

**Church of the Divine Love**

**SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**PROPER 12**

**JULY 24, 2022**

**9:00 A.M.**

**HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II**

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Genesis 18:20-32**

Psalm 138

Second Lesson: **Colossians 2:6-15, (16-19)**

Gradual Hymn – #

Gospel: **Luke 11:1-13**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Confession of Sin page 360

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:	
Eucharistic Prayer C	page 369
Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)	page 362
The Lord's Prayer	page 364
The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer	page 337
The Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn – #	
Post Communion Prayer	page 365
Prayer for Peace – on insert	
Prayer of St. Francis	page 833
Dismissal Hymn – #	
Dismissal	

### **Sermon Sunday July 24, 2022**

Genesis 18:20-32; Psalm 138; Colossians 2:6-15, (16-19); Luke 11:1-13

#### **Sisters and brothers in Christ,**

One of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray.'

Coke Machines I recall my own life of prayer, prayers I have heard, and conversations I have had about prayer I can't help but wonder if the coke machine isn't our primary teacher of prayer. Think about it. We put in the correct change, make our selection, and get what we want. "For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened." So, we offer the pieces of money of our wants and needs, our beliefs, and our good behavior. We tell God what we want and expect to get what we asked for.

All that works fine until it doesn't. Coke machines are great until they take your money but give you nothing or give you a Big Red when you selected a Diet Coke. Look how we respond when that happens. We get mad. We push the button again and again. We hit or kick the machine. We tip it side to side. We did our part and expected it to do it. It's not so different with prayer. Some will get angry. Some will feel hurt or betrayed, lose faith, even leave the church. God is not and never was a divine Coke machine. And prayer is not a transaction between us and God. I don't think Jesus ever intended ask, search, and knock as a blank check on God's account. His instruction to ask, search, and knock is in relationship to what we have come to call the Lord's Prayer. We are to be persistent in aligning our lives to the hallowing of God's name, giving existence to God's kingdom in our life and relationships, opening ourselves to the gift and sufficiency of this day, freely receiving and giving forgiveness.

What if those words we pray as the Lord's Prayer are also words the Lord prays to us? What if they are the Lord's prayer to us, a call and insistence in our lives? When Jesus teaches about asking, searching, and knocking he is not teaching a technique or magic formula for getting whatever we want. He is describing a certain posture, a way of standing before God, exposed and responsive to a holy and life-giving spirit. Maybe prayer is more about what we do than what God does. Maybe our words and actions offered in response to the insistence and calling of God in our lives are our truest prayer.

I have come to think of prayer not as asking God to do things for me, but as the way I stay open to the future that is coming to me; the coming of the kingdom, the coming of daily bread, the coming of forgiveness. There is always something coming to us, and I don't want to miss it. I want to stay open to the future because there is a sense in which the future is always better, not because it necessary will be, but because it might be. That might be is the faith and hope in our prayer. That's the thread we hold onto when our life is unraveling. When we haven't got a prayer, we pray for the coming of our future. It means we do not give up when the sands of life are shifting under our feet, when our life comes unhinged, when we are overwhelmed, when we come to the limits of our ability, when it looks like this day is as good as it gets and all there will ever be. Prayer opens the present moment to the possibility of something new, the chance of something different, something that will transform the present into something else.

Prayer does not guarantee an outcome, undo the past, or offer an escape from life or the circumstances of our lives. It keeps us open to the future. And where there is a future, whether it is an hour, a day, a month, or twenty years, there is the possibility of life and more life. That's what Jesus is promising in today's gospel. And it's what I want, don't you? I want the possibility of life and more life. I don't have a lot of people coming to ask me, why was my prayer answered? Why did I receive exactly what I asked for? I know prayer is answered. Sometimes we ask and receive, search, and find, knock and the door opens, but that is not their concern. They want to know why they asked but did not receive, why they searched but did not find, why they knocked but the door never opened. We all do. I don't know why some prayers seem to be answered and others seem to go unanswered. I don't have any good answers or explanations, but I have heard some really bad ones. You didn't pray hard enough. You didn't have enough faith. You were asking for the wrong thing. It's all a mystery and someday we'll understand. Everything happens for a reason. Something better is coming. I can neither believe nor accept any of that. That is nothing but an attempt to bolster a coke machine understanding of prayer. We've got to let that go. It's wrong. It hurts people and it perverts who and how God is.

I don't understand how prayer works but I know this. It is not about the pieces of money. It is not a mechanical process. It is not a transaction. It is not the transmission of information to God. In the midst of not knowing or understanding maybe the most and the best we can do is to echo that disciple's request, "Lord, teach us to pray." We are always beginners, always learning to pray. Jesus' response is not an explanation of prayer or how it works. He does not offer a formula or magic words. He does not give us the correct change for the coke machine. Instead, Jesus teaches about who and how God is. "When you pray, say: Father hallowed be your name. Your kingdom comes. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial. "God is holy, and we are his divine children, holy sons, and daughters. That's a given, a reality, before we even open our mouths and before we ever offer our coins or select. The relationship already exists. That's how Jesus begins his teaching. Prayer is about relationship and presence. We're not telling God something that God does not know. We are reminding ourselves of what already is,

always has been, and always will be. That relationship means that our life, our existence, our very being, comes from our father. Jesus speaks of that as daily bread.

If prayer, as Jesus teaches it, really is all about relationship and presence then there is only one answer to every prayer. God. I don't just mean God answers our prayer, but that God is the answer, God's presence, life, love, beauty, generosity, compassion, forgiveness, wisdom, justice, mercy. God gives God's self as the answer to our every prayer. Jesus tells us that. If you, he says, know how to give your kids good things "how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit. "Perhaps the greatest difficulty of prayer is that sometimes we just want to offer our pieces of money and push the button. We don't want God. We want something from God. We want God to change our circumstances.

While God can and sometimes does change circumstances, I am increasingly convinced that God, more often than not, changes us. God's self-giving sustains, nourishes, strengthens, empowers, emboldens, and enables us to face the circumstances of life. We do so, sometimes with joy and gratitude, other times with pain and loss, but always with God. On my better days I know this and that's enough. On those other days, it's "Lord, teach me to pray. "Amen.

### Masks optional with social distance seating

7 PENTECOST	9:00 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II	(also on zoom)
MONDAY	8:00 AM	AA MEETING	
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING	
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP	
	8:00 PM	AA MEETING	
SATURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP	
8 PENTECOST	9:00 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II	(also on zoom)

SUPPORT THE FOOD DRIVE – DROP OFF IN THE KITCHEN

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Jess Berbeck	Jess Berbeck
Altar Guild	Deb Giordano	Deb Giordano
	Jess Berbeck	Jess Berbeck

### PARISH PRAYER LIST

Give to all who suffer the refreshing waters of your compassion and healing. Make them dwell in the safety of your care even in the midst of all that troubles them. Especially we remember before you:

Art	Harriet Capers	Bob Curley
John Mulligan	Arlene Goodenough	Celeste
Chris Dickson	Kate Jones	Deb P.
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	Robert Sweat
Barbara Stinson	Michael & Family	Warren
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Anthony
Mo (Rachael)	Bill Conklin Sr.	Laura
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Taylor
Ciara	Gabriel	Aidan
Elodie	Sophia	Del
People of Haiti	Chrissy Neville	Vincent
Maggie & Family	People of Ukraine	Julia
Nathan Treadwell	Bob Lazevnick	Tim
Grace Schinella	Christopher & Family	

Help us to speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them. Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom.  
Amen

Prayer before Worship

Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it, the spirit of grace. Deliver us, when we draw near to you, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,  
Lay my life before you,  
How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus and third verse starting with Spirit.

## Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn  
but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So  
mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that  
all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince  
of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions  
and glory, now and for ever. Amen