

St Matthews Episcopal Church

2001 Windsor Drive

P.O. Box 342

Newton, Kansas 67114



Sunday, August 15, 2021

The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Communion in the Absence of a Priest

Worship at 10:15am

Mask Required

Prelude

Chris Teichler

Processional

“When in Our Music God is Glorified”

Pg. 420

Opening Acclamation

Minister of the Word: Grace and peace. In the name of Christ.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Collect of the Day

Minister of the Word: God be with you

People: **And also with you.**

Minister of the Word: Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

We Proclaim and Respond to the Word of God

The Lessons

The First Reading

Proverbs 9:1-6

A reading from Proverbs

Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn her seven pillars. She has slaughtered her animals, she has mixed her wine, she has also set her table. She has sent out her servant-girls, she calls from the highest places in the town, “You that are simple, turn in here!” To those without sense she says, “Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight.”

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 34: 9-14

Fear the Lord, you that are his saints, * for those who fear him lack nothing.

The young lions lack and suffer hunger, * but those who seek the Lord lack nothing that is good.

Come, children, and listen to me; * I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

Who among you loves life * and desires long life to enjoy prosperity?
Keep your tongue from evil-speaking * and your lips from lying words.
Turn from evil and do good; * seek peace and pursue it.

The Second Reading

Ephesians 5:15-20

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Seq.

"When Morning Gilds the Skies"

Pg.427, 1, 2, & 3

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John
Glory to you, Lord Christ.

The Gospel

John 6:51-20

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" So, Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Seq.

"When Morning Gilds the Skies"

Pg.427,4, & 5

Proclamation

Maggie Snow, Minister of the Word

Two old friends recently met at a school reunion. They had not seen each other for 35 years. During that time, they had each married, raised children, worked to support their families and been active members of their churches. As they walked into dinner, one looked at the other and said, “We’ve aged well, but our hair has gotten gray, and we’re sagging in places. What have we got to say for ourselves?” His friend smiled and said, “Wisdom!”

A local Rotary club was having a hard time getting a major fundraiser off the ground. People were distracted and nobody was volunteering for the jobs that needed to be done. The organizers were both discouraged when they met with their club president, an older woman. As they talked over lunch, their president had many suggestions for how to move forward, and all of them involved giving precise tasks to people and asking them if they would do a certain job, rather than a general asking for volunteers. At the next meeting all the tasks were assigned, and the activity was a success.

These two stories illustrate something we all know: maturity and experience are valuable traits. They are in our churches as well. From the earliest times of our ancestral faith, wisdom has always been upheld as a part of spiritual growth and development. As we grow in knowledge and love of God, we should expect to see changes in ourselves. Our tent should become bigger, not smaller. Our generosity of spirit should broaden and deepen. And we should see elders among us as gifts of wisdom and grace, especially in times of difficulty.

A church was having a conflict over worship times. There were those who wanted one service, and those who preferred an early service without music. As the discussion went on and became more divisive, one member said, “But we’ve never had an early service.” An elder stood up and replied, “Oh yes we have. I can remember...” and her explanation and tone changed the whole focus of the discussion. Elders are often sources of wisdom, and they carry the corporate history of a congregation.

But there is another side to all this talk of wisdom: it comes in today’s gospel reading from John. Jesus says, “I am the living bread....Whoever eats of this bread will live forever.” It seems that wisdom alone does not grant us participation in the kingdom. Wisdom is rather a doorway to spiritual living that includes the Eucharist as part of our regular practice. The Eucharist feeds us with the living bread that sustains us, helps us grow in Christ, and brings us peace and maturity of life, at whatever age we may be.

As we watch Jesus dealing with the people who come to him, some pleading, some confronting, others curious, we see him repeatedly answering their questions with simplicity, kindness, and great power. He cannot be trapped by the powers of this world, except by his own choice; he cannot be bought or tempted by the devil; and he is not compromised.

The prayer after Holy Baptism in the Book of Common Prayer says that when we are baptized, we enter into new life and are anointed with gifts: “an inquiring and discerning

heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and love [God], and the gift of joy and wonder in all [God's] works." These gifts are ones that result in spiritual wisdom and maturity. These are gifts that help us embrace the world as God's creation rather than rejecting it as merely sinful and degraded. And that is spiritual maturity.

Wisdom and spiritual maturity are needed to navigate a culture of contempt where there is increased posturing, finger pointing, blaming, and shouting about everything among those we trust to lead us. Some want to join in the name calling and finger pointing; and there is plenty of reason to do so. And yet, Jesus saw all temporal power as limited in its scope, subject to the whims and wills of the people who put others in power, and unable to address the issues of peace and justice for many. We need to remember that, and while we hold our leaders accountable, we also look to Jesus for leadership. Perhaps the most insightful and spiritually mature question to ask is not "What would Jesus do?" but "What *did* Jesus do?"

Our Christian wisdom should direct us to act in terms of our Baptismal Covenant, seeking and serving Christ in all persons. Our spiritual maturity should energize us to work to see the Christ in all persons. Our spiritual wisdom should help us know that does not mean we have to give others what they want, but what they need. Our combined maturity and wisdom should lead us to remember our own need for Sabbath, the rest that restores and renews us.

Finally, the living bread that sustains us should always be our quest: Jesus, whose prayer, mind, and deeds show us what to do, Jesus whose flesh and blood instill new life within us, Jesus who lives in us that we might live forever. As the collect for today has us pray, "Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work and to follow in the blessed steps of his most holy life." *Amen*

We Pray for the World and the Church

*The prayers may be led either by the Minister of the Word, a lector or other appointed petitioner.
Kneeling or standing as able*

Wisdom has built her house and offers counsel to all who will lay aside immaturity and walk in the way of insight. So, teach us, O God, to seek for wisdom and her sound teaching:

Those who seek the Lord lack nothing that is good.

Give us care in how we order our lives, that we may make the most of our time, being filled with the Spirit and giving thanks to God our Father at all times and for everything:

Turn from evil and seek good; seek peace and pursue it.

Grant wisdom to those who take counsel together for the governance of your Church, with prayers of special intention for Trinity and St. Matthew's, and for all entrusted with the care of our parishes:

Those who seek the Lord lack nothing that is good.

Guide those who lead our nation, remembering especially our President, Congress, Supreme Court, our Governor and Mayor, that they may turn aside to wisdom's gates and rest at the feet of her seven pillars:

Turn from evil and seek good; seek peace and pursue it.

We intercede for those who are ill, for those who are bereaved or downcast or in any kind of trouble, remembering especially those for whom we now pray name Amber, Ashley, Barbara, Becky, Beth, Brooks, Bertha, Danny, Dave, Delinda, Denny, Elaine, Eldon, Gracie, Ian, Jaden, Jane, Jean, Jeanette, Jerry, Jessica, Joan, Jonah, Kathleen, Kent, Suzanne, Ralph, Robby, Robert make them to sing the songs of Zion once again:

Those who seek the Lord lack nothing that is good.

You are the living bread that came down from heaven, O Christ; whoever eats of the bread and drinks of the cup will have eternal life, and you will raise them up on the last day. So, grant us to eat and drink and ever more to abide in you:

Turn from evil and seek good; seek peace and pursue it.

Pray for the Anglican Church of Southern Africa
Pray for the people of Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia
Pray for the students and faculty of Bishop Seabury Academy

For the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, our Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry, for our Bishop Cathleen Bascom, for all bishops and ministers, and for all the holy people of God. For Heartland Minster and their Shepherd, The Reverend Marc McDonald, Rector of St Andrews Episcopal Church, Emporia Kansas.

We give thanks for St. Matthew's and Trinity and pray for St. Matthew's Payee Program, Northridge Elementary School their teachers, staff, students and families, Priscilla's Pet Pantry, and all outreach of our churches.

Heavenly Father, you have promised to hear what we ask in the Name of your Son: Accept and fulfill our petitions, we pray, not as we ask in our ignorance, nor as we deserve in our sinfulness, but as you know and love us in your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

We Exchange the Peace

Minister of the Word: The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: *And also with you.*

Instrumental Music

Chris Teichler

We Prepare the Table and Share the Gifts of God

Minister of Reserved Sacrament: God be with you.

People: *And also with you.*

Minister of Reserved Sacrament: Let us pray.

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Lord's Prayer

And now our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

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 of 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 for ever and ever. Amen

The Prayer of Humble Access

The Minister of the Reserved Sacrament and People

We do not presume to come to this your Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your Table. But you are the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

Minister of the Reserved Sacrament: The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving. The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life. *Amen*

Hymn

"Be Thou My Vision"

Pg. 488

Post Communion Prayer

Let us pray:

Loving God, we give you thanks for restoring us in your image and nourishing us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of Christ Body. Now send us forth a people, forgiven, healed, renewed; that we may proclaim your love to the world and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. *Amen*

Recessional

“God of Grace and God of Glory”

Pg. 594

Grace and Dismissal

Minister of the Reserved Sacrament: Life is short, and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel with us. So be swift to love, make haste to be kind and go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Postlude

Chris Teichler

Ministers this Service

Mary Anne McCloud, Minister of Reserved Sacrament

Maggie Snow, Minister of the Word

Darlene Hall, Lector Chris Teichler, Pianist

Altar Guild: Karen Wall, Kala & George Whiteside, Beth Penner

Altar Flowers given by

Ethan Moulds in loving memory of Grandmother Barb Moulds

**Sermons That Work-The Episcopal Church*

Helmer, Ben E. “Wisdom and Grace” August 19, 2012

Edited by The Reverend Les Jackson August 2021