

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 13, 2020
Worship at 9:15 am



INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

Today's first and second readings highlight Joseph and his brothers and how they handle "holy discomfort." The brothers disconnect from Joseph and act in ways that tear apart relationships. Joseph reacts by looking for ways to connect to the people wherever he finds himself. "Holy Discomfort" can isolate us or push us to connect to community. We choose. Through forgiveness, grace, and love, God always chooses to connect to us, no matter what. Let us follow God's lead!

PRELUDE

BELLS

ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRAYER REQUESTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

C **Amen.**

P Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Faithful God,

C **have mercy on us.**

We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.

We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways.

We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves.

We place our own needs before those of our neighbors.

We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves.

Make us humble, cast away our transgressions,

and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

P God hears the cries of all who call out in need,

and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own.

Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of † Jesus Christ.

Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world.

C **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" ELW 834 vs. 1 & 2

1 **Immortal, invisible, God only wise, in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days, almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise!**

2 **Unresting, unchanging, and silent as light, nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains high soaring above thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.**

GREETING

P The grace of Jesus Christ our Savior, the reconciling love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

KYRIE: ELW 154

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy; have mercy, O Lord.

HYMN OF PRAISE

"Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven" ELW 864 vs. 1

1 **Praise, my soul, the God of heaven; joyfully your tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, evermore God's praises sing.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praises everlasting ring!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray together.

C **O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

First Reading: Genesis 47:12-14; 18-35

Jacob and his sons. Out of jealousy and discomfort, Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery and tell their father that he is dead.

¹²Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. ¹³And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." He answered, "Here I am." ¹⁴So he said to him, "Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock; and bring word back to me." So he sent him from the valley of Hebron.

¹⁸The brothers saw him from a distance, and before he came near to them, they conspired to kill him. ¹⁹They said to one another, "Here comes this dreamer. ²⁰Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; then we shall say that a wild animal has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams." ²¹But when Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, "Let us not take his life." ²²Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but lay no hand on him" — that he might rescue him out of their hand and restore him to his father. ²³So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves that he wore; ²⁴and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

²⁵Then they sat down to eat; and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balm, and resin, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. ²⁶Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? ²⁷Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers agreed. ²⁸When some Midianite traders passed by, they drew Joseph up, lifting him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

²⁹When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes. ³⁰He returned to his brothers, and said, "The boy is gone; and I, where can I turn?" ³¹Then they took Joseph's robe, slaughtered a goat, and dipped the robe in the blood. ³²They had the long robe with sleeves taken to their father, and they said, "This we have found; see now whether it is your son's robe or not." ³³He recognized it, and said, "It is my son's robe! A wild animal has devoured him; Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces." ³⁴Then Jacob tore his garments, and put sackcloth on his loins, and mourned for his son many days. ³⁵All his sons and all his daughters sought to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and said, "No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning." Thus his father bewailed him.

L The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13

[¹Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.
²Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all God's benefits—
³who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases;
⁴who redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;
⁵who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.
⁶O LORD, you provide vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.
⁷You made known your ways to Moses
and your works to the children of Israel.]
⁸LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;

- ⁹you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.
- ¹⁰You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.
- ¹¹For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.
- ¹²As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.
- ¹³As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

Second Reading: Genesis 50:15-21

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. Joseph reminds them that the holy discomfort he has endured pushed him closer to God and to helping others rather than pushing him to vengeance.

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

L The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW pg. 205

C **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.**

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 18th chapter.

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

Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened,

they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON

PRAYER FOR TIMES OF HOLY DISCOMFORT

“May God bless us with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships, so that we may live deep within our hearts. May God bless us with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that we may work for justice, freedom and peace. May God bless us with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, hunger, and war, so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and turn their pain into joy. And may God bless us with enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in this world, so that we can do what others claim cannot be done, to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.”

Franciscan blessing quote by Pastor Aaron Fuller on p. 24 of the September issue of *Living Lutheran*

HYMN OF THE DAY

“O Christ, Our Hope” ELW 604 vs. 1, 4, & 5

- 1 O Christ, our hope, our hearts' desire, creation's mighty Lord,
redeemer of the fallen world, by holy love outpoured,
by holy love outpoured:**
- 4 Oh, let your mighty love prevail to purge us of our pride,
that we may stand before your throne by mercy purified,
by mercy purified.**
- 5 All praise to you, ascended Lord; all glory ever be
to Father, Son, and Spirit blest through all eternity,
through all eternity!**

Text: Latin hymn, c. 8th cent.; tr. John Chandler, 1806-1876, adapt.

APOSTLES’ CREED

**C 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

After each petition, the congregation responds:

P Lord, in your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

The prayers conclude:

P All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. During these extraordinary times, you are welcome to mail your offering to the church or access our on-line giving option:

https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithely/give-one-time/1390744

DIALOGUE

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 our thanks and praise.**

P It is indeed right ... and we remember that...

THANKSGIVING

P 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 for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Spoken)

C **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**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Come to the banquet table where Christ gives himself as food and drink.

We invite all who are able to partake of bread/cracker/tortilla and wine/grape juice/water. You can serve others in your home with the words: "The body of Christ given for you." "The blood of Christ shed for you."

COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P We give you thanks, gracious God,
that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare,
the body and blood of Christ.
Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven,
into your beloved vineyard
to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst,
guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ
and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C Amen.

BLESSING

P Mothering God,
Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.

C Amen. (sung)

SENDING HYMN

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" ELW 834 vs. 3 & 4

- 3 To all, life thou givest, to both great and small; in all life thou livest, the true life of all;
we blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree, and wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.**
- 4 Thou reignest in glory; thou dwellest in light; thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all laud we would render; oh, help us to see 'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee!**

Text: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1824-1908, alt.

DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C Thanks be to God.

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #42052. Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service
obtained from One License with license #A-731018 New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of
the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Special thanks to today's Faithful Servants

Presiding: Rev. Amy Zietlow
Organist: Jeff Kashefska
Videographer: Bella Karunas
Acolyte & Lector: Luke Karunas
Live Stream & Video Team: Sara Corrigan, Jerry and Elaine Decker, Alan Duesterhaus, and Richard Wade

A note of generosity

¹⁷As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, ¹⁹thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

1 Timothy 6:17-19

Readings and Psalm for next Sunday

- **Jonah 3:10--4:11** *God's concern for the city of Nineveh*
- **Psalm 145:1-8** *The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.*
- **Philippians 1:21-30** *Standing firm in the gospel*
- **Matthew 20:1-16** *The parable of the vineyard workers*

This Week at Holy Cross:

Sun., September 13th Live Stream Worship Service 9:15am
Outdoor Worship 10:30 am
Ruth Bible Study (on Zoom) 5:30-6:30pm
Wed, September 16th Council Meeting (in sanctuary & on Zoom) 6:30pm
Sun., September 20th Live Stream Worship Service 9:15am
Outdoor Worship 10:30 am

Announcements

Holy Cross Member Survey In the next few weeks, council members will be contacting all Holy Cross members with a survey on returning to in-person worship in the sanctuary. Many thanks to our LiveStream team (Richard Wade, Alan Duesterhaus, Andrew Craycraft, Sara Corrigan, and Jerry Decker) who are working on updating our recording equipment and LiveStream software so that we can continue to Live Stream worship when we return to the sanctuary. It is important that even as we gather in-person to keep those who are not comfortable with in-person worship connected digitally. Outdoor worship and parking lot worship (with a radio transmitter) will always be an option as well should it be deemed unsafe to meet in person. We thank you for your patience as all these transitions happen.

Prayer is powerful. Please keep these people in your prayers.

Marti B	Joni M	Glenna P	Steve T
Elaine J-D	Jerry D	Lauralee H	Britt W

Shirley (cousin of Jerry Decker)
Kathy (cousin of Jerry Decker)
Mandy (niece of Pam Musser)
Dorothy & Kenneth (parents of Kathy Carter)
Peggy (second parent to Lee Williams)
Milton (in-law of Lee Williams)
Mindy (cousin of Lee Williams)
Penny (stepmother of Phil Barry)
Tina (cousin of Jerry Decker)
Travis (cousin of Jerry Decker)
Penny (sister of Greg Anderson)
Kent (brother of Kathy Carter)
Linda (daughter-in-law of Glenna Powell)
Maribeth (Godmother of Kay Wolken)
Mauva (friend of Pastor Amy)
Judy & Wayne (sister and brother-in-law of Jerry Decker)
Sarah (friend of the Manon's and of Holy Cross)
Gregg (friend of Kathy & Wayne Carter)
Sally, Christopher, Tracy & Tina (Elaine Decker's sister & family)
Nadine (friend of Barb Robinson)
Family of Teresa Taylor
Family of Harry Kemper

Please call the church office to have your prayer requests listed or when prayers have been answered and name(s) can be removed.



Holy Cross Lutheran Church

3778 North Water Street
Decatur, IL 62526
217-877-2258

Holycross3778@yahoo.com

Like us on Facebook @ HolyCrossLutheranDecaturIL
Website: HolyCrossLutheranDecatur.com