

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—PROPER 18

Reflecting the Faithful Work of Jesus

What Good Is It?

September 5, 2021

AS WE GATHER



In today's Readings, James encourages us toward good works of service and love, and Jesus does the good work of healing by restoring a man's hearing and speech. Our faith in Jesus is marked by our reflection of His love and service. While we are not able to do all the things Jesus can do, we are called to reflect His faithful work as we serve in our vocations by loving our neighbors. We focus today on the words of James, which call us to an active faith that loves our neighbors. We are forced to ask ourselves: What good is a faith that bears no fruit of love and service to others? Such a question might make us worry about our salvation. Friends in Christ: do not fear; your living, saving faith in Christ will inevitably overflow with His good works. Christ powerfully works in us as we live out our daily vocations. Serve the Lord with gladness.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

PRAYERS OF PREPARATION:

Jesus Christ, Son of David, have mercy upon us! So many days, we are like the blind beggar in Mark's gospel, sitting on the side of the road hoping to hear the sounds of your coming. We are like the Canaanite woman begging for the crumbs that fall from your table. We are like the woman who was sick for so many years who reached out to touch the hem of your garment. Have mercy upon us when we cannot see how we will make it, have mercy upon us when we are sick and cannot get well, have mercy upon us when life hardens our hearts and makes it difficult for us to love, to heal or to forgive, have mercy upon us when persecution comes and when we are misunderstood. Jesus Christ, Son of David, we come this afternoon asking for strength to get to the other side, and grace to represent you well. We come, confident that your promise to be with us always is true, confident that you are greater than the trials we face, confident that we are secure in the palm of your

hands. We come to you today, like blind Bartimaeus who sat on the side of the road to Jericho, knowing that you love us and have not forgotten our needs. Jesus Christ, Son of David, have mercy upon us, and grant us your peace. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION IS CELEBRATED:

As a Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) church, we believe and confess that through the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper we receive the true body and blood of Christ in, with, and under the elements of bread and wine. As we commune with faith and repentance, we receive the forgiveness of sins and power to amend our sinful lives. If you confess the same belief, we invite you to our fellowship of the Lord’s Supper.

WELCOME:

WELCOME TO GOD’S HOUSE.... Come and worship! Praise God with your whole being! Trust in the One who co-creates the was, the now, and the will-be. Welcome To Bethel! We are very happy that you are here to worship with us today. We believe that we are called to be "ALWAYS GROWING IN CHRIST" and we want to do everything possible to help you grow. We pray that the Gospel you hear today will take root in your life and do just that, grow. Let’s worship together!

Selection

Minister Terry Dale

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Based on Psalm 146*

Pastor: Praise the LORD, O my soul!

People: I will praise the LORD as long as I live.

Pastor: Blessed are those whose hope is in the LORD;

People: the LORD sets the prisoners free.

Pastor: The LORD opens the eyes of the blind.

People: The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down.

Pastor: The LORD upholds the widow and the fatherless.

People: The LORD will reign forever!

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Yes, the Lord reigns over every nation, language, and people. Yet, we have not loved all people as Christ has loved us. The fruits of our faith are not always evident. But our Lord is gracious and merciful, and He offers His forgiveness to all.

Silence for reflection.

Pastor: Heavenly Father,
People: **we have failed to love others as You love them. We have failed to reflect Your grace to the world in service and sacrifice. We have failed in our actions and in our unwillingness to act. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may follow You in joy. Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy sent Jesus Christ into our world to serve and save all people, showing no partiality or favoritism. By His death, He forgives all our sins. By His resurrection, He destroys death forever and offers us eternal life. Therefore, as a called and ordained 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.

People: **Amen. We are forgiven in Christ. We are set free to love and serve our neighbors. Amen.**

✠ WORD ✠

HYMN OF PRAISE “Bless The Lord” TFBF 273

1 Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name.
He has done great things, He has done great things, He has done great things,
bless His holy name.

2 Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name.
He has done great things, He has done great things, He has done great things,
bless His holy name.

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, Your grace and mercy overflow to all people. Lead us to love our neighbors, regardless of their differences from us, so that all people might know the good news of Your death and resurrection for their eternal life and salvation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 35:4–7a* (God will come and restore all things.)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

GRADUAL *Psalm 34:9, 19, alt.*

Fear the LORD, you His saints, for those who fear Him lack nothing! Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all.

EPISTLE *James 2:1–10, 14–18* (What good is a dead faith?)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

VERSE *Psalm 147:2–3*

Leader: Alleluia. The LORD builds up Jerusalem; He gathers the outcasts of Israel. He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. Alleluia.

Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Leader: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs. Lord of all nations, grant us grace

People: **to love all people in every place.**

Leader: For all the nations of the world, their leaders and residents, that peace may reign and that the Church would be a faithful witness of Jesus' love and service in every place. Lord of all nations, grant us grace

People: **to love all people in every place.**

Leader: For all those who work in the service of others, that their work might be blessed by God and appreciated by others. Lord of all nations, grant us grace

People: **to love all people in every place.**

Leader: For all those who mourn the death of loved ones, we pray for comfort in the face of grief, [*especially* . . .]. Grant that all those who mourn find hope in the resurrection to eternal life with Jesus. Lord of all nations, grant us grace

People: **to love all people in every place.**

Leader: For all those who have abandoned the faith, Lord, that they would once again hear Your Word and receive Your good gifts. Lord of all nations, grant us grace

People: to love all people in every place.

Leader: For all Christians throughout the world, that their faith and good works would overflow as a blessing to many others. Lord of all nations, grant us grace

People: to love all people in every place.

Leader: For all those with disabilities, Lord, that we might treat them with more thoughtfulness and care, serving them as Your beloved people. Lord of all nations, grant us grace

People: to love all people in every place.

Leader: For all who are sick, injured, preparing for surgery, and recovering, [*especially . . .*], that God would grant them healing according to His good and gracious will. Lord of all nations, grant us grace,

People: to love all people in every place.

Leader: Lord, into Your hands we place all these things, knowing that You hear us and remain faithful.

People: Amen.

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

PREFACE *2 Timothy 4:22*

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. He opens the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf and brings healing to all the nations. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty" (TLH 246 St.1)

1. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee; Holy holy, holy, merciful and mighty! God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST *1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelation 22:20*

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

People: **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

LORD'S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: **Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have renewed us by the body and blood of Christ. Empower and energize us to serve

our neighbors in faith toward You and fervent love toward all people; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

BENEDICTION *Numbers 6:24–26*

Pastor: 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.

People: **Amen.**

HYMN“Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing” TLH 50

1. Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing, fill our hearts with joy and peace. Let us each, Thy love possessing, triumph in redeeming grace. Oh, refresh us, Oh, refresh us, traveling through this wilderness!

2. Thanks we give and adoration for Thy Gospel's joyful sound. May the fruits of Thy salvation In our hearts and lives abound; Ever faithful, Ever faithful, To the truth may we be found!

3. So, when'er the signal's given us from earth to call away, Borne on angels' wings to heaven, glad the summons to obey, may we ever, may we ever, reign with Christ in endless day!