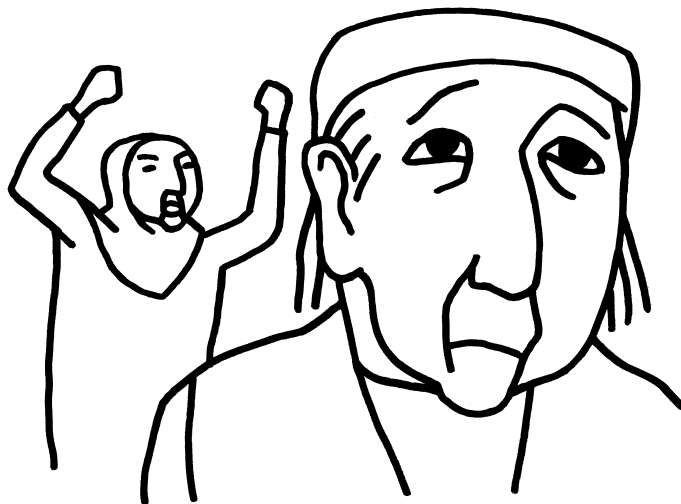


19th Sunday After Pentecost

October 16, 2022

Online Bulletin for the

Mark 2:4 Adaptive Worship Service



1812 North Highland Avenue

Clearwater, Florida 33755

Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

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Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

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Welcome! Pray always. Do not lose heart. This is Christ's encouragement in the gospel today. Wrestle with the word. Remember your baptism again and again. Come regularly to Christ's table. Persistence in our every encounter with the divine will be blessed.

There are a few things to know about this service: you are not required to stand at any point though you can move around anytime you want or need, prayer slips are available for your prayers to be included in Prayer Time, and Holy Communion is served with gluten-free bread and grape juice.

GATHERING SONG

All Are Welcome

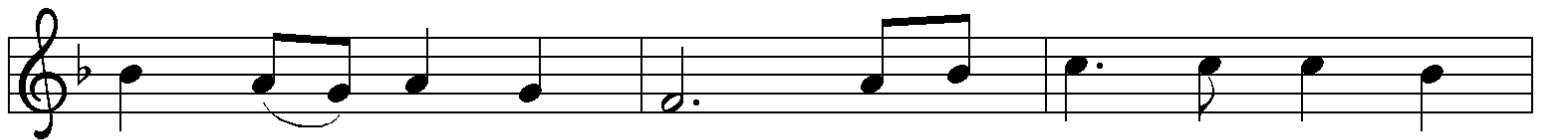
Verses 1 & 4



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



Christ shall end di - vi - sions: All are wel - come,



all are wel - come, all are wel - come in this place.

4 Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: TWO OAKS, Marty Haugen

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GREETING

Worship Leader: 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

Worship Leader: Let us pray. O Lord God, tireless guardian of your people, you are always ready to hear our cries. Teach us to rely day and night on your care. Inspire us to seek your enduring justice for all this suffering world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING

2 Timothy 3:14--4:5

Introduction to the Lesson: *The writer of this letter continues his instruction of Timothy, his younger colleague in ministry, by emphasizing the importance of faithful teaching despite opposition.*

Reader: 14 But as for you, continue in the truths that you were taught and firmly believe. You know who your teachers were, 15 and you remember that ever since you were a child, you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful[a] for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instruction for right living, 17 so that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good deed.

4:1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and because he is coming to rule as King, I solemnly urge you 2 to preach the message,

to insist upon proclaiming it (whether the time is right or not), to convince, reproach, and encourage, as you teach with all patience. 3 The time will come when people will not listen to sound doctrine, but will follow their own desires and will collect for themselves more and more teachers who will tell them what they are itching to hear. 4 They will turn away from listening to the truth and give their attention to legends. 5 But you must keep control of yourself in all circumstances; endure suffering, do the work of a preacher of the Good News, and perform your whole duty as a servant of God.

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL

Luke 18:1-8

Introduction to the Lesson: *Jesus tells a parable of an unjust judge who is worn down by a widow's pleas. Jesus is calling God's people to cry out for justice and deliverance. For if an unethical judge will ultimately grant the plea of a persistent widow, how much more will God respond to those who call.*

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to Luke in the 18th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Worship Leader: Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to teach them that they should always pray and never become discouraged. 2 “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected people. 3 And there was a widow in that same town who kept coming to him and pleading for her rights, saying, ‘Help me against my opponent!’ 4 For a long time the judge refused to act, but at last he said to himself, ‘Even though I don't fear God or respect people, 5 yet because of all the trouble this widow is giving me, I will see to it that she gets her rights. If I don't, she will keep on coming and finally wear me out!’”

6 And the Lord continued, “Listen to what that corrupt judge said. 7 Now, will God not judge in favor of his own people who cry to him day and night for help? Will he be slow to help them? 8 I tell you, he will judge in their favor and do it quickly. But will the Son of Man find faith on earth when he comes?”

After the reading...

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

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

Praying Like It Matters

The unjust judge in Jesus' parable admits that he eventually decides to grant the persistent widow justice because she has worn him out by continually “bothering” him

(Luke 18:5). And this is the character to whom Jesus compares God? Is Jesus trying to tell us that God feels worn out and bothered by our prayers? That's not a very comforting notion.

Of course, that interpretation misses the very first line of this passage, in which Jesus specifically says the parable is meant to underscore the importance of prayer. The widow's diligence is set as a spiritual example. She is confident in her case. She knows she deserves justice, and she will not stop until she is heard. What would it look like if we prayed with the kind of conviction this woman displays? We would know that our prayers matter, that they can make a real difference in our lives. Like the widow, we too would believe that justice can and will become reality.

Actually, we do pray this way every time we say the Lord's Prayer. When we call out to God, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven," we are praying like the persistent widow in Jesus' parable. We can be certain God hears that prayer and shares that dream for humanity. It is not prayer that wearies God, but human sinfulness and injustice.

God is nothing like the unjust judge because God's vision for our world is one that centers on generosity, compassion, and care for the vulnerable. The unjust judge may need to be hassled repeatedly before he will relent, but God is already overflowing with abundant mercy, even before our prayers are spoken. So, let us take heart and pray always, with our words and with our actions, as we join God's mission for a more just world.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Let Justice Flow like Streams

verses 1 & 2



1 Let jus - tice flow like streams of spar - kling wa - ter, pure,
2 Let righ - teous - ness roll on as oth - ers' cares we heed,
3 So may God's plumb line, straight, de - fine our mea - sure true,



en - a - bling growth, re - fresh - ing life, a - bun - dant, cleans - ing, sure.
an ev - er - flow - ing stream of faith trans - lat - ed in - to deed.
and jus - tice, right, and peace per - vade this world our whole life through.

Text: Jane Parker Huber, b. 1926

Music: ST. THOMAS, Aaron Williams, 1731-1776

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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: In gratitude and humility, let us join together in prayer on behalf of all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

Prayer Leader: For all the baptized, that they become skilled in compassion and grace and equipped to share the good news with all. Grant your followers persistence in proclamation and prayer. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: For those in our congregation and community engaged in advocacy work, especially those who work on behalf of people living with disabilities, that with the persistence of the widow, they lift their voices in seeking justice on behalf of others.

Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: For all who are lonely, especially those who have newly arrived in an unfamiliar city or country, political prisoners without recourse to justice, hospital patients without visitors, and any who are ill or grief-stricken. We pray 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 disasters including the victims of Hurricanes Fiona and Ian, and these we name now..... and those we name now with our lips or in our hearts Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Receive the prayers of your children, merciful God, and hold us forever in your steadfast love; through Jesus Christ, our holy Wisdom.

Congregation: Amen.

OFFERING

Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at GraceCLW.com (look for the "Donate" button), or (for now) by mailing a check to Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Ave. Clearwater FL 33755. Thank you for your continued financial support during these uncertain times. You can fill out your attendance form on our website as well.

OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: 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.

Pastor: 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.

Pastor: 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 whichever language is 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.

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

Prayer Leader: 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. **Amen.**

Pastor: 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.**

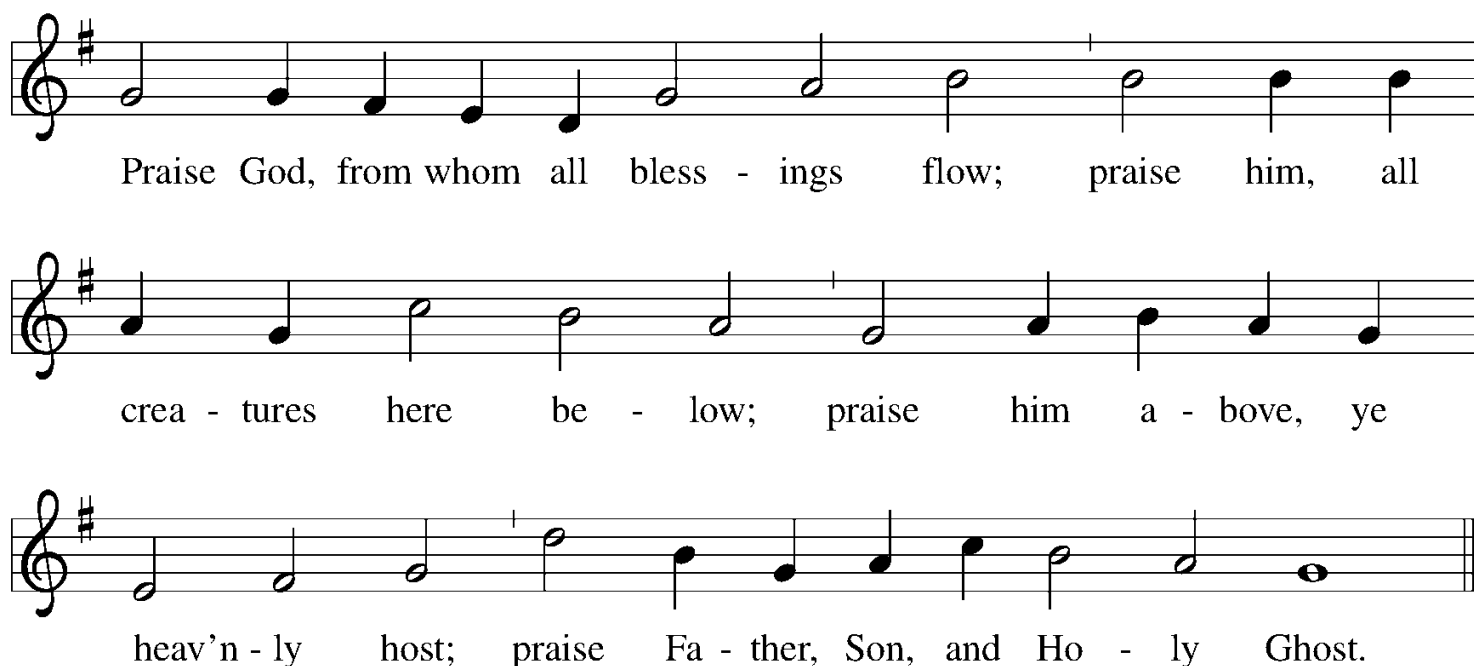
BLESSING

Worship Leader: 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.

Congregation: Amen.

SENDING SONG

The Doxology



The musical notation consists of three staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, using quarter and half notes. The lyrics are written below the notes.

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.

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God's Word and joined in prayer, 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. Tell what God has done.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!