



Pentecost +18

September 22, 2024



9:00 AM

*Welcome to our worship of the living God on this **18th Sunday after Pentecost!** Today we hear James warn against selfish ambition, while the disciples quarrel over which one of them is the greatest. Jesus tells them the way to be great is to serve. Then, to make it concrete, He puts in front of them a flesh-and-blood child. We're called to welcome the children God puts in front of us, to make room for them in daily interaction, and to give them a place of honor in the assembly.*

*Congregational responses are printed in **indented boldface italics.***

GATHERING

GATHERING MUSIC

entrance HYMN:

“God is Here!”

ELW 526

See the following page for the words and music.

INVOCATION, CONFESSION, AND FORGIVENESS:

Blest are You, O God, our Creator, ✝ our Redeemer, the Wellspring of faith and love!

You fashion us; You heal us; You reform us again and again!

And yet we keep turning away from Your loving embrace and going our own ways;

We pass judgment on others before examining ourselves;

We turn our faces away from injustice and oppression;

We exploit the earth with our apathy and greed;

We place our own needs and desires above those of our neighbors,

Rather than living as catalysts of Your redeeming grace.

Hear us, O God, as we confess the sin that everyone knows and the sins we fear to name:

Silence for personal reflection and confession. Then go to page 3...

God Is Here!



1 God is here! As we your peo - ple meet to of - fer
2 Here are sym - bols to re - mind us of our life - long
3 Here our chil - dren find a wel - come in the Shep - herd's
4 Lord of all, of church and king - dom, in an age of



praise and prayer, may we find in full - er mea - sure
need of grace; here are ta - ble, font, and pul - pit;
flock and fold; here as bread and wine are tak - en,
change and doubt, keep us faith - ful to the gos - pel;



what it is in Christ we share. Here, as in the
here the cross has cen - tral place. Here in hon - es -
Christ sus - tains us as of old. Here the ser - vants
help us work your pur - pose out. Here, in this day's



world a - round us, all our var - ied skills and arts
ty of preach - ing, here in si - lence, as in speech,
of the Ser - vant seek in wor - ship to ex - plore
ded - i - ca - tion, all we have to give, re - ceive;



wait the com - ing of the Spir - it in - to o - pen minds and hearts.
here, in new - ness and re - new - al, God the Spir - it comes to each.
what it means in dai - ly liv - ing to be - lieve and to a - dore.
we, who can - not live with - out you, we a - dore you! We be - lieve!

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000
Music: ABBOT'S LEIGH, Cyril V. Taylor, 1907–1991
Text © 1979 and Music © 1942, ren. 1970 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188.
All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Used with permission through One License music license number 731531-A

INVOCATION, CONFESSION, AND FORGIVENESS (continued):

For the sake of Your beloved Son, Christ Jesus our Savior,
have mercy on us and forgive us our sins!

***Humble us by His example, transform us by Your Holy Spirit,
and recommit us to the healing of Your whole creation. Amen.***

Hear the Good News, brothers and sisters: God loves you with passion, and
always will!

Almighty God has mercy on you, forgives you all your sins through our † Lord
Jesus Christ,
strengthens you in all goodness, and by the power of the Spirit keeps you in
eternal life.

So rejoice in God's love— you're forgiven and free!

Amen. Thanks be to God!

GREETING and PRAYER OF THE DAY:

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

And also with you.

Then let's pray: Gracious God, our teacher and guide,
You draw us to Yourself and welcome us as beloved children.
Help us to lay aside all envy and selfish ambition,
that we may walk in Your ways of wisdom and understanding
as servants of Your Son, Christ Jesus our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

WORD AND PRAYER

Sung to the tune of "Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty" ELW 533

***Alleluia! Lord and Savior, open now Your saving Word.
Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred!
Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the Good News that You bring.***

FIRST READING: Wisdom of Solomon 1.16-2.24

GNT

The philosopher writes: ¹⁶ Ungodly people have brought death on themselves by the things they've said and done. They yearn for death as if it were a lover. They've gone into partnership with death, and it's just what they deserve...

^{2,1} Wicked people are wrong when they say to themselves, "Our life is short and full of sorrow, and when its end comes, there's no escape. No one's ever been known to come back from the world of the dead. ² We were born by chance, and after life is over, we'll be as if we'd never been born at all. Our breath is no more than a puff of smoke; our mind is nothing more than a spark thrown off by the beating of our heart. ³ When that spark dies, our body will crumble into ashes, and our breath will become part of the empty air. ⁴ In time, no one will remember anything we ever did, and even our names will be forgotten. Our lives will pass away like the traces of clouds and vanish like fog in the heat of the sun. ⁵ Our time on earth is like a passing shadow. There's no escape from the day of our death; it's fixed, and no one can postpone it.

⁶ The wicked say, "Come on, then, let's enjoy the good things of life, and live in this world the way we did when we were young and free of care! ⁷ Let's drink the most expensive wines and use the finest perfumes. Let's not miss a single flower in the springtime! ⁸ Before the roses wither, let's pick them and wear them in our hair! ⁹ Let's all join in and leave signs everywhere of our carefree revelry! Life owes us that much!

¹⁰ "We'll oppress the poor, even if they're righteous. We'll show no respect for widows or old people. ¹¹ We'll call ourselves right if we're strong enough to get what we want. No one ever got anywhere by being weak! ¹² Righteous people are nothing but a nuisance, so let's look for chances to get rid of them. They're against what we do; they accuse us of breaking the Law of Moses and violating the traditions of our ancestors. ¹³ They claim to know God, and they call themselves the Lord's children. ¹⁴ We can't stand the sight of people like that; what they are contradicts our whole way of thinking. ¹⁵ They're not like other people; they have strange ways. ¹⁶ They think that our moral standards are so corrupt that everything we do should be avoided. They boast of having God for their Father, and believe that when all's said and done, only the righteous will be happy...

¹⁷ "But we'll see if that's true! Let's see what'll happen when it's time for **them** to die! ¹⁸ If the righteous really **are** God's children, God will save them from their enemies. ¹⁹ So let's put them to the test. We'll be cruel to them, and torment them; then we'll find out how calm and reasonable they are! We'll find out just how much they can

stand! ²⁰ We'll condemn them to a shameful death. After all, they say that God will protect them..."

²¹ That's how evil people think, but they're wrong. They're blinded by their own wickedness. ²² They've never known God's *mysteries*, never hoped for the rewards of a holy and blameless life. ²³ When God created us, He didn't intend for us to die; He made us like Himself. ²⁴ It was the Devil's jealousy that brought death into the world, and those who belong to the Devil are the ones who'll die...

This is holy wisdom; this is holy word.

Thanks be to God!

SECOND READING:

James 3.13-4.3, 7-

8a

NRSVUE

The apostle James writes: Who's wise and knowledgeable among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, don't be arrogant and lie about the truth. ¹⁵ This isn't wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. ¹⁶ For where there's envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. ¹⁸ And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

^{4.1} Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Don't they come from your cravings that are at war within you? ² You want something and don't have it, so you commit murder. And you covet something and can't obtain it, so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You don't **have** because you don't **ask**. ³ You ask and don't receive because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures. ⁴ Adulterers! Don't you know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you suppose that the Scripture speaks to no purpose? Does the Spirit that God caused to dwell in us desire envy? ⁶ But God gives all the

more grace; therefore, it says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” ⁷ Submit yourselves, therefore, to God. Resist the devil, and he’ll flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God, and *God* will draw near to you...

This is holy wisdom; this is holy word.

Thanks be to God!

THE HOLY GOSPEL:

Mark 9.30-37

NRSVUE

See ELW 172 for the tune.

***Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Halle, halle, hallelujah! Hallelujah, hallelujah!***

The Holy Gospel according to St Mark, the ninth chapter. ***Glory to You, O Lord!***

Jesus and His disciples went on from there and passed through Galilee. He didn’t want anyone to know it, ³¹ for He was teaching His disciples, saying to them, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they’ll kill Him, and three days after being killed, He’ll rise again.” ³² But they didn’t understand what He was saying, and were afraid to ask Him.

³³ Then they came to Capernaum, and when He was in the house He asked them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” ³⁴ But they were silent, for on the way they’d argued with one another who was the greatest. ³⁵ *Jesus* sat down, called the Twelve, and said to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.” ³⁶ Then He took a little child and put it among them, and taking it in His arms, He said to them, ³⁷ “Whoever welcomes one such child in My name welcomes Me, and whoever welcomes Me welcomes not Me, but the One who sent Me.”

This is the Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ!

***Christ, the Song of Love Incarnate, touching earth with heaven’s grace,
For Your living, suff’ring, dying, for Your rising, hear our praise!
Alleluia, Lord of life! Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!***

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOOD NEWS

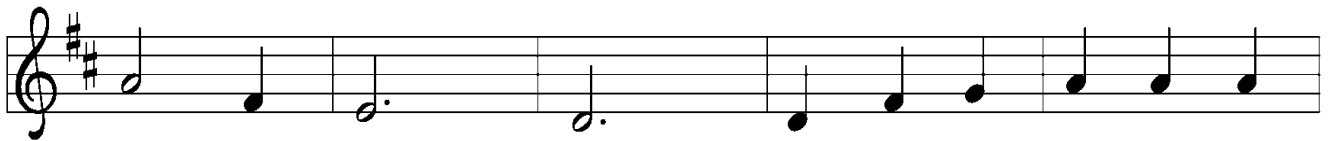
HYMN OF THE DAY

“I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”

ELW 815



1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to
2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to
3 I'm look - ing for . . . the com - ing of Christ. I want to



fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give
look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous-ness,
be with Je - sus. When we have run . . . with



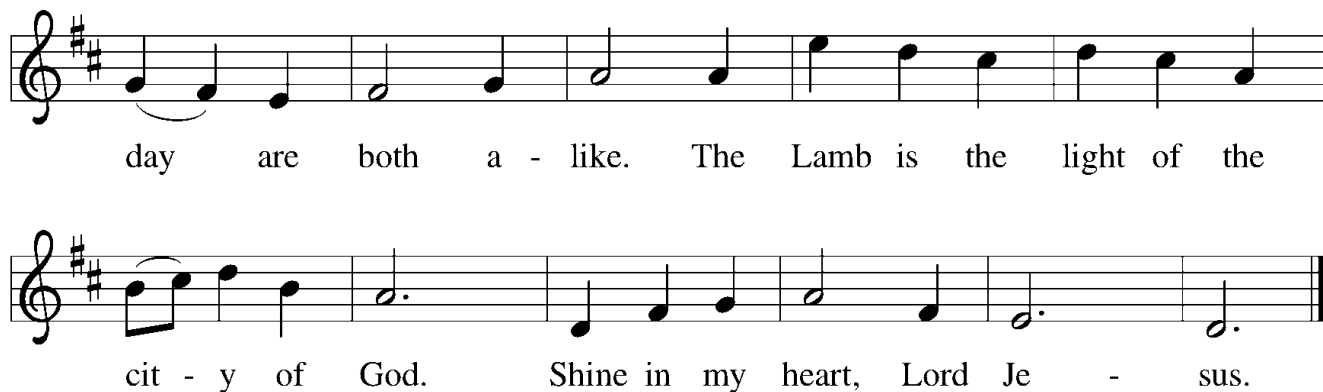
light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.
shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.
pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain



In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the





day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the
cit - y of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

Text: Kathleen Thomerson, b. 1934

Music: HOUSTON, Kathleen Thomerson

Text and music © 1970, 1975 Celebration

Used with permission through One License music license number 731531-A

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS:

In the book of Sirach we read, “The compassion of human beings is for their neighbors, but the compassion of the Lord is for every living thing.” And in the story of creation, God said: “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.’ And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.” And in Psalm 50, God says: “I don’t need the bulls from your barns or the goats from your pens, for all the animals of the forest are Mine, and I own the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird on the mountains, and all the animals of the field are Mine.” In the assurance that God loves our animal companions even more than we do, let’s seek God’s blessing upon them:

Gracious God, in Your love You created us in Your image and make us caretakers of the animals that live in the skies, the earth, and the sea. Bless us in our care for our pets and animals whom we name before You now... May they know joy and fullness of life in our presence and care. Help us recognize Your power and wisdom in the wide variety of creatures that live in the world, and hear our prayer for all who suffer overwork, hunger, and mistreatment. Protect Your creatures and guard them from evil, now and forever, through Him who has born our frailty in Himself, Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:

And now let's pray for the Church, the world, and all those in need:

Gracious God, You gather congregations together by the power of Your Word. As we move into the future You've prepared for us, a future that features neither the securities nor the privileges of the past, bless our leaders with the gifts of wisdom, discernment, and humility as they seek to make Your church the community for which You long. God of mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

Welcoming God, You give the communities of Your people the gift of children. Teach us to honor the children in our midst and to pay attention to what they can teach us about You. God of mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

Sovereign God, You raise up governments to protect the most vulnerable among us and to make sure that all have what they need from the abundance You give us. Still the storms of war in Ukraine and Russia, Israel, Gaza, and Palestine, Yemen, Libya, and Sudan, the DRC, Colombia, and Haiti, and homes and communities in our own land. Move leaders and citizens in every land to work for peace and justice for all in their care, to renounce terror, warfare, and the manipulation of fear, and to reject every temptation to sacrifice the poor for the enrichment of the powerful. God of mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

Sheltering God, You're the refuge and strength of those who are tempest-tossed. Have mercy on those recovering from floods, fires, storms, heat waves, and the ravages of human violence. Comfort them in their grief, renew them in hope, and give them what they need to rebuild through the gifts and the partnership we extend to them. God of mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

Healing God, You desire our health and wholeness. Reconcile us amid the conflicts and disputes that persist among us. Teach us to recognize the traumas of racism, sexism, and poverty; open our hearts to the cries of those who suffer among us; and make us instruments of Your healing love even as we receive challenge and grace from Your hand. And lay Your hands of healing upon all those who continue to struggle with sickness, grief, addiction, loneliness, or despair, especially those we remember before You now... God of mercy,

hear our prayer.

God of the ages, we give You thanks for the great cloud of witnesses who announce the good news of abundant life to a sad and needy world. Help us to recognize ourselves as pilgrim people who always recognize our fullest home in union with You, always telling the story of Your loving kindness and embodying it wherever we find ourselves. God of mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to You; through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

The peace of the Lord is with you always.

And also with you.

Reconciled to God and one another, let's share with one another a sign of God's peace.

MEAL

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES, WITH ANTHEM:

"Somebody's Knockin' at Your Door"

-- Linda Spevacek

Offertory hymn:

Sung to the tune of "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise", ELW 834

Oh, what shall we render in thanks to You, Lord, for all the good gifts by which we are restored?

No treasure we tender could ever repay Your mercy and faithfulness, new every day.

Our hands take the cup of salvation You give; we'll praise You, O God, for as long as we live.

Our thanks will rise up as we call on Your Name, with all of Your people Your goodness proclaim.

eucharistic prayer:

Blest are You, holy, mighty, and merciful Lord!

Heaven and earth are full of Your glory!

In Your great love, You created the universe and made us for Yourself;

and even when we brought on chaos, cruelty, and despair, You didn't give up on us.

You called a people to Yourself, as a light to the nations;

You set them free from slavery and led them to the land of Your promise.

Through leaders and prophets, through exile and return,

You reached out to draw us back to Yourself;

You so loved our broken world that, in the fullness of time,

You gave us Jesus Your only Son.

Embracing our humanity, Jesus showed us the way of salvation;

Loving us to the end, He poured out His life for us;

Dying for His own, He set us free from our slavery to sin and death;

Rising from death, He poured out the Holy Spirit upon us, that we might be His Body alive in the world.

Now pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts,

that we may receive our Lord with a living faith as He comes to us in His holy supper.

In the night in which He was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying:

“Take and eat. This is My body, given for You. Do this for the remembrance of Me.”

Again, after supper, He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

“This cup is the new covenant in My blood,

shed for You and all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of Me.”

And so, remembering all that our Lord has done for us, believing the witness of His resurrection, awaiting His final appearing in glory, we share this foretaste of the feast to come, praying as Christ Himself has taught us:

***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.***

the holy communion

*Now we share God's consecrated gifts among God's consecrated people, knowing that our living Lord Jesus is fully present with us in His Supper, giving Himself to us in bread and wine and forgiving love. Today, we'll share the Lord's Supper by receiving the body and blood of Christ at communion "stations" at the altar rail. Come forward a pew at a time; take a glass already filled with grape juice if necessary. Receive **"the body of Christ, given for you"** from the Pastor; then, by dipping the bread into the wine or the grape juice ("intinction"), receive **"the blood of Christ, shed for you"** from our communion assistant. We'll pause for silent prayer after we've all communed...*

SENDING

Thanksgiving AND Prayer:

May the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen us and keep us in His grace. **Amen.**

Holy and compassionate God, You've filled us with the very life of Christ.

Let Your living Word come to life in our witness and our service,
that we may humbly and boldly bring Your healing and justice to the world
through Christ Jesus our Rock and our Redeemer.

Amen.

DEDICATION OF OUR NEW TELEVISION:

Today we give thanks to God and seek God's blessing as we dedicate our new large-screen television to the glory of God. This television, now mounted in our fellowship hall, is a gift from the Johnson family in loving memory of our sister Carole Eddings, whose life and witness expressed God's servant love for us and for all around us. We rejoice in the possibilities for learning and fellowship afforded by this technology. So let's pray:

We give You thanks, O God, as we dedicate our large-screen television to Your glory, praise, and use. Grant us the faith to know Your gracious purpose in all things, and the wisdom to use this new technology to the blessing of Your people in this community. Give us joy in all Your gifts, and lead us to use them for the building up of Your Reign, through Your Son, Christ Jesus our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

benediction:

And now may God our Creator draw near to you and strengthen you;
may Christ Jesus teach you the ways of simplicity;
may the Holy Spirit fill you with wisdom and bring forth from you a harvest of peace;
and almighty God, the Creator, ✚ Redeemer, and Reconciler of all, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN:

“Thy Holy Wings”

ELW 613

See the following page for the words and music.

Thy Holy Wings



1 Thy ho - ly wings, O Sav - ior, spread gent-ly o - ver me,
 2 Oh, let me nes - tle near thee, with - in thy down-y breast
 3 Oh, wash me in the wa - ters of No-ah's cleans-ing flood.



and let me rest se - cure - ly through good and ill in thee.
 where I will find sweet com-fort and peace with - in thy nest.
 Give me a will - ing spir - it, a heart both clean and good.



Oh, be my strength and por - tion, my rock and hid - ing place,
 Oh, close thy wings a - round me and keep me safe - ly there,
 Oh, take in - to thy keep - ing thy chil - dren great and small,



and let my ev - 'ry mo - ment be lived with-in thy grace.
 for I am but a new - born and need thy ten - der care.
 and while we sweet-ly slum - ber, en - fold us one and all.

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903, sts. 1, 3; Gracia Grindal, b. 1943, st. 2; tr. composite

Music: BRED DINA VIDA VINGAR, Swedish folk tune

Text © 1983 Gracia Grindal, admin. Selah Publishing Co., Inc., agent.

- One License music license number 731531-A CLI music license number 2280004 New Revised Standard Version, Updated Edition [NRSVUE] © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used with permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Used with permission through One License music license number 731531-A



Announcements and dismissal:

God has a plan.

We're it!

What's our part in God's plan?

Sharing God's love in joyful service!

Then let's be at peace, live in joy, and serve the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

Gentleness Born of Wisdom... Born of God's Grace

In one of my former parishes, one of my lay leaders continually chastised me for not being able to “close the deal”. For him, life and “success” in the Church were always ultimately about “closing the deal”: getting the new members, getting them to give generously to the church, getting them to “accept Jesus as their personal Savior” and then to become the most rigorous, high-achieving “salespeople for Jesus” imaginable— people worthy of being seen with the high and mighty, ultimately.

I'll admit, I was always taken aback by his attitude; but I shouldn't have been. It's reflective of our entire culture. From the cradle to the ballfield to the classroom and beyond, our kids are steeped in this never-ending drive for “success” and “greatness” until they either run over everyone else in their path or find their own spirits run over into exhaustion, depression, addiction, and the like. As adults, we're beguiled by “the American Dream” to achieve, to amass wealth and status, and to be “the greatest” in everything— to achieve, to be “productive”, or to be disposed of. And as a nation, we're so obsessed with being “great” that we'll dump by the wayside any number of “unproductive” “parasites” among us in order to achieve that greatness...

Today's first reading from the apocryphal Wisdom of Solomon is completely unsparing of such an ethos. Its writer plainly states that such thinking is the stuff of making a pact with death itself. (Not that James is any less harsh: “earthly, unspiritual, devilish... Adulterers!”) Both James and the writer of Wisdom of Solomon point out the bitter harvest of such thinking: a deep cynicism and despair, hiding behind a veneer of hedonism and achievement, that ultimately leads those who buy into it to become violent in spirit and violent in action, especially towards the most vulnerable and the righteous who dare to stand up with and for them. Such violence always makes its perpetrators appear powerful— but it always arises from a heart that despairs of its own ultimate powerlessness and hungers for its own justification, a heart that's a dead man walking long before physical death actually arrives...

But did the latter part of that Wisdom of Solomon reading remind you of someone? Could you hear the taunts of those who crucified Jesus in the taunts of “Solomon's” “wicked”? Could you envision the cross of Christ as you heard them? **There's** where the whole theme turns, you see: in Christ Jesus, the One who empties Himself and takes our humanity upon Himself in the ultimate embodiment of humility and gentleness... the One who depends upon His heavenly Father for everything, not in shame, but in liberating trust... the One who shows true power and greatness not by securing or saving His own hide, but in defying our sinful violence by entering into its depth Himself and responding, not with hate and cursing and destruction and self-assertion, but with life-giving love..

That's where the gospel readings we're hearing in church right now are coming from: “What'll it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?... Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all... Whoever welcomes

one such child in My name welcomes Me... and the One who sent Me..." Over and over again, Jesus reminds us that real "greatness" isn't found in achievement and status and "winning", but rather in humility, in service, in vulnerability, in the willingness to stoop low to meet someone else and lift them up from whatever's keeping them down— in short, in all those virtues born of the recognition that everything we have and everything we are and everything that justifies our existence and makes us worthy is the result of God's *grace*.

It's that grace that's the fertile soil in which children and disciples can grow, and trust, and find strength to meet life's challenges. It's that grace that allows us to meet others in their need not merely with four spiritual laws or twelve steps, but compassion and caring and an artistry of love befitting one of God's masterpieces. It's that grace that enables us to see our differences from others as gifts rather than barriers, as bridges rather than walls. And it's that grace that the world, even over 500 years after Martin Luther and the Reformation, still desperately needs to experience, not just as a ticket to heaven, but as the wellspring of life here and now...

A while back, our church sign at St Paul's read "Welcome to the Grace Place". It's not a terribly witty slogan, and I'll admit, I was quickly tempted to change it. But every time I thought about changing it, I backed off— because if there's anything in this world I want our neighbors to know about us as a family of believers, it's that we're a place and a community of grace: a place where they can come as they are without shame, where they can escape even the sanctified hamster wheels of the pursuit of "greatness" and find rest, where they can ask questions and search for answers and grow and play and grow steadily by the work of the Spirit in ever-greater Christ-likeness... a place where they can know grace not simply as a theological tagline or term, but as a living experience— the gift of God in Christ Jesus our Lord!

Sunrise of Your Smile

*Listen to this song as **God's** song to you.*

Then look at the cross of Christ Jesus, and you'll begin to understand...

Reject the worldly lie that says that life lies always up ahead;
Let power go before control becomes a crust around your soul;
Escape the hunger to possess in soul-diminishing success.
This world is full of narrow lives— I pray by grace your smile survives...

For I would wander weary miles, would welcome ridicule, my child,
To simply see the sunrise of your smile,
To see the light behind your eyes, the happy thought that makes you fly—
Yes, I would wander weary miles to simply see the sunrise of your smile!

Now close your eyes, so you can see your own unfinished memories;
Now open them, for time is brief, and you'll be blessed beyond belief;
Now glance above you at the sky— there's beauty there to blind the eye!
I ask all this, then wait awhile to see the dawning of your smile...

For I would wander weary miles, would welcome ridicule, my child,
To simply see the sunrise of your smile,
To see the light behind your eyes, the happy thought that makes you fly—
Yes, I would wander weary miles to simply see the sunrise of your smile!

I would wander weary miles, I would wander weary miles,
I would wander weary miles if I could see the sunrise of your smile!

Michael Card