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15th Sunday After Pentecost, September 13 & 14, 2020

“Lord, help me follow you, even when it hurts!”

The Christian faith gives real answers to the real tough questions.. What’s tougher than the “why” in suffering? Our crucified and risen Lord strengthens us today. Christ calls on us to deny ourselves and follow him on the way of the cross. Those words first offend us but we pray for the never-failing mercy of our Savior to avoid such wicked thoughts and be guided on the cross-laden path to salvation.

Our Sunday 9:30am service is live streamed and can be watched on our website www.gracelutheran-church.com and click on the “[Live Stream Video](#)” link. It will be archived & available to watch at any time by clicking on the Sep 13 link.

GATHERING RITE OF THE WORD OF GOD *(Christian Worship Supplement page 11)*

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

We sing Hymn #221—stanza 1:

***Blessed Jesus, at your Word We are gathered all to hear you.
Let our hearts and souls be stirred Now to seek and love and fear you.
By your teaching, sweet and holy, Drawn from earth to love you solely.***

M: Oh, how I love your law! **C: I meditate on it all day long.**

M: Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, **C: for they are ever with me.**

M: I have more insight than all my teachers, **C: for I meditate on your statutes.**

M: How sweet are your words to my taste, **C: sweeter than honey to my mouth!**

We sing stanza 2:

***All our knowledge, sense, and sight Lie in deepest darkness shrouded
Till your Spirit breaks our night With the beams of truth unclouded.
You alone to God can win us; You must work all good within us.***

M: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

C: so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

M: Yet so often we have despised God’s Word and failed to gladly hear and learn it. For this and all our sins, we bow before God and humbly ask his forgiveness.

C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

We sing stanza 3:

***Gracious Savior, good and kind, Light from Light, from God proceeding.
Open now our heart and mind; Help us by your Spirit’s pleading.
Hear the cry your people raises; Hear and bless our prayers and praises.***

M: God gave his Word so “that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name”. The Scriptures testify about Jesus, who lived a perfect life for you, died on the cross to pay for all your sins, and rose again to assure you of your salvation. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

We sing stanza 4:

***Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Praise to you and adoration!
Grant that we your Word may trust, Confident of our salvation,
While we here below must wander, Till we sing your praises yonder.***

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

M: Let us pray. O Lord Jesus Christ, preserve the congregation of believers with your never-failing mercy. Help us avoid whatever is wicked and harmful, and guide us in the way that leads to our salvation; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen.**

FIRST LESSON: Jeremiah 15:15-21 (EHV)

After a hard ministry, Jeremiah began to forget the things of God and concentrate too much on the things of man. The prophet Jeremiah struggled to carry the cross given him by his God. God's Word was a joy and delight to his heart, but Jeremiah's life had been anything but joyful. He wondered whether God's promises amounted to nothing. God responds with a call to repent and turn to God for mercy. He didn't promise to remove the persecution, but to make Jeremiah strong enough to take it. May God make each of us "bronze walls." Even as we follow the way of the cross, our God is with us to rescue and save us.

PSALM 121 (page 112)

SECOND LESSON: Romans 12:1-8 (EHV)

Paul starts with "Therefore..." in view of everything God has done to save you eternally...let death come before life for you. First the cross, then the crown. Offer your bodies as living sacrifices. We die to self and live for Christ.

VERSE OF THE DAY (spoken)

Alleluia. Your words became a joy to me, and the delight of my heart. Alleluia. (Jeremiah 15:16)

GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 16:21-26 (EHV)

The disciples understood who Jesus is, they still failed to understand his work. He had come to fulfill the redemptive mission for which he was anointed; he had not come to fulfill Israel's earthbound views of Messiah. He couldn't be the Messiah they wanted, and still be the Savior they needed. First the cross, then the crown. Jesus explains this and Peter objects. Notice Jesus' strong rejection of this temptation. We die to self, but gain Christ, the Life.

HYMN #465: "Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken" ALL sing

APOSTLES' CREED

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M: Lord God, our maker and preserver, we praise and thank you for all that you give us day after day.

C: We are not worthy of all the mercies you show us.

M: You have given us your precious Word to nourish our souls and to protect us from the temptations of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature.

C: We thank you for those who teach and preach your saving truth at this place and everywhere. Grant them a rich measure of patience, wisdom, and love.

M: Heavenly Father, we pray that you shield us from every kind of danger: sudden catastrophe, terrors of crime, and the pain of disease. Watch over those who travel by land, sea, and air. Keep our loved ones from whatever perils may threaten them.

C: Heal those who are sick, cheer those who are sad, calm those who are distressed, and comfort all who are old and infirm.

M: Bless our land, our people, and those who hold offices of high trust. Keep our government and schools upright and strong for the advancement of good citizenship and useful vocations, that we may enjoy your gifts of peace, security, and well-being.

C: Grant your blessing to every nation on earth. Where there are wars, may there be peace. Where there is hatred, let it be healed. Where there is poverty, danger, or disaster, come with your almighty power to help and restore.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

M: We bring these requests before you in the name of Jesus our Lord, and ask you to hear us. Take all that we have, our bodies and minds, our time and skills, our ministries and offerings, and use them to your glory.

C: We give ourselves to you that we may serve you in whatever way is pleasing in your sight. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Traditional)

BLESSING - concluded with ALL singing: **Amen, Amen, Amen.**

HYMN #422 "Jesus, Lead Us On"

NEXT WEEK SUNDAY, SEP 20TH, WE BEGIN OUR FALL SCHEDULE AS FOLLOWS:

- **Sunday Worship:** We return to having just 2 services: **8:00 (live streaming) & 10:45**
- **Sunday School begins:** Children should meet in church @ **9:15am**
- **Adult Bible Class:** **9:20** in the fellowship hall. The Bible Class series is "Christians in Conflict".

