

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 5:1–7

- ¹ Let me sing for my beloved
my love song concerning his vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard
on a very fertile hill.
- ² He 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;
and he looked for it to yield grapes,
but it yielded wild grapes.
- ³ And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem
and men of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard.
- ⁴ What more was there to do for my vineyard,
that I have not done in it?
When I looked for it to yield grapes,
why did it yield wild grapes?
- ⁵ And 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.
- ⁶ I will make it a waste;
it shall not be pruned or hoed,
and briars and thorns shall grow up;
I will also command the clouds
that they rain no rain upon it.
- ⁷ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts
is the house of Israel,
and the men of Judah
are his pleasant planting;
and he looked for justice,
but behold, bloodshed;
for righteousness,
but behold, an outcry!

Epistle: Philippians 3:4b–14

^{4b}If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness, under the law blameless. ⁷But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count 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 that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— ¹⁰that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But 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 upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Holy Gospel: Matthew 21:33–46

³³[Jesus said:] “Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country. ³⁴When the season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit. ³⁵And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other servants, more than the first. And they did the same to them. 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 have his inheritance.’ ³⁹And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. ⁴⁰When therefore 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 let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons.”

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 marvelous in our eyes’?”

⁴³Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits. ⁴⁴And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him.”

⁴⁵When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶And although they were seeking to arrest him, they feared the crowds, because they held him to be a prophet.

I count
everything
as loss
because of the
surpassing
worth
of knowing
Christ

Philippians 3:8



About the Cover: Paul had every reason to boast in his flesh and worldly gains. He was revered, respected, and admired for his pedigree and zeal. But he counted it all as loss in comparison to gaining Christ. For Christ first gave His life on the cross to gain Paul. Likewise, Christ has done this for each of us. No individual status or personal achievement can compare to knowing our Lord, who gave His life for us. Everything else is all loss, but Christ is all gain.

St. John's Lutheran Church (LCMS)

8948 N 1900 Ave Geneseo, IL 61254

309-949-2516

October 8, 2023. Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Service of Prayer and Preaching (Lutheran Service Book, p. 260)

Hymn of Invocation 901 Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty

Opening Versicles (Common, p. 260)

Psalm 80:7-19

(in place of Old Testament Canticle)

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts;

let your face shine, that we may be saved!

⁸**You brought a vine out of Egypt;**

you drove out the nations and planted it.

⁹You cleared the ground for it;

it took deep root and filled the land.

¹⁰**The mountains were covered with its shade,**

the mighty cedars with its branches.

¹¹It sent out its branches to the sea

and its shoots to the River.

¹²**Why then have you broken down its walls,**

so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit?

¹³The boar from the forest ravages it,

and all that move in the field feed on it.

¹⁴**Turn again, O God of hosts!**

Look down from heaven, and see;

have regard for this vine,

¹⁵the stock that your right hand planted,

and for the son whom you made strong for yourself.

¹⁶**They have burned it with fire; they have cut it down;**

may they perish at the rebuke of your face!

¹⁷But let your hand be on the man of your right hand,

the son of man whom you have made strong for yourself!

¹⁸**Then we shall not turn back from you;**

give us life, and we will call upon your name!

¹⁹Restore us, O LORD God of hosts!

Let your face shine, that we may be saved!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son

and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning,

is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Readings (on back of bulletin)

Responsory (Common, p. 263)

Catechism (p. 264)

Ten Commandments

The Apostles' Creed

Lord's Prayer

The Table of Duties: To Parents/ To Children (see insert)

Sermon

Office Hymn 557 Seek Where You May to Find a Way

Presentation of the Offering

Prayer of the Church

After each petition:

P Lord, in Your mercy,

G hear our prayer.

The prayer concludes:

P ...one God, now and forever.

G Amen.

Collect of the Day (p. 265)

P Gracious God, You gave Your Son into the hands of sinful men who killed Him. Forgive us when we reject Your unfailing love, and grant us the fullness of Your salvation; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G Amen.

Collect for the Word

Morning Prayer (p. 266)

Blessing (p. 267)

Hymn to Depart 663 Rise, My Soul, to Watch and Pray

Silent Prayer

Luther's Small Catechism

Section 3

Table of Duties

Certain Passages of Scripture for various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their duties and responsibilities

To Parents

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:4

To Children

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and your mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise—"that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

Ephesians 6:1-3

Luther's Small Catechism

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ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH-LCMS

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Website: www.stjohnsgeneseo.org
<https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo>

HEARING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE

Rev. Timothy Nerud **Pastor**
309-949-2516 (Office), 612-940-8138 (Cell), 309-949-2517 (Home)

Elder: Carl Freeman

Organist: Gail Tutt

Greeter: Janet Bertso

Videographers: Joel Werling, Nicole Nerud, or Heidi Nerud

WE PRAY: Almighty God, who is at once our Judge and Justifier, by the power of the Holy Spirit open our spiritual eyes to the Christ who came and comes, lest we, failing to recognize Your only begotten Son and our Redeemer, reject Him and perish eternally; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with You and the Holy Spirit are one God with dominion over us forever. Amen

WELCOME TO ALL!

We are anxious to share with you the Christ-centered ministry at St. John's. Our Liturgy follows closely the pattern of Word and Lord's Supper handed down from the ancient Church. It is our hope that you will make the Church's life of prayer your own. If you have difficulty following our order of service, please ask someone sitting near you for assistance. We pray that you will receive rich spiritual blessings from your presence here. May the peace and power of our risen Christ be yours always.

IF YOU DESIRE, a visit or call from Pastor Nerud, please contact the church office (309-949-2516).

OFFICE HOURS

Terri's hours (Monday—Friday)	8 am—12 pm
Pastor's hours (Monday, Pastor's day off)	
(Tuesday)	9 am—12 pm
(Thursday)	9 am—12 pm & 1 pm—4 pm
(Wednesday & Friday) please call ahead.	

STREAM SERVICES <https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo/> and on the website: www.stjohnsgeneseo.org.

DAILY DEVOTIONS FROM LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES - use this website (www.lhm.org) to have daily devotions sent to your email or phone. You never have to be without God's word.

All bulletin announcements need to be in the Office by Wednesday mornings.

ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY

Sunday school—3 Adult Bible Class—9 Worship—54

OFFERING

Offering last Sunday	\$3,795.00
Weekly income needed per 2023 Budget	\$4,212.60
Dollar for Missions for September	\$ 93.00

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES AT ST JOHN'S

Today	8:45 am	SS, Adult/Youth Bible Study
	10:00 am	Divine Worship
Tuesday	1:00 pm	LWML
	6:00 pm	Council meeting
Wednesday	5:00 pm	Confirmation class
Next Sunday	8:45 am	SS, Adult/Youth Bible Study
	10:00 am	Divine Worship/Holy Communion
		LWML Sunday
	11:30 am	Youth Group

I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD."
Psalms 122:1

MATTHEW 21:43 – "Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits." The Pharisees were not bearing fruit. Though they were faithful to the letter of the Law in keeping the Sabbath, tithing, and all the rest, they neglected the heart of God's will. The grace of God belongs at the center. Our giving and all our other good works flow forth from receiving God's grace and living in that grace on a daily basis.

ATTENDANCE BOOK—We ask everyone attending this morning to sign the red attendance book found at the end of each pew, then pass it back.

LWML SUNDAY will be observed during the worship service on October 15, to celebrate all that God has done through the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML). The power of God is evident in the dimes, quarters, and dollars collected in Mite Boxes, and we celebrate this every LWML Sunday. Thank you! Our new Lutheran Women in Mission Statement reads — "As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others." The Holy Spirit has been doing this for 80 years through the LWML!

OCTOBER IS CHURCH WORKER APPRECIATION MONTH—Are you thankful for our pastors, DCEs, Christian teachers, and all working for the ministry of our Savior? What are you doing to show them your appreciation? At the very least, please pray for them often and then take the time to thank and speak encouragement to them.

MISSION SUNDAY 2023— Mission Sunday will be October 29. Rev. Roger B. James, Assistant to the General Secretary of the International Lutheran Coun-

cil will be our guest for the day. The International Lutheran Council is a world-wide association of over 50 confessional Lutheran church bodies, committed to Holy Scriptures as the inspired and infallible Word of God and to the Lutheran Confessions as the true exposition of those Scriptures. The ILC strives to strengthen Lutheran churches in their proclamation of the Gospel of salvation by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and in holding fast to the whole counsel of God given in the Bible.

Join us during the SS hour to hear of this world wide work connecting faithful Christians around the world. Rev James will also preach during the worship service and speak after a potluck dinner. All are invited to the potluck dinner. Pulled pork, buns and drinks will be furnished. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share. Also bring your own table service.

A free-will collection will be taken the next few Sundays to aid in the work of ILC. Please plan on joining us the whole day.

THANKSGIVING BASKETS—It is time to think about who might use our help with a gift of food. If you know a family in need, please give that name to Terri Hock or Linda Aper.

CHRISTIAN LIVING—Matthew 21:33-46: Jesus tells this parable about the long-suffering grace of God. Just like the Pharisees, people don't understand God and His character. They understood grace as a license for sin and greed and murderous acts. They understood grace as a deed of ownership, which allowed them to reject the landlord and kill his son. Jesus would take the punishment for sin upon Himself with His life and death on the Cross. Those who would reject Jesus would be lost. The Law and Gospel is very clear for us to share with the world. God longs to save the world by grace in Jesus.

DOLLAR FOR MISSIONS: A Dollar for Missions gathers many small gifts – one dollar at a time! – to add up to a big impact for the spread of the saving Gospel of Christ. The current Dollars for Missions Project is to raise \$20k for stipends to pastors to begin visiting four new prisons or jails in 2024.

ALTAR FLOWERS—The 2023 Flower Chart is now on the bulletin board next to the restrooms. Cost for weekly flowers are \$30 for two arrangements. We greatly appreciate those who help with providing flowers for Sunday worship services. Please sign up for a Sunday.

PORTALS OF PRAYER is available. Pick one up for your daily meditation and share one with another.

PRAYER MINISTRY

Remember God's gift of Baptism as you pray:

MISSION—*Pray for all the baptized*, that in daily repentance all might cling to God's promises of forgiveness and eternal life in Christ.

ST JOHN'S—Mrs. Margo Schillinger—We offer before You our common request for the well-being of Your church throughout the world that it may be so guided and governed by Your good Spirit that all who profess themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth and hold the faith in unity of spirit in

the bond of peace, and the righteousness of life. Specifically, we pray for Margo and ask Your blessings upon her.

ST. JOHN'S FAMILY—O Lord, You are the great Physician of soul and body. We pray that You would show mercy to Your servants:

Elizabeth Bjork	Betty Firch	Wanda Rahn
Paula Chapa	Arlyn Helke	Drew Schillinger
Jim Dahl	Lynne Johnson	Marilyn Woods
Jessica Johnson	Carolyn Werner	

Anthony/Sami Sedotto (2022/2023 Adopted seminary student)

Don Eggers (son of friend of Marilyn Woods)

Jodi Martins (daughter of Gary & Darla Johns)

Jon/Anita Clausing (missionaries in Kenya)

Marilyn Potts (wife of Cal Potts, former St. John Laborer for Christ)

Bruce & Debbie Bley (sister & brother-in-law of Cathy Schillinger)

Laurie Sanford (sister of Jan Dahl)

Mike Erdman (nephew of Bob Erdman)

Kim Riedy (cousin of Mary Jo Gehn)

Shandel Loenser (wife of Gabe Loenser)

Paul Werner (brother of Dan Werner)

Jim DeFauw (son of Joyce DeFauw)

Nancy Rice (Aunt of Mike Dahl & Kindra Thompson)

MILITARY—We pray for those serving in our military and their families:

Mandy/Richard Davila (daughter/son-in-law of Linda Aper)

Luke/Nicole Thompson (son/daughter-in-law of John/Kindra Thompson)

Karl Flynn (son of Mr/Mrs Paul Flynn)

Casey Powers Jr. (step son of Lisa Powers)

Brittany Loenser (daughter of Gabe Loenser)

Rylie Hallendorff (grand-daughter of Carolyn & Dan Werner)

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

“These two choices are vastly different: to give birth to a child or to abort it. But one thing is the same: to choose Jesus is to choose life. For Jesus holds every life—even the tiniest—in the nail-scarred palm of His hand.” *Rev. Gary Blobaum, St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Oregon, Illinois – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

HALL OF TYRANNUS, CONCORDIA SEMINARY WALKOUT—

Presented by Dr. Ken Schurb @ Christ Lutheran Church Normal IL on Saturday, October 21st from 10 am—4 pm. Cost is \$20 which includes a light breakfast and lunch. Sign up at <https://www.christlutherannormal.org/events-announcements>. Direct your questions by calling 309-452-5609 or CLCMS@christlutherannormal.org. See poster on Office window.

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

October 8, 2023

Text: Philippians 3:4b-14 (Epistle)

Other Texts: Isaiah 5:1-7 (Old Testament Reading); Matthew 21:33-46 (Gospel Reading)

“Trust in Christ, Strive in the Holy Spirit”

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!

The congregation in the city of Philippi was one which Paul, along with Silas, Timothy, and Luke, had started about 50 AD on the Second Missionary journey. It was the place where they had met Lydia and where he and Silas were imprisoned after the casting out of an evil spirit in a slave girl and their miraculous release which led to the conversion of the jailer and his family.ⁱ And so our text for this morning is St. Paul’s epistle to the Philippian Christians, which was written about ten years later, around 60 AD, during his first Roman imprisonment.

The reading begins with Paul addressing those who had confidence in themselves. He is most directly addressing the Judaizers, those who taught that faith in Jesus was needed, *but not enough* in order to be saved, but that aspects of the ceremonial law, especially circumcision, were also necessary. Paul is able to directly address this topic, reminding the Philippians that if anyone could have confidence in themselves, their status and works, it was him. He wasn’t merely circumcised, but on the eighth day as commanded in the Law. He was a full-blooded Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin, one of the few tribes that remained intact after the Assyrian and Babylonian conquests centuries earlier. And unlike many of his Jewish contemporaries, Paul actually spoke Hebrew, not just Aramaic.

But not only was his ancestral pedigree perfect, so was his religious one. For Paul was a follower of the strictest sect of Judaism, a Pharisee. He diligently studied the Hebrew Scriptures and meticulously followed the ceremonial law, including the many “traditions of the elders,” to the minutest details. So his righteousness according to the sternness of Pharisaism was blameless, and his zealousness could not be questioned since he had persecuted the church, seeing them as heretics who needed to be stopped by any means necessary, including violence unto death. No one, absolutely no one, could compare to Paul according to the flesh and Judaism. So before men, Paul was impressive indeed. But it still wasn’t remotely good enough before God.

“But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.”ⁱⁱ This is Paul’s answer to the Judaizers then and, incidentally, the Bible’s answer to those Christians who wrongly teach that Israel, *as a nation*, remains a part of God’s plans, either of salvation or the End Times. But Paul’s words are God’s answer to any and every one, even still today, who would try to hold themselves up as acceptable to Him by their own ancestry, works, or accomplishments, including those “extra” ones according to tradition, whether they be formal like monastic vows, or informal such as the “way we’ve always done it here.” But it goes deeper.

St. Paul reminds us of the difference between blessing and merit. For certainly having a Christian family, being brought to baptism as an infant, raised in the church from little on, regularly

attending worship, Sunday school, and Bible class, going through catechism instruction and being confirmed, being married within the church, being active within the congregation, all of these are very good indeed. Through these God grants us to hear His Word and receive His Sacraments, blessing us with His grace, forgiveness, the gift of the Holy Spirit and more. Through these He gives us opportunities to serve Him by supporting the Gospel ministry and caring for one another in true Christian love.

All these are of great benefit indeed. Unless, of course, we foolishly put our confidence before God in such things, as if they should earn something from Him. Sadly, how many past and present have done that very thing and, because they began to treat God's blessings as works and merits, they ended up losing Christ, the Holy Spirit, forgiveness, and salvation. For no good work we do, even the most holy, remains either good or holy when it comes from such a heart. Only a heart made pure through faith alone in Jesus' saving work can produce a work that is good and holy before God. For only a repentant believer, that is, one who places no trust in themselves since they know their sins and sinful state, only that person can begin to keep the First Commandment, a prerequisite for keeping any of the others. And it is that ongoing state of repentance that Paul refers to when he says,

For [Christ Jesus'] sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.ⁱⁱⁱ

So too, all things that we would put our trust and confidence in we also count as rubbish. Not that we despise them, especially those blessings and opportunities God has given us to grow in Christian faith, hope, and love, but we put no confidence in them as a work or merit, but see them as gracious gifts for which we take no credit, but give all glory to God for. For we recognize that if St. Paul, the other apostles, the prophets of old, no, not even the Virgin Mary, if people such as these could and did only put their confidence in Jesus' life, death and resurrection as their substitute and sacrifice before God and His judgment, then we too will do no less.

Yet, what confidence this actually gives us! True, it is not in ourselves in even the remotest way. Yet, looking to ourselves, to our hearts, our works, our suffering, all of these would leave us uncertain. For do we truly have the pure heart that God demands? Does it bring forth the life of holiness in us that His Law commands? Have we been ready to suffer loss of honor, friendship, status, position, and life for faithfully confessing Him? Has it been *enough*?

Truly, even the most sincere believer would be left wondering, concerned, doubting. Honestly, the more sincere the believer, the more knowledgeable in the Word he or she is, the greater the concern and doubt would be, for such a person better knows both the holy demands of God's Law and the depth of the sickness of sin within that makes such obedience impossible. So like Paul we place zero confidence in such things, counting them as rubbish before God, and instead trust in Jesus alone for our righteousness, His perfect life given to us, His sinless suffering and death the price for our forgiveness. Because of Jesus, we do have certainty indeed.

Of course, certainty of salvation in Christ Jesus is not the same as security in continuing in our sins, nor laziness in living the new life the Lord Jesus has won for us and the Holy Spirit works in us. Hear again St. Paul,

Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.^{iv}

Paul, despite his heritage, his many good works, his faithful apostolic ministry, his extensive missionary work, and his regular suffering for Christ, put no trust in himself in any way, recognizing that he was neither perfect nor had he yet obtained the goal of eternal life. He simply put his faith and hope in Christ crucified and the heavenly home that awaited him. Yet, all those works which he did not put his confidence in were actually then good and holy for they came forth from a heart filled with faith in Christ alone. As I said earlier, only such a heart can produce works that please God. But such a heart *will* produce those works indeed, striving for the perfection that remains elusive until heaven, yet equally remains the goal of the faithful believer! So Paul struggled. And so do we if our hearts are filled with genuine faith in Christ.

Just as a runner shoots for nothing less than victory, so too the Christian must yearn and strive for spiritual growth, targeting perfection. Just as a runner must not be distracted, must not look around or behind, but keep their focus on the race they're in, so too the Christian must not let spiritual dullness, worldly distractions, suffering and affliction, temptations to sin, nor spiritual overconfidence distract them from the ongoing struggle. All of these can cause the Christian "athlete" to lose the race, being eliminated from it by failing to keep running to the end. The struggle against the devil, the ways of this sinful world, and our own sinful nature is one in which no breaks are allowed until we have reached the finish line. We simply cannot afford laziness in faith, in the battle against sin and in growing in good works. We simply cannot afford a lack of concentration on God's Word in our Christian life, nor think that the race is as good as done until it actually is.

But take heart! For the goal for which you press so hard is not some finish line, an end zone, a home plate, or any other worldly and unimportant thing which seems big today but has no enduring value. No. Your goal is the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Your Heavenly Father has put the goal in place by the saving work of His Son, without whom there would be no race at all. And He has put His Holy Spirit within you to give you the ability to run the race and gives the endurance to press on toward the goal. Remain in Christ through a living faith, and you will achieve the goal, the upward call to eternal life in the new heavens and earth.

God grant us faithfulness and endurance to reach the goal. Amen!

ⁱ See Acts 16 for these events.

ⁱⁱ Philippians 3:7-8a. All quotes are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version* (ESV) unless otherwise noted.

ⁱⁱⁱ Philippians 3:8b-9.

^{iv} Philippians 3:12-14.

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 22A)
8 October 2023

Presentation of the Offering

No, on this festal day, Your bounteous hand confessing, Upon Your altar, Lord, we lay The firstfruits of Your blessing. By You the souls of men are fed with gifts of grace supernal; You freely give us earthly bread; Give us the Bread eternal. Amen.

Prayer of the Church—Responsive Form

Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

O Lord, You have planted, nurtured and hedged around Your vineyard, the Church. You sent Your dear Son to give His life for her. Inspire her by Your Holy Spirit to yield much fruit for Your kingdom and grant that many find shelter on her holy hill. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Merciful Father, since Your Son has made us His own by His death, grant that we may share in His sufferings with confidence, and that we may also know the power of His resurrection. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, grant all orphans a safe place in which to grow and thrive. Bring into their lives generous couples who will open their hearts to give them permanent homes through adoption. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Shine Your light upon us, O Lord, that we may do what is good and right and live as faithful citizens in our nation. Bless Joseph, our president; Jay, our governor; and all those elected and appointed to make, administer and judge our laws. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Divine Vinedresser, You prune those whom You love. Strengthen our hearts to heed Your Law, that we may never presume to sin nor trust in our own deeds, but look to the rainfall of Your grace for our source of life. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, You bring forth from this barren earth a holy people to press forward to Your heavenly goal. Direct our zeal toward Your good and gracious purpose, and prosper the work of the hands that labor in Your name. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Merciful Lord, grant the encouragement of Christ and the comfort of His love to those who suffer, especially Elizabeth, Bruce, Debbie, Paula, Jim, Jim, Don, Michael, Betty, Arlyn, Jessica, Lynne, Shandel, Jodi, Marilyn, Wanda, Aaron, Nancy, Kim, Laurie, Drew, Carolyn, Paul, Carolyn, and Marilyn. In every affliction, prove Yourself a ready and worthy Savior, especially to those who believe. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, remember Margo Schillinger. Bless her in body and soul with all things needful for this life and eternity. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious Lord, You sing the song of Your love over the vineyard of Your Church. Lift her united voice through Your Spirit, that she in turn would freely praise Your lavish grace and proclaim Your salvation beyond her walls; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the same Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Collect of the Day

Gracious God, You gave Your Son into the hands of sinful men who killed Him. Forgive us when we reject Your unfailing love, and grant us the fullness of Your salvation; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Collect for the Word