

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

February 23, 2025

Welcome/Announcements

Is It Possible?

As We Gather

Today's Old Testament Reading is the account of Joseph forgiving his brothers, who had sold him into slavery years earlier. Is it possible for us to forgive as he did? Joseph learned to trust in God and how He would arrange things. God has arranged everything for us too! The resurrection of Jesus is beyond our understanding but not beyond our comprehension. So Paul tries to explain about heavenly beings. We don't know much about them, but we can forgive because our Lord went a lot farther than we are called to follow, into death, for God to forgive us. Today Word and Sacrament strengthen us to follow His example in daily living.

PREPARATION

Opening Hymn

LSB 700 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

- 1 Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heav'n, to earth come down!
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation,
Enter ev'ry trembling heart.

- 2 Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit
Into ev'ry troubled breast;
Let us all in Thee inherit;
Let us find Thy promised rest.
Take away the love of sinning;

Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty.

3 Come, Almighty, to deliver;
Let us all Thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Nevermore Thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve Thee as Thy hosts above,
Pray and praise Thee without ceasing,
Glory in Thy perfect love.

4 Finish then Thy new creation,
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation
Perfectly restored in Thee,
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heav'n we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–88
Text: Public domain

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Opening Sentences

1 Corinthians 15:21–22, 42

P As by a man came death,
C by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.

P As in Adam all die,
C so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

P What is sown is perishable;
C what is raised is imperishable.

Confession and Absolution

Luke 6:27, 32, 37

- P** Confident of our Lord's victory over death, leading all who follow Him by faith, let us confess our sins. "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you." We confess our failure to love our enemies, O Lord.
- C** **We have responded to them as they have dealt with us. We have not done to them as we wish they would have done to us. Forgive us, Father.**
- P** "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you?" We confess our giving preference to people who are like us.
- C** **We have loved those near and dear to us and have dealt with others without love and mercy. Forgive us, Lord Jesus.**
- P** "Judge not, and you will not be judged." We confess our judgment of people we think are not up to the standards we think we can meet.
- C** **We have failed to pass on the forgiveness we have received from You, O Holy Spirit. Forgive us, Lord our God.**
- P** "Forgive, and you will be forgiven." Your sins have been forgiven by the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ! As a called and ordained servant of His, I therefore forgive you in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen.**

WORD

Introit

Psalm 37:1-5; antiphon: vv. 7a, b

Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him;
fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way.
Fret not yourself because of evildoers;
be not envious of wrongdoers!
For they will soon fade like the grass
and wither like the green herb.
Trust in the LORD, and do good;
dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness.
Delight yourself in the LORD,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.
Commit your way to the LORD;
trust in him, and he will act.

**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.**

Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him;
fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way.

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray. O God, the strength of all who put their trust in You,

C **mercifully grant that by Your power we may be defended against all
adversity;**

P through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and
the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading

Genesis 45:3–15

³ Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.

⁴So Joseph said to his brothers, “Come near to me, please.” And they came near. And he said, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not tarry. ¹⁰You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, and your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹There I will provide for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come, so that you and your household, and all that you have, do not come to poverty.’ ¹²And now your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you. ¹³You must tell my father of all my honor in Egypt, and of all that you have

seen. Hurry and bring my father down here.” ¹⁴Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck. ¹⁵And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them. After that his brothers talked with him.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle

1 Corinthians 15:21–26, 30–42

²¹For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. ²²For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶The last enemy to be destroyed is death. .

..
³⁰Why am I in danger every hour? ³¹I protest, brothers, by my pride in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die every day! ³²What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” ³³Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.” ³⁴Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

³⁵But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” ³⁶You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. ³⁸But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. ³⁹For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. ⁴⁰There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. ⁴¹There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.

⁴²So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse

Luke 6:36

- P** Alleluia. Be merciful,
C even as your Father is merciful. Alleluia.

Holy Gospel

Luke 6:27–38

- P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the sixth chapter.
C Glory to You, O Lord.

²⁷[Jesus said:] “But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. ³¹ And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.

³²“If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. ³⁵ But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. ³⁶ Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

³⁷“Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

- P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.
C Praise to You, O Christ.

Hymn of the Day

LSB 725 Children of the Heavenly Father

- 1 Children of the heav'nly Father
Safely in His bosom gather;
Nestling bird nor star in heaven
Such a refuge e'er was given.

- 2 God His own doth tend and nourish;
In His holy courts they flourish.
From all evil things He spares them;
In His mighty arms He bears them.
- 3 Neither life nor death shall ever
From the Lord His children sever;
Unto them His grace He showeth,
And their sorrows all He knoweth.
- 4 Though He giveth or He taketh,
God His children ne'er forsaketh;
His the loving purpose solely
To preserve them pure and holy.

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903; tr. Ernst W. Olson, 1870–1958
Text: Public domain

Sermon

Guest Pastor, Rev. Ted Rellstab
“Love - the heart of Jesus' teaching”
Luke 6:27-38

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.**

Prayer of the Church

P Let us pray for ourselves, our friends and family, the nations of the world, and our enemies. For the church, people gathered around Word and Sacrament, those who serve professionally that they reflect the Gospel they proclaim, and those who serve their family and friends quietly, that God remind them that they are indeed His children, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, hear our prayer.

P For the nations of this world and their leaders, that God use them for the good of all and that they serve both the influencers and those who have been forgotten by society, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, hear our prayer.

P For artists and craftspeople, musicians and actors, that they use their gifts to the glory of God, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, hear our prayer.

P For troops deployed and police at home, for first responders and health professionals and volunteers that their efforts bring about healing and peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, hear our prayer.

P For those near and dear to us, that God give them health and healing, recovery and remission, solace and peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, hear our prayer.

P For ourselves and our congregation, that God refresh and renew our resolve to spread the Gospel, love the people around us, and serve Him with all the resources He provides, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, hear our prayer.

P Into Your hands, gracious Father, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, grace, and compassion, for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Offering: If you were prepared to bring an offering today, you may leave it as you exit the sanctuary. Member/Visitor and Prayer Request cards may be left with your offering as well. Thank you

Lord's Prayer

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.

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
C Amen.

Closing Hymn

LSB 741 Jesus Christ, My Sure Defense

sts. 1-6

1 Jesus Christ, my sure defense
And my Savior, now is living!
Knowing this, my confidence
Rests upon the hope here given,
Though the night of death be fraught
Still with many_an anxious thought.

- 2 Jesus, my Redeemer, lives;
Likewise I to life shall waken.
He will bring me where He is;
Shall my courage then be shaken?
Shall I fear, or could the Head
Rise and leave His members dead?
- 3 No, too closely I am bound
By my hope to Christ forever;
Faith's strong hand the Rock has found,
Grasped it, and will leave it never;
Even death now cannot part
From its Lord the trusting heart.
- 4 I am flesh and must return
To the dust, whence I am taken;
But by faith I now discern
That from death I shall awaken
With my Savior to abide
In His glory, at His side.
- 5 Glorified, I shall anew
With this flesh then be enshrouded;
In this body I shall view
God, my Lord, with eyes unclouded;
In this flesh I then shall see
Jesus Christ eternally.
- 6 Then take comfort and rejoice,
For His members Christ will cherish.
Fear not, they will hear His voice;
Dying, they will never perish;
For the very grave is stirred
When the trumpet's blast is heard.

Dismissal

P Go in peace as you serve our heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Children's Sunday School Song (Sung A Cappella)

Jesus Loves the Little Children of the World.

Jesus loves the little children
All the children of the world
Red and yellow, black and white
They are precious in His sight
Jesus loves the little children of the world

Jesus died for all the children
All the children of the world
Red and yellow, black and white
They are precious in His sight
Jesus died for all the children of the world

Jesus loves the little children
All the children of the world
Red and yellow, black and white
They are precious in His sight
Jesus loves the little children of the world

Acknowledgments

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