

Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost

August 23, 2020

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Hermiston, Oregon

Prayer Before Worship

O Lord, my Creator, Redeemer, and Comforter, as I come to worship You in spirit and in truth, I humbly pray that You would open my heart to the preaching of Your Word so that I may repent of my sins, believe in Jesus Christ as my only Savior, and grow in grace and holiness. Hear me for the sake of His name. Amen.

Hymn #711 "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us"

Savior, like a shepherd lead us;
Much we need Your tender care.
In Your pleasant pastures feed us,
For our use Your fold prepare.
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
You have bought us; we are Yours.
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
You have bought us; we are Yours.

We are Yours; in love befriend us,
Be the guardian of our way;
Keep Your flock, from sin defend us,
Seek us when we go astray.
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
Hear us children when we pray.
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
Hear us children when we pray.

You have promised to receive us,
Poor and sinful though we be;
You have mercy to relieve us,
Grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free.
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
Early let us turn to You.
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
Early let us turn to You.

Early let us seek Your favor,
Early let us do Your will;
Blessèd Lord and only Savior,
With Your love our spirits fill.
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
You have loved us, love us still.
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
You have loved us, love us still.

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Opening Versicles

P: O Lord, open my lips,

C: and my mouth will declare Your praise.

P: Make haste, O God, to deliver me;

C: make haste to help me, O Lord,

**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.**

First Scripture Reading

Judges 13

And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, so the LORD gave them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

² There was a certain man of Zorah, of the tribe of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. And his wife was barren and had no children. ³ And the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold, you are barren and have not borne children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. ⁴ Therefore be careful and drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, ⁵ for behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb, and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines." ⁶ Then the woman came and told her husband, "A man of God came to me, and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God, very awesome. I did not ask him where he was from, and he did not tell me his name, ⁷ but he said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. So then drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.'"

⁸ Then Manoah prayed to the LORD and said, "O Lord, please let the man of God whom you sent come again to us and teach us what we are to do with the child who will be born." ⁹ And God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the field. But Manoah her husband was not with her. ¹⁰ So the woman ran quickly and told her husband, "Behold, the man who came to me the other day has appeared to me." ¹¹ And Manoah arose and went after his wife and came to the man and said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to this woman?" And he said, "I am." ¹² And Manoah said, "Now when your words come true, what is to be the child's manner of life, and what is his mission?" ¹³ And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "Of all that I said to the woman let her be careful. ¹⁴ She may not eat of anything that comes from the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing. All that I commanded her let her observe."

¹⁵ Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "Please let us detain you and prepare a young goat for you." ¹⁶ And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "If you detain me, I will not eat of your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, then offer it to the LORD." (For Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the LORD.) ¹⁷ And Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "What is your name, so that, when your words come true, we may honor you?" ¹⁸ And the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?" ¹⁹ So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering, and offered it on the rock to the LORD, to the one who works wonders, and Manoah and his wife were watching. ²⁰ And when the flame went up toward heaven from the altar, the angel of the LORD went up in the flame of the altar. Now Manoah and his wife were watching, and they fell on their faces to the ground.

²¹ The angel of the LORD appeared no more to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the LORD. ²² And Manoah said to his wife, "We shall surely die, for we have seen God." ²³ But his wife said to him, "If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering at our hands, or shown us all these things, or now announced to us such things as these." ²⁴ And the woman bore a son and called his name

Samson. And the young man grew, and the LORD blessed him.²⁵ And the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Hymn #724 "If God Himself Be for Me"

sung to: "Stand Up, Stand Up, for Jesus"

If God Himself be for me,
I may a host defy;
For when I pray, before me
My foes, confounded, fly.
If Christ, my head and master,
Befriend me from above,
What foe or what disaster
Can drive me from His love?

Second Scripture Reading

Judges 14-15

Samson went down to Timnah, and at Timnah he saw one of the daughters of the Philistines.² Then he came up and told his father and mother, "I saw one of the daughters of the Philistines at Timnah. Now get her for me as my wife."³ But his father and mother said to him, "Is there not a woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our people, that you must go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she is right in my eyes."

⁴ His father and mother did not know that it was from the LORD, for he was seeking an opportunity against the Philistines. At that time the Philistines ruled over Israel.

⁵ Then Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah, and they came to the vineyards of Timnah. And behold, a young lion came toward him roaring.⁶ Then the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and although he had nothing in his hand, he tore the lion in pieces as one tears a young goat. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.⁷ Then he went down and talked with the woman, and she was right in Samson's eyes.

⁸ After some days he returned to take her. And he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion, and behold, there was a swarm of bees in the body of the lion, and honey.⁹ He scraped it out into his hands and went on, eating as he went. And he came to his father and mother and gave some to them, and they ate. But he did not tell them that he had scraped the honey from the carcass of the lion.

¹⁰ His father went down to the woman, and Samson prepared a feast there, for so the young men used to do.¹¹ As soon as the people saw him, they brought thirty companions to be with him.¹² And Samson said to them, "Let me now put a riddle to you. If you can tell me what it is, within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothes,¹³ but if you cannot tell me what it is, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothes." And they said to him, "Put your riddle, that we may hear it."¹⁴ And he said to them,

"Out of the eater came something to eat.
Out of the strong came something sweet."

And in three days they could not solve the riddle.

¹⁵ On the fourth day they said to Samson's wife, "Entice your husband to tell us what the riddle is, lest we burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us here to impoverish us?"¹⁶ And Samson's wife wept over him and said, "You only hate me; you do not love me. You have put a riddle to my people, and you have not told me what it is." And he said to her, "Behold, I have not told my father nor my mother, and shall I tell you?"¹⁷ She wept before him the seven days that their feast lasted, and on the seventh day he told her, because she pressed him hard. Then she told the riddle to her people.¹⁸ And the men of the city said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down,

"What is sweeter than honey?
What is stronger than a lion?"

And he said to them,

"If you had not plowed with my heifer,
you would not have found out my riddle."

¹⁹ And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon and struck down thirty men of the town and took their spoil and gave the garments to those who had told the riddle. In hot anger he went back to his father's house.²⁰ And Samson's wife was given to his companion, who had been his best man.

15¹ After some days, at the time of wheat harvest, Samson went to visit his wife with a young goat. And he said, "I will go in to my wife in the chamber." But her father would not allow him to go in. ²And her father said, "I really thought that you utterly hated her, so I gave her to your companion. Is not her younger sister more beautiful than she? Please take her instead." ³And Samson said to them, "This time I shall be innocent in regard to the Philistines, when I do them harm." ⁴So Samson went and caught 300 foxes and took torches. And he turned them tail to tail and put a torch between each pair of tails. ⁵And when he had set fire to the torches, he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines and set fire to the stacked grain and the standing grain, as well as the olive orchards. ⁶Then the Philistines said, "Who has done this?" And they said, "Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken his wife and given her to his companion." And the Philistines came up and burned her and her father with fire. ⁷And Samson said to them, "If this is what you do, I swear I will be avenged on you, and after that I will quit." ⁸And he struck them hip and thigh with a great blow, and he went down and stayed in the cleft of the rock of Etam.

⁹Then the Philistines came up and encamped in Judah and made a raid on Lehi. ¹⁰And the men of Judah said, "Why have you come up against us?" They said, "We have come up to bind Samson, to do to him as he did to us." ¹¹Then 3,000 men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What then is this that you have done to us?" And he said to them, "As they did to me, so have I done to them." ¹²And they said to him, "We have come down to bind you, that we may give you into the hands of the Philistines." And Samson said to them, "Swear to me that you will not attack me yourselves." ¹³They said to him, "No; we will only bind you and give you into their hands. We will surely not kill you." So they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.

¹⁴When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him. Then the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and the ropes that were on his arms became as flax that has caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands. ¹⁵And he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, and put out his hand and took it, and with it he struck 1,000 men. ¹⁶And Samson said,

"With the jawbone of a donkey,
heaps upon heaps,
with the jawbone of a donkey
have I struck down a thousand men."

¹⁷As soon as he had finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone out of his hand. And that place was called Ramath-lehi.

¹⁸And he was very thirsty, and he called upon the LORD and said, "You have granted this great salvation by the hand of your servant, and shall I now die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?" ¹⁹And God split open the hollow place that is at Lehi, and water came out from it. And when he drank, his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore the name of it was called En-hakkore; it is at Lehi to this day. ²⁰And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

Hymn #724 "If God Himself Be for Me"

I build on this foundation,
That Jesus and His blood
Alone are my salvation,
My true, eternal good.
Without Him all that pleases
Is valueless on earth;
The gifts I have from Jesus
Alone have priceless worth.

Third Scripture Reading

Judges 16:1-22

Samson went to Gaza, and there he saw a prostitute, and he went in to her. ²The Gazites were told, "Samson has come here." And they surrounded the place and set an ambush for him all night at the gate of the city. They kept quiet all night, saying, "Let us wait till the light of the morning; then we will kill him." ³But Samson lay till midnight, and at midnight he arose and took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two posts, and pulled them up, bar and all, and put them on his shoulders and carried them to the top of the hill that is in front of Hebron.

⁴After this he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. ⁵And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, "Seduce him, and see where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower

him, that we may bind him to humble him. And we will each give you 1,100 pieces of silver.”⁶ So Delilah said to Samson, “Please tell me where your great strength lies, and how you might be bound, that one could subdue you.”

⁷ Samson said to her, “If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings that have not been dried, then I shall become weak and be like any other man.”⁸ Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings that had not been dried, and she bound him with them.⁹ Now she had men lying in ambush in an inner chamber. And she said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” But he snapped the bowstrings, as a thread of flax snaps when it touches the fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.

¹⁰ Then Delilah said to Samson, “Behold, you have mocked me and told me lies. Please tell me how you might be bound.”¹¹ And he said to her, “If they bind me with new ropes that have not been used, then I shall become weak and be like any other man.”¹² So Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them and said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” And the men lying in ambush were in an inner chamber. But he snapped the ropes off his arms like a thread.

¹³ Then Delilah said to Samson, “Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me how you might be bound.” And he said to her, “If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web and fasten it tight with the pin, then I shall become weak and be like any other man.”¹⁴ So while he slept, Delilah took the seven locks of his head and wove them into the web. And she made them tight with the pin and said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” But he awoke from his sleep and pulled away the pin, the loom, and the web.

¹⁵ And she said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and you have not told me where your great strength lies.”¹⁶ And when she pressed him hard with her words day after day, and urged him, his soul was vexed to death.¹⁷ And he told her all his heart, and said to her, “A razor has never come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If my head is shaved, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak and be like any other man.”

¹⁸ When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, “Come up again, for he has told me all his heart.” Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hands.¹⁹ She made him sleep on her knees. And she called a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him.²⁰ And she said, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” And he awoke from his sleep and said, “I will go out as at other times and shake myself free.” But he did not know that the LORD had left him.²¹ And the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. And he ground at the mill in the prison.²² But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.

Hymn #724 “If God Himself Be for Me”

Christ Jesus is my splendor,
My sun, my light, alone;
Were He not my defender
Before God’s judgment throne,
I never should find favor
And mercy in His sight,
But be destroyed forever
As darkness by the light.

Fourth Scripture Reading

Judges 16:1-22

Now the lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to rejoice, and they said, “Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand.”²⁴ And when the people saw him, they praised their god. For they said, “Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the ravager of our country, who has killed many of us.”²⁵ And when their hearts were merry, they said, “Call Samson, that he may entertain us.” So they called Samson out of the prison, and he entertained them. They made him stand between the pillars.²⁶ And Samson said to the young man who held him by the hand, “Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests, that I may lean against them.”²⁷ Now the house was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines were there, and on the roof there were about 3,000 men and women, who looked on while Samson entertained.

²⁸ Then Samson called to the LORD and said, “O Lord GOD, please remember me and please strengthen me only this once, O God, that I may be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes.”²⁹ And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and he leaned his weight against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the

other.³⁰ And Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines." Then he bowed with all his strength, and the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed during his life.³¹ Then his brothers and all his family came down and took him and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. He had judged Israel twenty years.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Gradual

recited by all

Romans 11:33, 36

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways!

For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.

To Him be glory forever. Amen.

Hymn #724 "If God Himself Be for Me"

Christ canceled my offenses,
Delivered me from death;
He is the Lord who cleanses
My soul from sin through faith.
In Him I can be cheerful,
Courageous on my way;
In Him I am not fearful
Of God's great Judgment Day.

For no one can condemn me
Or set my hope aside;
Now hell no more can claim me:
Its fury I deride.
No sentence now reproves me,
No guilt destroys my peace;
For Christ, my Savior, loves me
And shields me with His grace.

My heart with joy is springing;
I am no longer sad.
My soul is filled with singing;
Your sunshine makes me glad.
The sun that cheers my spirit
Is Jesus Christ, my King;
The heav'n I shall inherit
Makes me rejoice and sing.

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Sermon

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.**

**And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence 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.**

Hymn #744 "Amazing Grace"

Amazing grace—how sweet the sound—
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind but now I see!

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come;
His grace has brought me safe thus far,
His grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

Text & Music: Public domain

Kyrie

P: O Lord,

P: O Christ,

P: O Lord,

C: have mercy.

C: have mercy.

C: have mercy.

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.**

Versicles

P: Hear my prayer, O Lord;

C: let my cry come to You.

P: In the day of my trouble I call upon You;

C: for You answer me.

P: Hide Your face from my sins,

C: and blot out all my iniquities.

P: Create in me a clean heart, O God,

C: and renew a right spirit within me.

P: Cast me not away from Your presence,

C: and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.

P: Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,

C: and uphold me with a willing spirit.

P: Because Your steadfast love is better than life,

C: my lips will praise You.

P: For You have been my help,

C: and in the shadow of Your wings I will sing for joy.

P: Teach me Your way, O Lord, that I may walk in Your truth;

C: unite my heart to fear Your name.

P: I give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,

C: and I will glorify Your name forever.

P: May all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You.

C: May those who love Your salvation say evermore, "God is great!"

P: Save Your people and bless Your heritage!

C: Be their shepherd and carry them forever.

P: . . . *Congregational prayers are offered here* . . . Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer;

C: listen to my plea for grace.

Collects

P: Almighty God, Whom to know is everlasting life, grant us to know Your Son, Jesus, to be the way, the truth, and the life that we may boldly confess Him to be the Christ and steadfastly walk in the way that leads to life eternal; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

All: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Benedicamus and Blessing

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

P: The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

C: Amen.

Hymn #733 "O God, Our Help in Ages Past"

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home:

Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last
And our eternal home!

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Scripture for August

Psalm 138:7 ESV

*Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
You preserve my life;
You stretch out Your hand against the wrath of my enemies,
and Your right hand delivers me.*

What's Happening This Week

Worship: 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. at Bethlehem / 9 a.m. at Christ Alone

Bible Study: Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. ONLINE
Wednesday at 7 a.m. at the Lone Market

Men's Breakfast: 6:00 a.m. at Bethlehem

Doxology #805 "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

△ Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Amen.

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