

## Doxology

### Great Thanksgiving

The peace of 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 thanks and praise.**

### Communion

pages 496 and 497

*This Sunday we again offer healing prayer, anointing, and laying on of hands for healing. You may also ask to be anointed on behalf of another who needs healing or is troubled.*

### Prayer After Communion

**God of mercy, God of grace, we bless and praise you for nourishing us with this Easter feast of redemption. Fill us with your Spirit, and make us living signs of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### Community Sharing

### Offering

Hymn Of Response      **We Give Thee But Thine Own**      360

Closing Hymn      **There's A Wideness In God's Mercy** (*vss. 1-3*)      71

### Dismissal with Blessing

Go in peace, to love and serve God and your neighbor; and may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**Next Week's Readings:** Exodus 16:2-15; Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45; Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16

**Preaching This Week:** Sarah Stone

**Preaching Next Week:** Missy Deal (Freedom Sunday)

## St. Paul's Free Methodist Church Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Call To Worship      Come, Sing With Joy To God      URW 292

### Greeting

Bless the LORD, O my soul;

**All that is within me, bless God's holy name!**

The LORD is merciful and gracious,

**Slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

Hymn Of Praise      Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee      URW 65

### Prayer

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 forever. **Amen.**

### First Lesson

**Genesis 50:15-21**

Realizing 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?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, '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. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even 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. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

**R:** The word of the Lord.

**C:** Thanks be to God.

### Psalm

**Psalm 103:8-13**

**The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his**

**anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.**

**Hymn                                      Rain Down                                      URW 144**

***Second Lesson                                      Romans 14:1-12***

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those 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. Who 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. Some 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. Those 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. We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If 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. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why 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. For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

**R:** The word of the Lord.

**C:** Thanks be to God.

**Gospel Acclamation                                      Alleluia                                      URW 402**

***Gospel                                      Matthew 18:21-35***

**R:** Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew.

**C:** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the

church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, 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. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But 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.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

**R:** This is the Gospel of our Lord.

**C:** **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon**

**Apostles' Creed**

**Prayers Of The People**

**The Peace**

By dying, Christ destroyed our death;

In rising, he restores our life;

In giving us his Spirit, he grants us peace.

The peace of the Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us take a few moments to greet each other with signs of peace and reconciliation.

## THEOLOGY OF PREACHING AT ST. PAUL'S

St. Paul's submits to the authority of Christian Scripture. We preach from the lectionary, attending to the full witness of the Bible. In our preaching, we practice a "rotating pulpit" approach because we believe diverse Christian perspectives and voices are gifts from God. In hearing God's word preached by pastors and lay people, students and professors, old and young, women and men, we become the people of God. We celebrate the ways in which the Holy Spirit challenges, comforts, surprises, confronts, and embraces us through the sermon. Our faithful response to what God is saying to us requires honesty, humility, and courage. Even in our human and feeble efforts to speak on God's behalf, God proves faithful in addressing us, helping us become the reconciled and restored people of God in our time and place.

## TOWARD A THEOLOGY OF HEALING, BRIEFLY

*Healing is a feature of full salvation; like salvation, it results from God and God's church working together. Healing is the work of the church, and takes place under God's sovereignty in the church's life and worship.* The church supports the healing ministry of family, friends, and medical professionals in prayer and by visiting the sick. It provides regular services of healing following the pattern in James 5: "[The] sick ... should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven." Under God's sovereign care will every prayer be answered as we request, every time, right away?—probably not. Some will be healed by medicine, some by rest, recuperation and care, and others by better habits and new information. And some will be healed by the working together of the sovereign action of God through the engagement of the faith of the church and the laying on of hands. Some will not be healed in this life; all can be saved.

**"God heals sometimes, God saves always."** (Sam Wells)

## ST. PAUL'S PRAYS WITHOUT CEASING

Join us in Morning Prayer **Monday-Friday 7:30-8:00am** in the sanctuary for prayer, Scripture and Communion.

## GODLY PLAY DOORKEEPER TRAINING

Interested in joining our **Godly Play** team as a **doorkeeper**? **THIS Tuesday, Sept. 19**, beginning at **7pm**, Georgann Kurtz-Shaw will provide a **training session** (here at St. Paul's) **for doorkeepers**; to register, please contact her **ASAP** at: [georgann.kurtz-shaw@greenville.edu](mailto:georgann.kurtz-shaw@greenville.edu)

## FREEDOM SUNDAY IS NEXT SUNDAY!

More than **45 million** are trapped in slavery around the world—**children, men and women**. **Freedom Sunday** seeks to unite us in prayer, lament, learning, and worship, then community-based action, **standing against slavery and human brokenness**. Missy Deal, Ass't House Manager at Eden's Glory, will bring our message. We'll take a special offering, to **split between Freedom Sunday projects and Eden's Glory**; to participate, in the memo line of your check to St. Paul's please write **"Freedom Sunday"**. **BRINGING YOUR MUSICAL GIFTS**

If you have skills you could bring in **directing vocal music**, and/or **playing keyboard and guitar**, St. Paul's would gladly and thankfully receive them! Please email [stpaulsfmc@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulsfmc@gmail.com) **OPT IN TO "REMIND" NOTIFICATIONS**

To receive one-way notifications from St. Paul's (**potluck** reminders, weather closings, etc.), you must opt in by one of two methods: you may **text the message @eb9aa** to the number **81010**, OR you may send an **e-mail to eb9aa@mail.remind.com** (leaving both subject line and body of e-mail blank).

## WELCOMING OUR CHILDREN TO GODLY PLAY

Our **preschool and elementary-age (3+)** children are warmly invited to join in Godly Play Sundays **on the lower level**; meet outside the **carved door at 9:45am**. Godly Play creatively and imaginatively engages them with the church's stories, rituals and rites, preparing them to join in the worship and life of the church.

## ADULT/COLLEGE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Our **Adult/College Sunday School** meets at **10am** Sundays in the lower level. Today we began a multi-week study on **Mission** led by **Dr. Mathias (Matt) Zahniser**, emeritus missiology professor—please join us!

## YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL

Our Youth Sunday School, led by **Pastor Niquita and Kat Westbrook**, meets in the Teen Room Sundays at 10am.

## HELPING THOSE IN NEED

You may send aid to those recovering from the hurricanes in Texas and Florida by donating to the (FMC-USA) Bishops' Relief Fund at: <http://fmcusa.org/bfund/>

For more information see this website:

<http://fmcusa.org/blog/2017/09/09/hurricane-irma-update-pray-and-give/> as well as this one:

<http://fmcusa.org/blog/2017/09/06/free-methodists-provide-harvey-relief/>

## FUNDRAISER(S) FOR EDEN'S GLORY

The third-annual **Trivia Night and Live Auction** benefiting **Eden's Glory (Bond County's Human Trafficking Safe House)** is planned for **Saturday, October 14th** at the First Christian Church (1100 Killarney Drive). Eight to ten people per team, \$100 entry fee per team. Doors open at 6:30pm, trivia starts at 7:00pm. Soda and water for sale; BYO snacks. **100% of money raised goes to Eden's Glory!** (You can also help Eden's Glory raise money by drinking Prairie Farms milk. Please drop your **Prairie Farms milk caps labeled "Our Caps, Your Cause"** in the jug at the back of the sanctuary.)

## VOLUNTEER TO HELP EDEN'S GLORY

Eden's Glory Social Enterprise teaches work skills to its residents, repurposing recycled t-shirts et al. to sell. Recent demand for its **dog/pet toys** brings an urgent need for **volunteers with strong hands** to help replenish inventory. Your clean old **t-shirts (adult M-XXL only, in any colors but black and white)** are needed too!—**no side seams**, please. Please contact **Beth Rodgers** at (540)421-9384 if you can help.

## FEEDING THE HUNGRY IN BOND COUNTY

Our local food pantry urgently needs **soups, canned pasta meals, macaroni-n-cheese, and peanut butter and jelly**. Please place your **non-perishable** donations (food and toiletries) in the **box** in the mural room. They also gratefully receive and distribute **fresh produce from local gardens!** Please email [stpaulsfmc@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulsfmc@gmail.com) for more direction regarding these **perishable** donations.

## PLEASE CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE— & HELP BUILD OUR ONLINE DIRECTORY!!!

Thanks to the gifts of **Meg File**, we have a new website! Take a look at yourselves at:

[stpaulsfmc.org](http://stpaulsfmc.org)

Our desire with this new site is to strengthen our sense of community with better communication and resources. Here we have **mobile-friendly** access, online **announcements**, and many more upgrades. Browse around—you'll like what you see! And while you're browsing, **please join our new online church directory**, currently under construction. Note on the homepage, at the top right, the heading **MORE...**; when you hover over it, a box labeled **Congregation Area** pops up. (On your phone, Congregation Area is the last of the menu options.) Click on that, and you'll be prompted to enter our password, which is:

**stpfamily**

This password gives you access to the **St. Paul's Private Congregation Area**. Clicking on the **Directory Survey** button (inside the box in the upper left corner entitled **New Church Online Directory**, or first item on your phone) will take you to a simple form to fill out, in as much detail as you choose. (The only required information is your name and preferred mode of contact.) **This directory information WILL NOT be publicly available** on the church's new website, **but will remain password-protected in the Congregation (only) Area**. Please complete this survey for EACH family member separately, including children.

Making this a photo directory will help us all put names with faces! So please, when you've filled out your form(s), **email photo(s) [of each family member]** to us at

[stpaulsfmc@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulsfmc@gmail.com) or [file.meg@gmail.com](mailto:file.meg@gmail.com)

If you'd rather **submit your directory information on a paper form** (and receive a **print copy of the directory**), please contact Pastor Judy at [stpaulsfmc@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulsfmc@gmail.com)