



"...FORGIVE YOUR BROTHER FROM YOUR HEART."

THE 16TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SEPTEMBER 17, 2023

SAINT PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

4660 West 94th Street, Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453

(708) 423-1040
Pastor John Moeller

www.stpauloaklawn.org
Director of Music Ruth Sievers

As We Gather

The Scripture readings for today focus on living together as the family of God. Joseph forgave his brothers, even though they had sold him into slavery. Paul urges us not to quarrel over opinions about earthly matters, but to honor the Lord in all we do. And Jesus tells a parable about God's overwhelming forgiveness, and how such forgiveness should move us to forgive others. We can live together as His sons and daughters only because He has forgiven us on account of Christ, and now we are enabled to share this forgiveness as people of God.

Prelude

"Prelude in D Major"

J. Kindermann

Opening Hymn

"Children of the Heavenly Father"

#725

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Children of the heav'nly Father
Safely in His bosom gather;
Nestling bird nor star in heaven
Such a refuge e'er was given. | 3 Neither life nor death shall ever
From the Lord His children sever;
Unto them His grace He showeth,
And their sorrows all He knoweth. |
| 2 God His own doth tend and nourish;
In His holy courts they flourish.
From all evil things He spares them;
In His mighty arms He bears them. | 4 Though He giveth or He taketh,
God His children ne'er forsaketh;
His the loving purpose solely
To preserve them pure and holy. |

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Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

Psalm 103:1–5

- P** Bless the Lord, O my soul,
C and all that is within me, bless His holy name!
P Bless the Lord, O my soul,
C and forget not all His benefits,
P who forgives all your iniquity,
C who heals all your diseases,
P who redeems your life from the pit,
C who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
P who satisfies you with good
C so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Confession and Absolution

- P** The Lord is righteous and just, and He cares for all who are oppressed. As we'll hear in today's Old Testament reading, Joseph's brothers threw him into a pit, sold him into slavery, and then lied to their father about what had happened.
- C** We, too, are guilty of sinning against those You've placed into our lives, even our own families. We have harmed those we love through hurtful words and actions, and we have tried to cover up our sins, hoping to get away with evil.

- P** Let us turn in repentance to our merciful and gracious heavenly Father, and in all humility, confess these and all of our sins before Him.

We pause to remember our sins before our gracious Heavenly Father...

- P** As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear Him. He showed compassion to us by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, who died for our forgiveness and rose again to bring us new life. Because of Jesus, God does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

- C** **Amen. As far as the east is from the west, so far does God remove our transgressions from us.**

✠ Word ✠

Prayer of the Day

- P** The Lord be with you.

- C** **And also with you.**

- P** Let us pray.

O God, You are always ready to hear the prayers of Your people. Grant that we may with all boldness and courage bring our petitions to You with the assurance that You will hear them for the sake of our Lord Jesus, forgiving our trespasses and granting us Your guidance in this life and every blessing in the life to come. This we ask through the same 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

✠ God's Good Purposes ✠

Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." ¹⁶So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ²¹So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

- L** This is the Word of the Lord.

- C** **Thanks be to God.**

Anthem of Praise

"Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness"

R. Edwards

Epistle

✠ Do Not Pass Judgment on One Another ✠

Romans 14:1-12

¹As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ²One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

⁵One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. ⁷For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. ¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; ¹¹for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." ¹²So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Gospel

✠ The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant ✠

Matthew 18:21-35

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eighteenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

²¹Peter came up and said to [Jesus], "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven. ²³"Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. ³²Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

✠ Confession of Faith ✠

The Second Article

P In the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed, we confess Jesus to be the Savior, the One who fulfills God's promises and brings us forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

C **I believe 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.**

P What does this mean?

C I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

Sermon Hymn

“I Lay My Sins on Jesus”

#606

1 I lay my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God;
He bears them all and frees us
From the accursèd load.
I bring my guilt to Jesus
To wash my crimson stains
Clean in His blood most precious
Till not a spot remains.

2 I lay my wants on Jesus;
All fullness dwells in Him;
He heals all my diseases;
My soul He does redeem.

I lay my griefs on Jesus,
My burdens and my cares;
He from them all releases;
He all my sorrows shares.

3 I rest my soul on Jesus,
This weary soul of mine;
His right hand me embraces;
I on His breast recline.
I love the name of Jesus,
Immanuel, Christ, the Lord;
Like fragrance on the breezes
His name abroad is poured.

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Sermon

Prayer of the Church

P Today, Instead of the congregation speaking our usual prayer response, we'll sing our response at the beginning and after each petition as it's printed for us in the worship folder...

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs...

C (Response) **O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer;
When I call answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer;
Come and listen to me.**

Your Offering—*may be left in the offering plates near the doors as you leave. Those worshipping at home may continue to mail or drop off offerings at the church office, and on-line giving is available to everyone on our website at www.stpauloaklawn.org. For information about regular electronic giving, please contact the church office.*

Offertory Meditation

A word about the Sacrament of the Altar...

We believe Jesus' own words that the bread and wine we receive in Holy Communion is indeed His true Body and Blood and not just a representation of it. We also acknowledge St. Paul's instruction to the Church at Corinth that it is harmful for anyone to receive the Sacrament without recognizing the real presence of His Body and Blood. Because of this, in Christian love we ask anyone who does not understand these truths to please refrain from receiving the Sacrament until you've spoken with the pastor. (*Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-30*)

✠ The Sacrament of the Altar ✠

Preface

- P** The Lord be with you.
C And also with you.
P Lift up your hearts.
C We lift them to the Lord.
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Proper Preface

The Lord's Prayer

- C** Our Father, who art in Heaven...

Words of Our Lord

Pax Domini

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C Amen.

✠ Distribution of the Sacrament ✠

Hymn

"Chief of Sinners Though I Be"

#611

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed His blood for me,
Died that I might live on high,
Lives that I might never die.
As the branch is to the vine,
I am His, and He is mine. | | Lasting as eternity!
Love that found me—wondrous thought!
Found me when I sought Him not. |
| 2 | Oh, the height of Jesus' love,
Higher than the heav'ns above,
Deeper than the depths of sea, | 3 | Only Jesus can impart
Balm to heal the wounded heart,
Peace that flows from sin forgiv'n,
Joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,
Faith and hope to walk with God
In the way that Enoch trod. |

4 Chief of sinners though I be,
Christ is all in all to me;
All my wants to Him are known,
All my sorrows are His own.
He sustains the hidden life
Safe with Him from earthly strife.

5 O my Savior, help afford
By Your Spirit and Your Word!
When my wayward heart would stray,
Keep me in the narrow way;
Grace in time of need supply
While I live and when I die.

Text: Public domain

Hymn

“Lord Jesus, Think on Me”

#610

1 Lord Jesus, think on me
And purge away my sin;
From worldly passions set me free
And make me pure within.

In all my pain and misery,
O be my health and life!

2 Lord Jesus, think on me,
By anxious thoughts oppressed;
Let me Your loving servant be
And taste Your promised rest.

4 Lord Jesus, think on me
Nor let me go astray;
Through darkness and perplexity
Point out Your chosen way.

3 Lord Jesus, think on me
Amid the battle’s strife;

5 Lord Jesus, think on me
That, when this life is past,
I may the_ eternal brightness see
And share Your joy at last.

Text: Public domain

Hymn

“Feed Thy Children, God Most Holy”

#774

1 Feed Thy children, God most holy;
Comfort sinners poor and lowly.
O Thou Bread of Life from heaven,
Bless the food Thou here hast given!

As these gifts the body nourish,
May our souls in graces flourish
Till with saints in heav’nly splendor
At Thy feast due thanks we render.

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Communion Blessing

P The true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart ✠ in peace.

Closing Prayer

Benediction

Closing Hymn

“Where Charity and Love Prevail”

#845

1 Where charity and love prevail
There God is ever found;
Brought here together by Christ’s love
By love are we thus bound.

2 With grateful joy and holy fear
His charity we learn;
Let us with heart and mind and soul
Now love Him in return.

3 Forgive we now each other's faults
As we our faults confess,
And let us love each other well
In Christian holiness.

4 Let strife among us be unknown;
Let all contention cease;

Be God's the glory that we seek;
Be ours His holy peace.

5 Let us recall that in our midst
Dwells Christ, His only Son;
As members of His body joined
We are in Him made one.

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Postlude

“Postlude in F Major”

J. Kindermann



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & THANKS

Organist: Ruth Sievers

Vocalist: Julia Volk

Lector: Sunday: Audrey Mitchell; Wednesday: Rev. George Mrochen

Altar Care: Sunday: Denise Murray; Wednesday: Sandy Barry

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Announcements & Notes

Next Sunday, Sept. 24, please join us in the Timothy Room as we recognize Sandy Barry's 15 years of service as St Paul's church office Secretary / Administrative Assistant. There will be refreshments and fellowship. A box will be available to receive cards and greetings. There will be no Bible Class that day, but we will meet today – so join us there too.

Next Saturday is our annual Veteran's Luncheon. This will be the largest crowd so far - we've had to stop accepting reservations as we've already hit our maximum capacity for the gym!

Donations of baked goods are needed for the Veteran's Luncheon by this Friday, 09-26. Bake or buy from the store, all donations are appreciated!

If you are available to help set up tables and chairs for the luncheon on Friday, please see Rich Przybycien or give him a call as soon as possible.

Our Wednesday Evening Communion Services will be back in the Sanctuary beginning this Wednesday at 6pm.

Adult Choir rehearsals have begun! Rehearsals are Wednesdays at 7:15pm after the Wednesday evening church service. Please join us!

The Southwest Lutheran Chorus begins fall rehearsals tomorrow evening, September 18th at 7pm in the Timothy Room. For more information, please pick up a flyer from the narthex table or speak to Ruth Sievers, director.

Thursday Evening Bible Study with Curtis Simonson continues at 6:30pm in the Timothy Room. The study this Thursday is on the miracles of Jesus. All are invited!

The next meeting of the Voter's Assembly is Tuesday, September 26th at 7pm. All voters are encouraged to attend.

The Ladies Guild's September meeting is a free "Welcome Luncheon" served at 1pm on Tuesday, September 26th in the Timothy Room. All women are invited for food, fellowship, and to hear the Guild's plans for the coming year. So that the Board can provide enough food, please sign the attendance sheet on the clipboard outside the church office or call the office at (708) 423-1040. Please come and bring a friend!

Remembering our homebound friends is a caring ministry of St. Paul meant to help us stay in touch with our members who aren't able to be with us for worship. Please remember them in your prayers. You may also like to send a note or a card. This week our homebound friends are Mary Lou and Mike Degidio, 11553 Autobahn E, Unit 201, Palos Park, IL 60464.

Please pray for these members of our St. Paul family

Stan Wirtschoreck
Rev. George Mrochen
Rich & Jan Przybycien
Rev. Paul and Judy Anderson
Sue & Bill Volk
Arthur Gerth
Ingrid Lesko
Patricia Murdoch
Jan Briede
Roy Hodgeman
Katherine Hice
Kurt Seehofer
Flora Jones
Graham Jackson
Kevin Hickey
Gloria Meyer
Mary Ann Colander
Elaine Lebron
Melva Smith
Delores Stegemann
Carol Small
Mike Degidio
Norma Silinski
Beverly Sellers
Betty Beegle
Warren Miller
Delphine Cherry
Ron Klingensmith
Louis Frank
Betty Kruckow
Herta Iversen
Loretta Frank
George Dodaro, Sr.
Bob Marcinkowski

Barbara Prendergast
Nancy Bundley
Rosa Richardson
Evelyn Leise
Sue Berg

Please pray for these friends and family of our members:

Roberta & Carlos Owens
Roy Strassner
Dee DeLaurentis
Dorothy Kroll
Emily Feehan
LeRoy Bitner
Bob Hessert
Georgiana Easton
Jackie Plichta
Patricia Paulsen
Ken Kruckow
Janet Trierweiler
Vicki Warren
Rhonda Scott
Michelle Mitchell
Al Silinski
Pam Palhegyi
Carol Milazzo
Rich Huscher
The Lamberth Family
Jerry Gross
Louise Hrynkow
Gloria Folsom
Mary Beth Pasqua
Shirley Fairchild
Simeon Hoppe
Ron Lunt

Christopher Kosary
Sandy Plath
Iris McCoy
Shirley Demyres
Raquel Rameriz
Nick & Bridget DeAngelo
Henry Bondar
Kim & Shawn Skelton, Sr.
Kyle Hughes
Elaine Hoffstetter
Fred Raddatz
Allyson Seehofer
Selma Carmichael
Bernadette & Rich Trusk
Dana Kahn
Donald Hakanson
Guillermo Ramirez
Paul Noffke
Vern Howe
Pam Brown
Shawn Harland
Ann Herold
Barb Potter
Wayne Volk
Lance Barrientos
Linda Shuman
Doris Potts
Doreen Holford
Judy Collins
Luke Pajowski
Phyllis Hicks
Jimmy Kennedy, Jr.
Monica Iversen
Cathy Becker
Ken Matz
Jean & Al Zirbel

Carol Loecherbach
Miguel Hernandez
Carl Hoppe
Charley Heitz
Sophia Salus
Justin & Ashley Fasel
Frank Cogliase
Gene Wawrzynkowski
Kimberly Rooney
Helena Hoffman
Evelyn & Ron Konieski
Audrey Metes
Richard DeSaga
Ken Wenten
Margaret Lundgreen
Julie King
Sharon Bryant
Anika Seger
Monica Kato
Brian Anderson
Herb Kleeman
Debra Kleeman
Nora Beth Will DeMottes
Sarah Skelton
Barbara Apt
Bob & Gloria Freeman
Carrie Aspan
Lisa Anglin
Devon Apt
Tristan Ferry
Naomi Mauler
LaNell Mauler Koenig
Todd, Sofia & Grace Lylum
Terry Hepton
Hillary Pittelko
Marge Schmidt
Sue Berg

- *For Sue Berg (wife of Pastor Peter Berg, formerly pastor of St Peter on Kedvale)*

We pray for those who grieve:

- *For Mike Will and family on the death of his aunt, Louise Pennay, called to her eternal rest with Jesus on Sept. 12th. Services have been held in Pennsylvania.*

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Blessing

- *We give thanks with Sue & Bob Marcinkowski on the birth of their 3rd grandchild, Grayson*
- *We ask God's blessings for safe travels as George Oberg travels South America*

Please let the church office know when your need for our congregational prayers is over. (708) 423-1040