



# Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

+ Matthew 5:3

## THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 6, 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

“Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” Jesus’ disciples asked. Our Lord responded by welcoming a child into His midst and saying, “Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Children are highly valued by our gracious God for the very reason that they are completely dependent. On their own, children have nothing and need everything. This is true for all of us in our relationship with God! On our own, we have nothing good within us. We are simply not able to please God or live according to His will.

Yet, in Christ Jesus, we possess everything good thing! Forgiveness of sins and the sure and certain promise of life everlasting are given freely to us from the gracious hand of our Savior, who earned our forgiveness by His holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death on the cross. In Christ Jesus, we are completely dependent, and wonderfully so! We are children, blessed and loved, of our Father in heaven. Thanks be to God through Christ Jesus!

Yours in Christ Jesus, +Pastor Griebelaw

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## † MATINS †

### OPENING HYMN: Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now

LSB 902

1 Lord Je - sus Christ, be pres - ent now; Our hearts in  
 2 Un - seal our lips to sing Your praise In end - less  
 3 Then shall we join the hosts that cry, "O ho - ly,  
 △ 4 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, Son, And Ho - ly  
 true de - vo - tion bow. Your Spir - it send with  
 hymns through all our days. In - crease our faith and  
 ho - ly Lord Most High!" And in the light of  
 Spir - it, Three in One! To You, O bless - ed  
 light di - vine, And let Your truth with - in us shine.  
 light our minds; And set us free from doubt that blinds.  
 that blest place We then shall see You face to face.  
 Trin - i - ty, Be praise through-out e - ter - ni - ty!

*Text and tune: Public domain*

*Stand*

### OPENING VERSICLES

Psalm 51:15; Psalm 70:1

L O Lord, o - pen my lips,  
 L Make haste, O God, to de - liv - er me;

C and my mouth will de - clare Your praise.  
 C make haste to help me, O Lord.

**C** Glo-ry be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spir - it;  
 as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for-ev-er. A - men.  
 Praise to You, O Christ. Al - le - lu - ia.

### PSALMODY

**L** The Lord has sanc - ti - fied us in the true faith.  
**C** O come, let us wor - ship Him.

Venite

*Psalm 95: 1-7*

**C** 1 O come, let us sing . . . . . to the Lord,  
 2 For the Lord is a . . . . . great God  
 3 The sea is His, for He . . . . . made it,  
  
 5 Glory be to the Father and . . . . . to the Son  
  
 1 let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our sal - va - tion.  
 2 and a great . . . . . king a - bove all gods.  
 3 and His hand . . . . . formed the dry land.  
  
 5 and to the . . . . . Ho - ly Spir - it;  
  
 1 Let us come into His presence with thanks - giv - ing,  
 2 The deep places of the earth are . . . . in His hand;  
 3 O come, let us worship and bow down,  
 4 For He . . . . . is our God,  
 5 as it was in the be - gin - ning,  
  
 1 let us make a joyful noise to . . . . . Him with songs of praise.  
 2 the strength of the hills is . . . . His al - so.  
 3 let us kneel before the . . . . . Lord, our mak - er.  
 4 and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.  
 5 is now, and will be for - ev - er. A - men.

**L** The Lord has sanc - ti - fied us in the true faith.  
**C** O come, let us wor - ship Him.

*Sit*

## OFFICE HYMN: My Soul, Now Praise Your Maker

LSB 5820

1 My soul, now praise your Mak - er! Let all with - in me  
 2 He of - fers all His trea - sure Of jus - tice, truth, and  
 3 For as a ten - der fa - ther Has pit - y on his  
 4 His grace re - mains for - ev - er, And chil-dren's chil - dren

bless His name Who makes you full par - tak - er Of  
 righ - teous - ness, His love be - yond all mea - sure, His  
 chil - dren here, God in His arms will gath - er All  
 yet shall prove That God for - sakes them nev - er Who

mer - cies more than you dare claim. For - get Him not whose  
 yearn - ing pit - y o'er dis - tress; Nor treats us as we  
 who are His in child - like fear. He knows how frail our  
 in true fear shall seek His love. In heav'n is fixed His

meek - ness Still bears with all your sin, Who heals your ev - 'ry  
 mer - it But sets His an - ger by. The poor and con - trite  
 pow - ers, Who but from dust are made. We flour - ish like the  
 dwell - ing, His rule is o - ver all; O hosts with might ex -

weak - ness, Re - news your life with - in; Whose grace and  
 spir - it Finds His com - pas - sion nigh; And high as  
 flow - ers, And e - ven so we fade; The wind but  
 cel - ling, With praise be - fore Him fall. Praise Him for -

care are end - less And saved you through the past; Who  
 heav'n a - bove us, As dawn from close of day, So  
 through them pass - es, And all their bloom is o'er. We  
 ev - er reign - ing, All you who hear His Word— Our

leaves no suf - fer friend - less But rights the wronged at last.  
 far, since He has loved us, He puts our sins a - way.  
 with - er like the grass - es; Our place knows us no more.  
 life and all sus - tain - ing. My soul, O praise the Lord!

*Text and tune: Public domain*

## READINGS

### OLD TESTAMENT READING

Ezekiel 33:7–9

**P** The Old Testament Reading is from Ezekiel, chapter 33.

<sup>7</sup>“So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from My mouth, you shall give them warning from Me. <sup>8</sup>If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. <sup>9</sup>But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.”

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**P** The Epistle is from Romans, chapter 13.

<sup>1</sup>Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. <sup>2</sup>Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. <sup>3</sup>For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, <sup>4</sup>for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. <sup>5</sup>Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. <sup>6</sup>For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. <sup>7</sup>Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

<sup>8</sup>Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup>The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>10</sup>Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

### ALLELUIA & VERSE

**C** Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

Matthew 5:3

Alleluia. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Alleluia.

**C** Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

### HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 18:1–20

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eighteenth chapter.

**C** Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

<sup>1</sup>At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” <sup>2</sup>And calling to Him a child, He put him in the midst of them <sup>3</sup>and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup>Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>5</sup>“Whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me, <sup>6</sup>but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

<sup>7</sup>“Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! <sup>8</sup>And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. <sup>9</sup>And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

<sup>10</sup>“See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven. <sup>11</sup>For the Son of Man came to save the lost. <sup>12</sup>What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? <sup>13</sup>And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. <sup>14</sup>So it is not the will of My Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

<sup>15</sup>“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup>But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup>If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. <sup>18</sup>Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I among them.”

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.



**C** Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

## RESPONSORY

*Psalm 119:89; 26:8; Luke 11:28*



**L** 1 Forever, O Lord, Your Word is firmly set in the heavens.  
2 Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it.  
3 Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.



**C** Lord, I love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells.

*Sit*

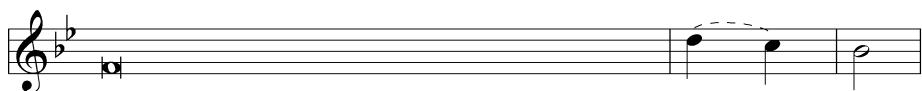
## SERMON

*Rev. Griebelaw*

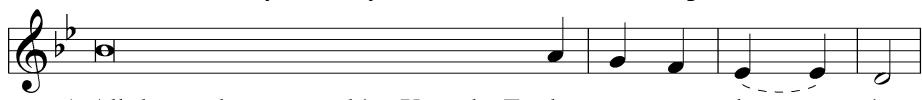
*Stand*

## CANTICLE

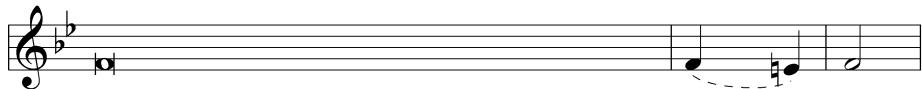
### TE DEUM: We Praise You, O God



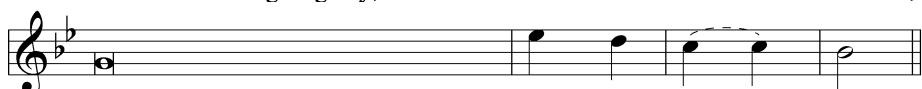
**C** 1 We praise You, O God; we acknowledge You to be the Lord.  
2 Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sab - a - oth;  
3 The noble army of martyrs praise You.



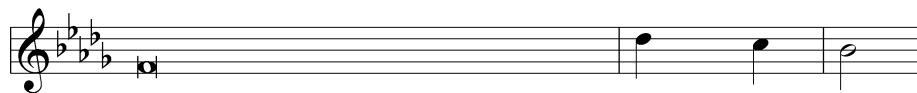
1 All the earth now worships You, the Fa-ther ev - er - last - ing.  
2 heaven and earth are full of the majes - ty of Your glo - ry.  
3 The holy Church throughout all the world does ac - knowl-edge You:



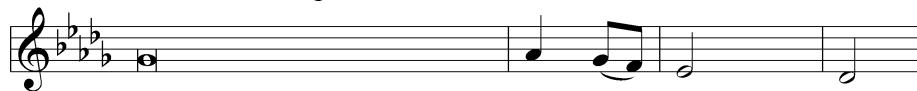
1 To You all angels cry aloud, the heavens and all the pow'rs there-in.  
2 The glorious company of the apostles praise You.  
3 The Father of an infinite majesty; Your adorable, true, and on - ly Son;  
4 You are the king of glory, O Christ;



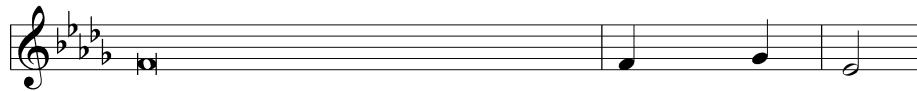
1 To You cherubim and seraphim con - tin - ual - ly do cry:  
2 The goodly fellowship of the proph - ets praise You.  
3 also the Holy Ghost, the Com - fort - er.  
4 You are the everlasting Son of the Fa - ther.



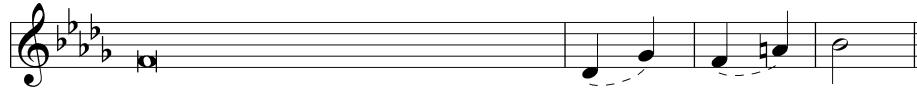
5 When You took upon Yourself to de - liv - er man,  
6 You sit at the right hand of God



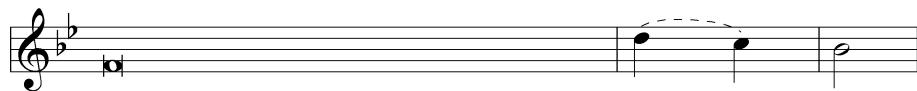
5 You humbled Yourself to be born of a vir - gin.  
6 in the glory of the Fa - ther.



5 When You had overcome the sharpness of death,  
6 We believe that You will come



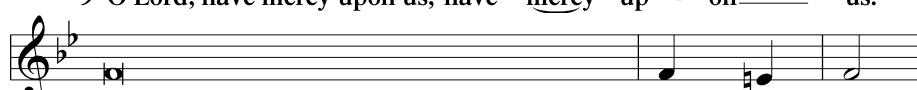
5 You opened the kingdom of heaven to all be - liev - ers.  
6 to be our judge.



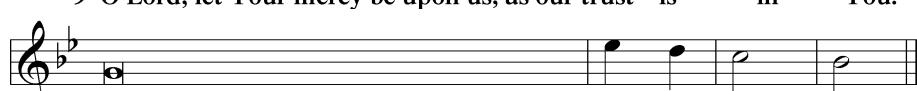
7 We therefore pray You to help Your ser - vants,  
8 O Lord, save Your people and bless Your her - i - tage.  
9 Grant, O Lord, to keep us this day with - out sin.



7 whom You have redeem - ed with Your pre - cious blood.  
8 Govern them and lift them up for - ev - er.  
9 O Lord, have mercy upon us, have mercy up - on us.



7 Make them to be numbered with Your saints  
8 Day by day we magni - fy You.  
9 O Lord, let Your mercy be upon us, as our trust is in You.



7 in glory ev - er - last - ing.  
8 And we worship Your name for ever and ev - er.  
9 O Lord, in You have I trusted; let me never be con - found - ed.

## PRAYER

*Kneel (or remain standing)*

### KYRIE

*Mark 10:47*



C Lord, have mer-cy; Christ, have mer-cy; Lord, have mer-cy.

## LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9–13

Our Fa - ther who art in heav - en, hal-low - ed be Thy name,  
 Thy king - dom come, Thy will be done on earth as  
 it is in heav - en; give us this day our dai - ly  
 bread; and for-give us our tres-pass - es as we for-give  
 those who tres - pass a - gainst us; and lead us not in -  
 to temp - ta - tion, but de - liv - er us from e - vil.  
 For Thine is the king - dom and the pow'r and the glo -  
 ry for - ev - er and ev - er. A - men.

## COLLECTS



**P** The Lord be with you.



**C** And with your spir - it.

### *Collect of the Day*

**P** O God, from whom all good proceeds, grant to us, Your humble servants, Your holy inspiration, that we may set our minds on the things that are right and, by Your merciful guiding, accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



**C** A - men.

### *Collect for Blessing on the Word*

**P** Lord Jesus Christ, giver and perfecter of our faith, we thank and praise You for continuing among us the preaching of Your Gospel for our instruction and edification. Send Your blessing upon the Word, which has been spoken to us, and by Your Holy Spirit increase our saving knowledge of You, that day by day we may be strengthened in the divine truth and remain steadfast in Your grace. Give us strength to fight the good fight and by faith to overcome all the temptations of Satan, the flesh, and the world so that we may finally receive the salvation of our souls; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



**C** A - men.

*Additional collects may be prayed following the same form and response. The prayers conclude with the Collect for Grace.*

*Collect for Grace*

**P** O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, You have safely brought us to the beginning of this day. Defend us in the same with Your mighty power and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger, but that all our doings, being ordered by Your governance, may be righteous in Your sight; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



*Stand*

**BENEDICAMUS**

*Psalm 103:1*

L Let us bless the Lord.  
C Thanks be to God.

**BENEDICTION**

*2 Corinthians 13:14*

P The grace of our Lord + Je-sus Christ and the love of God  
and the communion of the Holy Spir - it be with you all.

C A - men.

**CLOSING HYMN: Abide, O Dearest Jesus**

*LSB 919*

1 A - bide, O dear - est Je - sus, A - mong us with Your grace  
2 A - bide, O dear Re-deem - er, A - mong us with Your Word,  
3 A - bide with heav'n-ly bright - ness A - mong us, pre - cious Light;  
4 A - bide with rich - est bless - ings A - mong us, boun-teous Lord;

That Sa - tan may not harm us Nor we to sin give place.  
And thus now and here - af - ter True peace and joy af - ford.  
Your truth di - rect and keep us From er - ror's gloom - y night.  
Let us in grace and wis - dom Grow dai - ly through Your Word.

5 Abide with Your protection  
Among us, Lord, our strength  
Lest world and Satan fell us  
And overcome at length

6 Abide, O faithful Savior,  
Among us with Your love;  
Grant steadfastness and help us  
To reach our home above.

*Text and tune: Public domain*

**† SOLI DEO GLORIA †**  
(TO GOD ALONE BE THE GLORY)

## SOME FINAL THOUGHTS FROM YOUR PASTOR

Brothers and sisters,

Happy Labor Day! And welcome to September!

Is it just me or does it feel like it should still be March? It's almost like my internal calendar just stopped when the stay-at-home orders began, even though we've had a whole lot of holidays since then—Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost, Leo's 4<sup>th</sup> Birthday, my 41<sup>st</sup> birthday, Holly's \*undisclosed\* birthday (just so you know, she's younger than me and not yet in her 40s). In fact, this week Holly and I celebrate our 11<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary! Our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was strange enough, with Sam's birth only one week away (and all the accompanying changes to life with a newborn child) . . . but with the pandemic and whatnot, this one feels strange too. And, of course, next week will be little Sam's FIRST BIRTHDAY! How did that happen?! He's just a newborn!

But that brings me back to where we are today: Labor Day Weekend. Now, according to the United States Department of Labor ([www.dol.gov/general/laborday/history](http://www.dol.gov/general/laborday/history)), the official meaning of Labor Day is a day “dedicated to the social and economic achievements of the American worker.” In practice, it is a day off and day for special sales at your favorite retailer (ahhh, the irony of making more work for the “American worker” on the weekend to celebrate the “American worker” LOL!).

But for me, Labor Day makes me think of “vocation”—the fancy word used in theology to talk about the “work” that we do in our lives, the activities we are called to do, and the roles we are given to fulfill. None of our vocations are easy—thankfully not all of them are hard at the same time or in the same way. I find this especially true with children: they always keep you guessing and, as they learn and grow, things are always changing. I guess it was fitting that the Gospel message today highlighted kids and reminded us that we are all very much children in the eyes of our heavenly Father, always learning and growing and needing grace and forgiveness!

I found on the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s website a really nice (and SHORT) webpage about Vocation and I really hope you’ll check it out: [www.lcms.org/life-ministry/library/vocation](http://www.lcms.org/life-ministry/library/vocation)). It does a really good job of summarizing the Biblical understanding of Vocation in a simple and approachable way. Also, I’ve talked about it before and remind you again of the great resource we have in the Small Catechism’s Table of Duties (where the roles and responsibilities given to each of us are discussed in view of God’s Word). Truly the Catechism is a great gift that all too many of us Christians set aside after Confirmation (in other words, pick up your Small Catechism and give it a read or look it up online—[catechism.cph.org](http://catechism.cph.org)).

Beyond reacquainting yourself with the Small Catechism, I hope that you’ll join me for our **Study of the Psalms** on “Zoom” **every Tuesday at Noon (ending by 1:00pm)**. We socialize for the first 15 minutes and work through the psalm from 12:15pm to 12:45pm, finishing by 1:00pm. This week we study Psalm 20.

- To join the study on your computer, go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7603525715>
- To join by phone, call either “669-900-9128” or “346-248-7799” and enter 7603525715#

And tune-in to Facebook **each Wednesday night at 7:00pm** for a short (30-minute) **service of prayer and meditation** on the psalm. The service folder will be on our website ([www.GraceLutheranElCentro.org](http://www.GraceLutheranElCentro.org)) and the live-stream will be on our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/GraceLutheranElCentro](http://www.facebook.com/GraceLutheranElCentro)).

Lastly, please continue to mail your tithes and offerings to the church's post office box:

Grace Evangelical-Lutheran Church, PO Box 1530, El Centro, CA 92244-1530.

Yours in Christ Jesus, +Pastor Griebelaw