



Sunday, August 23, 2020
12th Sunday after Pentecost
Holy Communion

In Isaiah the people are advised to look to their spiritual ancestors as the rock from which they were hewn. Jesus declares that the church will be built on the rock of Peter's bold confession of faith. God's word of reconciliation and God's mercy are keys to the church's mission. Paul urges us to not be conformed to this world but to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, using our individual gifts to build up the body of Christ. From the table we go forth to offer our spiritual worship through word and deed.

WELCOME! We are glad to have you join us in worship today. Here are a few notes to help you feel more at home participating in our worship.

Worshipping. Today's service is printed in this bulletin. Parts in bold indicate responses by everyone in which you are invited to participate.

Adjustments to our service. In order to comply with safety and social distancing guidelines, it will be mandatory that everyone have a face covering and everyone must be mindful of keeping their distance from others. Please refrain from mingling in confined spaces before and/or after service.

Other adjustments are:

- Congregational singing is discouraged. If you feel you must, please sing softly with your mask in place.
- The sign of the PEACE will be offered by a wave or bow while staying in place.
- The OFFERING PLATE will not be passed or brought forward. It will be in the back of the sanctuary instead.
- If this is a service of HOLY COMMUNION, communion elements will be available as you exit the sanctuary.
- At the conclusion of the service, everyone is asked to remain in their pew. Ushers will dismiss people by row to maintain safe spacing.
- The Sanctuary, Narthex and Broadway lobby are the only areas open. All other areas of St. Stephen's are closed.

Prayer Requests. Please call the office you'd like to place someone on our prayer list.

PRELUDE: I Come With Joy

+ GATHERING +

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

C Amen.

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom 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 Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Gracious God,

C have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

P God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

C Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *In the Morning When I Rise* (WOV 777)

You are invited to listen.

*In the morning when I rise,
in the morning when I rise,
in the morning when I rise,
give me Jesus.*

Refrain

Give me Jesus,

give me Jesus.

You may have all the rest,

give me Jesus.

GREETING

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

C And also with you.

CALL TO WORSHIP

A Our help is in the name of the Lord our God,

C the Maker of heaven and earth,

A who comes to our aid in times of need,
who gives us the courage to do what we know is right,
who invites us to turn away from the influences of the world around us
and confess Him alone as Savior and Lord.

C This is our God! Let's worship together.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray. O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the
rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into the body of your Son, that
we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

+ WORD +

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 51:1-6

*Just as God had called Abraham and Sarah and given them many descendants, so now
God offers comfort to Zion. God's deliverance will come soon and will never end.*

A reading from Isaiah.

¹Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness,
you that seek the LORD.
Look to the rock from which you were hewn,
and to the quarry from which you were dug.
²Look to Abraham your father
and to Sarah who bore you;
for he was but one when I called him,
but I blessed him and made him many.
³For the LORD will comfort Zion;
he will comfort all her waste places,
and will make her wilderness like Eden,
her desert like the garden of the LORD;
joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and the voice of song.
⁴Listen to me, my people,
and give heed to me, my nation;
for a teaching will go out from me,
and my justice for a light to the peoples.
⁵I will bring near my deliverance swiftly,
my salvation has gone out
and my arms will rule the peoples;
the coastlands wait for me,
and for my arm they hope.
⁶Lift up your eyes to the heavens,
and look at the earth beneath;
for the heavens will vanish like smoke,
the earth will wear out like a garment,
and those who live on it will die like gnats;
but my salvation will be forever,
and my deliverance will never be ended.
...The word of the Lord. **C Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING: Romans 12:1-8

In response to God's merciful activity, we are to worship by living holistic, God-pleasing lives. Our values and viewpoints are not molded by the time in which we live but are transformed by the Spirit's renewing work. God's grace empowers different forms of service among Christians, but all forms of ministry function to build up the body of Christ.

A reading from Romans.

¹I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ²Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

³For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, ⁵so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.
...The word of the Lord. **C Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL: Matthew 16:13-20

At a climactic point in Jesus' ministry, God reveals to Peter that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God," and Jesus responds with the promise of a church that will overcome the very gates of Hades.

P The holy gospel according to Matthew.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

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

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: *My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less (MELITA) (ELW 597)*
You are invited to stand and listen as the Word of God is proclaimed in song.

*My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
no merit of my own I claim,
but wholly lean on Jesus' name.*

Refrain
*On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
all other ground is sinking sand.*

APOSTLES' CREED

A With the whole Church, we confess our faith:

**C 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 INTERCESSION

A Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

A Lord our rock, you are our foundation in Jesus Christ, your Son, whom we confess as the living God. Prepare your church for its mission in bearing witness to Christ, both here at home and throughout the world. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A You call forth praises from the far reaches of the universe to the smallest of creatures. Join our songs to theirs, that a spirit of praise and thanksgiving will arouse us to cherish this wondrous home you give us. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord. Direct the leaders of countries, legislators and magistrates, mayors and councils, to walk in your ways. Help leaders regard those in need with mercy and fulfill your loving purposes in the governance of peoples. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A Though we walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve us, deliver us, and fulfill your purpose for us. According to your steadfast love, grant healing and wholeness to those who are bereaved, in trouble or adversity, or sick and in need of care. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A You call us into this community, in which we, though many, are one in Christ. May we recognize in ourselves and in one another the unique gifts you have given us for the building up of the church for the sake of the world. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

PEACE

The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ.

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace with a wave or bow while staying in place.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE: *My Life Flows on In Endless Song*

+ MEAL +

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.
Pour out your Holy Spirit,
that by this Holy Communion we may know
the unity we share with all your people
in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

C Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

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

**C 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.**

Communion will be distributed at the conclusion of our worship service as you exit the sanctuary. After the presiding minister hands you the wafer, take one individual cup of wine or juice, partake of communion and dispose of the used cup.

+ SENDING +
God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

P 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.
C **Amen.**

SENDING SONG: *The Church's One Foundation* (ELW 654)
You are invited to listen.

*The church's one foundation
is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
she is his new creation
by water and the word.
From heav'n he came and sought her
to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her,
and for her life he died.*

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Christ is with you.
C **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE: Built on a Rock

Who Is Jesus?

“Who do you say that I am?” (Matt. 16:15). When Jesus asks us this question, how do we reply? Do we respond with Peter, proclaiming that Jesus is “the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (Matt. 16:16)? We may respond in that way when we feel we have more faith than doubt. However, we don’t always feel so bold. Sometimes we might not have a clear answer when our Lord asks, “Who do you say that I am?” Our worship here today is one of the ways we learn about what Jesus does so that we might proclaim who Jesus is.

Jesus . . .

. . . meets us in the assembly gathered for worship and calls us to be united in his love.

. . . meets us in baptismal waters, drowning our sin and making us new.

. . . invites us to tell the truth about the ways we have sinned against God and each other.

. . . responds to our confession with full and immediate pardon.

. . . is the saving, calling, redeeming Word, coming to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

. . . invites us to share what God has given us, calling us to offer our resources of money and time so that the church’s mission of genuine love may be extended.

. . . feeds us with his own body. As we take Jesus into our bodies in the form of bread and wine, we become what we receive: the body of Christ.

. . . blesses us, gives us his peace, and grants us courage to answer his question: “Who do you say that I am?”

Having experienced Jesus in our worship, may we be so bold as to reply: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God!”