

ORDER OF SERVICE
September 27, 2020 - Pentecost 17

INTRODUCTION

“Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.”

Good morning everyone. This is Fr. Dean Mercer and I welcome you as the parish of St. Paul's gathers on the 17th Sunday of Pentecost. Separated physically, we join in spirit, sharing in the joy of the resurrection of our Lord.

Reading the lessons is Vanessa Cambridge. The anthem is performed by the Harvard University Choir. And the litany is led by Sandra Johnson.

So let us hear Holy Scripture, reflect and pray together, and open our hearts to the Living Word, Jesus Christ - our risen Saviour and Lord.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Grant, O merciful God, that your Church, being gathered by your Holy Spirit into one, may show forth your power among all peoples, to the glory of your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

LESSONS

First Reading

READER: A reading from Philippians

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-13

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

READER: From Psalm 78

PSALM 78:1-4, 12-16

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

I will open my mouth in a parable; I will declare the mysteries of ancient times.

That which we have heard and known, and what our forefathers have told us, we will not hide from their children.

We will recount to generations to come the praise-worthy deeds and the power of the Lord, and the wonderful works he has done.

He worked marvels in the sight of their forefathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.

He split open the sea and let them pass through; he made the waters stand up like walls.

He led them with a cloud by day, and all the night through with a glow of fire.

He split the hard rocks in the wilderness and gave them drink as from the great deep.

He brought streams out of the cliff, and the waters gushed out like rivers.

READER: A reading from the Gospel of Matthew

MATTHEW 21:23-32

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."

LITANY (#2)

Litanist: Let us pray with confidence to the Lord, saying, "Lord hear our prayer."

O Lord, guard and direct your Church in the way of unity, service, and praise.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Give to all nations an awareness of the unity of the human family.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Cleanse our hearts of prejudice and selfishness, and inspire us to hunger and thirst for what is right.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Teach us to use your creation for your greater praise, that all may share the good things you provide.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Strengthen all who give their energy or skill for the healing of those who are sick in body or in mind.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Set free all who are bound by fear and despair.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Grant a peaceful end and eternal rest to all who are dying, and your comfort to those who mourn.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all you have done for us. We thank you for the splendour 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 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; 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 LORD'S PRAYER & BLESSING

Leader: And now as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

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, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Doors of St. Paul's Have Re-opened - Sunday, September 13.

In a series of careful steps, the doors are re-opening and services and programs are being resumed - starting with Sunday Services. We are working toward the resumption of other services and programs over the next few weeks. However, because the virus remains active, safety guidelines are in effect and all online services will continue for the foreseeable future.

Beginning September 13, four services are offered in the church. Ninety (90) people, which is 30% of capacity, are allowed in the church proper - main floor and balcony - at any one time. The hall, kitchen and rooms downstairs remain closed.

Sunday Schedule:

8.00 a.m. (at the church)

10.00 a.m. (at the church)

10.00 a.m. - Sunday School (online - see the church calendar)

10.30 a.m. - English service (online - see the church calendar)

1.00 p.m. (Chinese)

3.45 p.m. (Tamil) - also being streamed.

6.00 p.m. - Evening Prayer (online - see the church calendar)

Morning Prayer will continue to be offered on Zoom, Monday through Saturday, as of September 13th. Sunday School and the Sunday recording will continue to be offered.

Safety Guidelines

As required, St. Paul's is following the safety guidelines issued by the Diocese of Toronto.

Anyone is welcome to read the detailed guidelines available on the Diocesan website, but the following Ten Commandments are offered as a working summary:

1. Please do not enter the church if you have a temperature, feel ill or have been in contact with a COVID-19 positive individual over the past two weeks.
2. Reserve a seat - online ([<http://www.stpl.ca/>]/www.stpl.ca) or by calling the church office (416-499-1545). Maximum attendance is 60 on the main floor and 30 in the balcony.
3. Wear a mask.
4. On Sundays, enter and sign-in at Entrance A (the main church door). During the week, sign-in at Entrance C.
5. Wash your hands.
6. Keep your distance (six feet, except with your family or members of your "bubble").
7. No singing.
8. No eating (snacks for children may be brought, but not shared with other children). And BYOW - "bring your own water".
9. Communion is in one kind (bread only) and in procession.
10. One at a time in washrooms and the elevator (with the exception of parents/guardians with children).

Before and After - General cleaning by cleaning staff resumes as before, and between services trained volunteers will ensure that high-touch areas will be cleaned: door handles, bannisters, the top of chairs, etc..

Seat Reservations

Due to a seating limitation of 30% capacity for group gatherings in the Diocesan safety guidelines, we request that you reserve a seat for Sundays. Registration is now open and available by calling the church office (416-499-1545) or by registering online here:

<https://stpl.ca/services.html>

Choose and click on the service you wish to attend and complete the registration. Kindly pass the word along to those you know who may wish to attend but do not have internet access.

Other Services, Programs and Meetings - Gradually, we plan to resume other services, programs and meetings, but safely and carefully. Watch for updates and announcements.

Summary - Due to broad cooperation across the country, the safety guidelines ensure that it is relatively safe to come back to church in the same way that it is now relatively safe to go to the grocery store, drug store, or hardware store. We are grateful to the Bishops and Diocese for their guidance. Small steps, but all in the right direction. And, as has been true all along, the situation remains dynamic. We'll do our best to keep everyone updated.

Thanksgiving Food Drive for ACSA. We are asking our generous members to help us help ACSA provide food for those in need. To donate, call (416-321-6912) or visit the website - www.agincourtcommunityservices.com.

S.P.Y. - St. Paul's Youth - Friday Nights, 7 p.m. - Resumed September 18.

Looking for Work - If you're looking, or know someone who is, here's the national job site: www.jobbank.ca

Friday Night Bible Study - on Zoom - Next Friday, October 2. Revelation 11, Lesson 11.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/830877703>

Telephone: 647-374 4685, or 647-558 0588; Meeting ID: 830 877 703

Have you moved? - If you have moved recently, kindly notify the office of your new address, phone number and e-mail address. We appreciate your help.

Gifts and Offerings - The emergency measures and suspension of all church services and programs presents a large challenge to churches and charities dependent on regular gatherings and fundraising events. Your faithful support is as important now as it has ever been. Church Envelopes can be sent by mail.

Members may wish to sign up for the Pre-Authorized Giving Program (contact the office). Or, gifts can be made online at our website through CanadaHelps here: www.stpl.ca/give.html.

Members who use online banking may now also make E-transfers (contact the office).

Contact

The clergy of St. Paul's are all in the vicinity. If any one of us can be of service, don't hesitate to call or write.

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