



St. Andrew Church's "Why" Statement... *To come together as a worshipping community, nourished by God's love so that we may reflect God's love to others.*
Adopted April 2023

September 17, 2023
16th Sunday after Pentecost

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

+GATHERING+

The Holy Spirit calls us together as people of God.

WELCOME

PRELUDE

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be God,
the one who forms us,
✠ Jesus who bears the cross,
the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

Amen.

Let us bow before God in humility,
confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Steadfast and faithful God,
**you have revealed the ways of justice,
yet we fail to follow you.**
**We are overwhelmed
by the world's violence and suffering.**
**We are afraid to risk what we have
for the sake of others.**
**For the harm we have caused,
known and unknown, forgive us.**
**For the unjust demands we place on others
and your creation, forgive us.**
**For the ways we turn away
from you and our neighbor, forgive us.**

**Lead us back to you
and set us on the right path;
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.**

Beloved in Christ,
God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.
God's compassion is beyond compare.
In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.
In † Christ, you are already and always forgiven.
Amen

GATHERING HYMN Let Us Go Now to the Banquet ELW 523

Refrain

Let us go now to the banquet,
to the feast of the universe.
The table's set and a place is waiting;
come, ev'ryone, with your gifts to share.

- 1 I will rise in the early morning;
the community's waiting for me.
With a spring in my step I'm walking
with my friends and my family. *Refrain*
- 2 God invites all the poor and hungry
to the banquet of justice and good
where the harvest will not be hoarded
so that no one will lack for food. *Refrain*
- 3 May we build such a place among us
where all people are equal in love.
God has called us to work together
and to share ev'rything we have. *Refrain*

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.

Let us pray.

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

+WORD+

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

FIRST READING

Genesis 50:15-21

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

A reading from Genesis.

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But

Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.” In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13

- [¹Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God’s holy name.
- ²**Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all God’s benefits—**
- ³who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases;
- ⁴**who redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;**
- ⁵who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle’s.
- ⁶**O LORD, you provide vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.**
- ⁷You made known your ways to Moses
and your works to the children of Israel.
-] ⁸**LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**
- ⁹you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.
- ¹⁰**You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**
- ¹¹For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.
- ¹²**As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**
- ¹³As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

SECOND READING Romans 14:1-12

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

A reading from Romans.

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**ELW p. 102**

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Repeat alleluia

Alleluia. We have an advocate, Jesus | Christ the righteous;* your sins are forgiven on account | of his name. *Alleluia.* (1 John 2:1, 12)

GOSPEL Matthew 18:21-35

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²²Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be

made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY Where Charity and Love Prevail

ELW 359

- 1 Where charity and love prevail,
there God is ever found;
brought here together by Christ's love,
by love we thus are bound.
- 2 With grateful joy and holy fear,
God's charity we learn;
let us with heart and mind and soul
now love God in return.

- 3 Let us recall that in our midst dwells Christ, God's holy Son; as members of each body joined, in him we are made one.
- 4 Let strife among us be unknown; let all contentions cease. Be God's the glory that we seek; be his our only peace.
- 5 Let us forgive each other's faults as we our own confess, that we may love each other well in Christian gentleness.

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,**

**the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

A We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and healing to rivers clogged with pollution. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in positions of power to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, the disease of addiction, or otherwise afraid or in harm's way. Protect all who cry out for mercy, especially Bill, Marge, Arthur, Jim, Callum, Paul, Charles, Steven, Johanna, Carole, Trudi, Anna, Nancy, Susan, Marie, Jean, Tracey, Donna, Gary, Michael, Pat, Les, and those we name before you, on our lips or in the silence of our hearts.

(Pause for silence)

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A We pray for this congregation. Open our hearts to practice intentional invitation. Help us to forgive each other, practice patience, and choose welcome over judgment. Move us to care for those in our community seeking refuge and safety.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A We give thanks for the saints who died in faith. Show us how to live faithfully, creatively, and lovingly in your church and world.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

SHARE THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

+MEAL+

God feeds us in the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING *An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.*

OFFERTORY HYMN God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending ELW 678

(st. 1)

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending



- 1 God, whose giv-ing knows no end-ing, from your rich and end-less store:
- 2 Skills and time are ours for press-ing toward the goals of Christ, your Son:
- 3 Trea-sure, too, you have en-trust-ed, gain through pow'rs your grace con-ferred;



na-ture's won-der, Je - sus' wis-dom, cost-ly cross, grave's shat-tered door,
all at peace in health and free-dom, rac-es joined, the church made one.
ours to use for home and kin-dred, and to spread the gos-pel word.



gift-ed by you, we turn to you, of-f'ring up our-selves in praise;
Now di-rect our dai-ly la-bor, lest we strive for self a-lone;
O-pen wide our hands in shar-ing, as we heed Christ's age-less call,



thank-ful song shall rise for-ev-er, gra-cious do-nor of our days.
born with tal-ents, make us ser-vants fit to an-swer at your throne.
heal-ing, teach-ing, and re-claim-ing, serv-ing you by lov-ing all.

Text: Robert L. Edwards, 1915–2006

Music: RUSTINGTON, C. Hubert H. Parry, 1848–1918

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OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray:

God of power, God of plenty,
all things belong to you.

We bring your gifts to the table,
that all might be fed.

Form us into the body of your Beloved,
Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

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 our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW pg. 108

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
 pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
 san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
 name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father:
 Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign.
 You have filled all creation with light and life;
 heaven and earth are full of your glory.

We praise you for the grace shown to your people in every age:
 the promise to Israel,
 the rescue from Egypt,
 the gift of the promised land,
 the words of the prophets;
 and, at this end of all the ages, the gift of your Son,
 who proclaimed the good news in word and deed

and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup
we remember the life our Lord offered for us.
And, believing the witness of his resurrection,
we await his coming in power
to share with us the great and promised feast.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit,
that we who share in Christ's body and blood
may live to the praise of your glory
and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Join our prayers with those of your servants

of every time and every place,
 and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest
 until he comes as victorious Lord of all.
 Through him, with him, in him,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father,
 now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

You are invited to come forward down the center aisle to the altar railing receive the Meal today. Please fill in along the railing from the pulpit to lectern sides. You may either stand or kneel to receive the Meal. The Meal will be served continuously. After you have received the Meal and after a quiet prayer of thanksgiving you may return to your seats via the side aisles. Gluten free wafers are available as an alternative. Please ask. White grape juice, in the center ring

of each serving tray, is available as an alternative to the wine. Praise God for the life giving presence of the crucified-risen Christ in the bread and wine of this holy meal!

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready!

COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN “Lamb of God” ELW p. 112

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -
way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray:

Blessed be your name, O God,

for we have feasted on your Word,
 Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts.
 Strengthened by this food,
 send us to gather the world to your banquet,
 where none are left out and all are satisfied.
 In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

+SENDING+

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
 The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN On Our Way Rejoicing ELW 537

1 On our way rejoicing
 gladly let us go.
 Christ our Lord has conquered;
 vanquished is the foe.
 Christ without, our safety;
 Christ within, our joy;
 who, if we be faithful,
 can our hope destroy?

Refrain

On our way rejoicing;
 as we forward move,
 hearken to our praises,
 O blest God of love!

2 Unto God the Father
 joyful songs we sing;
 unto God the Savior
 thankful hearts we bring;
 unto God the Spirit
 bow we and adore,
 on our way rejoicing
 now and evermore. *Refrain*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. God is at work in you. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP LEADERS for Sunday, September 17, 2023

Ryan Heckman, Deacon Gwynne Hopko

Assistant Minister: Jill Little

Lector: Bob Herold

Tech Team: Abigail Griffin, Ken Griffin, Noah Galvin, Connor Pratt

Ushers: Donald Millbrandt, Bill Golden, Kathy Golden

Altar Guild: Denise Martin

This morning we welcome as our worship leader Ryan Heckman. Ryan is a recent graduate of Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. He served as intern at Emanuel Lutheran Church in Manchester, CT over the past two years. He has been approved for ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the ELCA and is awaiting a call to serve here in New England. Welcome Ryan!

Ryan has received permission from Bishop James Hazelwood of our New England Synod, ELCA, to preside at the Communion table today.

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THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

Monday, September 18, 2023

6:00 p.m. Bristol Chorale

Tuesday, September 19, 2023

6:45 Hand Bells

7:30 p.m. Voice Choir

Wednesday, September 20, 2023

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Bible Study

Thursday, September 21, 2023

7:00 p.m. AA (Fellowship Hall)

7:00 p.m. Al Anon (Youth Room)

Sunday, September 24, 2023; 17th Sunday after Pentecost

9:30 a.m. Service of Holy Communion (Sanctuary, You Tube, Facebook)

10:30 a.m. Coffee Hour