

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost (20th September, 2020)

Pastor Peter Ghalayini

M: If I live, it will be for Christ;

All: **and if I die, I will gain even more.**

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

C: **Amen.**

Opening Hymn – O how great is Thy compassion *LH 326*

- 1. O how great is your compassion,
Faithful Father, God of grace,
That with all our fallen race
In our depth of degradation
You had mercy so that we
Might be saved eternally.**
- 2. Your great love for this has striven
That we may, from sin made free,
Live with you eternally.
Your dear son himself has given,
And extends his gracious call
To his supper leads us all.**
- 3. Firmly to our soul's salvation
Witnesses your Spirit, Lord,
In your sacraments and Word.
There he sends true consolation,
Giving us the gift of faith,
That we fear not hell nor death.**
- 4. Lord, your mercy will not leave me -
Ever will your truth abide.
Then in you I will confide.
Since your Word cannot deceive me,
My salvation is to me
Safe and sure eternally.**

**5. I will praise your great compassion,
Faithful Father, God of grace,
That with all our fallen race.
In our depth of degradation
You had mercy so that we
Might be saved eternally.**

*Music: 'Hirtenlieder,' Altdorf 1653,
Church use: Breslau 1657, ad J. Flittner, Greifswald 1661;
Words: Ach, wie gross ist deine Gute; Johann Olearius (1611-1684),
Tr. August Crull, alt. In the public domain*

M: St Paul says: live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.
Let us confess our sins to God our Father and ask him in the name of our
Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us;

C: **We confess to you, almighty God,
before the whole company of heaven, and to each other,
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, by our own fault.
Have mercy on us, for Jesus' sake, forgive us all our sins,
and bring us to eternal life.
Amen.**

M: As a called and ordained servant of the Word I announce the grace of
God to all of you. On behalf of my Lord Jesus Christ, and by his
command, I forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of
the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

L: I will exalt you, O God my King,
Lord have mercy,

C: **Lord have mercy.**

L: I will bless your Name for ever and ever.
Christ have mercy,

C: **Christ have mercy.**

L: Every day will I bless you,
Lord have mercy,

C: **Lord have mercy.**

M: The Lord be with you,

C: **And also with you.**

M: Let us pray for the gift of generosity.

Loving and righteous God,
you are far more generous to us,
and to all who work in your kingdom,
than we desire or deserve.

Make us generous to others
as you have been to us.

We ask this through your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

First Reading – *Jonah 3:10 - 4:11*

Jonah is angered by God's mercy

¹⁰ When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened. ^{4:1} But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the Lord, "Isn't this what I said, Lord, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.

³ Now, Lord, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live."

⁴ But the Lord replied, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵ Jonah had gone out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city. ⁶ Then the Lord God provided a leafy plant and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the plant. ⁷ But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah's head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, "It would be better for me to die than to live." ⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?" "It is," he said. "And I'm so angry I wish I were dead." ¹⁰ But the Lord said, "You have been concerned about

this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. ¹¹ And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals?”

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 145:1-8 (*Spoken responsively*)

M: ¹ I will exalt you, my God the King;

All: **I will praise your name for ever and ever.**

M: ² Every day I will praise you
and extol your name for ever and ever.

All: ³ **Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.**

M: ⁴ One generation commends your works to another;

All: **they tell of your mighty acts.**

M: ⁵ They speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty—and I will meditate on your wonderful works.

All: ⁶ **They tell of the power of your awesome works— and I will proclaim your great deeds.**

M: ⁷ They celebrate your abundant goodness
and joyfully sing of your righteousness.

All: ⁸ **The Lord is gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger and rich in love.**

Second Reading – Philippians 1:21-30

Living for Christ

²¹ For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²² If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! ²³ I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; ²⁴ but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. ²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I

will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶ so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me. ²⁷ Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. ²⁹ For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, ³⁰ since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

L: Alleluia, alleluia.

Jesus said: The kingdom of heaven is like this:

All: **the last will be first,
and the first will be last.**

Alleluia!

Gospel Reading – Matthew 20:1-16

(Spoken) **Glory to you, O Lord,**

The workers in the vineyard

Jesus said: ¹“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. ² He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

³“About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. ⁴ He told them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ ⁵ So they went. “He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. ⁶ About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, ‘Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?’ ⁷ “‘Because no one has hired us,’ they answered. “He said to them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard.’

⁸“When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones

hired and going on to the first.’⁹ “The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each received a denarius.¹⁰ So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius.¹¹ When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner.¹² ‘These who were hired last worked only one hour,’ they said, ‘and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.’¹³ “But he answered one of them, ‘I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn’t you agree to work for a denarius?’¹⁴ Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you.¹⁵ Don’t I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?’¹⁶ “So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

L: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All: *(Spoken)* **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Lord Jesus, thank you for your generosity,
far beyond what we deserve.**

Teach us to be thankful, and not envious of others.

Amen.

Gospel Hymn – Fight the good fight *LH 352*

- 1. Fight the good fight with all thy might,
Christ is thy strength, and Christ thy right;
Lay hold on life, and it shall be
Thy joy and crown eternally.**
- 2. Run the straight race through God’s good grace,
Lift up thine eyes, and seek His face;
Life with its way before thee lies,
Christ is the path, and Christ the prize.**
- 3. Cast care aside, lean on thy guide;
His boundless mercy will provide;
Lean, and the trusting soul shall prove
Christ is its life, and Christ its love.**

4. **Faint not, nor fear, His arms are near;
He changeth not, and thou art dear;
Only believe, and thou shalt see
That Christ is all in all to thee.**

*Music: J.P. Lohe 1869–1952;
Words: John Samuel Bewley Monsell (1811-1875), alt. In the
public domain*

Sermon

All: **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, dead, and 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.**

Offering Hymn – By Grace I'm Saved LHS 329

1. **By grace I'm saved,
grace free and boundless;
My soul, believe and doubt it not;
Why stagger at this word of promise?
Has Scripture ever falsehood taught?**

**No; then this word must true remain:
By grace you too will life obtain.**

- 2. By grace! None dare lay claim to merit;
Our works and conduct have no worth,
God in His love sent our Redeemer,
Christ Jesus, to this sinful earth;
His death did for our sins atone,
And we are saved by grace alone.**
- 3. By grace God's Son, our only Saviour
Came down to earth to bear our sin,
Was it because of your own merit
That Jesus died your soul to win?
No, it was grace, and grace alone,
That brought him from his heav'nly throne.**
- 4. By grace! This ground of faith is certain;
As long as God is true, it stands.
What saints have penned by inspiration,
What in His Word our God commands,
Our faith in what our God has done,
Depends on grace— grace through his Son.**
- 5. By grace to timid hearts that tremble
In tribulation's furnace tried,
By grace, in spite of fear and trouble,
The Father's heart is open wide.
Where could I help and strength secure
If grace were not my anchor sure?**
- 6. By grace! On this I'll rest when dying;
In Jesus' promise I rejoice;
For though I know my heart's condition,
I also know my Saviour's voice.
My heart is glad, all grief has flown
Since I am saved by grace alone.**

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L: Lord, thank you for being so generous and merciful to us.
Help us to remember what Christ has done for us, and to give ourselves
in love and service as a response to his love.

All: Amen.

Prayer of the church

The Lord's Prayer

All: **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive
those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever.
Amen.**

M: Live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ,
standing firm in one spirit,
striving side by side with one mind for
the faith of the gospel.

Go in peace. Serve the Lord with a merciful and generous spirit.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

M: 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 favour,
† and give you peace.

All: **Amen.**

Closing Hymn- Lord of all hopefulness *LHS 870*

- 1. Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
whose trust, ever childlike,
no cares could destroy:
be there at our waking and give us, we pray,
your bliss in our hearts, Lord,
at the break of the day.**

- 2. Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
whose strong hands were skilled
at the plane and the lathe:
be there at our labours and give us, we pray,
your strength in our hearts, Lord,
at the noon of the day.**

- 3. Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
your hands swift to welcome,
your arms to embrace:
be there at our homing and give us, we pray,
your love in our hearts, Lord,
at the eve of the day.**

- 4. Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
whose voice is contentment,
whose presence is balm:
be there at our sleeping and give us, we pray,
your peace in our hearts, Lord,
at the end of the day.**

*Music: Traditional Irish melody
Words: Jan Struther (1901-53)
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