

**So the last will be first, and the first will be last.
~ Matthew 20:16**

**St. John's Episcopal Church
The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 20th 2020**

Words of Welcome from T.J. Martin and Fr. John Beach

Opening Prayer:

To the last as to the first, O God, you are generous and more than just, for as high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are your ways above our ways and your thoughts above our thoughts.

Open our hearts to the wisdom of your Son, that, without concern for the cost of discipleship or the reward of our labors, we may grasp how incomparable the hour of working in your vineyard from morning until night.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Spirit, God forever and ever.

Opening Hymn #583 ~ *O Holy City, Seen of John*

O holy city, seen of John, where Christ, the Lamb, doth reign,
within whose four-square walls shall come no night, nor need, nor pain,
and where the tears are wiped from eyes that shall not weep again!

O shame to us who rest content while lust and greed for gain
in street and shop and tenement wring gold from human pain,
and bitter lips in deep despair cry, "Christ has died in vain!"

Give us, O God, the strength to build the city that hath stood
too long a dream, whose laws are love, whose ways are servant-hood,
and where the sun that shineth becomes your grace for human good.

Already in the mind of God that city riseth fair;
lo, how its splendor challenges the souls that greatly dare -
yea, bids us seize the whole of life and build its glory there.

The Word of God

Celebrant Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. *Amen.*

The Collect of the Day

Grant us, Lord, not to be anxious about earthly things, but to love things heavenly; and even now, while we are placed among things that are passing away, to hold fast to those that shall endure; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Lessons

Old Testament

Jonah 3:10-4:11

When God saw what the people of Nineveh did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

The Response

Psalm 145:1-8

Exaltabo te, Deus

- 1 I will exalt you, O God my King, * and bless your Name for ever and ever.
- 2 **Every day will I bless you * and praise your Name for ever and ever.**
- 3 Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; * there is no end to his greatness.
- 4 **One generation shall praise your works to another * and shall declare your power.**
- 5 I will ponder the glorious splendor of your majesty * and all your marvelous works.
- 6 **They shall speak of the might of your wondrous acts, * and I will tell of your greatness.**
- 7 They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness; * they shall sing of your righteous deeds.
- 8 **The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, * slow to anger and of great kindness.**

The Epistle

Philippians 1:21-30

To me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well- since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

The Gospel

Matthew 20:1-16

Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The Sermon

The Rev. John Beach

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

(In peace let us pray to the Lord, saying, "Lord, have mercy.")

God of unending mercy and steadfast love, we are grateful that you are slow in anger, for there is much in this world that is wrong and set against your purposes.

Overcome our many injustices with your justice; overtake our lust for revenge with you great mercy

silence

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

We pray for nations locked in enmity to be set free from old patterns and to embrace a new way of relating to one another.

silence

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

We pray for people who wield economic power to take notice of those whom you notice and to have compassion for those who are vulnerable. We pray for day laborers, the unemployed, and the homeless. Inspire us who have enough to share what we have, not in measured and resentful amounts, but gladly, abundantly, so basic needs to not go unattended. Gather up the first and the last, the least and the greatest, in the common work of your kingdom, until there is no more first or last at all, for all are one in your name.

silence

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help us all to see not only your grace at work in the world, but also your humor at work among us, the holy laughter that heals us and helps us see ourselves rightly. We thank you for the privilege of believing in Christ, of living in Christ. In all things, at all times we give thanks to you, who never lets us go.

silence

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

We lift up those who are sick or suffering in any way. We remember particularly.... In their fragility may they know your strength, in their anxiety may they know your peace, and in their fear may they know your love.

silence

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

We pray those who have died, especially William & Edith Draper, Brian Kurz, Robert Kurz, Margaret Kurz, Roseanna Rainge, and recently, Teresa Smith. Father of all, we pray to you for those we love, but see no longer: Grant them your peace; let light perpetual shine upon them; and, in your loving wisdom and almighty power, work in them the good purpose of your perfect will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Loving God, you have crowned us with steadfast love and mercy, receive our prayers and help us to trust your goodness; through Jesus Christ we pray. **Amen.**

Confession of Sin

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People

Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People And also with you.

Anthem during the preparation of the Altar

The Holy Communion

Prayer over the Gifts Holy

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them up unto the Lord.**
Celebrant Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.
People **It is meet and right to do so.**

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord; who on the first day of the week overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The people stand or kneel.

Celebrant Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Celebrant We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. AMEN.

Celebrant Called to labor in the vineyard for the coming of God's kingdom, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

People and Celebrant

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,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept.

Celebrant: Behold the gifts prepared by the Teacher who ate with sinners: Draw near to the banquet of mercy, partake of the feast of forgiveness.

The Invitation to Holy Communion

A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.

The presider invites the following prayer to be said by all.

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot receive you in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

Behold the living bread come down from heaven: Those who eat of it will never die.

Anthem during Communion

Prayer after Communion

Ruler of the universe, all creation yearns for its fulfilment in your Son. May we who have shared in holy things grow into maturity in him. This we ask in the name of the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Blessing

*Life is short,
And we do not have much time
to gladden the hearts of those who
make the journey with us.
So... be swift to love,
and make haste to be kind.
And the blessing of God,
who made us,
who loves us,
and who travels with us
be with you now and forever.
AMEN*

Celebrant Eager to proclaim and share God's reconciling love, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Concluding Hymn #293 ~ *I Sing a Song of the Saints of God*

I sing a song of the saints of God,
patient and brave and true, who toiled and fought and
lived and died for the Lord they loved and knew. And
one was a doctor, and one was a queen, and one was a shepherdess
on the green: they were all of them saints of
God - and I mean, God helping, to be one too.

They loved their Lord so dear, so dear, and
his love made them strong; and they followed the right, for
Jesus' sake, the whole of their good lives long. And
one was a soldier, and one was a priest, and one was slain
by a fierce wild beast: and there's not any reason,
no, not the least, why I shouldn't be one too.

They lived not only in ages past, there are
hundreds of thousands still, the world is bright with the
joyous saints who love to do Jesus' will. You can
meet them in school, or in lanes, or at sea, in church, or in trains,
or in shops, or at tea, for the saints of God are just
folk like me, and I mean to be one too.

Weekly Prayer List

Residents and wildlife affected by wildfires and natural disasters in the Pacific Northwest, Alabama and elsewhere, Maureen Burke, Annelies Caggiano, Gia Capello, Armand Couture, Jr., Jerry Dello Russo, Don DiGiacomo, Oriol Pi-Sunyer, Jim Dockery, Pat & Tim Eldridge, Claire Errico, Joanne Felci, Ruth Garrett, Peggy Gibbs, Gary Goodwin, Estelle Heath, Bruce Higgins, Michele Hoelzl, Jeanne Kelly-Smith, Hilary Lancaster, Kevin Lancaster Jr., Lisa Lancaster, Shane Maxwell, Kevin McGinnis, Matt, Lori M., Gisela Moore, Jeanine Morris, Fran Muise, Sara Murray (and deeply affected families), Bill St. Clair, David St. Clair, Nancy Scarry, Jeanne Seaboyer, Bo Shaw, Ray Shaw, Malcolm Silva, Gail Smith, Victoria Smith, Linda Sullivan, Meghan Tapley, Walter T., Susan Webb, Rachel W., and Candace Wormstead

St. John's Episcopal Church
The Rev. John Beach, Bridge Priest
([johntbeach\(at\)comcast.net](mailto:johntbeach(at)comcast.net) or 774*961*9881)

Music Director: Stephen Sikorski
Worship Readings: John Rogalski

8 Prospect Street, Saugus, MA 01906
Office: 781-233-1242 Email: StJohnsSaugus@gmail.com
Twitter: @StJohnsSaugus Facebook: St. John's Episcopal Church Saugus
Website: www.StJohnsSaugus.org