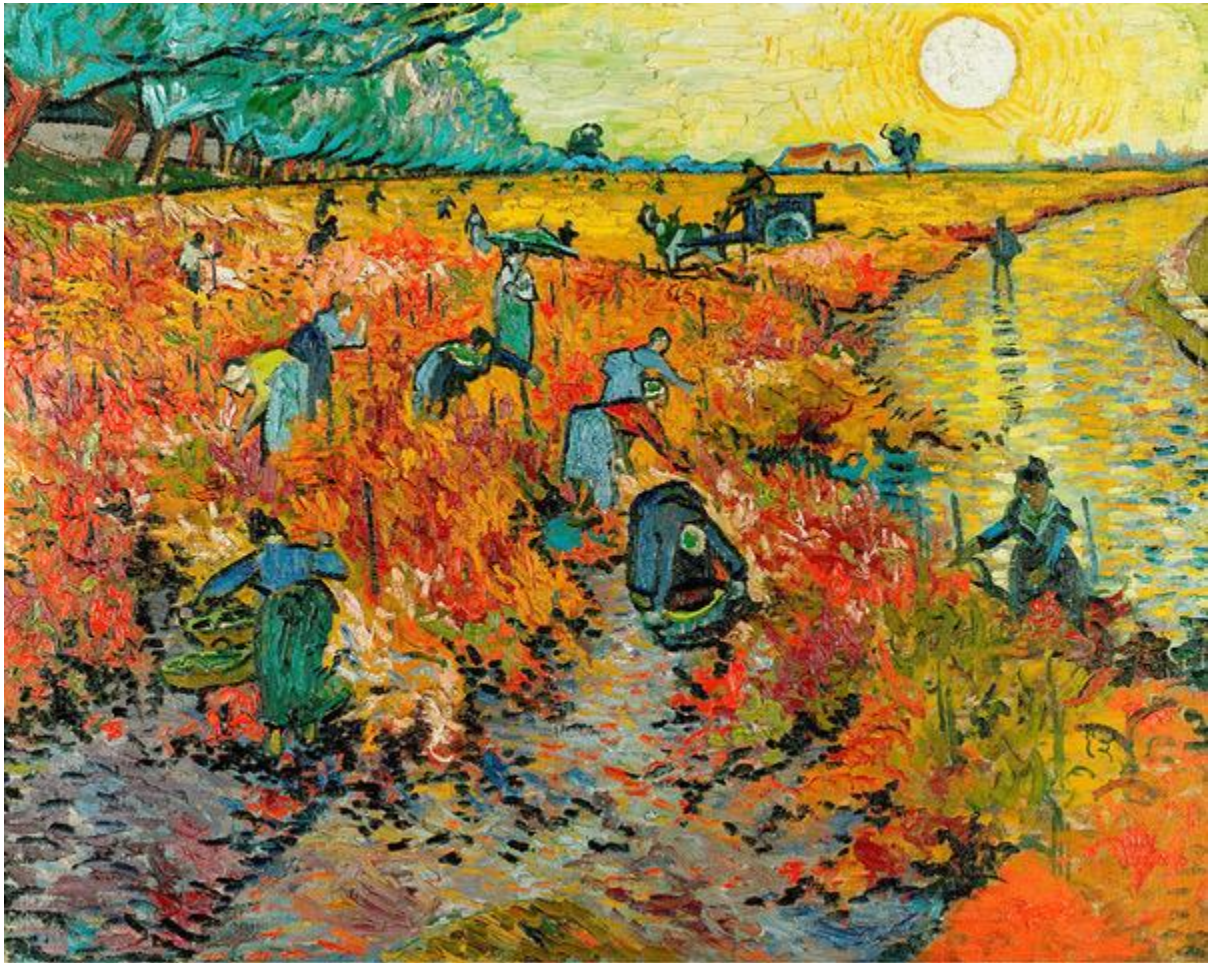

St. Paul's Episcopal Church Piney Parish



The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 27, 2020

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Officiant O Lord, open our lips
All **and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**
Officiant Give us the joy of your saving help
All **and sustain us with your life-giving Spirit.**

PRAYER FOR PURITY

Officiant Let us pray.
All **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.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

All Creatures of Our God and King

vv. 1,7

All creatures of our God and King,
lift up your voice and with us sing
alleluia, alleluia!
Bright burning sun with golden beam
pale silver moon that gently gleams
O praise him, O praise him,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Let all things their creator bless,
And worship him in humbleness,
O praise him, Alleluia!
Praise God the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One:
O praise him, O praise him,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Officiant The Lord be with you.
All **And also with you.**
Officiant Let us pray.
Merciful God, you gave your only Son to be both a sacrifice for sin and an example for godly
life; help us gladly to receive all that has been done for us and follow in his footsteps;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

YOUNG DISCIPLES MOMENT

Abraham and Sarah

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Genesis 1:1-5

Colin Hoover

When God began to create the heavens and the earth— the earth was without shape or form, it was dark over the deep sea, and God’s wind swept over the waters— God said, “Let there be light.” And so light appeared. God saw how good the light was. God separated the light from the darkness. God named the light Day and the darkness Night.

There was evening and there was morning: the first day.

Lector The Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

THE PSALM *Psalm 25:1-8*

A prayer for forgiveness and guidance and expression of trust in the Lord.

- ¹ To you, O God, I lift up my soul;
my God, I put my trust in you; *
**let me not be humiliated,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**
- ² Let none who look to you be put to shame; *
let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.
- ³ Show me your ways, O God, *
and teach me your paths.
- ⁴ Lead me in your truth and teach me, *
**for you are the God of my salvation;
in you have I trusted all the day long.**
- ⁵ Remember, O God, your compassion and love, *
for they are from everlasting.
- ⁶ Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; *
**remember me according to your love
and for the sake of your goodness, O God.**
- ⁷ Gracious and upright are you; *
therefore you teach sinners in your way.
- ⁸ You guide the humble in doing right, *
and teach your way to the lowly.

THE GOSPEL *Matthew 21:23-32*

In response to a question about authority, Jesus tells a parable of two sons who obeyed their father differently, and he indicates that it is the same with those who are apparently obedient and disobedient in this age. Both John the Baptist and Jesus offered their message of repentance and the hope of the kingdom to all. It was the seeming outcasts who most genuinely responded. Then and now it is not a popular idea to suggest that such persons have priority over those who are established in their religion. Action is the test of obedience.

Deacon The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
All **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and elders of the people came to him as he was teaching. They asked, "What kind of authority do you have for doing these things? Who gave you this authority?"

Jesus replied, "I have a question for you. If you tell me the answer, I'll tell you what kind of authority I have to do these things. Where did John get his authority to baptize? Did he get it from heaven or from humans?"

They argued among themselves, "If we say 'from heaven,' he'll say to us, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' But we can't say 'from humans' because we're afraid of the crowd, since everyone thinks John was a prophet." Then they replied, "We don't know."

Jesus also said to them, "Neither will I tell you what kind of authority I have to do these things.

"What do you think? A man had two sons. Now he came to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.'

"No, I don't want to,' he replied. But later he changed his mind and went.

“The father said the same thing to the other son, who replied, ‘Yes, sir.’ But he didn’t go.

“Which one of these two did his father’s will?”

They said, “The first one.”

Jesus said to them, “I assure you that tax collectors and prostitutes are entering God’s kingdom ahead of you. For John came to you on the righteous road, and you didn’t believe him. But tax collectors and prostitutes believed him. Yet even after you saw this, you didn’t change your hearts and lives and you didn’t believe him.

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

THE SERMON

The Rev. Deacon Steve Seely

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: 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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Mason Hoover

Officiant

In turning to the ways of God our lives are saved from the grip of the Evil One, and the humility of love lightens our path. We offer our prayers, responding, “Lord, hear our prayer.”

Intercessor

For the grace to move from grumbling to shared responsibility, from accusation to a search for truth, from humiliation and shame to God’s compassion and mercy. In the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer, we pray for the Church of the Holy Communion, DC; Diocesan Youth Ministry; Diocesan Young Adult Ministry; and the Church of St. Michael and All Angels, Adelphi; let us pray.

Lord, hear our prayer.

That we may bear witness to the wonderful works of God, so that our children and the generations to come may walk in the path of faith and announce the mystery of faith through their lives; let us pray.

Lord, hear our prayer.

That we may bend the knee of our hearts to those who live in despair and great need, knowing that they are Christ to us, a gift of the Holy Spirit who fills us with compassion, and transforms the way we live; let us pray.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who work at night, staying aware while others sleep, guarding our streets, and healing the sick, that they may labor in safety and receive the rest that prepares them for another round; let us pray.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For our President, his advisors, the members of Congress and the Supreme Court, that they may be honest and vigilant in their duties, knowing that their decisions affect the people of our land, and of the nations of the world; let us pray.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who have died and now reside on another shore and in a greater light, that their faith may inspire our own, and their generosity encourage the way in which we use our gifts; let us pray.

Lord, hear our prayer.

(Please add your intercessions and thanksgivings, silently or aloud.)

The Officiant will add a concluding collect.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Officiant As Christ teaches us, we pray:

All **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 CONFESSION OF SIN & ABSOLUTION

Deacon Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

All **Merciful God, we have sinned in what we have thought and said, in the wrong we have done and in the good we have not done.**

We have sinned in ignorance:

we have sinned in weakness:

we have sinned through our own deliberate fault.

We are truly sorry.

We repent and turn to you.

Forgive us, for our Savior Christ's sake, and renew our lives to the glory of your name.

Amen.

Officiant 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

Officiant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

BIRTHDAY AND ANNIVERSARY BLESSINGS

PRAYER FOR A BIRTHDAY

O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your servants *she/he/they* begin another year. Grant that *she/he/they* may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen *his/her/their* trust in your goodness all the days of *his/her/their* life(ves); through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ANNIVERSARY

O God, you have so consecrated the covenant of marriage that in it is represented the spiritual unity between Christ and his Church: Send therefore your blessing upon these your servants, that they may so love, honor, and cherish each other in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, that their home may be a haven of blessing and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Officiant During this time in which we cannot gather to celebrate the great sacrament of Holy Communion, let us offer our selves, souls, and bodies to God in this prayer for spiritual communion.

All **In union, O Lord, with the faithful at every altar of your Church where your blessed Body and Blood are being offered, we desire to offer you praise and thanksgiving for creation and all the blessings of this life. We present to you our souls and bodies, with the earnest wish that we may ever be united to You.**

We proclaim our trust in you and recall your mighty deeds on our behalf. We remember your death, we proclaim your resurrection, and we await your coming in glory.

Strengthen and sustain us with your grace, surround us with your love, and uphold us with your mercy. May we live in you and you in us, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

I Love to Tell the Story

vv. 1&3

1. I love to tell the sto - ry of un - seen things a - bove, of Je - sus and his glo - ry,
3. I love to tell the sto - ry, for those who know it best seem hun - ger-ing and thirst-ing
of Je - sus and his love. I love to tell the sto-ry, be - cause I know 'tis true;
to hear it, like the rest. And when, in scenes of glo-ry, I sing the new, new song,
it sat - is-fies my long-ings as noth - ing else could do. I love to tell the sto-ry;
'twill be the old, old sto - ry that I have loved so long.
'twill be my theme in glo-ry to tell the old, old sto-ry of Je - sus and his love.

THE BLESSING

THE DISMISSAL

Questions for Reflection

The tax collectors and prostitutes, who were commonly known to be sinners, recognized God's righteousness in John the Baptist and Jesus, while the religious authorities (the elders) did not. Do you know of any comparable examples today?

Household Prayer: Morning

Almighty God, give me the mind of Christ: drive away any selfish ambition, fill me with compassion and love, and make me a humble servant, that all I do and all I desire may be pleasing to you; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Lord, in my accomplishments this day, make me humble; for my failures, give me consolation. In your steadfast love, uphold me, and for my sins, forgive me, that I may know your mercy and walk in the way of your salvation. Amen.

PERMISSIONS

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St. Paul's Episcopal Church
4535 Piney Church Road, Waldorf, MD 20602
Office: (301) 645-5000 • Pastoral Emergencies: (301) 535-4567
www.stpaulswaldorf.org