**Church of the Divine Love**

**NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**PROPER 14**

 **AUGUST 7, 2022**

**9:00 A.M.**

**HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II**

 THE WORD OF GOD

 Processional Hymn #**68 – Rejoice! Rejoice believers**

Opening Acclamation page 355

 Collect for Purity page 355

 Gloria page 356

 Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

 First Lesson: **Genesis 15:1-6**

 Psalm 33:12-22

Second Lesson: **Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16**

Gradual Hymn **– #401 – The God of Abraham praise**

 Gospel: **Luke 12:32-40**

 Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

 Nicene Creed page 358

 Prayers of the People, FormIV page 388

 The Confession of Sin page 360

 The Peace

 Welcome and Announcements

 THE HOLY COMMUNION

 Offertory Hymn **#637 – How firm a foundation**

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 – **#316 – This is the hour**

 Post Communion Prayer page 365

 Prayer for Peace – on insert

 Prayer of St. Francis page 833

 Dismissal Hymn – **#709 – O God of Bethel**

Dismissal

 **Sermon Sunday August 7, 2022**

Genesis 15:1-6; Psalm 33:12-22; Hebrews 11:1-3,8-16; Luke 12:32-40.

**Sisters and brothers in Christ,**

Have you ever received a gift and had no idea what it was or what you were supposed to do with it? I wonder if that’s what happens to us when we hear Jesus say, “It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” We’re not quite sure what it is. We often don’t know what to make of the kingdom or what to do with it.

Is Jesus talking about royalty, wealth, palaces, and power? For many of us those are the images that come up when we think about a kingdom. That’s what a kingdom often looks like in movies and history books. Is he talking about heaven? Is the kingdom a reward in the next life for being good, having faith, and believing in this life? If so, then is this life nothing more than an installment payment to secure a future place in heaven? Is the kingdom security, safety, and guaranteed outcomes? After all, Jesus prefaces the giving of the kingdom by saying, “Do not be afraid.” I wish that were the kingdom, but security, safety, and guaranteed outcomes have not always been my experience of life. What about you?

We pray weekly, if not daily, for the kingdom to come on earth. What are we praying for? What comes to mind when you think of or pray for the kingdom? My guess is that most of us think of the kingdom as something to be possessed: a reward from God, a perfect life in which we have everything we want and everything goes our way, an ideal world. But what if it’s not? What if the kingdom is not something to be possessed or had but a different way of being? And here’s why I ask that. Right after Jesus says, “It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom,” he tells us to sell our possessions and give alms, and to make purses that do not wear out. He talks about thieves that do not come near and moths that do not destroy. I don’t think those are prescriptions or prerequisites for getting the kingdom. Rather, they are descriptions of what the kingdom life is like.

So let me ask you this. What’s the best way to keep a purse from wearing out? Don’t put anything in it. What’s the best way to keep a thief away? Don’t have anything worth stealing. What’s the best way to keep moths from destroying? Don’t have anything that can be destroyed. So, what if the kingdom is a non-possessive life? A life in which we sell our possessions and give alms, a life in which our purses are empty, a life in which there is nothing to steal or destroy. I want us to be careful that we don’t literalize the text. Jesus is using metaphor, calling us into a new way of seeing and living. I am not suggesting we all need to be poor, go without, or be lacking. And I don’t think Jesus is saying we shouldn’t own or have anything. In and of itself there is nothing virtuous about poverty, lack, or insufficiency. The world does not need more poor people. What the world needs is people who are not possessed by their possessions, people who live a non-possessive life, kingdom people.

Jesus is offering another vision of life, a kingdom vision. He is calling into question a possessive way of life. The kingdom is not a different place, a reward, or a thing to be had. It is a different way of being, living, and relating. The kingdom is not a where or a what but a how. When I live a possessive life, I am more focused on me than we, more passionate about my rights than my responsibilities, and more concerned about being right than doing what’s right. I worry about the thief that steals and the moth that destroys. I fear not only not having enough but that I am not enough. I am always striving for more: more money, more stuff, more status, more success, more control, even more of God. Does any of that sound familiar? Resonate with your life? We see it every day in the news. It’s what lies behind our conflicts and divisions. And if we are honest, we can see it in our lives too. We are possessive people, concerned about keeping what we have and getting what we don’t have. We not only possess but are possessed by what we possess whether they are things, beliefs, opinions, status, or power. Have you ever felt like you were possessed by your work, your success, your house, or the stuff you own? Do you ever feel like you spend more time and energy creating or maintaining your life than living it? Have you ever felt possessed by your position, another’s approval, the need to be right, the need to win or be in control? And if so, what did it cost you? What did you lose? Is that how you really want to live? Is that how you want your children or grandchildren to live? Have you ever been concerned about who was moving into your neighborhood? Have you ever become angry and defensive when someone questioned or challenged your religious or political beliefs? Have you ever felt the need to change someone or get them to do it your way? Have you ever needed to have the final word or to be right? And if so, what were you trying to possess? Or maybe the better question is what was possessing you?

We’re at our best when we live non-possessive lives. We become more welcoming and hospitable. We forgive more freely. We’re more generous with our time, money, and resources. We love more extravagantly. We see more clearly our deep interconnection with and need of others. A non-possessive life deepens our conversations and intimacy. It makes us better parents, spouses, and friends. We handle conflict and differences in better and more productive ways. We open our hearts and minds to other people and new possibilities. We’re more creative and less judgmental of ourselves and others. Life is fuller and we are freer to live. That’s how I want to live, most of us probably do. We want to live in the kingdom of life. Fear is probably the greatest impediment to a non-possessive life. Most of us live in fear, consciously or unconsciously, of losing what we have and not getting what we don’t have. Maybe we should be more afraid of what we already have, of being owned by our possessions and desires. Maybe that’s what Jesus is talking about when he says, “Do not be afraid.” Do not be afraid of a non-possessive life. What is possessing you today? What owns your life? In what ways are you being possessive of things, ideas or opinions, opportunities and resources, other people, yourself, God? What would a non-possessive life look like for you today?

Today’s gospel is not, however, simply about passing time. It is about presence and being present. Jesus sees waiting as an act of faithfulness; the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. So, we are mistaken if we think today’s gospel describes an absent God, a God who left some time ago, for whom we wait. We are equally mistaken if we think we are waiting for a God who lives out in the future. Jesus is teaching us how and where to wait. He’s inviting us to be present to the One who is always already present. He’s inviting us to listen for the knock, to watch, and to be alert. He’s inviting us to be present to the reality of God in each other, in the world, and in ourselves. This is the God who is present in the ordinary circumstances of our lives, even in our waiting. We might be tempted to ask, so where is God in all our waiting? But maybe the better question is, where are we?

The most unexpected hour is the hour spent in the hospital waiting room; the hour sitting next to the phone waiting for news of a loved one; the hour praying for a miracle; the hour in which we wait for clarity and a way forward; the hour waiting for the grief to end and life to return to normal; the hour in which it seems as if nothing is happening, life is not the way we want, and there is nowhere to go**. Amen**

 Masks optional with social distance seating

 9 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

 10 PENTECOST

 9:00 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II HOLY BAPTISM

 10:00 AM VESTRY MEETING (also on zoom)

 SUPPORT THE FOOD DRIVE – DROP OFF IN THE KITCHEN

 Today Next Week

Eucharistic Minister Roe Prosser Jess Berbeck

Altar Guild Roe Prosser Deb Giordano

 Marie Quatorze 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:

Grace Schinella 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 Christopher & Family Julia

Maggie & Family People of Ukraine Tim

Nathan Treadwell Bob Lazevnick Art

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