

Today's Theme for Worship: God is fair. As a matter of fact, God is more than fair. He is gracious!

Opening Hymn: 217 The Head that Once Was Crowned

1 The head that once was crowned with thorns Is crowned with glory now;
A royal diadem adorns The mighty victor's brow.

2 The highest place that heav'n affords Is his, is his by right,
The King of kings and Lord of lords And heav'n's eternal light,

3 The joy of all who dwell above, The joy of all below
To whom he manifests his love And grants his name to know.

4 To them the cross, with all its shame, With all its grace, is giv'n;
Their name, an everlasting name; Their joy, the joy of heav'n.

5 They suffer with their Lord below; They reign with him above,
Their profit and their joy, to know The myst'ry of his love.

6 The cross he bore is life and health, Though shame and death to him;
His people's hope, his people's wealth, Their everlasting theme.

Text: Thomas Kelly, 1769-1855.

P: The grace of our Lord + Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you.

C: And also with you.

Confession of Sins

P: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

P: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: Amen.

P: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

♪ Oh Taste And See

Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.
Bless-ed are they who take re-fuge in him.

Your Word, O Lord, is e-ter-nal;
it stands firm in the heav-ens.
Your faith-ful-ness con-tin-ues for-ev-er.

Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.
Bless-ed are they who take re-fuge in him.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us Pray.

Mercifully grant, O God, that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, for without your help we are unable to please you; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: ♪ Amen.

First Lesson: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

The Israelites were complaining that God was making them suffer for the sins their fathers committed. They were forgetting their responsibility for the trouble God had brought on the nation.

The word of the LORD came to me.

²What do you mean, you who keep repeating this proverb concerning the soil of Israel, “Fathers eat sour grapes, and their sons’ teeth are set on edge”? ³As surely as I live, declares the LORD God, you will never again use this proverb in Israel. ⁴Indeed, all souls are mine. The soul of the father is mine just like the soul of the son. The soul who sins is the one who will die.

²⁵But you say, “The LORD’s way is not fair.” Listen now, house of Israel. Is it my way that is not fair? Is it not your ways that are not fair? ²⁶If a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and practices unrighteousness, he will die because of it. Because of the unrighteousness that he has practiced, he will die.

²⁷But if a wicked man turns from his wickedness that he has done and practices justice and righteousness, he will preserve his life. ²⁸Because he has seen and turned away from all the rebellious acts that he had committed, he will surely live, and he will not die. ²⁹But the house of Israel says, “The LORD’s way is not fair.” Is it really my ways that are not fair, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are not fair?

³⁰Therefore, I will judge each one of you according to his ways, O house of Israel, declares the LORD God. Repent and turn away from all your rebellious acts, so that you will not set out a stumbling block that makes you guilty. ³¹Throw off from yourselves all your rebellious actions by which you have rebelled, and obtain a new heart and a new spirit for yourselves. Why should

you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies, declares the LORD God. So repent and live!

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 25

“To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul; in you I trust, O my God.”

Refrain

To you, O Lord, I lift my soul; in you I trust, my God.

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul;*
in you I trust, O my God.

Remember, O LORD, your great mercy and love,*
for they are from of old.

Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways;*
according to your love remember me,
for you are good, O LORD.

Refrain

To you, O Lord, I lift my soul; in you I trust, my God.

Turn to me and be gracious to me,*
for I am lonely and afflicted.

Look upon my affliction and my distress*
and take away all my sins.

Guard my life and rescue me,*
for I take refuge in you.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

To you, O Lord, I lift my soul; in you I trust, my God.

Second Lesson: Philippians 2:1-11

Paul points to our unity in the body of Christ. As we deal with one another, we imitate Christ's humility

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, ²then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being united in spirit, and having one mind. ³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility consider one another better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look carefully not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

⁵Indeed, let this attitude be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. ⁶Though he was by nature God, he did not consider equality with God as a prize to be displayed, ⁷but he emptied himself by taking the nature of a servant. When he was born in human likeness, and his appearance was like that of any other man, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

These words are written that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel: Matthew 21:28-32

It is not only God's acts of judgment which people see as being unfair. God's grace to sinners also seems unfair to those who feel no need for it. Jesus shows this in the parable of the two sons.

²⁸“What do you think? A man had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go work today in my vineyard.’ ²⁹He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰He came to the second and said the same thing. The second son answered, ‘I will go, sir,’ but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?”

They said to him, “The first.”

Jesus said to them, “Amen I tell you: The tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness, but you did not believe him. However, the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him. Even when you saw this, you did not change your mind and believe him.”

C: ♪ Praise be to you, O Christ!

Hymn of the Day: 306 Before You, God the Judge of All

1 Before you, God, the Judge of all,
With grief and shame I humbly fall.
I see my sins against you, Lord,
My sins of thought and deed and word.
They press me sore; to you I flee:
O God, be merciful to me!

2 O Lord, my God, to you I pray:
Oh, cast me not in wrath away!
Let your good Spirit ne'er depart,
But let him draw to you my heart
That truly penitent I be:
O God, be merciful to me!

3 O Jesus, let your precious blood
Be to my soul a cleansing flood.
Turn not, O Lord, your guest away,
But grant that justified I may
Go to my house at peace to be:
O God, be merciful to me!

Text: Magnus B. Landstad, 1802-80; tr. Carl Döving, 1867-1937, alt.

Sermon

Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Offering Prayer

Electronic Giving! You can give your offerings from your smartphone with the GivePlusChurch app, which can be downloaded for free at Google Play or the App Store. You can also give at holytrinitylutheranwyoming.com by clicking the Offerings link at the top of the page or scan the QR code below. If you have any questions about any of these options, please contact Dave Conrad at dconrad765@gmail.com or 616-406-7172



Prayer of the Church

Lord's Prayer

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.

Hymn: 749 The Love of Christ, Who Died for Me

1 The love of Christ, who died for me Is more than mind can know,
His mercy measureless and free To meet the debt I owe.
He came my sinful cause to plead, He laid his glories by,
For me a homeless life to lead, A shameful death to die.

2 My sins I only see in part, My self-regarding ways;
The secret places of my heart Lie bare before his gaze.
For me the price of sin he paid; My sins beyond recall
Are all alike on Jesus laid, he died to bear them all.

3 O living Lord of life, for whom The heavens held their breath,
To see, triumphant from the tomb, A love that conquers death,
Possess my heart that it may be Your kingdom without end,
O Christ who died for love of me And lives to be my friend.

This hymn examines the true nature of God's grace. While human love is directed toward people and things that bring pleasure, "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, b. 1926 © 1991 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Prayer and Blessing

P: O Lord God, our heavenly Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep us strong in your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow on us your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

or

P: Almighty God, we thank you for teaching us the things you want us to believe and do. Help us by your Holy Spirit to keep your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: ♪ A-men.

P: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

C: ♪ A-men, A-men, A-men

Closing Hymn: 461 vv. 1, 4-6 From Eternity, O God

1 From eternity, O God, In your Son you did elect me.
Therefore, Father, on life's road Graciously to heav'n direct me;
Send to me your Holy Spirit That his gifts I may inherit.

2 Born alive but dead in sin, Lost to all good things by nature,
I was found and changed within And became a newborn creature.
Sinful flesh works ruination, But the Spirit works salvation.

3 Drive away the gloomy night Of my darkened mind's reflection.
Quench all thoughts that are not right; Hold my reason in subjection.
For your truth may I be yearning, Heav'nly wisdom ever learning.

4 As a branch upon a vine, In my blessed Lord implant me;
Ever of my head divine To remain a member grant me.
Oh, let him, my Lord and Savior, Be my life and love forever!

5 Faith and hope and charity Graciously, O Father, give me;
Be my guardian constantly That the devil may not grieve me.
Grant me humbleness and gladness, Peace and patience in my sadness.

6 Help me speak what's right and good And keep silence on occasion.
Help me pray, Lord, as I should; Help me bear my tribulation.
Help me die and let my spirit Everlasting life inherit.

Text: Caspar Neumann, 1648-1715, abr.; tr. August Crull, 1845-1923, alt.