Saint Paul’s Episcopal Church

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**Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

September 12, 2021

Pastor Dan Wilfrid

79 Cross Street, Gardner, Massachusetts ~ 01440

***Welcome to St. Paul’s.*** *We’re glad that you have joined us for worship, either in person or livestreamed on our YouTube channel. For as long as COVID infection rates remain elevated in our area, we ask everyone attending in person to wear a mask in worship and to sit safely distanced from people not from your household. At the distribution of Holy Communion (bread only), please come forward one at a time, and return to your seat through the door to your right and from the rear of the nave down the center aisle. Worship leaders are all vaccinated and will only unmask while speaking. Words in* ***boldface type*** *are the congregation’s responses.*

**Prelude:**  *How Great Thou Art ~* Setting by Carol Tornquist

**The Word of God**

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

**Collect for Purity**

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**A Song of Praise** *Benedictus es, Domine 1982 Hymnal S236*

**Glory to you, Lord God of our fathers;**

**you are worthy of praise; glory to you.**

**Glory to you for the radiance of your holy Name;**

**we will praise you and highly exalt you for ever.**

**Glory to you in the splendor of your temple;**

**on the throne of your majesty, glory to you.**

**Glory to you, seated between the cherubim,**

**we will praise you and highly exalt you for ever.**

**Glory to you, beholding the depths,**

**in the high vault of heaven, glory to you.**

**Glory to you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit;**

**we will praise you and highly exalt you forever.**

**The Collect**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray.

O God, because without you we are not able to please you, mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and
for ever. **Amen.**

**First Reading:** Isaiah 50:4-9a

4The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens — wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. 5The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. 6I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. 7The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame;
8he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. 9It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 116:1-9**

1I love the Lord, because he has heard
    my voice and my supplications.
2Because he inclined his ear to me,
    therefore I will call on him as long as I live.
3The snares of death encompassed me;
    the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;
    I suffered distress and anguish.
4Then I called on the name of the Lord:
    “O Lord, I pray, save my life!”

5Gracious is the Lord, and righteous;
    our God is merciful.
6The Lord protects the simple;
    when I was brought low, he saved me.
7Return, O my soul, to your rest,
    for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.

8For you have delivered my soul from death,
    my eyes from tears,
    my feet from stumbling.
9I walk before the Lord
    in the land of the living.

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**Second Reading:** James 3:1-12

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits.

How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gradual Hymn:** *“St. Michael’s Setting”*

*All Sing:***Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Gospel Reading:** Mark 8:27-38

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say that I am?’ And they answered him, ‘John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.’ He asked them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Peter answered him, ‘You are the Messiah.’ And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, ‘Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.’

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, ‘If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

**Gradual Hymn:** *“St. Michael’s Setting”*

*All Sing:* **Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**The Sermon** ~ Pastor Dan Wilfrid

**The Hymn:** *Take Up Your Cross, the Savior Said, #675 Verses 1,2, and 5*

1. **Take up your cross, the Savior said,
if you would my disciple be;
take up your cross with willing heart,
and humbly follow after me.**
2. **Take up your cross, let not its weight**

 **fill your weak spirit with alarm;**

**His strength shall bear your spirit up,
and brace your heart, and nerve your arm.**

**5. Take up your cross, and follow Christ,**

 **Nor think til death to lay it down;**

 **For only those who bear the cross**

 **May hope to wear the glorious crown.**

**The Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son, he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**Prayers of the People ~** *Form VI ~ The Book of Common Prayer p. 392*

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God. *Silence*

For all people in their daily life and work;
**For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.**

For this community, the nation, and the world;
**For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.**

For the just and proper use of your creation;
**For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.**

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;
**For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.**

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;
**For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.**

For Michael our Presiding Bishop, and Douglas our Bishop; and for all bishops and other ministers;
**For all who serve God in his Church.**

For the needs and concerns of this congregation and its people; especially for:

Pat Lewis Aaron Harris

Suzanna Cleveland Jon Bowdoin

Lisa Boulanger Betty Caldwell

Cindy Richard Maureen Owens

Brandon Grenier Eveline Beauregard

Millie Williams Jay Hipkins

Jacob Decarolis Dawn Deluca

Cyndi Flanagan Andy LePage

Christopher Sharon Hamel

Kim Shea Bob and Lorene McLaughlin

Kathy Lewis Fred and Ginny Monette

Evelyn Wolenty Tom and Felicity Littlepage

Joni Pulnick

Jared Snyder

Brian Cormier

Robin Hatch and family

For those in military service.

For the people of Afghanistan and for the people of Haiti and for all refugees.

For people in our nation who have suffered loss in recent storms and wildfires.

In remembrance of those who lost their lives in the terror attacks of twenty years ago, especially those who lost their lives while striving to save others.

For our parishioners unable to be with us.

For the repose of the soul of Frank Wells and Rachel Thibodeau

In thanksgiving for the birthdays of Brandon Grenier and Dennis Theriault.

In thanksgiving for the Anniversary of Kathi & Dennis Theriault.

In thanksgiving for the Altar flowers this week, given by Cathy Grenier in thanksgiving for Brandon Grenier, and in memory of all family members who are deceased.

In thanksgiving for the Sanctuary Candle given by Kathi Theriault for the month of September in memory of Richard Cunningham.

In thanksgiving for the Communion Wine for the month of September, given by Sylvia Wells in memory of Frank Wells.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life.

**Your generous goodness comes to us new every day.**

We will exalt you, O God our King;
**And praise your Name for ever and ever.**

We pray for all who have died,

**that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.**

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;
**Who put their trust in you.**

**The Collect**

Almighty and eternal God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth: Mercifully accept the prayers of your people, and strengthen us to do your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**The Confession of Sin**

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

**Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; in your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone; and so uphold us by your Spirit that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**The Absolution**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

**The Peace**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

**Announcements**

**The Holy Communion**

**Offertory Invitation**

Let us with gladness present the offerings and oblations of life and labor to the Lord.

**Offertory Music:** *God Will Take Care of You~* Setting by Melody Bober

**Offertory**

Blessed are you, gracious God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts.

**With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of the one who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Eucharistic Prayer C** *~ from the Book of Common Prayer p. 369*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.
**Glory to you for ever and ever.**

At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.
**By your will they were created and have their being.**

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.
**Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.**

Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.
**By his blood, he reconciled us. By his wounds, we are healed.**

And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

**Sanctus** *1982 Hymnal, #S125*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,
**We celebrate his death and resurrection, as we await the day of his coming.**

Lord God of our Fathers: God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name. **Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.**

Accept these prayers and praises, Father, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation. **Amen***.*

**The Lord’s Prayer**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,**

**thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

**The Breaking of the Bread**

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

**Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

**Lamb of God** *sung by all* *1982 Hymnal, S164*

**Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, bearer of our sins: have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, redeemer, redeemer of the world:**

**Give us your peace, give us your peace.**

**The Distribution**

**Communion Music:** *Near to the Heart of God* ~Setting by Melody Bober

**Post Communion Prayer**

Let us pray.

**Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**The Blessing**

Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and for ever. **Amen**

**Sending Hymn:** *Lift High the Cross, #473, Verses 1,2, and 4*

*REFRAIN***:**

**Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim,
till all the world adore his sacred name.**

**1. Led on their way by this triumphant sign,
the hosts of God in conquering ranks combine.** *REFRAIN*

**2. Each newborn servant of the Crucified
bears on the brow the seal of Him who died.**  *REFRAIN* **4. So shall our song of triumph ever be:
Praise to the Crucified for victory.** REFRAIN

**Dismissal**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude:** *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee ~* Setting by Carol Tornquist

Reader … Pam Harris LEM …Brian Chipman

Organist … Judy Greenlees

Altar Guild … Denise Whitney

Camera …Susan Hubbard

**This Week at St. Paul’s:**

Starting this week our weekly **Bible Study** moves to Tuesday evening, 7:30 – 8:30 pm on Zoom. It’s easy to join the study. Simply visit our church website ([www.stpaulsgardner.com](http://www.stpaulsgardner.com)) and click on the Bible Study link.

The Vestry will meet next Sunday, September 19, after worship.