

Half Truths-*“Everything Happens for a Reason”*

September 17, 2023 11:15a.m.

Altar Flowers in Memory of Sue Hoffman

GATHERING WORSHIP MUSIC *“Nothing is Impossible”*

Planet Shakers

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please stand as you are able.)

GATHERING SONGS

“Hosanna, Praise is Rising”

“King of Kings”

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, you are the source of all truth and wisdom, and we seek your guidance and direction. We ask that you lead us into all truth, that we may know you more fully and follow you more closely. Open our eyes to see your ways clearly, to be discerning, and to be filled with your light and truth. Help us to live lives that honor and please you and to be faithful witnesses in all we do. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, who is the way and the truth and the life.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated.)

MISSION MOMENT

“Navigation Team”

Margie Turowski

MEMORY VERSE

John 8:31-32

Anne Oliver

A: Together, let us recite the memory verse:

C: Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

FIRST READING

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

A: The first reading is from the book of Deuteronomy, the thirtieth chapter.

¹⁵“See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. ¹⁶If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. ¹⁷But if your heart turns away and you do not hear but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸I declare to you today that you shall certainly perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, ²⁰loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him, for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God

SECOND READING

Romans 8:28-35,37-39

A: The second reading is from the book of Romans, the eighth chapter.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. ³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand as you are able.)

GOSPEL

Matthew 23:29-39

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-third chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁹ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous, ³⁰ and you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' ³¹ Thus you testify against yourselves that you are descendants of those who murdered the prophets. ³² Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors. ³³ You snakes, you brood of vipers! How can you escape the judgment of hell? ³⁴ For this reason I send you prophets, sages, and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town, ³⁵ so that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. ³⁶ Truly I tell you, all this will come upon this generation. ³⁷ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁸ See, your house is left to you, desolate. ³⁹ For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

(Please be seated.)

SERMON

The Rev. Dr. Niklaus C. Schillack, Senior Pastor

(Please stand as you are able.)

SONG OF THE DAY

“Blessed Be Your Name”

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Anne Oliver

A: Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

A: We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and healing to rivers clogged with pollution. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in positions of power to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, the disease of addiction, or are otherwise afraid or in harm's way. Protect all who cry out for mercy (*especially those we now name aloud or in the quiet of our hearts*). Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We pray for this congregation. Open our hearts to practice intentional invitation. Help us to forgive each other, practice patience, and choose welcome over judgment. Move us to care for those in our community seeking refuge and safety. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We give thanks for the saints who died in faith (*especially those we now name aloud or in the quiet of our hearts*). Show us how to live faithfully, creatively, and lovingly in your church and world. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

(Please be seated.)

STEWARDSHIP READING

2 Corinthians 9:8

And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.

OFFERING

“Everlasting God”

(Please stand as you are able.)

OFFERING PRAYER

P: Let us pray. God of love, you abide with us; you provide for all our needs and guide us in your ways. Out of gratitude for your love, we bring our gifts before you. Use them for your work of caring, that all may feast at the table of abundance, journey without fear, and drink deeply from the cup of compassion.

C: Amen

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P: 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.

C: Amen.

LORD’S PRAYER

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray ...

C: Our Father, ...

(Please be seated.)

HOLY COMMUNION

POST HOLY COMMUNION BLESSING

(Please stand as you are able.)

SENDING SONG

“We’re Gonna Shine”

DISMISSAL

SERVING THIS MONTH

Readers

September 3 Barb Barbour
September 10 Tom Ingram
September 17 Anne Oliver
September 24 Annette George

Ushers

September 3 Tom Ingram & Christian Arnold
September 10 Brain and Max Tognetti
September 17 Brian Rusher
September 24 Jim Kershner & Tom Ingram

PowerPoint

September 3 Jeanine Rusher
September 10 Jeanine Rusher
September 17 Ted George
September 24 Don Haefner

Communion Assistants

September 3 Barb Barbour
September 10 Nancy Kriewall
September 17 Brian Rusher
September 24 David Lochner