

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

*Benediction

*Hymn “Rise Up, O Saints of God!” ELW #669

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. God is at work in you.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

THOSE SERVING TODAY

Ministers: All God’s People; Pastor: Karen Sparling; Organist: Nalani Bever;
Reader: Barb Bever

IN THE MILITARY

Jacob Picha, Dylan Dougherty, Danelle Dougherty, Matthew Dutton,
Robert Cale

IN OUR PRAYERS

Gloria Meltesen, Darlene Babbitt, Judy Bever, Craig King, Mary Leis, Tracie
Herman, Jayden Shea, Erin Long, Sandra Lamb, Roger O’Gara, Barb
Delong Nofsinger, Barbara Johnson, Dick Beier

CALENDAR

Wed., Sept. 27	The Chosen, Episodes 5 & 6	12:30 PM
Sun., Oct. 1	Sunday School	9:00 AM
	Worship	10:15 AM



St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church
Wilton, WI

17th Sunday after Pentecost
September 24, 2023

**Inviting People to
Journey with Christ’s Family
in Spreading God’s Love and Mercy**

Matthew narrates one of Jesus’ controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God’s mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God’s mercy we are all beggars.

**(Indicates that the people should stand as they are able.)*

Announcements

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

*Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be God,
the one who forms us,
✠ Jesus who bears the cross,
the Spirit who makes our joy complete.
Amen.

Let us bow before God in humility,
confessing our sin.

Steadfast and faithful God,
you have revealed the ways of justice,
yet we fail to follow you.
We are overwhelmed
by the world's violence and suffering.
We are afraid to risk what we have
for the sake of others.
For the harm we have caused,
known and unknown, forgive us.
For the unjust demands we place on others
and your creation, forgive us.
For the ways we turn away
from you and our neighbor, forgive us.
Lead us back to you
and set us on the right path;
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

Beloved in Christ,
God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.
God's compassion is beyond compare.
In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.
In ☩ Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

***Hymn "Take My Life, That I May Be" ELW #685**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
And the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

***KYRIE ELW p.184**

***Canticle of praise "Glory to God" ELW p.185**

Prayer of the Day
Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us
your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us
your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your
Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION (Merciful God, receive our prayer.)**

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

OFFERING

***Offertory Hymn "Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil" ELW #512**

***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Let us pray,
God of power, God of plenty,
all things belong to you.
We bring your gifts to the table,
that all might be fed.
Form us into the body of your Beloved,
Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, 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 the usual daily wage?' ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

The gospel of the Lord. Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Reverend Karen Sparling

Hymn

"Lord of Light"

ELW #688

(Melody: Praise the Lord, O Heavens ELW #823)

***Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,**

**he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**

Amen.

Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?

Jonah 3:10--4:11

¹⁰When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

^{4:1}But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ²He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. ³And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

⁹But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." ¹⁰Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and

which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 145:1-8

¹I will exalt you, my God and king,
and bless your name forever and ever.

²**Every day will I bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.**

³Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised!
There is no end to your greatness.

⁴**One generation shall praise your works to another
and shall declare your power.**

⁵I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty
and all your marvelous works.

⁶**They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts,
and I will recount your greatness.**

⁷They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.

⁸**The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

SECOND READING

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

Philippians 1:21-30

²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. 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 for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW p. 188

Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

The holy gospel according to Matthew 20:1-16

Glory to you, O God.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹"The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸When evening came, the owner