

SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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*I press on toward
the goal*
PHILIPPIANS 3:14

"Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church, following the example of Jesus Christ, seeks to live in the confidence and fullness of God's grace; to preach the Good News boldly and truthfully; to support and serve others in faith; to work in harmony with all creation."

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
OCTOBER 8, 2023

October 8, 2023
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

In today's gospel reading, Jesus tells a vineyard parable, which serves as an image of Israel, the prophets' mission, and Christ's death. For Christians, the vineyard also speaks of God's love poured out in the blood of Christ, given to us for the forgiveness of sin. Grafted onto Christ the vine at baptism, we are nourished with wine and bread so that we may share Christ's sufferings and know the power of his resurrection.

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be God,
the one who forms us,
✠ Jesus who bears the cross,
the Spirit who makes our joy complete.
Amen.

Let us bow before God in humility,
confessing our sin.

Steadfast and faithful God,
**you have revealed the ways of justice,
yet we fail to follow you.**
**We are overwhelmed
by the world's violence and suffering.**
**We are afraid to risk what we have
for the sake of others.**
**For the harm we have caused,
known and unknown, forgive us.**
**For the unjust demands we place on others
and your creation, forgive us.**
**For the ways we turn away
from you and our neighbor, forgive us.**
**Lead us back to you
and set us on the right path;
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior.**
Amen.

Beloved in Christ,
God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.
God's compassion is beyond compare.
In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.
In ✠ Christ, you are already and always forgiven.
Amen.

GATHERING SONG *You Are Holy: Du är helig* (ELW 525)



Du är he - lig, du är hel. Du är all - tid myck-et mer
You are ho - ly, you are whole. You are al - ways ev - er more



än vi nån - sin kan för - stå, du är nä - ra än - då.
than we ev - er un - der - stand. You are al - ways at hand.



Väl - sig - nad va - re du som kom - mer hit just nu,
Bless - ed are you com - ing near. Bless - ed are you com - ing here



väl - sig - na - de vår jord, blir till bröd på vår jord.
to your church in wine and bread, raised from soil, raised from dead.



Du är he - lig, du är hel - het,
You are ho - ly, you are whole - ness,



du är när - het he - la kos - mos lo - var dig!
you are pres - ent. Let the cos - mos praise you, Lord!



Ho - si - an - na, ho - si - an - na,
Sing ho - san - na in the high - est!



ho - si - an - na, ho - si - an - na vår Gud.
Sing ho - san - na! Sing ho - san - na to our God!

** May be sung in canon.*

Text: Per Harling, b. 1945

Music: DU ÄR HELIG, Per Harling

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South America, and Central America, including the Caribbean.

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GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE (Sung Twice) *He Is Exalted* (W&P 55)

He is ex-alt-ed, the King is ex-alt-ed on high; I will praise him.

He is ex-alt-ed, for - ev - er ex-alt-ed, and I will praise his

name. Je - sus is Lord, for - ev - er his truth shall

reign; hea - ven and earth re - joi - ce in his ho - ly

name. He is ex-alt-ed, the King is ex-alt-ed on high.

Chords: F, F/A, B♭, C/B♭, B♭/C, C, Dsus, D/C, Gm, Dm/F, C/E, C, F, Am, B♭, F/A, Gm, Dm/F, C/E, C, F, Am, B♭, F/A, Gm, B♭/F, E♭M⁷, B♭/C, F, B♭/F, F.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM *Wonderful Grace*

FIRST READING: Isaiah 5:1-7

A reading from Isaiah.

The prophet sings a sad, parable-like love song about the relationship between God and Israel. In this song Israel is compared to a promising vineyard. Despite God's loving care, the vineyard that is Israel has brought forth "wild grapes" of injustice and distress, when fine grapes of justice and righteousness were expected.

¹Let me sing for my beloved
my love-song concerning his vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard
on a very fertile hill.

²He dug it and cleared it of stones,
and planted it with choice vines;
he built a watchtower in the midst of it,
and hewed out a wine vat in it;
he expected it to yield grapes,
but it yielded wild grapes.

³And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem
and people of Judah,
judge between me
and my vineyard.

⁴What more was there to do for my vineyard
that I have not done in it?
When I expected it to yield grapes,
why did it yield wild grapes?

⁵And now I will tell you
what I will do to my vineyard.
I will remove its hedge,
and it shall be devoured;
I will break down its wall,
and it shall be trampled down.

⁶I will make it a waste;
it shall not be pruned or hoed,
and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;
I will also command the clouds
that they rain no rain upon it.

⁷For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts
is the house of Israel,

[Paul writes:] ^{4b}If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised 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; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸More 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 ⁹and 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. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not 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. ¹³Beloved, 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, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *Open Our Eyes, Lord* (W&P 113)

D G² G Em⁷/A A⁷
O - pen our eyes, Lord; we want to see

G/D D A/C# Bm D/A GM⁹
Je - sus, to reach out and touch

Em A⁷ G/D D² D
him, and say that we love him.

DM⁷ A/G G Em⁷ A⁷
O - pen our ears, Lord, and help us to

G/D D A Bm⁷ D/A GM⁹
lis - ten. O - pen our eyes,

Em⁷ A⁷ Em/D D
Lord, we want to see Je - sus.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:33-46

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus tells a parable to the religious leaders who are plotting his death, revealing that their plans will, ironically, bring about the fulfillment of scripture.

[Jesus said to the people:] ³³“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. ³⁴When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ ³⁹So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” ⁴¹They 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.”

⁴²Jesus 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’?

⁴³Therefore 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. ⁴⁴The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”

⁴⁵When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON REV. HERB SPOMER

HYMN OF THE DAY *The Church of Christ, in Every Age* (ELW 729)



1 The church of Christ, in ev - 'ry age be - set by
2 A - cross the world, a - cross the street, the vic - tims
3 Then let the ser - vant church a - rise, a car - ing
4 For he a - lone, whose blood was shed, can cure the
5 We have no mis - sion but to serve in full o -



change, but Spir - it - led, must claim and test its
of in - jus - tice cry for shel - ter and for
church that longs to be a part - ner in Christ's
fe - ver in our blood, and teach us how to
be - dience to our Lord; to care for all, with -



her - i - tage and keep on ris - ing from the dead.
bread to eat, and nev - er live be - fore they die.
sac - ri - fice, and clothed in Christ's hu - man - i - ty.
share our bread and feed the starv - ing mul - ti - tude.
out re - serve, and spread his lib - er - at - ing word.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000

Music: WAREHAM, William Knapp, 1698–1768

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Please join me as we confirm our faith together in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

CREED

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
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,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH *(Please respond.)*

P: God of grace, C: hear our prayer.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERTORY *Create in Me a Clean Heart (Hopkins) (W&P 35)*

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of six systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. Chords are indicated above the vocal line.

System 1: Chords: C/D mn, Dm/C. Lyrics: Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, that I might serve

System 2: Chords: C⁷sus, C⁷, F, C/E, C/D Dm, Dm/C. Lyrics: you; cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, that

System 3: Chords: Gm, F/A, F/Bb, C, F, Am⁷, Dm⁷. Lyrics: I might be re - newed. So fill me and

System 4: Chords: Am⁷, Dm⁷, Gm⁷, Gm/D, C⁷sus, C⁷. Lyrics: heal me, and bring me back to you. Cre -

System 5: Chords: F, C/E, C/D Dm, Dm/C, Gm, F/A, F/Bb, C, F. Lyrics: ate in me a clean heart, O God, that I might serve you.

OFFERING PRAYER

God of power, God of plenty,
 all things belong to you.
 We bring your gifts to the table,
 that all might be fed.
 Form us into the body of your Beloved,
 Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 153)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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,
forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Jesus invites you to this table.
Come, eat and live.

COMMUNION

Continuous - Please continue down center aisle at the direction of the usher. After you receive the bread, you may take a cup of red wine or white grape juice from the tray. Please place your empty communion cup in the basket. Gluten free wafers are available, ask the Pastor when you come forward. Notify the Head Usher if you would appreciate receiving Communion at your seat rather than walking up to the altar, the Pastor and Communion Assistant will be happy to bring Communion to you.

COMMUNION SONG



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

HYMN AFTER COMMUNION *Jesus Loves Me!* (ELW 595)



1 Je - sus loves me! this I know, for the Bi - ble tells me so;
2 Je - sus loves me! he who died heav - en's gates to o - pen wide;
3 Je - sus loves me! he will stay close be - side me all the way;



lit - tle ones to him be - long, they are weak, but he is strong.
he will wash a - way my sin, let his lit - tle child come in.
when at last I come to die, he will take me home on high.

Refrain



Yes, Je - sus loves me, yes, Je - sus loves me,



yes, Je - sus loves me, the Bi - ble tells me so.

Text: Anna B. Warner, 1820–1915, alt.

Music: JESUS LOVES ME, William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868

COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

SONG AFTER COMMUNION *We Rejoice in the Grace of God* (W&P 151)

The musical score is written on five staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and joyful, with lyrics written below each staff. The lyrics are: "We re-joice in the grace of God poured up - on our lives; lov - ing - kind - ness has come to us be - cause of Je - sus Christ. We re - joice in the grace of God, our hearts o - ver - flow. What a joy to know the grace of God!"

We re-joice in the grace of God poured up - on our lives;
lov - ing - kind - ness has come to us be -
cause of Je - sus Christ. We re - joice in the
grace of God, our hearts o - ver - flow.
What a joy to know the grace of God!

Text: Steve Cook and Vicki Cook

Music: WE REJOICE IN THE GRACE, Steve Cook and Vicki Cook

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PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Blessed be your name, O God,
for we have feasted on your Word,
Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts.
Strengthened by this food,
send us to gather the world to your banquet,
where none are left out and all are satisfied.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.
Amen.

SENDING SONG *My Lord of Light* (ELW 832)



1 My Lord of light who made the worlds, in wis - dom you have spo - ken;
2 My Lord of love who knew no sin, a sin - ner's death en - dur - ing:
3 My Lord of life who came in fire when Christ was high as - cend - ed:
4 My Lord of lords, one Trin - i - ty, to your pure name be giv - en



but those who heard your wise com-mands your ho - ly law have bro - ken.
for us you wore a crown of thorns, a crown of life se - cur - ing.
your burn - ing love is now re - leased, our days of fear are end - ed.
all glo - ry now and ev - er - more, all praise in earth and heav-en.

Text: Christopher Idle, b. 1938
Music: BARBARA ALLEN, English folk tune
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SENDING IN SERVICE

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Thanks be to God.

EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE/SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE

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SERVING TODAY

PastorRev. Herb Spomer
Church Office Email Addressoffice@solomonslutheran.org
Organist Doug Mummert
Head Usher Larry Socks
AcolyteJanice McEntire
Lector.....Patricia Yetter
Securing Offering.....Zoe Mummert & Wayne Norman
Communion Set-Up..... Ilona & Jerry Laney
Communion Clean-Up Ilona & Jerry Laney
Communion BreadFrances Reichard
Communion Assist..... Marjorie Dale & Janice McEntire
Attendance last Sunday.....69

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The altar flowers this morning are placed to the Glory of God in loving memory of Mary Stoops and Mary Armstrong given by Susie & Glenn; Sally & Mark; Randy & Mary Jane.

Welcome Visitors! We welcome you to our worship service. We hope your visit with us will be a time of blessing. If you have any concerns, please talk to the Head Usher. We invite you to worship with us again!

Prayer requests for the following: *Becky Ensminger, Ron Bunting, Rose Wishard, Bobby Seilhamer, Mark Gayman, Sam Mull, Lilly Chiado, Bernie Harris, Phyllis Brehm, Catherine Plummer, Bonnie Hudson, Marty Wenger, Virginia Detwiler, Callie Mummert, Matthew, Lexi and Brooke Bowen, Jim & Carole Darr, Beth Floyd, Sarge and Barb Weaver, Tina Smith, Patricia Yetter, Nancy Marshall, Darrell Veilleux, Linda Wepking, Bill and Jane Brindle, Esther Gift, Jean Jackson, Marjorie McMullin, Joe Mock, Ina Shreiner, Genny Grant, Frances Kramer, Linda Russ, Carol Locke, Betty Amt, Ukrainian Nation, Peace for the World.* If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire.

Please Be Aware: *If you would like to remain listed on the next month's list, or if you would like to have your name removed from the list before the end of the month, please call the office.*

Weekly Calendar Reminders:

October 9 - Council 7PM

10 - Christian Ed 7PM

12 - Choir Practice 7PM

A special thank you to Rev. Herb Spomer for filling in as supply pastor this morning.

If you are in need of pastoral care, please notify Ron Coldsmith, Council President. Pastor Jane Nicholson, pastor of First Lutheran, Chambersburg, has agreed to provide this care for Solomon's until such time as an interim or settled pastor is called to serve.

If you are not taking your altar flowers home, please let Kathy Bowen know to whom or to where you would like them donated. Thanks.

Apple Butter & Candy Orders are Due Today! Don't forget to sign-up to help on Thursday October 26 at 10:00 am to set up and on Friday October 27 at 8:00 am to make candy. Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board in Sunday School Room.

Per our Oct 3 zoom meeting, we set Sunday Nov 19 at 5PM for our joint Thanksgiving Service to be held at New Franklin Assembly of God Church. Everyone is invited and please bring a dessert to share. Blessings, Ron Coldsmith.

The SpiriTrust Lutheran Chambersburg Auxiliary invites you to dine out at MOD Pizza located at 917 Norland Ave, Chambersburg on Sunday, October 15th. Simply bring in the fundraiser flyer, or order online through the MOD app or website using the code MODGIVES20 and MOD will donate 20% of your bill to the auxiliary. All proceeds support SpiriTrust Lutheran, The Village at Luther Ridge and SpiriTrust Lutheran Home Care & Hospice in Franklin County.

Solomon's Relay for Life Team: Is having a Hammer & Stain Fundraiser – “Stained Resin Wine Glasses or Metal Tumblers Workshop” on Sunday, October 22, 2023 from 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm at: Hammer & Stain, 31 South Main Street, Chambersburg. Go on-line to register & pay at: hammerstainchambersburg.com. Scroll down on the home page until you see our listing. – “Click on” 10/22/23 Relay for Life Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church Fundraiser; then you pick which item you want to make; pay directly on the site. **Sign-up deadline is October 8, 2023.** If you have any questions please see Becky Mull or Zoe Mummert. Snacks and Water will be provided. Join us for a fun afternoon!

Power Pack Meals: The need for nutritious food for New Franklin Elementary School students in need starting in September. Please consider donating individual serving size fruit and vegetable cups, individual packages of mac-n-cheese, Chef Boyardee, 8 oz bottles of water, juice boxes, and yahoo chocolate drink. Monetary donations are accepted as well, please write “power pack meals” in the memo of your check.

SpiriTrust Lutheran Chambersburg auxiliary has discount cards available for \$5.00. Cards are good until Sept. 1, 2024. All proceeds go to support programs at Luther Ridge. Lots of great places to save. See Bonney Coldsmith, Marjorie Dale, Becky Pecha, or Frances Reichard if you'd like to have a card.

Sign-up Sheets for worship assistants for July – December 2023 are on the bulletin board in the Sunday School room. Communion: bread, set-up, clean-up, and assistant will be on a monthly basis. If you can't commit to the entire month, please see if you can share the month with someone else. Acolytes and Lectors are on a weekly basis. If you find you can't fulfill a chosen date, please call someone to take your place. Let Kimberly in the office know so the bulletin and newsletter info stays up to date. Thank you for your commitment to help provide opportunities for meaningful worship at Solomons. Kimberly will publish the schedule for each month in the newsletter.

Bulletin Announcement Forms are in both pamphlet racks. Please submit all bulletin announcements to the office by the Wednesday prior to the Sunday for inclusion in the bulletin.

OCTOBER 8, 2023
NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



God's love leads us to bear the fruits of the kingdom.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 21:33-46	Parable of the vineyard tenants
Monday	Isaiah 5:1-7	A song about a vineyard
Tuesday	Philippians 3:4b-14	To know Christ
Wednesday	Psalm 19	The wonders of God
Thursday	Haggai 2:10-19	A rebuke and a promise
Friday	John 15:1-17	Jesus the true vine
Saturday	Psalm 80:7-15	Prayer for Israel's deliverance
Sunday	Matthew 22:1-14	Parable of the wedding feast

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"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." **Matthew 22:1-14 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Almighty God, may your passion for justice and mercy lead us to display your compassion for others for the sake of your Son, our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, may the fruit of the earth that we enjoy in this meal give us strength to care for others through Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May you know Christ's love and the power of his resurrection to love others. (Philippians 3:10)

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- How can correcting someone's mistakes in thoughts and actions be an act of love?
- What does it mean to you to live out the fruits of the kingdom?

HYMN OF THE WEEK

God of the Sparrow



DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 21:33-46.

Jesus continues his debate with religious leaders in the Jerusalem temple. He addresses chief priests, elders, Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes. These leaders represent the religious life and the institutions of Judaism, a community of faith with very diverse views. Their commonality is that they all misrepresent the kingdom of God. Instead of “bearing the fruits of the kingdom,” they display a power and influence that does not work for God. For Jesus the fruits of the kingdom are identified in his first public message, the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-12). That message speaks of humility, meekness, a desire for God’s righteousness, mercy, purity, peacemaking, and more. It’s a message in opposition to the religious leaders of his day, that is, the wicked tenants of the parable that steal, covet, and murder to possess what is not theirs. The good news is that Jesus’ parable names the coming of the son, the Son of God who bears the very fruits announced by Jesus.

Discuss: What would upset Jesus in today’s religious life?

Pray: **God of power and might, cleanse us of all that does not bear the fruits of your kingdom that our lives may be a witness to your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you serve others with compassion for those in need?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

In Psalm 80, Isaiah 5, and Matthew 21, the image of a vineyard and vines are used to describe God’s people planted by God to produce the fruit of faith and justice. Use a potted plant or draw a picture of a plant with vines. Make a sign to place in the plant or write on the paper: “God’s vineyard is full of faith, justice, love, and mercy.” Place the plant or drawing in a visible place and when you pass by it each time, give thanks to God for the fruits of the kingdom.