



# St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

## SERVICE OF THE WORD

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
September 20, 2020 • 10 am

You are welcome here! As a Reconciling in Christ congregation, we believe that the gospel is God's gift to all people, shared unconditionally and without regard to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic or family status, age, physical or mental abilities, outward appearance, or religious affiliation. We seek to live the truth written in Ephesians that Christ breaks down the dividing walls between us and makes us one.

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.

## Gathering

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

### **Welcome**

### **Prelude**

### **Confession and Forgiveness**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

In the name of the Father,  
and of the son †  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us.**

**We confess that we have turned from you  
and given ourselves into the power of sin.**

**We are truly sorry and humbly repent.**

**In your compassion forgive us our sins,**

**known and unknown,**

**things we have done and things we have failed to do.**

**Turn us again to you,**

**and uphold us by your Spirit,**

**so that we may live and serve you in newness of life  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

**Amen.**

## \*\* Gathering Song

*Blessing and Honor* (verses 1 and 2)

ELW # 854



1 Bless - ing and hon - or and glo - ry and pow'r, wis - dom and  
2 Let all the heav - ens sound forth Je - sus' name; let all the  
3 Ev - er as - cend - ing the song and the joy, ev - er de -  
4 Give we the glo - ry and praise to the Lamb! Take we the



rich - es and strength ev - er - more, be to the Lamb who our  
earth sing his glo - ry and fame. O - cean and moun - tain, stream,  
scend - ing the love from on high; bless - ing and hon - or and  
robe and the harp and the palm; sing we the song of the



bat - tle has won, whose are the king - dom, the crown, and the  
for - est, and flow'r ech - o his prais - es and tell of his  
glo - ry and praise— this is the theme of the hymns that we  
Lamb who was slain, dy - ing in weak - ness and ris - ing to



throne; whose are the king - dom, the crown, and the throne!  
pow'r; ech - o his prais - es and tell of his pow'r.  
raise; this is the theme of the hymns that we raise.  
reign; dy - ing in weak - ness and ris - ing to reign!

Text: Horatius Bonar, 1808–1889, alt.

Music: AMERICAN HYMN, Matthias Keller, 1813–1875

## \*\* Prayer of the Day

*Assisting Minister leads the prayer of the day and the assembly responds: Amen.*

\*\* Items in bold are to be spoken/sung by the assembly.

# Word

God speaks to us in scripture, preaching and song.

Reading

Matthew 20:1-16

Sermon

The Rev. Jason Churchill

\*\* Hymn

*There's a Wideness in God's Mercy* (verses 1-2)

ELW #588



1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy, like the wide - ness of the sea;  
2 There is wel - come for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;  
3 For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;  
4 'Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice which is more than lib - er - ty.  
there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing in his blood.  
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.  
great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in heav'n.  
There is grace e - nough for thou - sands of new worlds as great as this;  
But we make this love too nar - row by false lim - its of our own;  
Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,



There is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.  
there is room for fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.  
and we mag - ni - fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.  
and our lives will be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, alt.  
Music: LORD, REVIVE US, North American, 19th cent.

\*\* Prayers of the People

*Each portion of the prayer ends with either:*

Responses: Bless we the Lord  
Hear us, O God.

Thanks be to God.  
Your mercy is great.

**Thanksgiving for the Word**

**Lord's Prayer**

\*\* Items in bold are to be spoken/sung by the assembly.

# Sending

*We are sent into the world to serve.*

**Dismissal**

**Postlude**

Enjoy today's service? Visit our Facebook page and invite a friend, comment, or leave a review. May God go with you today and everyday.

## **Readings for Sunday, September 20, 2020**

Jonah 3:10-4:1, Psalm 145:1-8, Philippians 1:21-30, Matthew 20:1-16

## **Readings for Sunday, September 27, 2020**

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32, Psalm 25:1-9, Philippians 2:1-1, Matthew 21:23-32

Worship elements taken from Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #24228

For additional reference on hymn text and music please refer to the hymn number in the cranberry prayer book and hymnal, Evangelical Lutheran Worship.

## **Participants in Today's Service**

### **Pastor:**

The Rev. Jason Churchill

### **Cantor:**

Dr. Oksana Glouchko

### **Assisting Minister:**

Ralph Heiss

### **Lector:**

Michele Torchia

### **Reader:**

Noah Sullivan

### **Ministers:**

The people of St. Stephen's

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church  
1301 N Broom St, Wilmington, DE 19806 302-652-7623  
[www.saintstephenslutheranchurch.org](http://www.saintstephenslutheranchurch.org) [office@ststeph.org](mailto:office@ststeph.org)