

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Opening Prayer

Leader: The Apostle Paul declares, “Live in a way that is worthy of the Gospel!”

People: We will stand firm in the Spirit, laboring side by side.

Leader: Mark the Evangelist preaches, “The last are first in the realm of God.”

People: The least are welcomed in Jesus’ name.

Leader: The Psalmist sings, “The Lord raises the poor from the dust.”

People: God lifts up the needy from the ashes. Come! Let us gather in the presence of God and invoke God’s holy name by praying...

Pastor Jim: Almighty God, you created the heavens and the earth, and humankind in your image. Teach us to discern your hand in all your works and to serve you with reverence and thanksgiving. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

Confession of Sin

Leader: Whenever we pass through the deep and troubled waters of life, or endure times of fiery trial, the Lord our God is with us. Confident in God’s grace, let us fully and truthfully confess our sin and the sin of the world and find pardon.

People: Eternal God, our judge and redeemer, you command us to work hard for your kingdom and to earn the wages of everlasting life. We confess that we have done little to bring your kingdom nearer to our neighbors. We have grown lazy and complacent in our labor for you. Rather than live a godly life and take your message of salvation and hope to our community, we have remained silent, allowing our community to fall into the darkness of anger and despair. We have ignored our community’s pain by passing by the hungry, the poor, and the oppressed. In your great mercy forgive our sins. Free us from our slothfulness. Help us work harder for your kingdom and earn the wages of eternal life. We ask through Jesus Christ our Savior, the light and hope of the world. Amen!

Pardon of Sin:

Pastor Jim: Hear the good news! Hope does not disappoint us, for God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us in baptism. Believe this good news and give thanks: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

People: Jesus taught that if we forgive other people whenever they harm us, our heavenly Father will forgive us. Having pardoned all others, we are now pardoned ourselves. Thanks be to God!

Dedication of Tithes and Offerings

Pastor Jim: The earth is the Lord’s, and all that is in it. We have returned the first and best of what God has given us, so that his will may be done, and his kingdom draw nearer; therefore, let us pray, dedicating our gifts to these holy purposes.

Blessed are you, O God, for you are the maker and provider of all things. You have blessed us with many gifts, including all our possessions. Not one thing is ours to use as we see fit. All things are to be used to spread your Word and demonstrate our mercy to the world, so that the world may turn to you, and find its salvation. Use us and what we have gathered this morning to showing your love to the world. We ask this through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen!

Scripture (*see below*) *Psalms 145:1-8 (NIV); Philippians 1:21-30 (NIV); Matthew 20:1-16 (NIV)*

Reflection “Earn Your Wage” Pastor Jim

Ascription of Praise

Pastor: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone; therefore, hear the Word of the Lord and obey it. Now to Jesus Christ, who loves and freed us from our sins by his blood and made us to become a kingdom, priests laboring diligently for his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever! Amen.

Invitation to Discipleship

Pastor: If, in the work and worship of this congregation, you have been nurtured and fed in the ways of Christ our Lord, then we invite you all to join us in this labor of love. There is always a place for you in this beloved family of faith. You are most welcome and needed here.

Thanksgiving for our Baptism

Pastor: In response to God’s saving Word to us, and in gratitude for our salvation through faith, alone, let us pray to God, giving God thanks for the gift of our baptism and the new and everlasting life it has brought us.

We give you thanks, O God, for the story of your saving love and the grace you pour out upon us through your gift of water – from the water of Eve’s womb, bringing life to all the earth, to the water of Mary’s womb, offering new life through Jesus Christ; from the tears of Hannah, making her a mother, to the tears of the Hebrew people, crying out for deliverance; from the bold action of a woman, washing Jesus’ feet, to Christ’s own humble service, washing the feet of his disciples; from the rock of Moses and Miriam, providing water in the wilderness, to the promise of our Savior, quenching our thirst with living water. From age to age, O God, your waters give us life and show us your love. We praise you for the baptismal waters that bring us new and refreshed life in Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit, unite us as one body and let the gift of your love flow through us like streams of living water, with blessing and promise,

justice and righteousness, grace and peace for all. All glory and honor are yours, O God, now and forever. Amen.

Prayer of Intercession

Pastor Jim: Almighty God, in our Lord Jesus Christ you taught us to pray. Guide us by your Holy Spirit, that our prayers may serve your will and show your steadfast love. We pray for the world you have made. Overthrow all malevolent and destructive powers; correct what is wrong; feed and satisfy those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, so that all your children may freely enjoy your creation and joyfully sing your praises. We pray for the needs of the holy church, the entire human family, and all the world. Specifically, we pray for the holy church in which you have called us to be disciples of Jesus Christ. Keep us one in faith and service, breaking bread together, and proclaiming the good news to the world, that all may believe you are love, and turn to your ways. We pray for peace because you sent Jesus Christ to break down the walls of hostility that divide us. Send peace upon the earth, and put down greed, pride, and anger, which turn nation against nation and race against race. Speed the day when wars will end and the whole world finally accepts your benevolent and tranquil rule. We pray for our enemies, for you teach us that we cannot fully love you unless we also love all our neighbors. Remove hate and prejudice from us and from all people, so that all your children may be reconciled with those we fear, resent, or threaten, and live together in your peace. We pray for those who govern us. Direct those who make, administer, and judge our laws; the President of the United States and others in authority among us; that, guided by your wisdom, they may lead us in the way of truth and righteousness. We pray for the sick. Look with compassion upon those who are ill, especially those mentioned here today; cheer them by your Word and bring healing to them as a sign of your grace. We pray for those who sorrow. Give them assurance that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, shall ever separate them from your love. We pray for our friends and families. Bless those we love, that, drawing closer to you, we may be drawn closer to each other. God of all generations, we praise you for all your servants who, having been faithful to you on earth, now live with you in heaven. Keep us in fellowship with them, until we meet with all your children in the joy of your eternal realm. Mighty God, whose Word we trust, whose Spirit enables us to pray, accept our requests and further those which bring about your purpose for the earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray, saying...

“Our Father...”

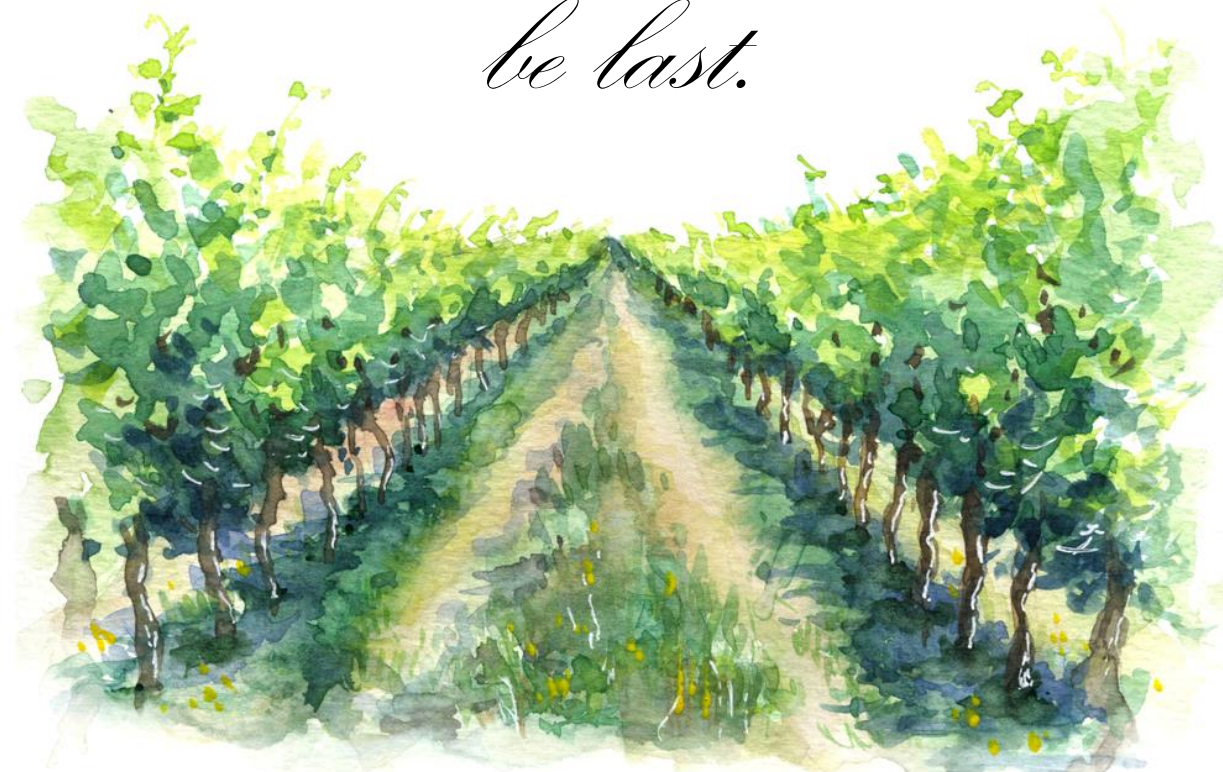
Sending and Benediction

Leader: My friends, thanks for coming and worshipping with us today. Now go in peace and serve the Lord.

Pastor Jim: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you. Amen.



*“So the last will be first,
and the first will
be last.”*



JOYS & CONCERNS

Joy for...

All teachers, for their care and concern for the safety of their students, fellow teachers and staff. Pray for their health and safety while teaching during the pandemic.

Pray for...

Milford schools staff member Mark Zahn seriously injured in a car accident.

The grandmother of Tedi Blinkhorn's grandson's girlfriend who had two serious strokes.

Mike Nesbit, recovering from COVID-19 at home after a brief hospital stay.

Ruth and Tiffany Bruning, recovering from COVID-19.

Sara, June Taylor's great-great-grandson's mother, that her brain tumor continues to shrink.

Mission co-workers, David Cortes and Josey Saez, leaving mission work.

Niki Price's sister, Marta, being treated for stage 4 small cell lung cancer.

All those suffering property damage or injuries due to recent hurricanes in the Gulf Coast.

The health and safety of all children attending school in person.

Safety for our first responders and healthcare workers.

Peace and reconciliation in our community and beyond.

Our home bound - Norma Koerkel, Gene Strand, Sunni & Karl Kadon

Please keep in your hearts and prayers all the sick and shut-ins of LPC.

Please notify the LPC office of the progress and recovery of the individuals and loved ones named above. Names will appear for 2 weeks unless the office is otherwise notified.

Thank you.

BIRTHDAYS

September 23rd ~ Rae Bauer

September 27th ~ Niki Price

ANNIVERSARIES

September 20th ~ Tiffany & Mike Bruning

LPC NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

LPC Youth Activities: Our Children's Ministry reached out to our young families for ideas and interest in safe activities this fall with the goal of incorporating family time, service to others, and community building. A fun fall has been planned! If you have children and have not talked to Mary Frees, please contact her to get the schedule. Our first event is September 27. All events are outdoors or online.

LPC Annual Fall Events: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic it has been decided that it will not safe to hold our annual fall events – LPC's Harvest Bazaar & Turkey Dinner and Trunk or Treat this year. We look forward to these events in 2021!

Livestream Coming October 4th! Stay tuned for information on watching our Sunday morning services live from your home!

Join us this month in supporting the PC(USA)'s Special Offering – Peace and Reconciliation. Their work of peace and reconciliation is supported by gifts to the Peace & Global Witness Offering. These gifts also unite them with Presbyterian peacemakers across the country and the world who are active, not passive; who are doing, not waiting.

- 25% of this Offering stays with individual congregations to support local peacemaking and reconciliation efforts and ministries.
- 25% of this Offering will go to mid councils to join congregations in support of peacemaking throughout presbyteries and synods.
- 50% of this Offering supports the work for peace and reconciliation being done by Presbyterians across the globe.

We are the peacemakers. We are the Church, Together.

When we all do a little, it adds up to a lot. You can find collection envelopes on the table in the Narthex. Envelopes will be taken up on Oct. 4th – World Communion Sunday. You may also go to their website to donate: <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/peace-global-witness/>

Psalm 145:1-8 (NIV)

¹ I will exalt you, my God the King;

I will praise your name for ever and ever.

² Every day I will praise you

and extol your name for ever and ever.

³ Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;

his greatness no one can fathom.

⁴ One generation commends your works to another;

they tell of your mighty acts.

⁵ They speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty—

and I will meditate on your wonderful works.

⁶ They tell of the power of your awesome works—

and I will proclaim your great deeds.

⁷ They celebrate your abundant goodness

and joyfully sing of your righteousness.

⁸ The LORD is gracious and compassionate,

slow to anger and rich in love.

Philippians 1:21-30 (NIV)

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.

Matthew 20:1-16 (NIV)

20 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.”