righteous are you, | O LORD,\*  
and right are your | just decrees.

You have appointed your testimonies in |  
righteousness\*

and in all | faithfulness.

My zeal con- | sumes me,\*  
because my foes for- | get your words.

Your promise is | well tried,\*  
and your servant | loves it.

Your righteousness is righteous for- | ever,\*  
and your | law is true.

**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.**

Your testimonies are righteous for- | ever;\*  
give me understanding that | I may live.

## Collect of the Day

P Let us pray.

O Lord, keep Your Church in Your perpetual mercy;  
and because without You we cannot but fall,  
preserve us from all things hurtful, and lead us to all  
things profitable to our salvation; through Jesus  
Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with  
You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

## Old Testament Reading

*Amos 8:4–7*

Hear this, you who trample on the needy  
and bring the poor of the land to an end,  
saying, “When will the new moon be over,  
that we may sell grain?

And the Sabbath,  
that we may offer wheat for sale,  
that we may make the ephah small and the shekel  
great

and deal deceitfully with false balances,  
that we may buy the poor for silver  
and the needy for a pair of sandals  
and sell the chaff of the wheat?”

The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob:  
“Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.”

- A This is the Word of the Lord.
- C **Thanks be to God.**

## Epistle

*1 Timothy 2:1–15*

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. For this I was appointed a

preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

### **Holy Gospel**

*Luke 16:1–15*

[Jesus] also said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions. And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’ And the manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.’ So, summoning his master’s debtors one by

one, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' He said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.

"One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. And he said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise be to Thee, O Christ.**

### **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.**

**Sermon Text – Luke 16:1-15**

**Sermon Theme – Well Done, Unfaithful Servant**

When my father, a retired pastor, died, the pastor of the church of which he was a member chose a bulletin cover for his funeral service which quoted the words of Matthew 25, verse 21, where it says, **“Well done, good and faithful servant.”** I think it was the pastor’s way of recognizing my father’s service as a pastor.

Today, in our text, it is as if a bad and unfaithful servant is told, “Well done.” You see, this servant is

about to be fired for mismanaging his master's possessions. In today's world, when a person is fired, the company ordinarily has that person escorted out of the building so that he or she can't do the kind of mischief that we hear this unfaithful servant was guilty of.

You see, this unfaithful servant knew he was going to be fired, but he was still in possession of the master's books. So, he started giving his masters stuff away. In one case it was 50 measures of oil. In another case, it was 20 measures of wheat. Following the unfaithful servant's instructions, the master's debtors changed what they owed. They were off the books. The unfaithful servant was making friends for himself so that when he was fired, people would help him.

In today's world, the master would call the police and file a complaint. The unfaithful servant would go to jail. All those unethical transactions would be said to be "null and void." That's not the way it is in the parable that Jesus tells. We are told that **"the master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness"** (Luke 16:8). Or, to put it another way, "Well done, you bad and unfaithful servant."

So, what's the point Jesus is trying to get across by telling this parable? Last week our Gospel lesson (Luke 15:1-10). We heard how the Pharisees were complaining about Jesus hanging out with sinners and tax-collectors. I think, it is as if they thought Jesus was mismanaging God's kingdom. The Pharisees thought Jesus was giving away God's stuff. That would be God's

salvation and they thought Jesus was giving it away to people who didn't deserve it.

Of course, the Pharisees could point to the words of our Old Testament lesson where God points to those who **“trample on the needy”** (Amos 8:4), those who **“deal deceitfully”** (Amos 8:5), and those who **“buy the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals”** (Amos 8:6). We heard how the LORD says, **“Surely I will never forget any of their deeds”** (Amos 8:7). The Pharisees must have wondered how Jesus could just forgive the sins of those sinners, those tax-collectors who everyone knew trampled on the needy, dealt deceitfully, and would have bought the poor for a pair of sandals. Why was Jesus hanging out with such people?

We don't forget the sins others have committed against us. We don't forget that person who spread that awful gossip about us. We don't forget how that other person betrayed us. We don't forget how that third person who took advantage of us. We could point to the words of our Old Testament lesson and justify what we are doing.

What God says through the prophet Amos is true! God does not forget any sin, no, not one. What He does is deal with them, all of them, every single one of them. Jesus takes the debt we owe on account of our sin, all of it, to the cross and pays for it, with His blood. The debt we owe on account of our sin is not forgotten. It is atoned for. All that we owed, died with Jesus. It is as if Jesus takes our bill and writes, “Paid in full.” It is all forgiven.



The Pharisees didn't like that very much. There are still people today who don't like that very much. Maybe those people are sometimes you and me as we think somebody's got to pay for what they did to us!

Who says forgiveness is easy? It isn't. Who says somebody didn't pay? When we feel that way or think that way, look at the cross and remember what Jesus did for you there. He paid the price for your sin, and not just your sin, but the sin of all people, including that person who spread gossip about us or who betrayed us or took advantage of us.

It is as we heard in our epistle lesson for today (1 Timothy 2:1-15). God **“desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth”** (1 Timothy 2:4). The truth that He wants all people to come to the knowledge of is that Jesus is our Savior who cancelled all of our debt, not just a portion of it.

Each and every Sunday, you come with the debt you have accumulated over the past week or weeks, debt you owe to God because you have dishonored His name or ignored His Word, debt you owe because you have rebelled against authority or hurt others by your words or deeds, debt you owe because you have lusted after what wasn't yours. Bring it all to Jesus and listen to the manager, your Savior, Jesus. He takes it all way; He forgives you your sin.

And then, as you leave this place of worship, think of those who might owe you because they have wronged you this past week. Will you demand payment from them? Or will you forgive them? Who knows it

might be that the folks you forgive are going to be the ones who will welcome you into heaven.

While the world might think that is crazy, like the Pharisees thought Jesus was crazy, because of the faith that is in your heart, the Father will say to you, **“Well done, good and faithful servant.”** AMEN

- P The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
- C **Amen.**

### **Prayer of the Church**

Kind Father, Your Son declared to us that we cannot serve You and also be devoted to money. Free all Your baptized children from obsession with the goods of this world, that they may set their hearts on the joys of the kingdom and the inheritance that never fades.

Almighty God, You entrust to Your people the abundant wealth of Christ’s salvation in Your Word and Sacraments. Bless pastors, that they might be faithful stewards of these mysteries, and grant that all Your people would make proper use of Your Means of Grace and rejoice in Your salvation.

Maker of heaven and earth, You have created man and woman for different offices and with different gifts, that they might complement one another and glorify You. Grant that, in our homes and congregations, Your people might rejoice in the callings You have given them.

God, our Savior, uphold \_\_\_\_\_, our president; \_\_\_\_\_, our governor; and all whom

You have placed in high positions with wisdom and mercy, that we may lead peaceable and quiet lives, godly and dignified in every way.

Heavenly Father, be with the sick and those who suffer, those troubled in mind, those grieving in their sorrows, and the dying in their last hours [*especially* \_\_\_\_\_]. Grant them the comfort of Your presence, relief according to Your will and peace in their hearts.

Gracious God, Your Son gave Himself as a ransom for all and now gives Himself to us, that we might have life and salvation. Give us unity in faith and hearts eager for mercy as we receive His body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins.

Almighty Father, You desire all to be saved. Remember Your foes who forget Your Word and call them to repentance and faith, that they also would rejoice in Your righteousness and salvation.

We give thanks to You, O Lord, for You have forgiven our debt of sin for the sake of Jesus. Preserve us in His grace and life until that day when You gather us to be among the saints in glory around Your throne; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### **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**

*LSB 202*

☞ The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be  
gracious unto you.  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give  
you peace.

☉ **Amen.**

## **Acknowledgments**

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book

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