



September 27, 2020 17th Sunday After Pentecost

Prelude: *Thy Strong Word* (Elim Handbell Choir) [aka *O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus*, arr. Linda R. Lamb]

Welcome

Confession and Forgiveness

In the name of the Father,
and of the ✙ Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. To our most merciful God, do you confess that you are captive to sin and cannot free yourself? Do you confess that you have sinned against God in thought, word, and deed, by what you have done and by what you have left undone? Do you confess that you have not loved God with your whole heart; that you have not loved your neighbors as yourself? If so say, "I do." **I do.**

For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name. **Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Hymn: *How Firm a Foundation*

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.**

Prayer of the Day (See Celebrate insert)

Readings: Matthew 13:31, 34-35; Hebrews 8:6-7; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19

Sermon (Pastor Scott Westphal)

Hymn: *Change My Heart, O God*

Prayers of Intercession (See Celebrate insert)

Communion (when applicable) **and Lord's Prayer**

Blessing and Sending

Litany of Farewell (see reverse side)

Postlude

Litany of Farewell to Pastor Scott

Council President:

Pastor Scott Westphal, on April 18, 1999, we called you to be our pastor: to proclaim God's Word, to baptize new members into the Church of Jesus Christ, to announce God's forgiveness to us, and to preside at our celebration of the Lord's Supper. With the Gospel you have comforted us in times of sickness and trouble, and at death of our loved ones. Sharing our joys and sorrows, you and your family have been important to our life together in the Church of Jesus Christ and in our service to this community.

You have served our congregation faithfully for 21 years. You are now leaving our midst. As your fellow members of this congregation we wish to honor your ministry among us and bid you farewell and Godspeed in your new endeavor, bringing closure to your ministry at Elim Lutheran Church.

Pastor Scott:

I thank, you, the members of Elim Lutheran Church for the love, the kindness, and the support shown to me and my family during my active ministry among you. I ask forgiveness for the ways I have sinned against you. I am grateful for the ways my ministry has been accepted. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.

Congregation:

We receive your thankfulness. We offer you our forgiveness and accept that you now leave to continue your ministry in another capacity. We express our gratitude for your time among us. We ask forgiveness for the ways we have sinned against you. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.

Pastor Scott:

I forgive you and accept your gratitude trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.

Do you, members of Elim Lutheran Church release me from my duties as your pastor?

Congregation:

We do, with God's help.

Council President:

Do you, Pastor Scott Westphal, release us, Elim Lutheran Church from turning to you and depending on you?

Pastor Scott:

I do, with God's help.

Council President:

Let us pray. God whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. The time we were together in your name saw our laughter and tears, our hopes and disappointments. Guide us as we hold these cherished memories. Move us forward in the direction you now call us, until that time to come when we are completely one with you and with each other, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Council President:

Let us bless the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

Pastor Scott:

The Lord bless us, defend us from evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen.

Elements of the Celebrate® Insert for September 27, 2020

Introduction to the day

Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

Prayer of the Day

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

In all the world, give your church unity. Inspire all the baptized with the mind of Christ. Where the church is powerful and where it struggles, shape us with humility and obedience so that your love may be at work in us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Your Son took on all of bodily life in our world, even to death. Preserve and keep your creation, O God. Mend and redeem places that are polluted and damaged, so that all of creation confesses you as Lord. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Turn the nations toward life. Where our ways are unfair, give us new hearts and new spirits. Where sin permeates our cultures and institutions (*especially*), change our minds and teach us to trust your authority. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Our lives are yours, O God. Relieve the suffering of those who are ill in body, mind, or spirit. Defend the lives and welfare of children who are abused or neglected, hungry or exploited, bullied or lonely. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Turn this congregation away from our own interests toward the interests of others. Fill us with your compassion and sympathy. Bless ministries of care in our community (*especially*); make us into signs of your mercy and justice for our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Thank you for those who have gone into the kingdom ahead of us—tax collectors and prostitutes, likely and unlikely, obedient and slow to learn. By their witness, teach us to confess Jesus Christ as Lord in life and in death. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

For readings, refer to your Bible or use an online Bible source, such as [Bible Gateway](#). [NOTE: The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) is used.]