**Twenty First Sunday after Pentecost**

**Sunday, October 30, 2022**

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**October 30, 2022 — 21st Sunday after Pentecost**

THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

**Gathering Hymn  # 445**​***God the Creator***

**Greeting**​​p. 185

**Hymn # 365**​***Glory to God on High***

**Kyrie Eleison**​p. 186

**Collect of the Day: Almighty God, whose chosen servant Abraham obeyed your call, rejoicing in your promise that in him the family of the earth is blessed, give us faith like his, that in us your promises may be fulfilled; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. AMEN**

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

1st reading HABAKKUK 1:1-4, 2:1-4

The oracle that the prophet Habakkuk saw. O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not listen? Or cry to you "Violence!" and you will not save? Why do you make me see wrongdoing and look at trouble? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. So the law becomes slack and justice never prevails. The wicked surround the righteous - therefore judgement comes forth perverted. I will stand at my watchpost, and station myself on the rampart; I will keep watch to see what he will say to me, and what he will answer concerning my complaint. Then the Lord answered me and said: Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it. For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. Look at the proud! Their spirit is not right in them, but the righteous live by their faith.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM 119:137-144**

You are righteous, O Lord, and upright are your judgements. You have issued your decrees with justice and in perfect faithfulness.

**Grant me understanding, that I may live.**

My indignation has consumed me because my enemies forget your words. Your word has been tested to the uttermost, and your servant holds it dear.

**Grant me understanding, that I may live.**

I am small and of little account, yet I do not forget your commandments. Your justice is an everlasting justice and your law is the truth.

**Grant me understanding, that I may live.**

Trouble and distress have come upon me, yet your commandments are my delight. The righteousness of your decrees is everlasting; grant me understanding, that I may live.

**Grant me understanding, that I may live.**

 Lord, you are just and your commandments are eternal. Teach us to love you with all our heart and to love our neighbour as ourselves, for the sake of Jesus our Lord. **AMEN.**

2nd reading. 2 THESSALONIANS 1:1-4, 11-12

A READING FROM THE SECOND LETTER OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of everyone of you for one another is increasing. Therefore we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith during all your persecutions and the afflictions that you are enduring. To this end we always pray for you, asking that our God will make you worthy of his call and will fulfil by his power every good resolve and work of faith, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

 The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gradual Hymn  # 430**​***Will You Come and Follow Me***

Gospel​​LUKE 19:1-10

**Sermon**

**Is it Really All About Money?**

**?**

When someone tells you that something is not about money, you can believe that it is indeed about money. Maybe we expect that  our very material world. But it might surprise you that it seems to be the same in the Gospel of Luke. It’s all about the money!

OK, I guess, that this is going to take some explaining.

Jesus has begun his meandering journey to Jerusalem.Jericho, where Jesus encounters Zacchaeus, is hardly on a direct route from Galilee to Jerusalem. Jesus is going out of his way, on his way to Jerusalem.

Along the way, Jesus sends seventy of his followers ahead as reconnaissance for the towns and villages that he will eventuallyvisit. He gives them specific instructions: “Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals…” They are to travel light, with no money and no extra provisions of any kind. No wonder Jesus said he was sending them out “like lambs into the midst of wolves”.

That may be the reason why Jesus is so quick to recognize Zacchaeus up in that sycamore tree. I can just imagine one of Jesus’ disciples coming back to report to him… “Let me tell you about this little man in Jericho who thinks he’s such a big shot…”Evidently, Zacchaeus had heard about Jesus. He certainly went to a lot of trouble to get a glimpse of Jesus, climbing up that tree.

And he’s no spring chicken, I would think. Even with all the money,that he’s been skimming while collecting taxes, it would have takena while for him to have acquired such wealth. And, since Luke informs us he was the chief tax collector. You don’t get a position like that overnight, so I would imagine that Zacchaeus is not a young man. Climbing trees is for the young, not the old, let me tell you.

Well, the chances are Zacchaeus had a conversation with one of Jesus’ disciples who had come to town on a scouting mission. And since few if any of the towns folk would even talk to Zacchaeus –because he was probably the most hated man in town – he would have enjoyed the conversation with one of Jesus’ friends. Come to think of it, he would have enjoyed talking with just about anybody.

On the way to Jerusalem, by way of Jericho, shortly after he sends out the seventy, Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan, the one who pays the innkeeper out of his own pocket to provide help for a man who should have been his enemy. Later, Jesus recounts the story of the rich fool who amasses a fortune and decides to build bigger barns, only to have his life claimed from him before he has the chance to see his foolish dreams fulfilled.

It is in the aftermath of that shocking story – and yes, it would have been most shocking to his listeners – that Jesus tells his followers to sell their possessions and give alms to the poor.

You’re probably familiar with the story of the rich young ruler, found in Luke as well as Matthew and Mark. Jesus tells him what he has to do in order to inherit the kingdom, something the young man evidently wants very much. Like the other followers of Jesus, he has to sell his possessions and give the proceeds to the poor. The young man is unwilling to do it, so he goes away with a heavy heart.

And it is reported in Luke’s gospel that Jesus says, “How hard it is for those who have possessions to enter the kingdom.” In fact, he says, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to make it to heaven. A literal interpretation of that image is quite amusing, and I imagine elicited some laughter from Jesus’ disciples when they heard it. After all, there are times when you laugh because it hurts too much to cry. None of Jesus’disciples, I would think, had many prospects of ever striking it rich, but a person can dream, can’t he?

Jesus is very interested in money and in what people do with their money.” And for that reason, it is quite possible that when Jesus comes into Jericho, he comes looking specifically for the rich little man named Zacchaeus.

Have you ever known anyone named Zacchaeus? You’re about as likely to encounter a Zacchaeus as you are a Judas. “Zacchaeus”comes from Hebrew. and ironically it means pure or innocent. Hewas anything but pure or innocent since he defrauded all the people in his town.

Most of us know that being a tax collector for the Romans was the most despised position in first-century Jewish society. They were considered spiritually unclean. Tax collectors handled money which had the emperor’s image on it, and that alone would keep them from being able to observe religious holidays like regular folk. Zacchaeus got rich, by taking more in taxes than was actuallyowed. The local towns folk would have hated Zacchaeus and wouldhave categorized him as being spiritually hopeless. If there was anybody in their community who was surely going to hell, it would be Zacchaeus.

When Jesus responds to the wee little man who had climbed up in the sycamore tree, “so Jesus he could see,” those who witnessed the event began to grumble and say disgustedly, “He has gone to be the guest of this man who is a sinner.” Whatever popularity Jesus had managed to attain along the way was gone in just an instant because he had the audacity to befriend a cheat like Zacchaeus.

It doesn’t make Jesus look very good, does it?… that he would cozy up to such a loser, that he would keep company with such a despicable character. In fact, we can understand how the towns folk might think that Jesus is paying attention to Zacchaeus only because he is wealthy. Maybe for Jesus, at least in the Gospel of Luke, it is indeed all about money.

Think about it… money can make up for a lot of things. Who cares what people think of you when you’ve got a big house and lots of servants? Who cares what people think when you have a five-chariot garage and a stable full of the latest model of camels? Who cares what people say when you’ve got money in the bank and can buy anything and everything you want? Who cares? Money can make up for a lot of things.

Ah, yes it does, yes it does. And if you follow that line of reasoning, Zacchaeus is the handiest guy around because he’s got money to burn.

But then he encounters a Man who has told his disciples not to take any money with them on their journeys, not that they had a lot to begin with. He meets a Man who has told those who would follow him – or those who want to make it to the kingdom of heaven – to sell their possessions and give the proceeds to the poor, who usesridiculous images of camels being pulled through the eye of a needle to show how difficult it is for the rich to get into heaven. And because of that encounter, Zacchaeus is willing to give everything away – everything – fourfold, if need be. Suddenly, money means nothing to Zacchaeus and Jesus means everything.

**And that is why Luke tells this story, a story found only in Luke.** Why do you think that is, that Luke wanted to record this story when the other gospel writers chose not to do it? Well, some people have a theory.

Everywhere you turn in this gospel the rich are being criticized. In fact, it would be easy to assume that if you have wealth there is no way you are going to make it to the kingdom of heaven. But here –and now – salvation is coming to a very rich man… a very bad, scheming, lying, cheating, rich man.

Has Luke changed his mind? Has he switched sides, changed horses midstream? No, I think he’s telling us that it really isn’t about the money after all. According to Luke, “the one qualification to be found by Jesus is to be lost.” Not poor, not rich… lost. If it is so hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom, it is because riches tend to replace repentance. But poverty isn’t an automatic guarantee into the kingdom either. Both rich and poor are eligible for God’s grace. Money’s got nothing to do with it unless it has become an obstacle to receiving God’s mercy, and sometimes the love of money –whether you have it or just crave it – becomes a replacement for our desire to receive Christ’s mercy.

We talked about the meandering journey of Jesus. Just prior to his encounter with Zacchaeus in Jericho, on the other side of town –the other side of the tracks – Jesus is met by a blind beggar. He too knows who Jesus is. Maybe he talked with the same disciple who told Jesus about Zacchaeus. This beggar receives salvation from Jesus too. Why? Because he asked for it, and because there was nothing in the way – like riches – that would keep him from receiving what only Jesus has to give.

Beggars and rich men… it made no difference to Jesus. If they opened their hearts to him, Jesus was more than happy to save them. It isn’t about the money after all, is it?

So it makes no difference how much you’ve got in your wallet. But it has everything to do with what is in your heart. If you find yourself with this overriding desire to receive the grace that only Jesus can give, the only thing you have to do is ask for it.

Fortunately, for all of us, you don’t have to climb up in a tree. You don’t even have to give your money away. Well, not all of it anyway.But when it comes to your heart, nothing less than one hundred percent will do. Why? Because it isn’t about the money. It really isn’t about the money.

So, let us ask the Lord, to reach down deep into our hearts and remove anything – anything – that would keep us from coming tohim. We ask this in Jesus’ name, Amen.

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The Apostles’ Creed​p. 189

Prayers of the People  # 1​p. 110

**Prayer for a Renewed Church**: **Almighty God, give us a new** **vision of you, of your love, of your grace and power, and then, give us a new vision of what you would have us do as your Church in this nation and at this time, and an awareness that in the strength of your Spirit, we can do it to your glory.  In Jesus’ name we pray.** **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution​​​​​​       p. 191

The Peace

**Offertory Hymn #377**​***To the Name of Our Salvation***

Offertory Response ​**Doxology**(sung)

**Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow.**

**Praise Him, all creatures here below.**

**Praise Him above, ye Heavenly Host.**

**Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

THE CELEBRATION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

**Prayer over the Gifts:** God of freedom, accept all we offer you this day. May we embrace the law of your service and know the glorious liberty of the children of God. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

Eucharistic Prayer  # 4  ​p. 201

The Lord’s Prayer​p. 211

Breaking of the Bread  # 4​p. 212

Communion

**Prayer After Communion:**Heavenly Father, bring to perfection within us the communion we share in this sacrament. May the unity we know this day live in our community and family. This we pray in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

Glory to God & Blessing​p. 214

**Mission Hymn**​***#*390**​***Womb of Life and Source of Being***

Officiant:​​Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People:​​**Thanks be to God.**

Sung Benediction​***Go Now in Peace****(in the back of the Hymn Book)*

*The****Flowers on the Altar****today are given*

*to the glory of God.*

Please enter names in the**Intercessions Book**each week to be read in the service.

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**News and Events**

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Please send announcements for the bulletin to Karen by **11:00 a.m. Tuesday** of each week. Call: 519-344-9531 or E-mail: canondavis@gmail.com.

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If you would like a home visit with Communion or know of someone who would, please let Rev. Ray know as he and/or a Lay Visitor will be available in the coming weeks.

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Please join us for **Coffee Hour**after service for a time of fellowship in the parish hall.

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**Saturday November** **26 Sew Day**from **9:00 till 3:00 p.m. at CDM**.  Cost $20.00, lunch included.  Bring your projects for a show and tell Sew Day.

Daylight Savings Time is coming to an end

Remember to turn your clocks back 1 hour Saturday night,

November 5th. Also, it is a good time to test and/or change

the batteries in your smoke alarms and CO2 detectors.

**Upcoming Events:**

**Nov 23**​**Parish Council Meeting in the Boardroom at 10:00 a.m.**

**Nov 26**​**Sew Day in the Parish Hall**