

**Church of the divine love**  
**TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**  
**OCTOBER 29, 2023 10:15 AM**  
**HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II**

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn **#423 – Immortal, invisible, God only wise**

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (sung) page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18**

Psalm 1

Second Lesson: **1 Thessalonians 2:1-8**

Gradual Hymn **#551 – Rise up, ye saints of God!**

Gospel: **Matthew 22:34-46**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze (printed on insert)

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form VI page 392

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn **#574-Before thy throne, O God**

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:	
Eucharistic Prayer A	page 361
Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)	page 367
Hymn during Consecration printed on insert	
The Lord's Prayer	page 364
The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer	page 337
The Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn <b>#431 – The stars declare his glory</b>	
Post Communion Prayer	page 365
Prayer for Peace – on insert	
Prayer of St. Francis	page 833
Dismissal Hymn – <b>Promised Land</b> (on insert)	

### Sermon Sunday October 29, 2023

Leviticus 19:1-2,15-18; Psalm 1; 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8; Matthew 22:34-46.

#### Sisters and brothers in Christ,

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind,” and “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:34-46)

These, Jesus says, are the two commandments on which everything else hangs. They are two sides of the same thing. You can't truly have one without the other. This is about more than our feelings or affection for God and one another. It's about our commitment to the life and well-being of the other. It's a choice we make every day to love or not to love. I wonder what that love looks like. I wonder what your life and my life would be like if we held those two commandments as the guiding principles for all we do. I wonder what we might create and achieve if we embodied and lived those commandments.

Here's another way of getting at what I am asking. What kind of world do you want to live in? What kind of world do you want for your children, grandchildren, and those who will come after you? What are your best wishes and hopes for the future of the world, our country, this city? What do you pray for

when you look at everything that is happening today? Here are some of the things I want, wish, and pray for. I want a world that is founded on human dignity and respect for one another. I want a world in which people come first, a world in which principles and policies support people rather than agendas. I want justice for all and not just those who can afford it, who have power. I want a world in which different religions and beliefs are valued and viewed as a means for all to meet the Divine. I want a world in which diversity and difference are celebrated rather than oppressed, a world in which people and nations are at peace with themselves and one another. I want a world in which we face and learn from our past, mistakes, and failures so that we can do and be better.

I want a world in which everyone has living wage employment, educational opportunities, access to healthcare, safe and decent housing; enough to eat. I want a world in which the first, maybe even the only, judgment we make is that the needs, concerns, sorrows, hopes, dreams, and lives of others matter as much as our own. Don't you want those same things too? Isn't that the kind of world you want to live in and pass on to the next generation? What else would you add to my list? Ultimately, that list points to a world in which we love God, and our neighbor as ourselves. We say that's what we want, but is it really? Do we really believe those are the two commandments on which everything else hangs? Are they really what orient the direction of our hearts and determine the things to which we give our time, money, and energy? I want to say yes to those questions but I'm just not so sure any more. I look at what's happening in our country today and I'm not sure we fully believe or live those two commandments. If we did, wouldn't our world be different? Why do we seem more energized by blame, name calling, and finger pointing than working together for a solution?

"Love God," Jesus says. Yes, but what is it that I love when I say I love God? Have you ever thought about that? I can't help but wonder if nationalism, individual rights, and self-interest have displaced God as our first love. If God was our first love wouldn't God's concerns, dreams, and hopes for the world be ours too? A wise man once told me, "We love others best when we love God first and most." "Love your neighbor," Jesus says. Yes, it's a value I claim to hold in my life. It's something I teach and preach. And yet, I don't even know the names of the people who live across the street or two houses down from mine. How could I possibly know their hurts, hopes, or needs? What about you? How are you loving your neighbor? One of the things I know about myself, and maybe this is true for you too, is that I can always find the time, money, and energy for the things that really matter to me. And regardless of how much I have I will never have enough time, money, and energy for the things that don't matter to me. I hope you know that I'm not talking about the quantity of my hours or dollars, but the quality and shape of my commitments.

When I look at my wish list and listen to my prayers for the world, I have to ask myself, what am I doing to bring that world into existence? What are you doing? It's not enough to only want, wish, or pray for that world. Love is a verb, an action. I'm afraid those two great commandments have become like an old favorite song. The tune has been so overplayed that it no longer calls us to the dance floor. The words are so familiar that we no longer hear them. We've lost our passion for the music. We still like the song

but we're no longer singing it, and if we are it's only for the God who comforts, affirms, and comes through for us; only for the neighbor who looks, acts, thinks, worships, and votes like us. I don't know what that is but that's not love. The love Jesus speaks about is all or nothing. We love God first or not at all. We love everyone or no one. The only measure of love is love without measure

What if you asked someone, do you love me? And after a long and awkward pause and considerable deliberation he or she said, well, up to a certain point, under certain conditions, to a certain extent, yes, I do. You have your answer and it's not what you wanted to hear. We all know that's not love. The mark of really loving someone or something is unconditionality and excess, engagement and commitment, fire and passion. Where is that today in your life, my life, and the life of our country and this city? Who is the recipient of that love and who is not? And what would it take for you and me to expand the circle of our loving? Do we even want to? You and I are the hope that runs throughout this sermon. You and I are the hope of the next generation. You and I are the hope for our country and this city. You and I are love's only hope in this world. Love is at the heart of the gospel. God loved us and so this calls forth a response of love for Him. The word love is agape which means unconditional and selfless love. God loves us because He is love, and He cannot help but love. He loves us because He places an infinite value on us.

For this reason, we must love our neighbors as we love ourselves. God places an infinite value on other people, so I must recognize that and love them as God loves them. This applies to those who are born again as well as to those who are not. This is an impossible commandment to fulfil in our own ability. We need God's love, God's Holy Spirit, dwelling in us in order to love God and our neighbors. So, we pursue God because He loves us. He enables us to love Him freely, and the overflow of this love is expressed in love to others. Let us pray: **Lord, thank you for your love for me. Help me to love you and to know you, and may that love multiply as it flows out to the to the people in my street, at work, or at school.**  
**Amen.**

Enclosed is the form to remember your deceased loved ones next week for All Saints' Sunday. Please list on form and place it in the collection plate.

22 PENTECOST	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II	(also on zoom)
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS	
	11:15 AM	VESTRY MEETING	
MONDAY	8:30 PM	AA MEETING	

WEDNESDAY 7:00 PM AL-ANON  
 THURSDAY 10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP  
 8:30 PM AA MEETING

SATURDAY  
 10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP

**SET CLOCKS BACK**

ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY 10:15 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II (also on zoom)  
 COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Roe Prosser	Jess Berbeck
Coffee Hour	Prossers	Nolans

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

**PARISH PRAYER LIST**

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Grace Schinella	Lourdes S.	Kaylee
Bob Curley	Michael & Family	Art
Chris Dickson	Kate Jones	Deb P.
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	Bethany
Christopher	Warren	Kristen

Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Mo (Rachael)	Phil Ryder	Carolyn
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Del
Robert Hosey	Robert Sweat	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Sophia	Carol K.
Mary & Family	Ciara	Dennis L.
Nathan Treadwell	Vincent	Judy

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disasters.

Help us 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



