

Sunday, November 12, 2023 – 24th Sunday after Pentecost

www.GloriaDeiWinnipeg.org

Introduction

Today the prophet Amos calls for justice to roll down like waters. Paul urges us to encourage one another with the promised coming of the Lord. Jesus tells the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids. Surrounded by the faithful of every time and place, we celebrate Christ's coming in our midst in the word of life and the feast of victory—the marriage feast of the lamb.

Prayer of the Day

O God of justice and love, you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

First Reading: Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25

¹Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. ²And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. ^{3a}Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many.

¹⁴"Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

¹⁶Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; ¹⁸and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God."

¹⁹But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. ²⁰If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good." ²¹And the people said to Joshua, "No, we will serve the LORD!" ²²Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him." And they said, "We are witnesses." ²³He said, "Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel." ²⁴The people said to Joshua,

“The LORD our God we will serve, and him we will obey.” ²⁵So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem.

Psalm 78:1-7

¹Hear my teaching, ¹ O my people;
incline your ears to the words ¹ of my mouth.

²**I will open my mouth ¹ in a parable;**
I will declare the mysteries of ¹ ancient times—

³that which we have heard and known, and what our fore- ¹ bears have told us,
we will not hide ¹ from their children.

⁴**We will recount to generations to come the praiseworthy deeds and the power ¹ of
the LORD,**
and the wonderful works ¹ God has done.

⁵The LORD gave a decree in Jacob and established a ¹ law in Israel,
commanding our ancestors to teach it ¹ to their children;

⁶**that the generations to come might know, and the children ¹ yet unborn;**
that they in their turn might tell it ¹ to their children;

⁷so that they might put their ¹ trust in God,
and not forget the deeds of God, but keep ¹ God’s commandments.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

¹³We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. ¹⁵For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. ¹⁶For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel’s call and with the sound of God’s trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; ⁴but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. ⁶But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ ⁷Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ ⁹But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ ¹⁰And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. ¹¹Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ ¹²But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ ¹³Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

Prayers and introductions from
SundaysAndSeasons.com

Prayers of Intercession

Let us turn our hearts to God, our breath and life, as we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

O God for whom we wait, come quickly to your people, bring your salvation, and center us in hope found only in you. Deepen our faith through meaningful worship and send us out with your justice and truth. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

O God for whom we watch, we glimpse your power in rushing water and your beauty in the darkening night. Restore this creation, and provide clean water to all people and animals. Save us from foolish, wasteful living. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

O God for whom we long, let justice roll down like waters on all nations. Bless citizens with wise leaders; save your children from war. We pray for the veterans of this community, that they are supported and loved. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

O God, in whom we hope, we pray for all who are in need. Provide for those who experience homelessness or hunger, support the under- or unemployed, and comfort any who are suffering this day. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

O God for whom we listen, inspire the music ministry of our congregation. Fill our worship with songs to proclaim your greatness. Help us to sing and dance with joy and tell boldly of your salvation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

O God, in whom we remain, we remember our loved ones who have died and now live in you. Bring comfort and the assurance of new life to all who grieve. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We offer our spoken prayers and those held in our hearts trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

A reflection for this Twenty-Forth Sunday after Pentecost

Trusting in God, Trusting with God

Human beings are relational creatures. We are created to be in relationship with one another and with God. No one, no matter how independent or disconnected they may feel they are, functions completely outside the context of relationships. From the moment we are born we are thrust into relationship with people around us—the people who delivered us, the people who will be taking care of us in a hospital nursery, our family, and God. When we enter this world we do so forming relationships right from the start.

Relationships, healthy relationships, require a lot of work and care to continue. In particular, relationships require trust to grow and become mature. Relationships rooted in trust can bring out the best in us. Relationships rooted in anything else can bring out the worst.

Today's readings give us the chance to consider the trust required in the relationship between God and God's people. Moreover, we are invited to give thought to the consequences of replacing trust with something else: hubris stemming from trust in one's identity or work (in Amos), or hubris stemming from trust in others to sustain us rather than God (in Matthew). Paul reminds us that our relationship with God is cause for joy, even in the midst of sorrow, since we believe (trust) God's promise of eternal life through the living Lord Jesus.



Gloria Dei
LUTHERAN CHURCH