



# **Pentecost +19**

**October 8, 2023     +     9:00 AM**

*Welcome to our worship of the living God on this 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost! In today's gospel reading, Jesus tells a vineyard parable which serves as an image of Israel, the prophets' mission, and Christ's death. For Christians, the vineyard also speaks of God's love poured out for us in the blood of Christ given to us for the forgiveness of sin. Grafted onto Christ the Vine in our Baptism, we're nourished with wine and bread and the very life of Christ so that we may share in Christ's sufferings and know the power of His resurrection.*

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

## **GATHERING**

### **GATHERING MUSIC**

### **GATHERING HYMN:     “Christ is Made the Sure Foundation”**

***ELW 645***

***Christ is made the sure foundation, Christ, our head and cornerstone,  
Chosen of the Lord and precious, binding all the church in one;  
Holy Zion's help forever and our confidence alone.***

***To this temple, where we call You, come, O Lord of hosts, and stay;  
Come, with all Your lovingkindness, hear Your people as they pray;  
And Your fullest benediction shed within these walls today.***

***Here bestow on all Your servants what they seek from You to gain;  
Here to have and hold forever means of grace that You ordain;  
And hereafter in Your glory with Your blessed ones to reign.***

***Praise and honor to the Father, praise and honor to the Son,***

***Praise and honor to the Spirit, ever three and ever one:  
One in might and one in glory while unending ages run!***

## **INVOCATION, CONFESSION, AND FORGIVENESS:**

Blest are You, our + Triune God, the Wellspring, Word, and Spirit of Love!

***And blest is Your Reign, now and forever!***

Out of sheer love for us, You created us in Your image,  
saved us by the death of Your Son,  
and made us Your children in the waters of our Baptism.

***But we've trusted in our own strength rather than living in Yours;***

We've rejected Your word of love and pursued the demands of other lords.

***We've tried to live freely on our own terms,  
but have only bound ourselves more tightly in chains of slavery to sin.***

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

*Silence for reflection and individual confession.*

*Sung to the tune of "Lord Jesus, Think on Me" ELW 599:*

***Restore in us, O God, the splendor of Your love;  
Renew Your image in our hearts, and all our sins remove.***

***O Spirit, wake in us the wonder of Your pow'r;  
From fruitless fear, unfurl our lives like springtime bud and flow'r.***

***Bring us, O Christ, to share the fullness of Your joy;  
Baptize us in the risen life that death cannot destroy.***

***Three-personed God, fulfill the promise of Your grace,  
That we, when all our searching ends, may see You face to face.***

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Listen to the Good News, brothers and sisters:  
In the mercy of Almighty God, Jesus Christ gave His life for you,

and in + Him, you're forgiven!

Now, buried with Christ in baptismal repentance and raised through His forgiveness,  
let's walk with Him in newness of life. *Amen. Thanks be to God!*

## **HYMN OF PRAISE: "Glory, God, is Yours in Heaven!"**

*Sung to the tune of "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" ELW 836*

*Glory, God, is Yours in heaven! Bring Your peace to all the earth!  
Mighty God of all creation, Father of surpassing worth:  
We exalt You, we adore You, we lift high our thanks and praise.  
Saints and angels bow before You; here on earth our songs we raise.*

*Glory, Christ, is Yours forever! Lamb of God and Lord of love,  
Son of God and gracious Savior, You have come from heav'n above;  
On the cross You died to save us; now You reign at God's right hand.  
Hear our prayer; restore, forgive us; in Your promise firm we stand.*

*Holy One, we now acclaim You; Lord alone, to You we call;  
Holy One, in faith we name You, God most high, yet near to all:  
Jesus Christ, with God the Spirit, in the Father's splendor bright.  
For the peace that we inherit, glory be to God on high!*

## **GREETING AND PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

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

Then let's pray: Holy God, You love justice and hate oppression;  
You call us to righteousness and not to exploitation.  
Give us generous and loving hearts, and eyes to see the splendor of Your Reign,  
that we may live with integrity and praise You for the transformation of our lives  
through Your Son, Christ Jesus our Savior and Lord. *Amen.*

# WORD AND PRAYER

## PREPARATION FOR THE WORD:

*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:                      **Isaiah 5.1-7**

**NRSVUE**

I will sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard:

My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.

<sup>2</sup> He dug it and cleared it of stones and planted it with choice vines;  
he built a watchtower in the midst of it and hewed out a wine vat in it;  
he expected it to yield grapes—but it yielded rotten grapes!

<sup>3</sup> And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah,  
judge between me and my vineyard!

<sup>4</sup> What more was there to do for my vineyard that I haven't done in it?  
When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield rotten grapes?

<sup>5</sup> And now I'll tell you what I'll do to my vineyard:

I'll remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured;

I'll break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.

<sup>6</sup> I'll make it a wasteland; it shall not be pruned or hoed,  
and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;

I'll also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

<sup>7</sup> For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel,  
and the people of Judah are *God's* cherished garden;  
*God* expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!

This is holy wisdom; this is holy word.

***Thanks be to God!***

**SECOND READING:****Philippians 3.4b-14****NRSVUE**

*St Paul writes:* If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup>circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup>as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

<sup>7</sup>Yet whatever gains I had, these I've come to regard as loss because of Christ. <sup>8</sup>More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake, I've suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup>and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the Law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. <sup>10</sup>I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the sharing of His sufferings by becoming like Him in His death, <sup>11</sup>if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

<sup>12</sup>Not that I've already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of me. <sup>13</sup>Brothers and sisters, I don't consider that I've laid hold of it, but one thing I **have** laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

This is holy wisdom; this is holy word.

***Thanks be to God!***

**THE HOLY GOSPEL:****Matthew 21.33-46****NRSVUE**

*See ELW 174 for the tune.*

***Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!***

The Holy Gospel according to St Matthew, the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter.

***Glory to You, O Lord!***

*Jesus said to the religious leaders who questioned His authority, "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a winepress in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went away. <sup>34</sup>When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. <sup>35</sup>But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned*

another. <sup>36</sup> Again he sent other slaves, more than the first, and they treated them in the same way. <sup>37</sup> Then he sent his son to them, saying, 'They'll respect my son.' <sup>38</sup> But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir! Come, let's kill him and get his inheritance.' <sup>39</sup> So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

<sup>40</sup> Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?"

<sup>41</sup> They said to him, "He'll put those wretches to a miserable death and lease the vineyard to other tenants who'll give him the produce at the harvest time!"

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures, 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it's amazing in our eyes'? <sup>43</sup> Therefore I tell you, the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces its fruits. <sup>44</sup> The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and it'll crush anyone on whom it falls."

<sup>45</sup> When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they realized that He was speaking about them. <sup>46</sup> They wanted to arrest Him— but they feared the crowds, because they regarded *Jesus* as a prophet.

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: "Lord Christ, When... You Came to Earth"**

***ELW 727***

**>**

# Lord Christ, When First You Came to Earth



1 Lord Christ, when first you came to earth, up -  
 2 O awe - some Love, which finds no room in  
 3 New ad - vent of the love of Christ, will  
 4 O wound - ed hands of Je - sus, build in



on a cross they bound you, and mocked your sav - ing  
 life where sin de - nies you, and, doomed to death, shall  
 we a - gain re - fuse you, till in the night of  
 us your new cre - a - tion; our pride is dust, our



king - ship's worth by thorns with which they crowned you. And  
 bring to doom the pow'r that cru - ci - fies you, till  
 hate and war we per - ish as we lose you? From  
 vaunt is stilled; we wait your rev - e - la - tion. O



still our wrongs may fash - ion now new thorns to pierce that  
 not a stone is left on stone, and then the na - tions'  
 an - cient doubts our minds re - lease to seek the king - dom  
 Love that tri - umphs o - ver loss, we bring our hearts be -



stead - y brow, and robe of sor - row round you.  
 pride, o'er - thrown, will nev - er - more de - fy you!  
 of your peace, by which a - lone we choose you.  
 fore your cross; come, fin - ish your sal - va - tion.

## APOSTLES CREED:

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

*I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.*

*He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.*

*He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.*

*He descended into hell. On the third day He rose again.*

*He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.*

*He will come again 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.*

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:

Drawn together in the compassion of God,  
let's pray for the Church, the world, and all those in need:

Good and gracious God, we give You thanks and praise, for You've made us Your own through Christ Jesus and given us a new righteousness based on faith. Though we repeatedly rejected Your ways and destroyed Your messengers, You sent Your Son to us to renew heaven's call; and through His death and resurrection for us, He's become the cornerstone of righteousness, the first fruits of Your Reign and the incomparable prize towards which we press.

Restore what's broken in Your Church, loving God. Heal the divisions that exists within and among Christian communities; give courage to leaders facing hardship as they dare to proclaim Your liberating Word; open our ears to the prophets' cries among us; inspire us to work for peace and justice in Your vineyard; and refresh the Church with Your life, that we may bear the fruits of Your grace in our work and our service. Merciful God, *receive our prayer.*



Bless and care for those whose hands bring forth the fruits of the earth to the tables of all who hunger. Revive farmlands and vineyards, burned-out forests and flooded coastlands; protect waters needed by all living things; and move us to care for this earthly home You've given us, following in the humble and joyful footsteps of St Francis of Assisi. Merciful God, ***receive our prayer.***

Restore what's broken in our world, O God. Bring Your peace to places of conflict and violence; quell the rush to violence between people and nations; curb the impulses of greed and pride that lead us to take advantage of others; break down the walls that divide us; bring healing to those ravaged by terror, oppression, violence, greed, and abuse; and move in the hearts of our leaders, that they may pursue Your justice and work for the good and welfare of all people, and especially for the most vulnerable. Merciful God, ***receive our prayer.***

Sustain all who suffer with the promise and the gift of new life. Pour out Your healing Holy Spirit on all who are lonely or despairing, sick or grieving; heal our own pain and suffering, and equip us to embrace all those aching for wholeness, that together we may behold Christ's resurrection taking shape in our own experience. We especially seek Your healing grace for our brothers and sisters... Merciful God, ***receive our prayer.***

We give You thanks for Your saints who've taught us how to work faithfully in Your vineyard, and especially for St Francis of Assisi and for Theodore Fliedner, the father of the deaconess movement that revolutionized public education and nursing care throughout the world. Root us firmly with them in Your everlasting love, that our chorus of praise may join with theirs until our labor is complete. Merciful God, ***receive our prayer.***

For into Your hands, O God, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Christ Jesus our Lord. ***Amen.***

The peace of the Lord is with you always. ***And also with you.***

*Reconciled to God and to one another, we share with those around us a sign of God's peace.*

# MEAL

## OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES

### OFFERTORY HYMN:

*Sung to the tune of "He Leadeth Me" LBW 501:*

***Accept, O Lord, the gifts we bring to place upon Your Table.  
We do not worship as we ought, but only as we're able.  
Our hopes and dreams, our toils and cares, we lift in prayer before You;  
Lord, by Your grace now come to us as humbly we adore You.***

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING:

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

***Heaven and earth are full of Your glory!***

We praise and thank You for the goodness and love You've shown us in creation,  
***in the calling and liberation of Your people Israel,***

in Your strong word spoken through the prophets,

***and above all in Your Son Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh,***

who poured out His life for us even unto death on the cross,

***that filled with the Spirit of His resurrection,***

***we might have eternal life in Him.***

And so, with the Church on earth and the whole company of heaven,  
we praise Your Name and join their unending hymn:

*Sung to the tune of "Angels, From the Realms of Glory" ELW 275:*

***Holy, holy, Lord most holy, God of power, God of might:  
Heav'n and earth proclaim Your glory! Hail, hosanna, God Most High!  
Blest is He who comes in Your Name! Hail, hosanna, God Most High!***

In the night in which He was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread,  
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 for all people  
for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of Me.”

And so, remembering all that our Lord’s done for us,  
believing the witness of His resurrection, awaiting His final appearing in glory,

***We share this foretaste of the feast to come.***

Now send 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.

***Empower us by that same Spirit to love and forgive,  
that our lives may anticipate that day when You’ll make all things new.***

All this we pray with joy through our Lord Jesus Christ, who’s taught 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.***

## **CANTICLE:**

## **“O Lamb of God”**

*Sung to “When All Your Mercies” LBW 264:*

***O Lamb of God, You bear the sin of all the world away;  
You suffered death, our lives to save— have mercy now, we pray.***

***O Lamb of God, You bear the sin of all the world away;  
You set us free from guilt and grave— have mercy now, we pray.***

***O Lamb of God, You bear the sin of all the world away;  
Eternal peace with God You made— give us Your peace, we pray.***

## 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 ("intinction"), receive **"the blood of Christ, shed for you"** from our communion assistant. We'll pause for silent prayer after we've all communed...*

*If you're joining us from your home, we invite you to share the bread and cup with one another. When giving the bread to your neighbor, say **"The body of Christ, given for you."** When giving the wine/grape juice say, **"The blood of Christ, shed for you."** Whatever's left over may be reverently eaten and drunk by everyone after our worship is over. Once we've all shared in the body and blood of Christ, we continue in blessing and prayer:*

## SENDING

### THANKSGIVING, PRAYER, AND BENEDICTION:

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

**Amen.**

Blessed be Your name, O God, for here we've feasted on Your living Word,  
Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts!

Strengthened by this food, may we gather the world to Your banquet,  
where none are left out and all are satisfied through Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Amen.**

Now may God our Creator's perfect word revive your soul;

may Christ Jesus be your Savior and your Rock;

may the Holy Spirit strengthen you to press ever onward;

and Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN: “How Firm a Foundation”

ELW 796

*How firm a foundation, O saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in Christ Jesus, the Word!  
What more can He say than to you He has said  
Who unto the Savior for refuge have fled?*

*“Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dismayed,  
For I am your God and will still give you aid;  
I’ll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,  
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.*

*“When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,  
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be your supply.  
The flames shall not hurt you; I only design  
Your dross to consume and your gold to refine.*

*“Throughout all their lifetime My people shall prove  
My sov’reign, eternal, unchangeable love;  
And then, when gray hairs shall their temples adorn,  
Like lambs they shall still in My bosom be borne.”*

## 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 go in peace, live in joy, and serve the Lord!

*Thanks be to God!*

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## Sensible Justice or Crazy Love?

This parable's kind of crazy when you think about it. Why on earth do these guys think that they're going to inherit the vineyard? Sure, it's a legal possibility— but it's not like that landlord has disappeared. He's sent servants, and more servants, and then his son. Who's to say he doesn't have another son, or more servants, or an army, or at least a gang of thugs at his disposal to take care of these tenants? These tenants are crazy, I tell you...

***But they're not half as crazy as this landowner!*** Think about it: First he sends servants, and they're beaten, stoned, and killed. Then he sends more— not the police, mind you, or an army, just more servants— and the same thing happens again. So where does the bright idea come from to send his son, his heir, alone, to deal with these bloodthirsty hooligans? It's absolutely crazy! Who would do such a thing? No one— except maybe a crazy landlord so desperate to be in relationship with these tenants that he'll do anything, risk anything, to reach out to them. This landowner acts more like a desperate parent, willing to do or say or try anything to reach out to a beloved and wayward child, than he does a businessman. It's crazy— ***the kind of crazy that comes from being in love!***

“What will the landlord do when he comes?” Jesus asks, and all they can imagine is violence: “He'll put those wretches to a miserable death!” But notice, it's not Jesus talking right now; they're condemning themselves. That's part of Matthew's narrative brilliance, I suspect, to have his opponents voice their own condemnation. But it invites us to consider a different question: not “What ***will*** that landowner do?” but “What ***did*** that landowner do?” And to that question we have Jesus' own answer: the Landowner sent His Son, Jesus, to deal with all of us who've hoarded God's blessings for ourselves and not given God His own due. And when we killed Him, God raised Him from the dead and sent Him back to us yet one more time, still bearing the message of God's desperate, crazy love, still reaching out to embrace us once more to Himself..

Oh, I know: Jesus goes on, at least according to Matthew, to finish this parable and accuse and condemn the Pharisees Himself. But at this point, I think Matthew can't help himself from witnessing to a God that's even more merciful than he can imagine. Jesus slips free of Matthew's grasp for a moment, not simply to stand in judgment of Matthew and so many of us since who've used this story to validate our own causes (though He does that as well, I think), but even more to introduce

us to the desperate, crazy love of God— love offered not once, not twice, but a million times or more to all who will receive it.

Martin Luther once said that sometimes you have to squeeze a Biblical passage until it leaks the Gospel. This is one of those weeks, I think, when with equal measures of patience and faithful pressure we can “squeeze out the Gospel” and give witness to the God made most clear to us in Jesus. Thank God that Jesus— at least the Jesus Matthew witnesses to— is greater than our fear and insecurity, and manages again and again to twist free in order that we might taste the mercy of God...

*Based on reflections by the Rev. Dr. David Lose*

### **The Non-Ownership Society**

This fall, we’re spending a lot of time in the vineyard. Two weeks ago, our gospel reading noted how the vineyard owner graciously hired unemployed workers at all hours of the day, but gave each worker a full day’s wage. In last week’s gospel reading, two brothers showed us the real meaning of “yes” and “no”. This week, the vineyard’s in rebellion as the workers seize control and ownership of the property.

It’s so easy for tenants to begin to imagine that the vineyard is theirs: “**My** church... **my** family... **my** bank account... **my** world.” All of us do it. It’s as natural as breathing! But few of us recognize the violence buried in these simple assertions of ownership and control. Alas, Jesus understands it only too well— for **He’s** the beloved Son who loses His life over such matters, not just once, but time and again!

These delusions of ownership and property rights rob us of the graciousness of the God who offers us everything for free. When we do violence against God’s kindness, we do violence against ourselves as well. The cornerstone of God’s grace becomes a stumbling block that trips us, a loose stone that crushes us when we dislodge it by our arrogance.

What if **everything** is on loan to us— this church, my family, my bank account? What if God’s word to us in our Baptism’s really true— “You’re Mine! You no longer belong to yourself; My love claims you”? Then everything’s different. One world ends and another begins. True obedience is possible; “Yes, buts” disappear, for

“yes” really means yes and “no” means no. The Kingdom’s given to us as an undeserved gift on loan, and we’re far wealthier than we could ever imagine!

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## **My Beloved had a Vineyard – Isaiah 5:1 Coloring Page**

