

Sept 27 2020 Worship at Home

Good morning – welcome to worship

I hope you are able to gather everyone in your household together this morning. If you are not alone - assign parts of this beforehand. If you don't have a Bible you can google the scripture readings and print them out too. Perhaps print out copies of this for everyone present. This Liturgy is from the LBW book. Prayers are from Sundays & Seasons.

Shut off all the distractions in your home. Sit in the quiet for a bit – take some deep breaths. Light your candle.

The Gathering

Call to Worship

Trust in the Lord at all times.

Pour out your hearts before God.

God is our refuge and strength, and very present help in times of trouble.

Let us worship.

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

Hymn WOV 719 ELW 526 - God is here

Prayer of the Day

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The WORD

Ezekiel 18: 1-4, 25-32

Psalm 25:1-9

Philippians 2:1-13

Gospel: Matthew 21:23-32

Sermon Rev. Norine Gullons

What authority do we have to be obedient to? I guess it depends on the circumstance!

I live on a cul de sac, at the end of the street. There are two young boys who ride their bicycles on the road when no one is around. Even though the rest of us are careful about driving on our street, whenever one of us pulls out to leave, the dad or mom calls out to the boys to stay still. And they do. But what would happen if they didn't obey their parents? They might get physically hurt by a driven car. They also might get a dressing down or scolding from their parents, or their bikes might get confiscated for awhile. The boys honor their father and mother.

Jesus has been in conflict with the religious authorities - the Pharisees- since the first days of his ministry. For three years he has been in running conflict with these people. His trustworthiness was brought into question by them. They wanted to see Jesus credentials.

In our world today we have information just flying at us constantly from every angle. If one hears certain rhetoric very often, eventually certain people begin to believe the lies. We have seen this happen in our neighboring country.

How do we learn who & what to trust, and who & what NOT to trust? Did these chief priests expect Jesus to reach into the folds of his garments and pull out official papers signed by a King and confirmed with an official seal in wax? Well, probably, but that wasn't going to happen! They would be mightily disappointed.

Instead of offering credentials Jesus engaged them in one of their own favourite games, that is - asking tricky questions. Then he told them the parable of the two sons. He also told them that sinners and prostitutes would enter the reign of God

ahead of them. Jesus actually told them a series of stories. When they listened closely these elders did NOT look good in any of them.

They were furious! They wanted to arrest him, but they were afraid the crowds would protest. By now the general public regarded Jesus as a prophet. He had street smarts and credibility with all kinds of people. He also carried all authority on heaven and earth. Street creds can be fickle but the authority of God is everlasting.

Our own reformation history of believing in scripture alone, faith alone, and grace alone, provides a guide for discerning what is authoritative and trustworthy when it comes to our faith.

As children of God we carry precious credentials. Our foreheads are marked with the cross of Christ forever. We are sealed by the Holy Spirit. Jesus story is an invitation from him to go and do God's work in the vineyard - the messed up world and communities that we live in. We may not always do this ministry exactly perfect but we try to do it to the best of our ability.

Our good intentions do not always lead to actions or commitments. God calls us to work in the world in our everyday lives. We do that through word and deed, as we strive for justice for all and peace for all.

This is the consequence of encountering and engaging with Jesus. He is not interested in discussing the meaning of life. Today He confronts us with the issue of his identity, and the call to faith in him. In 2020 he is still asking us – *who do you say that I am?* He does not allow for beating around the bush. He will do whatever it takes to call us to faith in him.

Our Christ has a jester like quality – a holy foolishness about Him. His spirit will never be controlled or captured. He eludes our grasp - and he confounds us and claims us all at the same time.

We say yes to respond to God's gracious invitation. We gather together to give thanks and to ask for the healing of our bodies, minds and spirits and then we go out into the world to serve with joy. Amen

Hymn ELW 513 - Listen God is Calling

Prayers of the people are led by Debbie Kargus

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

In all the world, give your church unity. Inspire all the baptized with the mind of Christ. Where the church is powerful and where it struggles, shape us with humility and obedience so that your love may be at work in us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Your Son took on all of bodily life in our world, even to death. Preserve and keep your creation, O God. Mend and redeem places that are polluted and damaged, so that all of creation confesses you as Lord. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Turn the nations toward life. Where our ways are unfair, give us new hearts and new spirits. Where sin permeates our cultures and institutions change our minds and teach us to trust your authority. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Our lives are yours, O God. Relieve the suffering of those who are ill in body, mind, or spirit, esp those we name before you now. . . . Defend the lives and welfare of children who are abused or neglected, hungry or exploited, bullied or lonely. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Turn this congregation away from our own interests toward the interests of others. Fill us with your compassion and sympathy. Bless ministries of care in our community *especially the Arnprior Food Bank*; make us into signs of your mercy and justice for our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Thank you for those who have gone into the kingdom ahead of us—the likely and the unlikely, obedient and slow to learn. By their witness, teach us to confess Jesus Christ as Lord in life and in death. 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.**

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.

Hymn: ELW 537 & LBW 260 - On Our Way Rejoicing

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you,
The Lord look upon you with favour and give you (+) peace. Amen.

Dismissal Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.