

17th Sunday of Pentecost

September 24, 2023

Mark 2:4 Adaptive Worship Service



1812 North Highland Avenue

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Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

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Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

Welcome! Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

GATHERING SONG

All Are Welcome

Verses 1 & 5

1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safe - ly
live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell how
hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and
vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of
Refrain
Christ shall end di - vi - sions: All are wel - come,
all are wel - come, all are wel - come in this place.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: TWO OAKS, Marty Haugen

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5 Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.

Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

GREETING

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **Congregation: And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Congregation: Amen.**

FIRST READING

Jonah 3:10--4:11

Introduction to the Lesson: *After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?*

Reader: 10 God saw what they did; he saw that they had given up their wicked behavior. So he changed his mind and did not punish them as he had said he would. 4:1 Jonah was very unhappy about this and became angry. 2 So he prayed, "Lord, didn't I say before I left home that this is just what you would do? That's why I did my best to run away to Spain! I knew that you are a loving and merciful God, always patient, always kind, and always ready to change your mind and not punish. 3 Now then, Lord, let me die. I am better off dead than alive." 4 The Lord answered, "What right do you have to be angry?" 5 Jonah went out east of the city and sat down. He made a shelter for himself and sat in its shade, waiting to see what would happen to Nineveh. 6 Then the Lord God made a plant grow up over

Jonah to give him some shade, so that he would be more comfortable. Jonah was extremely pleased with the plant. 7 But at dawn the next day, at God's command, a worm attacked the plant, and it died. 8 After the sun had risen, God sent a hot east wind, and Jonah was about to faint from the heat of the sun beating down on his head. So he wished he were dead. "I am better off dead than alive," he said. 9 But God said to him, "What right do you have to be angry about the plant?" Jonah replied, "I have every right to be angry—angry enough to die!" 10 The Lord said to him, "This plant grew up in one night and disappeared the next; you didn't do anything for it and you didn't make it grow—yet you feel sorry for it! 11 How much more, then, should I have pity on Nineveh, that great city. After all, it has more than 120,000 innocent children in it, as well as many animals!"

After the reading...

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 20:1-16

Introduction to the Gospel: *When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.*

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew in the 20th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

"The Kingdom of heaven is like this. Once there was a man who went out early in the morning to hire some men to work in his vineyard. 2 He agreed to pay them the regular wage, a silver coin a day, and sent them to work in his vineyard. 3 He went out again to the marketplace at nine o'clock and saw some men standing there doing nothing, 4 so he told them, 'You also go and work in the vineyard, and I will pay you a fair wage.' 5 So they went. Then at twelve o'clock and again at three o'clock he did the same thing. 6 It was nearly five o'clock when he went to the marketplace and saw some other men still standing there. 'Why are you wasting the whole day here doing nothing?' he asked them. 7 'No one hired us,' they answered. 'Well, then, you go and work in the vineyard,' he told them. 8 "When evening came, the owner told his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with those who were hired last and ending with those who were hired first.' 9 The men who had begun to work at five o'clock were paid a silver coin each. 10 So when the men who were the first to be hired came to be paid, they thought they would get more; but they too were given a silver coin each. 11 They

took their money and started grumbling against the employer. 12 ‘These men who were hired last worked only one hour,’ they said, ‘while we put up with a whole day's work in the hot sun—yet you paid them the same as you paid us!’ 13 ‘Listen, friend,’ the owner answered one of them, ‘I have not cheated you. After all, you agreed to do a day's work for one silver coin. 14 Now take your pay and go home. I want to give this man who was hired last as much as I gave you. 15 Don't I have the right to do as I wish with my own money? Or are you jealous because I am generous?’” 16 And Jesus concluded, “So those who are last will be first, and those who are first will be last.”

After the reading...

Pastor: The gospel of the Lord. **Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *Gracious Spirit, Heed Our Pleading* verses 1-3

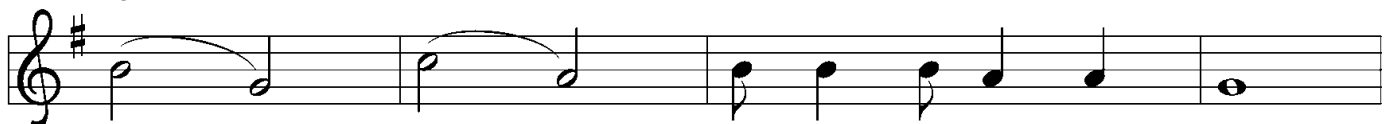


Njo - o kwe - tu, Ro - ho mwe - ma, M - fa - ri - ji we - tu.
 1 Gra - cious Spir - it, heed our plead - ing, fash - ion us all a - new.
 2 Come to teach us, come to nour - ish those who be - lieve in Christ.
 3 Guide our think - ing and our speak - ing done in your ho - ly name.



Tu - fu - ndi - she ya mbi - ngu - ni, tu - we wa - tu wa - pya.
 It's your lead - ing that we're need - ing, help us to fol - low you.
 Bless the faith - ful, may they flour - ish, strength - ened by grace un - priced.
 Mo - ti - vate all in their seek - ing, free - ing from guilt and shame.

Refrain



Njo - o, njo - o, njo - o, Ro - ho mwe - ma.
 Come, come, come, Ho - ly Spir - it, come.



Njo - o, njo - o, njo - o, Ro - ho mwe - ma.
 Come, come, come, Ho - ly Spir - it, come.

Text: Wilson Niwagila; tr. Howard S. Olson, b. 1922

Music: NJOOKWETU, ROHO MWEMA, Wilson Niwagila

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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

Prayer Leader: God who is gracious and merciful, teach your church to invite and welcome all. Lead us to be grateful for the blessing of community. Challenge your church to choose equity and compassion over judgment. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: God who sends the wind and the sun, you know every worm and bush by name. Help us remember that even the humblest parts of creation are precious to you. Show us how best to care for the earth and its creatures. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: God who saves, direct your people who are tempted by evil ways. Protect your children from calamity and disaster. Strengthen all who are incarcerated. Encourage all who are in despair or pain of any kind. We pray especially for those on our prayer list, those suffering from war and terror such as the people of Ukraine and victims of mass shootings, those suffering from natural and manmade disasters including hurricanes, blizzards, floods, and chemical spills, & and these people and circumstances we name now..... and those we name now with our lips or in our hearts Lord, in your mercy, **Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ. **Congregation: Amen.**

OFFERING PRAYER

Pastor: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

Congregation: We lift them to the Lord.

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

Congregation: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Pastor: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name.

Pastor: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.



Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.



Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

LORD’S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in the language closest to our hearts.

Congregation: 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; and 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.

TABLE BLESSING (*AFTER COMMUNION IS SERVED*)

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Congregation: Amen.**

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

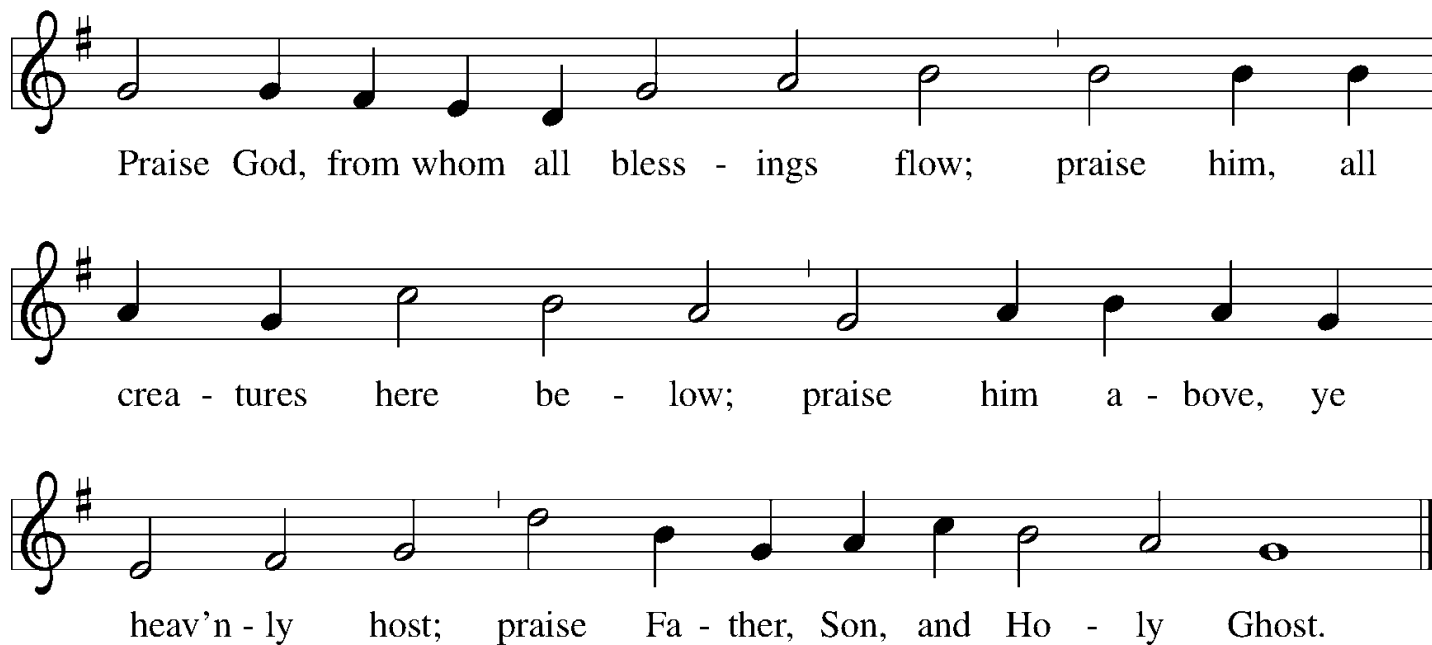
Pastor: Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another. Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother’s tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, help those who go to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick, homebound, or imprisoned. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your everlasting presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Congregation: Amen.**

BLESSING

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG

The Doxology



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God's Word and shared in the Lord's Supper, we have given and have been forgiven. Now as this service of worship is ending, this week's service to the world is beginning! Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

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