

September 13, 2020 – Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost



Sunday School is back! Children and parents are invited to join us each week for the Sunday School Opening at 9:30 a.m. at the CEB (outdoors). Please bring your own chair (“BYOC”) and plan to stay until 10:00 a.m. Parents are welcome. Please remember to bring your mask!



PLEASE NOTE TIME AND LOCATION CHANGES – Beginning September 13, weekly Holy Communion services will move to 9:00 a.m. at the CEB. Please wear a mask and practice social distancing.



New worship schedule beginning September 13: Weekly Holy Communion services are continuing at 9:00 a.m. and moving to the CEB. On the first and third Sundays of the month, Holy Communion will be offered at 10:30 a.m. at the church. On the second and fourth Sundays, we are offering an outdoor worship service (no communion), behind the CEB. For those wishing to remain in their vehicle, this service will also be broadcast on 92.1 FM.



Please continue to support the ministries of Zion with your offerings and prayers. Financial contributions can be mailed to the Parish Office at P.O. Box 41, Oldwick, NJ 08858.

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading: Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Second Reading: Romans 14:1-12

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written,

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God."

¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

PRAYER CONCERNS

Members

- + **Linda Herder**, *who is undergoing treatment for breast cancer.*
- + **Betty Lanka**, *who is recovering from a blood infection.*
- + **Robbin Lamo**, *who is recovering from shoulder replacement surgery.*
- + **Bonnie Summer**, *who is undergoing rehabilitation and recovering at home.*
- + **Ted Talis**, *who is recovering at home.*
- + **Paul Zerfas**, *who received a stem cell transplant to combat his multiple myeloma.*

Friends and Family

- + **Pat Ciccatelli**, *friend of Millie Melblom, who is in the hospital with cancer.*
- + **Bill Gibbs**, *relative of the Formalarie family, who has ALS.*
- + **Rita Gorky**, *mother of Paul Gorky, who is recovering at home from a stroke and remains unable to communicate.*
- + **Jay**, *friend of Sandy & John Matsen, who is undergoing treatment for esophageal cancer.*
- + **Jeff**, *brother-in-law of Robbin Lamo, who has been diagnosed with esophageal cancer.*
- + **Daniel Kentopp**, *brother of Linda Smith, who is struggling with a number of health issues.*
- + **Dixie Kentopp**, *mother of Linda Smith, who is recovering at home.*
- + **Sally Kohl**, *mother of Stacey Rothermel, who is in long-term care and struggling with Parkinson's disease.*
- + **Greg Minerowicz**, *son of John and Wendy, who is making progress in his recovery from an acute stroke.*
- + **Noreen**, *friend of Debra Kaufman, who is recovering from breast cancer surgery.*
- + **Martin Simon**, *friend of the Kunkel and Wintemute families, who suffered a stroke and is recovering at home with ongoing issues.*
- + **Nicole Smith**, *friend of Colleen Bryson, who is undergoing her third brain surgery this month.*
- + **Ted Weisenbach**, *nephew of Sue Schermerhorn, who suffered a stroke and is in the hospital.*
- + **Mary Ann Wilmoth**, *relative of Judy Formalarie, who has been diagnosed with Lymphoma.*

Those in the Armed Services

Lindsay Carrick, Daemon Durham, Christopher Grinnell, Robert Heinke, Erik Lindquist, Hunter MacKenzie, David Maravel, Cody McAleer, Gilbert Mercedes, Patty Oelschlager, Kurt Rossi, Elizabeth Snyder, Daniel Wort, Joshua Wort

Suggested prayer for those with health concerns:

Almighty and merciful God, you are the only source of health and healing; you alone can bring calmness and peace. Grant to our sisters and brothers an awareness of your presence and a strong confidence in you. In their pain, weariness, and anxiety, surround them with your care, protect them by your loving might, and grant to them once again the gifts of health and strength and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Suggested prayer for military members:

Almighty God, we commend to your gracious care and keeping all the men and women of our armed forces, and all who serve this country at home and abroad. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils that surround them; and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.