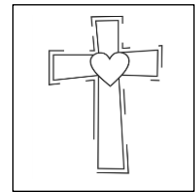


Perley Lutheran Parish
August 30th, 2020
Lectionary 22



Welcome and Announcements

- Reminder – next week we will be at Nora again for service – 1st Sunday of the month.
- Letters went out Thursday with updated information regarding plans for returning to church.
- We continue to monitor the COVID crisis and will continue to do so with a meeting scheduled in late September.
- Continue to send in your offerings. Keep in touch – if you need something please reach out and invite friends to watch!

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, +one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation, to generation. Amen

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin

Reconciling God,

We confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives. We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts. We fail to believe that you provide enough for all. We abuse your good creation for our own benefit. We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us. We sin in thought, word, and deed. By your grace, forgive us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness in life. Amen

Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through +Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

Prayer of the Day

O God, we thank you for your Son, who chose the path of suffering for the sake of the world. Humble us by his example, point us to the path of obedience, and give us strength to follow your commands, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Psalm 26:1-8 (Read Responsively)

Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the LORD without wavering. **Prove me, O LORD, and try me; test my heart and mind.** For your steadfast love is before my eyes, and I walk in faithfulness to you. **I do not sit with the worthless, nor do I consort with hypocrites;** I hate the company of evildoers and will not sit with the wicked. **I wash my hands in innocence, and go around your altar, O LORD,** singing aloud a song of thanksgiving, and telling all your wondrous deeds. **O LORD, I love the house in which you dwell, and the place where your glory abides.**

First Reading Exodus 3:1-15

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight and see why the bush is not burned up." When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy

ground.” He said further, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. Then the LORD said, “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.” But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” He said, “I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.” But Moses said to God, “If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” He said further, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” God also said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you’: This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations.

Holy Gospel according to Matthew 16:21-28, **Glory to you O Lord**

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.” Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life? “For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

The Gospel of our Lord, **Praise to you, O Christ**

Children’s Message

Hello, children of God! You may notice that I look ready for some athletic adventures today... do you like sports? To tell you the truth, I’m not terribly great at sports, but I enjoy getting into a good game, and I also enjoy watching people who are good at athletics. I really love watching the Olympics. In fact, this year was supposed to be a year for summer Olympics, and I was super disappointed when I found out they were actually cancelled. Do you have favorite sporting events to watch? Some that I really love are... *(Name a few sports, and hold up pictures of athletes in those events as you describe them)*.

Now, do you know what it takes to compete in the Olympics? It takes a lot of hard work and discipline, and it involves some sacrifice, too. Athletes who want to compete at such top levels wind up giving up a lot. Sometimes they move to different places so they can train with the best coaches. Or they might have to leave regular school and get tutors to allow for more practice time. They work out for hours and hours each day, and when they aren’t exercising, they have to be very careful about how they sleep, what they eat, and how they spend their time. Their lives are basically governed by training. And what is it all for? There’s pride and national recognition, of course. It’s something special to go to the Olympics and represent your country. But even going to the games isn’t always the main end goal. People who compete really want to get a medal. They train for years, hungry for a podium spot and a shiny gold medal to hang around their necks. One slight

misstep, one moment of hesitation, and all of that work might seem to be for nothing. It seems like a lot of pressure and effort for not a lot of reward, doesn't it?

When we speak of the Christian life, there is an element of sacrifice. Jesus spoke to His disciples of this fact, warning them not to be concerned with things of this world, but to focus on lasting things that would matter. He told Peter that it isn't worth it to "gain the whole world, but lose your soul." Well, what might that mean? See, people are always seeking after something. It might not be athletic glory, but people today work hard for one thing or another. Some might want money, or a prestigious job, or fancy clothes, or a nice house, or power, or fame, or the perfect family. It is not wrong to want things like that. But we can't let those pursuits outweigh worship of God. He needs to take the number one spot in our hearts. All of those other things will fade away. They don't last, and they aren't worth it.

Being a Christian isn't always easy. In fact, we are promised that it can be tough. Sometimes we have to make sacrifices. We might not do the same things as some of our friends, and it may seem like we are missing out on certain activities or opportunities because we choose to follow God. But it's worth it. You know why? Because ultimately, it was Jesus who made the biggest sacrifice possible. He gave up a Godly throne to come to Earth and live as a human. He gave up His life so that we could be saved and have eternal life. Compared with that, the minor discomforts of life or sacrifice of missing out on an event or music artist here and there seem pretty insignificant. Jesus paid it all. Loving and serving Him brings us the promise of Heaven, and we don't really have to do anything but believe! That is something worth living for and celebrating, and it's even better than a gold medal!

Children's Prayer Moment

Dear God,
You are worth more than the whole world
Help us to be willing to live for you
Knowing that you sacrificed all for us
Thank you for your love
We love you, God!
In Jesus name, Amen!

Message

Good morning and God's peace to you today and in all the days to come.

Over the last few weeks we have been remembering the amazing miracles and blessings Jesus has been doing - when He fed thousands and thousands with very little food, when he helped Paul to realize that if he didn't let the fear take over and believed he too could walk across the sea on top of the water. And last week we were left with the disciples - thankfully Peter spoke up - accepting and acknowledging that Jesus was the Messiah. But remember how we left the Gospel last week? We left it with Jesus telling them all to keep quiet - don't tell anyone who really is because the timing just wasn't right quite yet.

What we hear today is that now that the disciples have figured it out - that He is the Savior, there is work to be done and much of what lies ahead is not going to be easy or even make sense at the time. When we stop think about it - the realization of what that means, what the future holds for this Man - their leader - is a future that can't help bring them all to a sense of sadness, of dread and even disbelief. Jesus stands before his followers - his chosen disciples - and announces what is yet to come.

Can you imagine? I sometimes think about all that these disciples gave up and all that they endured. What must it have been like for them to sit back, witness and experience the excitement in all the amazing things he was doing? Wonder what it would be like to be standing there with people as far as the eye can see and know you have five loaves and two fish? Wonder who and how a man can walk across the sea to meet you in the middle of a wavy and blowing storm in the dark of night? It's easy to understand why people would be drawn to him - wanted to follow him and see what was next. Stay close to Him.

It would've been pretty unsettling however, to hear what's coming in the days ahead. Peter's astonishment with the whole idea seems to sum it up. It would be - I'm sure what most of us would've thought - No way! No way will Jesus be put through such pain and torture. Peter rebukes what Jesus is saying. Rebukes always seems to be such a very hard and harsh word for me so I actually looked it up in Dictionary.com. Rebuke means a sharp disapproval or criticism.

I think there's significance in Peter using that word - it really is showing just how much Peter felt - how deeply he disapproved - when hearing the words and plans that Jesus was laying out for them. He wasn't just saying to Jesus that he didn't like what he was hearing - telling them or that he didn't understand what Jesus was saying. No it was more of him putting his foot down - that there was really no way that this was going to happen as Jesus had described. What could ever give anyone enough reason or make that suffering an appropriate response after all the amazing miracles Jesus has done? How and why should any of them believe that Jesus would become Jerusalem's "most wanted" and be forced to die for them?

So what do they do? I'm not sure how I would react. As a believer sitting in His midst, would I question Him just like Peter? Would any of us not wonder why he could be telling such a horrific story? Would we not think this just can't be true? Or do we sit there and realize that there is obviously something so amazingly special about this Man - something in the fact that He knows what lies ahead and He is ok with it. And if He's ok with it then how can WE not be ok with it too? But wait, if we believe, remain His disciple and continue to follow then what lies ahead for us?

Jesus gives us an idea when He says, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." Deny themselves and take up the cross? First, can they, can we, so completely trust in Him and in doing so give up your life - all that you have and know - just to follow Him.

Think about times when you've had to make tough decisions - when you know that your decision will bring a lot of change and you wonder and question and weigh the decision you make in hopes that you find an answer that will be what you need and want. Maybe it's a new job, maybe it's a new home, maybe it's a new relationship - they can be decisions that are scary and uncertain but they can also bring amazing excitement and joy when the decision brings about a happy and successful result.

None of us are so unwilling in our lives paths to not able to adjust, or move over, or accommodate a bump in road, but of course these types of changes sometimes mean we need to look at things differently. Trust that our paths have been changed for a reason and know that we must be able to find the flexibility inside us to adjust accordingly. The disciples - and any of us - would've longed to keep the amazing ride going and continue on with everything status quo. I can only imagine the fascination with Jesus and what he was doing and saying - the intensity of it all - would be much harder to walk away FROM than to stay and walk away WITH Him.

Finally we can't forget about the last part of Jesus' request - "take up their cross and follow". I imagine that His choice of words was very intentional. Jesus IS referencing the means in which He would come to meet His death and ultimately resurrection. I also wonder, though, if He didn't want them to realize that taking up that

cross was going to mean that they too would have to be obedient to the Father, to be a servant to the cause and to be willing to die for all of it – quite a burden to carry.

How do you carry the cross? Is it carried when you do God's work? Do you carry the burden of Jesus when you too forgive others? Do you carry the cross around your neck – like I do – not just as a fashion statement or accessory – but rather as a reminder to myself and others that Jesus asked me to join him? Do you remind yourself by hanging across on the wall of your home or of your office? Can you carry the cross even when decisions are tough and life is throwing you curve balls of pain and suffering??

Ultimately there is no greater cross that any of us carry or have received than the cross that was placed when we were baptized. Whether we knew it – remember many or most of us were baptized as babies – we were being marked as a child of God even back then and therefore we were given the opportunity of a lifetime to carry the cross forever. Honestly, for me it IS very reassuring to be reminded every time I see a cross - that someone loved me enough to give His life so I could be forgiven. Suffered and died so I could be loved by my Lord and Savior. Knowing that by giving our heart and our souls, believing in His love and His plan, we too you can know that we are never alone. We too will be sitting beside the Father when the time comes, the time that matters. He knows it won't always be easy for us. Jesus knew those thousands of years ago with his disciples that there were going to be times when they would, when we would, struggle with what is asked. He did however promise that no matter what, He will come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then we will be rewarded with life everlasting. Amen!

Please pray with me.....

Heavenly Father, we are so very thankful that Jesus was willing to take up the cross and die for our sins. As his disciples, help us to take up our cross as well, forsaking all else, and follow Him. Until that day when we will see you and rejoice in your kingdom. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen!

Hymn of the Day: O Jesus, I Have Promised

O, Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
Remain forever near me, my master and my friend.
I shall not fear the battle if you are by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.

O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you
That where you are in glory your servant shall be too.
And Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
Oh give me grace to follow, my master and my friend.

Apostles Creed

***I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian/catholic Church, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen***

Prayers of the people (Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**)

Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in

need. Lord we look to you to be better disciples. Prepare us, your church, for its mission in bearing witness to Christ, both here at home and through the world. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**

You call forth praises from the far reaches of the universe to the smallest of creatures. Join our songs to theirs that a spirit of praise and thanksgiving will arouse us to cherish this wondrous home you have given to us. Be with those who are in the fields harvesting and preparing to reap the bounty of their work. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**

All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord. Direct the leaders of countries, legislators and magistrates, mayors and councils, to walk in your ways. Help leaders regard those in need with mercy and fulfill your loving purposes in the governance of peoples. We ask that you be with those in regions that continue to have rioting and destruction – lord help those involved to seek and find peace and understanding to reach results that both deem fair and appropriate. We ask that you continue to be with those dealing with the aftermath of storms and surges – help there be strength and perseverance for those attempting to clean up and rebuild after all of the destruction. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**

Though we walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve us, deliver us, and fulfill your purpose for us. According to your steadfast love, grant healing and wholeness to those who are mourning as they deal with tremendous loss, We ask that you continue to send healing to those dealing with illness and recovery. We lift up those within our congregation and those that have reached out to us for prayers, like Alana and Jeff, like Kirk and Brent, like Paxley and Joanne and all of those that we now name in our own hearts. Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer

In you, steadfast love and faithfulness meet, and righteousness and peace live together. Protecting God, we have created divisions you will not own. In places of conflict – be it from safe practices because of COVID or from racial disparity. God of mercy, your grace is poured out for all. Inspire authorities, politicians and all of us to act with compassion. Teach us to overcome fear with hope, meet hate with love, and welcome one another as we would welcome you. Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from you, we offer these prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Words of Institution

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.

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

Meal

Blessing

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

God, the creator, +Jesus the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the comforter, bless you and keep you in eternal love.

Amen

Sending Hymn: You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore

You have come down to the lakeshore seeking neither the wise nor the wealthy,
But only asking for me to follow.

Sweet Lord, you have looked into my eyes, kindly smiling,
You have called out my name.

On the sand I have abandoned my small boat;
Now with you, I will seek other seas.

You who have fished other waters; you, the longing of souls that are yearning:
O loving Friend, you have come to call me.

Sweet Lord, you have looked into my eyes, kindly smiling,
You have called out my name.

On the sand I have abandoned my small boat;
Now with you, I will seek other seas.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you. **Thanks be to God.**

Mark Your Calendars:

Sunday – September 6th - Outdoor Worship at Nora – 9AM. Please bring a chair.

Sunday – September 13th – RALLY SUNDAY - Outdoor Worship at Kirkebo – 9AM. Please bring a chair.

Pastor Michele Jenson: Phone: 701-261-0998 Email: mjenson001@luthersem.edu Web Page: www.perleyparish.org Email: perleyparish@gmail.com

I Will Follow Jesus, Our Leader



Take Up Your Cross

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Matthew 16:24 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 16:22-28 (NIV)



X M V Q X O V J W J O U Z E X
Q Z P E P F Y A B W M P R X W
E F V A L F O R F E I T O I J
T A F E C F I N N B I W L M U
S R S U E L F Q M Z D L M W V
Q I P E C X G S I V D S T R P
P R V Q U R C F L M L U P E F
R I Y F Y E O H S T D O L L L
G E Q N O Z V S A F A O S L Z
L I E Y N L A N S N H W G E K
O D H O Q F L V R W G L A S V
F G F H L K T O L I F E I O V
I W O R L D O D W T U I N U C
N I Y O O S U Q C G B Q Y L L
D H T P D T V E P J M U H Z Y

GIVE
FIND
SELF
DENY

EXCHANGE
SAVE
SOUL
WORLD

GOOD
CROSS
FOLLOW
FORFEIT

WHOLE
GAIN
LOSE
LIFE

Take Up Your Cross

Complete the sentences by filling in the blanks with the correct words from the word bank at the bottom of the page.



1. To be a follower of Christ, one must _____ self.
2. Jesus said, " _____ up your _____ and _____ me."
3. Whoever wants to _____ his _____ will lose it.
4. Whoever _____ his life for the cause of Christ will find it.
5. What good is it if you _____ the whole _____, but lose your _____?

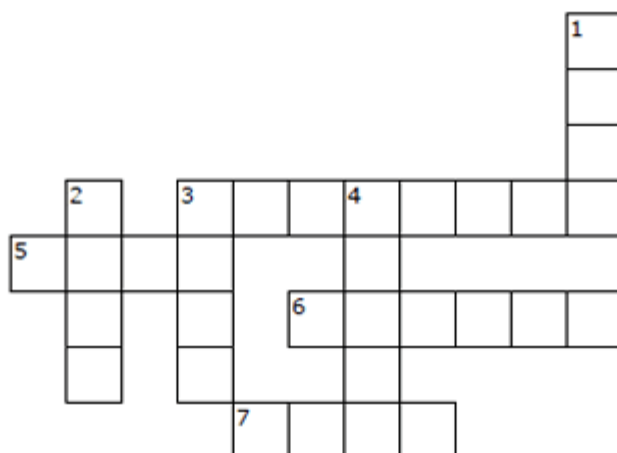
Matthew 16:24-26 (NIV)

world	Take	life	gain	save
follow	deny	soul	loses	cross

Take Up Your Cross

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Matthew 16:24 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 16:22-28 (NIV)



ACROSS

3. One who believes in Christ and follows his teachings
5. The period between birth and death
6. To accept the leadership of someone
7. To no longer have something because it has been taken away from you or misplaced

DOWN

1. To keep something from harm or loss
2. To discover something unexpectedly or as a result of a search
3. To refuse to allow yourself to have something you want
4. The object upon which Jesus was crucified

FIND	LIFE	DISCIPLE	FOLLOW
DENY	CROSS	SAVE	LOSE