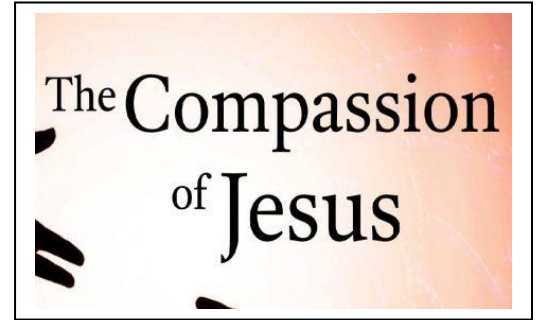


Perley Parish
Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 16
July 18, 2011

Gathering Hymn: The Church's One Foundation
The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is His new creation by water and the word:
From heav'n He came and sought her to be His holy bride
With His own blood He bought her and for her life He died.

Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth
Her charter of salvation, one Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy Name she blesses, partakes one holy food
And to one hope she presses, with every grace endured.



Welcome and Announcements

- Thanks all for covering while I was away – such a fun time with family
- Where's Michele
- All School Reunion
- Next Sunday – Old Fashioned service INSIDE at Kirkebo w/brunch. Celebration of Life for Sherman Hogenson

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy.
Amen.

God, our provider,

Help us. It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn? Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for life in the world.
Amen.

Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, +the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life. **Amen**

Prayer of the Day

O God, powerful and compassionate, you shepherd your people, faithfully feeding and protecting us. Heal each of us, and make us a whole people that we may embody the justice and peace of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. **He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters,** he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. **Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.** You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.**

First Reading: Jeremiah 21:1-6

This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur son of Malchiah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah, saying, ²“Please inquire of the LORD on our behalf, for King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon is making war against us; perhaps the LORD will perform a wonderful deed for us, as he has often done, and will make him withdraw from us.” Then Jeremiah said to them: Thus you shall say to Zedekiah: Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I am going to turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands and with which you are fighting against the king of Babylon and against the Chaldeans who are besieging you outside the walls; and I will bring them together into the center of this city. I myself will fight against you with outstretched hand and mighty arm, in anger, in fury, and in great wrath. And I will strike down the inhabitants of this city, both human beings and animals; they shall die of a great pestilence.

Holy Gospel according to Mark 6:30-34, 53-56 **Glory to you O Lord**

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

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

Children’s Message

How many of you have taken a vacation? (Invite the children to share where they went and what they did. As children share, point out aspects of rest in each child’s story.) I’ve been on vacation too. I brought some pictures that I took while I was on vacation. (Briefly describe where you went and something you did to relax.)

We all need to get away sometimes. Even Jesus said that we sometimes need to take some time off to get caught up on our rest. The Bible tells about a time the disciples went to Jesus and told Him how busy they had been teaching and ministering to the needs of people. “There have been so many people coming and going that we didn’t even have time to stop and eat,” they told Jesus. (Have kids pretend to eat and then stop abruptly.)

“Come with me to a quiet place so that you can get some rest,” Jesus said to the disciples. (Have kids pretend to sleep.) So the Bible tells us that they got in a boat. (Have kids pretend to row a boat.) And they went away with Jesus to a quiet place.

Yes, we all need a time to get away, even Jesus and His friends needed to rest!

Dear God, thank You for work, for play, and for school. We also thank You for those times when we can get away from it all and get some rest. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Message

Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

When you look at today’s Gospel and the story of the beheading of John the Baptist it isn’t really a story that a pastor would want to hand off to a lay person to preach on. So thankfully Pastor Michele is going to give me a message this morning on our text from Amos instead.

Take any day and look at our headlines on the news and in the newspapers. You will find stories of deceit, greed, self-righteousness, oppression, materialism, heart filled stories and heartless

stories. Stories where we see God at work and stories where we see evil at work. That is our world today isn't it? Guess what though, that's essentially the same type of information, storylines and mayhem that Amos wrote about over 2,700 years ago when he penned the book of Amos and it's all still relevant all these years later.

People in Amos' time would say they had life pretty good – the rich were getting richer, the powerful getting more powerful, prestige and power were expanding and life and success was a great thing. The problem was that those that had it all allowed their success to let them become lazy and trouble bound. People began to be greedy, they were conceited, they oppressed others and all of the other bad things we listed from our headlines earlier. And of course, this did not make God happy.

The greedy and powerful began to worship other gods – some worshipped themselves even and all that they were in their own minds and some worshipped things and idols. Instead of worshipping God – who provided them with all that they had – they were worshipping others so God sends a prophet to proclaim judgement on them. Now this prophet wasn't a "professional," wasn't from royal courts or anything. In fact Amos says he is just "a guy making a living in the fields" and God says to him 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.' There becomes a lot of Law and Judgement in the rest of the book of Amos and Amos pleads to God to not really carry out all that he is saying.

True, the people don't really deserve mercy – they are doing this to themselves remember – but Amos pleads and says "Lord God, I beg you, stop!" And God does at first – in fact he does twice – and then He gets to a point where he doesn't and that is where we get our lesson. There is indeed a message of wrath in this passage. A matter of this is what you get for what you have done. This is the beginning of the inevitable judgement of God administered to those in order to turn them back to Him. *"This is what he showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand."*

We know what a plumb line is – a simple construction tool to guide us in a straight line, to help us do things straight and square. I imagine God used this analogy because the plumb lines help one to deal with what's real, they don't mess around with "almost" or "close" results when the plumb line is made. That's how God's law is too. It makes no attempt to soften a hit to one's pride, accept one's excuses or both when we try to explain away our sinful hearts, minds and voices. It's black and white, straight or crooked, right or wrong, acceptable or unacceptable... you get the idea. We can argue and plea all we want to justify our sins as much as we want but we can't change the reality. God didn't pass by the people in Amos' day and he isn't going to ignore that plumb line for us either. *"See, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass them by;"*

The plumb line is still around for you and me. It's still making judgements about our sins, still speaking truth about us and to us and that truth really isn't pretty. It's not easy to think about because it's hard to grasp that there is one supreme authority and that judgement doesn't come from you and me. What is good and bad, right and wrong, just and unjust in your life is decided by God – He has real high standards for us and sometimes that can find us running from what we know isn't good and looking for other means of measurement instead of God's. Ones that aren't quite so tough, allow us a bit of breathing room or find us not feeling quite so accountable when we do not follow as we should.

Sometimes we can even find ourselves tempted to change the measure all together. Try to use other things than the Word of God to tell us how we are doing and what we can do moving forward. Or what about comparing ourselves to others – "hey I know I did this but it's not nearly as bad as the actions of so and so. If we find ourselves thinking that way you can find yourself in a place without the love and grace that God provides in our lives.

So what's next? How do I use this passage? Well this teaches us that we will respond in 1 of 2 ways when we are confronted with our sins and it WILL depend on how we understand who God is. What the purpose – the plumb line – is to us. We can run away, try and push God away like Amaziah. He was called out for his sins, how he and others had sinned against God, and he tries to go somewhere to be rescued. In a way it's like when you and I do something wrong and instead of bringing the wrong to God we call a friend and help them be on "our side" to justify what we did. Or maybe we could try to push God away and isolate ourselves from Him and his influence in our lives. There are parts of our lives where we want God and the Word involved but other areas – not so

much. Both of these two responses have one thing in common and that is that they DO understand God' Law, his judgement as a burden and obligation. But that's not why God gives us law.

God's Law, for as much as it hurts at times, challenges us at times, and makes us uncomfortable at times, is a great gift from a Loving Father. God makes us aware of our sins for one reason – one reason – and that is so we go to the only one who holds that plumb line and the only one who can make us right. We can go as our messy selves to Jesus – the one who lived a perfect life and died on the cross for us. We can trade all of our sinful selves, our unholy and avoiding ways and receive the perfection of Jesus to us.

God gives us Law in order to make us turn to the Word, to repent and return to his grace and forgiveness. He doesn't call us out for being sinful to separate himself from us but rather to make us aware of our distress, our messiness in order to turn us to Him for a lifeline. He loves us all that much – so much so that there is never a point at which you can't turn back to him. No matter what you do, he'll be right there waiting to welcome you home.

I encourage you today to remember who God is and what he has done for you. I want you to know and be confident that God is working in your life – even when you feel the tug of Law on your hearts and minds. We have the blessing as Brothers and Sisters in Christ that we can't run from the truth of the plumb line. We also can't thankfully outrun the grace of God because Christ died for our sins. No matter how wrong we have been, as forgiven sinners, we have the gift of being made right to God. Amen

Hymn of the Day: Lord, Speak to Us that we May Speak
Lord, speak to us that we may speak in living echoes of your tone
As you have sought, so let me seek. Your erring children, lost and lone.

Oh, fill me with your fullness, Lord until my very hearts o'erflows
In kindling thought and glowing word, your love to tell, your praise to show.

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: (Hear us O God, **your mercy is great**)

Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

Tend your Church O, God. Embolden all the baptized to embody your love and justice. Hear us O God, **your mercy is great.**

Restore your creation, O God. Sustain croplands and pastures and safeguard all farm animals and livestock. Preserve lakes, rivers and streams that offer refreshment. Revive lands recovering from natural disasters and lack of rain. Hear us O God, **your mercy is great.**

Reconcile the nations, O God. Break down the dividing walls and barriers that make us strangers to one another and untie us as one family of God. Equip leaders to deal wisely with conflict and guide diplomats who see peaceful solutions. Hear us O God, **your mercy is great.**

Heal your people, O God. Give rest to those who are weary, comfort to those who are grieving and recovery or peace to those who are fighting illnesses. Embrace those who are sick, today we

especially lift up Marlis and Kirk, Sonya and Roger, Terry and Jeff, Evonne and Byron, Whitney and all of those that we now name silently in our own hearts.....Surround them with your unwavering presence. Hear us O God, **your mercy is great.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace. Amen

Meal

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, that by this Holy Communion we may know the unity we share with all your people in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Words of Institution and 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

Invitation to Communion and Offering

Christ has set the table with more than enough for all. Come!

After Communion Prayer

Jesus, Bread of life, we have received from your table more than we could ever ask. As you nourished us in this meal, now strengthen us to love the world with your own life. In your name we pray. **Amen**

Blessing

The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, +be upon you now and forever. In the Name of the Father, and the +Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Sending Song: Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead us

Savior, like a shepherd lead us much we need Thy tender care
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us for our use Thy folds prepare
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus thou hast brought us thine we are
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus thou hast brought us thine we are

We are thine, do thou befriend us, be the guardian of our way

Keep thy flock from sin defend us, see us when we go astray
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, hear, O hear us when we pray
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, hear, O hear us when we pray

Dismissal – Go in peace. You are the body of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**

Mark Your Calendars:

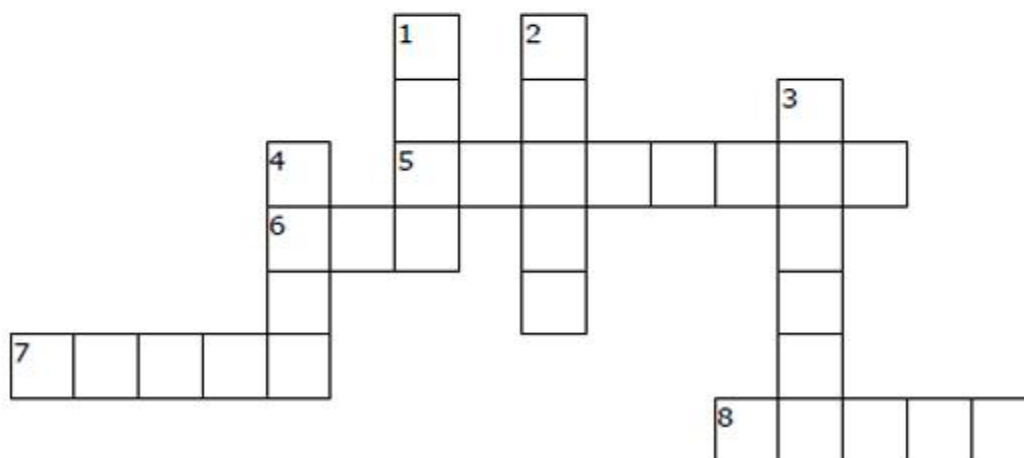
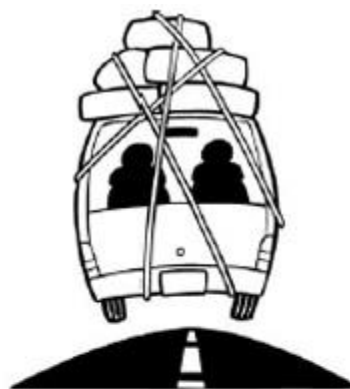
- Monday, July 19th – Council meeting 6:30 at Nora
- Sunday, July 25th – Old Fashion Services at 9am INSIDE Kirkebo with brunch and celebration of Sherman Hogenson



Getting Away from It All

Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. Mark 6: 30-32

Puzzle is based on Mark 6:30-34



ACROSS

5. The early followers of Jesus
6. To take solid food through the mouth
7. Without noise or activity
8. To give knowledge or skills to others

DOWN

1. A small vessel for traveling on water
2. A large group of people
3. Any group of men, women, and children
4. To take a break from activity

EAT	TEACH	BOAT	APOSTLES
PEOPLE	QUIET	REST	CROWD

Getting Away from It All

Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. Mark 6:30-32

The puzzle is based on Mark 6:30-34



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

PEOPLE	TOWNS	SHEEP	BOAT	REST
APOSTLES	JESUS	CROWD	LARGE	TOWNS
SHEPHERD	SOLITARY	EAT	QUIET	TEACH