

Christ Episcopal Church

Sparta, NC

Christ Church is an active, joyful, transforming, faith community that practices radical welcome.

Together we feed our minds, souls, and bodies with study, worship, and hospitality.

We are a growing fellowship of people who seek to love like Jesus.



Morning Prayer: Rite Two

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

October 4, 2020 – 10:30 AM

The Rt. Rev José McLoughlin
Bishop of Western North Carolina

Jann Boggs
Senior Warden

Welcome to Christ Episcopal Church

We are delighted God has brought you to this special place.

What do you need to know about worship? Everything you need for your worship today is in the booklet you are holding. Our service is based on the Book of Common Prayer, using music from sources including the Hymnal 1982 and Taizé.

Are you worshipping with us for the first time? We would love to get to know you! Please email our office at ccepisopal@skybest.com with your name and contact information, and let us know if we can call you, answer questions, or pray for you. And know that wherever you are on your journey of faith, there is a place for you at Christ Church.

Newsletter: Sign-up today to receive our electronic newsletter, the weekly *Good News & Notes*. Email the church office at ccepisopal@skybest.com.

We extend special thanks today to:

Jann Boggs, for leading us in worship this morning,

Betty Upchurch, for serving as musician and for being so generous with her talents, and

Jeanne Green, for providing the flowers at the altar in memory of her mother, Helene Reindollar.

Social media: Please join us for online worship by visiting our Facebook page or our YouTube page at Church Episcopal Church – Sparta, North Carolina.

And for more information about Christ Church, please visit our website – christchurchallegghany.com.

The Gathering

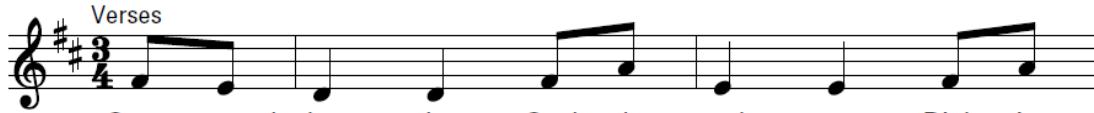
Prelude

Betty Upchurch

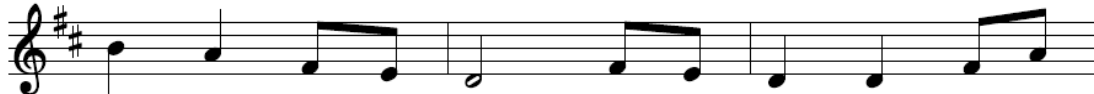
Processional Hymn

Sing a new church

{sung to the tune: Come, thou fount of every blessing}



1. Sum-moned by the God who made us Rich in
2. Ra-diant ris-en from the wa-ter, Robed in
3. Trust the good-ness of cre-a-tion; Trust the
4. Bring the hopes of ev-'ry na-tion; Bring the
5. Draw to-geth-er at one ta-ble All the



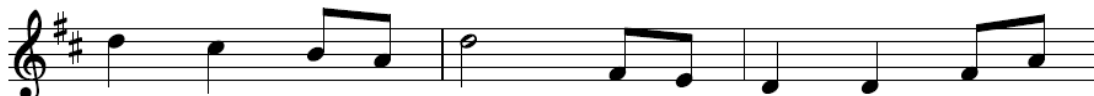
1. our di-ver-si-ty, Gath-ered in the name of
2. ho-li-ness and light, Male and fe-male in God's
3. Spir-it strong with-in. Dare to dream the vi-sion
4. art of ev-'ry race. Weave a song of peace and
5. hu-man fam-i-ly; Shape a cir-cle ev-er



1. Je-sus, Rich-er still in u-ni-ty:
2. im-age, Male and fe-male, God's de-light:
3. prom-ised, Sprung from seed of what has been.
4. jus-tice; Let it sound through time and space.
5. wid-er And a peo-ple ev-er free.



Let us bring the gifts that dif-fer And, in



splen-did, var-ied ways, Sing a new church in-to



be-ing, One in faith and love and praise.

Opening Acclamation

Leader I was glad when they said to me,
People **“Let us go to the house of the Lord.”**

Confession of Sin

Leader Dearly beloved, we have come together in the presence of Almighty God our heavenly Father, to set forth his praise, to hear his holy Word, and to ask, for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and our salvation. And so that we may prepare ourselves in heart and mind to worship him, let us kneel in silence, and with penitent and obedient hearts confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy.

Silence.

Leader Most merciful God,
People **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.**

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

Leader Lord, open our lips.
People **And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

All **Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

Psalm 95:1-7

Come, let us sing to the Lord; *
let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving *
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, *
and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are the caverns of the earth, *
and the heights of the hills are his also.
The sea is his, for he made it, *
and his hands have molded the dry land.

Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, *
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. *
Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

Liturgy of the Word

A Reading from Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

Then God spoke all these words:

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work.

Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die." Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin."

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People Thanks be to God.

Psalm 19

The heavens declare the glory of God, *
and the firmament shows his handiwork.

One day tells its tale to another, *
and one night imparts knowledge to another.

Although they have no words or language, *
and their voices are not heard,

Their sound has gone out into all lands, *
and their message to the ends of the world.

In the deep has he set a pavilion for the sun; *
it comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to run its course.

It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens
and runs about to the end of it again; *
nothing is hidden from its burning heat.

The law of the Lord is perfect
and revives the soul; *
the testimony of the Lord is sure
and gives wisdom to the innocent.

The statutes of the Lord are just
and rejoice the heart; *
the commandment of the Lord is clear
and gives light to the eyes.

The fear of the Lord is clean
and endures for ever; *
the judgments of the Lord are true
and righteous altogether.

More to be desired are they than gold,
more than much fine gold, *
sweeter far than honey,
than honey in the comb.

By them also is your servant enlightened, *
and in keeping them there is great reward.

Who can tell how often he offends? *
cleanse me from my secret faults.

Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins;
let them not get dominion over me; *
then shall I be whole and sound,
and innocent of a great offense.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my
heart be acceptable in your sight, *
O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

The First Song of Isaiah 12:2-6

Surely, it is God who saves me; *
I will trust in him and not be afraid.
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, *
and he will be my Savior.
Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing *
from the springs of salvation.
And on that day you shall say, *
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name;
Make his deeds known among the peoples; *
see that they remember that his Name is exalted.
Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, *
and this is known in all the world.
Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, *
for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Silence.

The Second Reading Philippians 3:4b-14

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People Thanks be to God.

The Song of Simeon – Luke 2:29-32

Lord, you now have set your servant free *

to go in peace as you have promised;

For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior, *

whom you have prepared for all the world to see:

A Light to enlighten the nations, *

and the glory of your people Israel.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew

Matthew 21:33-46

Jesus said, "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.'" So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures:

'The stone that the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone;

this was the Lord's doing,

and it is amazing in our eyes?'

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People Thanks be to God.

Reflections

Jann Boggs

Silence.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers

Leader The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Leader Let us pray,
Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

Show us your mercy, O Lord;
And grant us your salvation.
Clothe your ministers with righteousness;
Let your people sing with joy.
Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;
For only in you can we live in safety.
Lord, keep this nation under your care:
And guide us in the way of justice and truth.
Let your way be known upon earth;
Your saving health among all nations.
Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;
Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
Create in us clean hearts, O God;
And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

Prayers of the People

Leader: Bound together in Christ in the communion of the Holy Spirit, we pray with one heart and mind to our God, saying:

People: **Holy Spirit, you renew the face of the Earth.**

Leader: We pray that the love that flows endlessly between the Father and the Son in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit may renew and deepen the lives of all who follow Jesus and draw the human family all together into your eternal dance;

People: **Holy Spirit, you renew the face of the Earth.**

Leader: We pray for the leaders of the Church, and for the leaders of nations, that we, with them, may discern the ways to overcome divisions and mistrust, that all may reflect your unity in every aspect of our common lives.

People: Holy Spirit, you renew the face of the Earth.

Leader: We pray that your Abundant Life, seen clearly in the life of Jesus, may endure and flourish as the Holy Spirit enlightens us to a greater understanding of you, ourselves, and all others with whom we share our planet.

People: Holy Spirit, you renew the face of the Earth.

Leader: We pray for our families, our communal life and our wider communities, that they may be places of communion and mutual support, which builds us up and strengthens us with your grace and truth. We pray especially for... We give thanks for the gift of community.

People: Holy Spirit, you renew the face of the Earth.

Leader: We thank you for our natural world, which you created and deemed very good. Help us, we pray, to do as you have commanded and care for our planet the way you care for us.

People: Holy Spirit, you renew the face of the Earth.

Leader: In the power of your Spirit who joins our prayer to Christ's eternal intercession, we pray for the sick, the suffering, those who have died, and all who stand in need, especially...For healing for all the world we pray,

People: Holy Spirit, you renew the face of the earth.

Leader: In an endless outpouring of thanksgiving for your ceaseless joy, we give thanks for... that we may always rejoice in the power of your love.

People: Holy Spirit, you renew the face of the Earth.

Leader: Gracious God, whom Jesus taught us to call Abba, Father, by the inner workings of your Spirit, help us to embrace your grace to deepen our communion with you, give us courage to more and more be signs of your enduring love. This we pray through Jesus Christ, who lives and works with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Collect for Sundays

Leader The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Leader Let us pray,

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect for Peace

O God, the author of peace and lover of concord, to know you is eternal life and to serve you is perfect freedom: Defend us, your humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in your defense, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer for Mission

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A General Thanksgiving

Please stand, as able, and read in unison.

BCP 836

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love.

We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side.

We thank you for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us.

We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone.

Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his Word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom.

Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know Christ and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things. **Amen.**

The Blessing

Leader Let us pray,

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

Leader Let us bless the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Dismissal

Leader May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Postlude

Betty Upchurch

Coming Lessons

Exodus 32:1-14
Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23
Philippians 4:1-9
Matthew 22:1-14

Prayer List

Intercessions: Amy Jones, Ben & Laura Davis, Brenda Weems, Chuck & Sally Besaw, Frank Withrow (Laura Davis' brother-in-law), Gary Medley, Gina Davis, Jann Boggs, Jean Callison, Jonathan, Julie Ottesen, Laura, Lorene Ramsey, Margaret Blanck, Martha Willie Coleman, Nancy Meredith (Laura Davis' sister), Ned Lentz, Sheila Pfaender, and Smitty Hughes (Charles Besaw's friend). We also pray for all those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters around the world

Departed:

Birthdays: Cynthia Grant (Oct 4)

Wedding Anniversaries & Thanksgivings:

Schedule

Sunday, October 4 – Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

10:30 am – Morning Prayer: Rite Two – via YouTube & Facebook

Sunday, October 11 – Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

10:30 am – Morning Prayer: Rite Two – via YouTube & Facebook

Announcements

****NEW**Office and Church Guidelines during Phase III of COVID-19:**

The National and Diocesan offices have not released any updates to-date for Phase III restrictions but will likely release them in the near future. *Watch next week's GNN for an update.*

Because of the repairs in progress, it remains preferable that you only enter the church if necessary, and then, using the Parish Hall entrance. If you come into the church, you must wear a face mask, maintain 6 feet of distance from each other, wash your hands regularly and/or use hand sanitizer.

Given the size of the Administrator's Office, we ask that you enter no further than the doorway. Face masks and hand sanitizer are available, as required, on a table to the right of the parish hall entrance door.

Plans are in place to begin our “in-person” services in the next few weeks, pending the completion of the sanctuary repairs, painting and deep cleaning.

We’re working in the right direction and are as eager as you are to return to some sense of normalcy in the very near future!

Christ Episcopal Church

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Cover art: Caller of the Morning Prayer by Dale Auger

October 4, 2020

Surrendering privilege and wealth

BY THE REV. ED GOMEZ



This Sunday falls on the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi and, as if by design, all the readings speak to his exemplary life of practicing generosity. Living church in the time of COVID-19 has reconfirmed my views of poverty and generosity.

As I ponder today's readings, Paul's words pop out at me in Philippians, where he writes:

"Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ."

He continues:

"For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ."

In reflecting on the life of Francis and these words, I wish to suggest that we not romanticize his embrace of poverty, but rather focus on his Faith-Filled Generosity. His generosity allowed him to surrender his privilege and wealth, and to embrace and consider them "rubbish," in order to be Jesus to those who need Him most.

When the church where I serve, San Pablo in Houston, closed doors for public worship, we opened a new way of church... one that provided drive-by food distribution and rental assistance for Houston's most vulnerable people. Donations and volunteerism increased tenfold and online viewership flourished more than any Sunday attendance record in recent memory. The gifts came mainly from those we called "unchurched" or who do not consider themselves religious. The joy exuded in giving included dancing, socially distant high-fives and laughter through masks.

Our worship became solidarity and compassion, the religious became spiritual, the unchurched found their worship, and the poor heard and felt the Good News. I learned that practicing Faith-Filled Generosity as Francis did transforms and unites us all. A new Church for a new world.

Ed Gomez is pastor at Iglesia de San Pablo in Houston. He also serves on the boards of The Episcopal Network for Stewardship and Christian Church Homes.

FAITH
FILLED

GENEROSITY

For reflection

- In this time of COVID-19, did you focus and mourn what you lost, or rather did you focus and rejoice on what you gave to others?
- When you have practiced faith-filled generosity, did you experience an increase in joy and wealth; i.e., wealth as a quality of life measure: joy, peace, love, personal satisfaction, fulfillment and self-actualization?