

**THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY**  
Mills River, North Carolina

**The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**  
**September 17, 2023**

Sacred Place +++ Sacred Space  
Please observe silence after the altar candles are lit



**PRELUDE** *Praise to the Lord w/Immortal, Invisible-* Arr. Mary K. Sallee  
*A bell rings three times; the people stand*

**PRESENTATION OF THE WORD**

**ENTRANCE HYMN** *GTG #815 Give to the Winds Thy Fears*

Give to the winds thy fears; hope, and be undismayed.  
God hears thy sighs and counts thy tears; God shall lift up thy head.

Through waves and clouds and storms God gently clears the way.  
Wait patiently; so shall this night soon end in glorious day.

Leave to God's sovereign sway to choose and to command.  
So shalt thou, wondering, own God's way, how wise, how strong God's  
hand!

Let us in life, in death, thy steadfast truth declare,  
and publish with our final breath thy love and guardian care.

**OPENING ACCLAMATION**

*Celebrant* Blessed be our God.  
*People* **For ever and ever. Amen.**

**SONG OF PRAISE** *GTG #657 Sing to God, with joy and gladness, v. 1*

**Refrain:** Sing to God, with joy and gladness, hymns and songs of  
gratitude; with the voice of praise discover that to worship God is good.

God unites the scattered people, gathers those who wandered far,  
heals the hurt and broken spirits, tending every wound and scar. **Refrain**

## THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

*Celebrant* God be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* 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: Genesis 50:15-21

A reading from the book of Genesis.

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.

*Reader* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM 103: 1-13

<sup>1</sup>Bless the LORD, O my soul, \*  
and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.

<sup>2</sup>**Bless the LORD, O my soul, \***  
**and forget not all his benefits.**

<sup>3</sup>He forgives all your sins \*  
and heals all your infirmities;

<sup>4</sup>**He redeems your life from the grave \***  
**and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness;**

<sup>5</sup>He satisfies you with good things, \*  
and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

<sup>6</sup>**The LORD executes righteousness \*  
and judgment for all who are oppressed.**

<sup>7</sup>He made his ways known to Moses \*  
and his works to the children of Israel.

<sup>8</sup>**The LORD is full of compassion and mercy, \*  
slow to anger and of great kindness.**

<sup>9</sup>He will not always accuse us, \*  
nor will he keep his anger for ever.

<sup>10</sup>**He has not dealt with us according to our sins, \*  
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.**

<sup>11</sup>For as the heavens are high above the earth, \*  
so is his mercy great upon those who fear him.

<sup>12</sup>**As far as the east is from the west, \*  
so far has he removed our sins from us.**

<sup>13</sup>As a father cares for his children, \*  
so does the LORD care for those who fear him.

## **SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12**

A reading from Paul's letter to the Romans.

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.

*Reader* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

*People* Thanks be to God.

**SEQUENCE HYMN *GTG #444 Forgive our sins as we forgive***

"Forgive our sins as we forgive," you taught us, Lord, to pray, but you alone can grant us grace to live the words we say.

How can your pardon reach and bless the unforgiving heart that broods on wrongs and will not let old bitterness depart?

In blazing light your cross reveals the truth we dimly knew: what trivial debts are owed to us, how great our debt to you!

Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls and bid resentment cease. Then, by your mercy reconciled, our lives will spread your peace.

**GOSPEL: Matthew 18: 21-35**

*Deacon* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

*People* Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Peter 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?" 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. <sup>35</sup>So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

*Deacon*            The Gospel of the Lord.

*People*            Praise to you, Lord Christ.

### THE SERMON    *The Rev. Deacon Paulette Rempfel*

#### 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.

#### THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*Leader* Sisters and brothers, the Lord is full of compassion and mercy. Let us pray to the Lord saying, “You, O God, are our hope; **You, O God, are our salvation.**”

*Celebrant* God of mercy, you have given us grace to pray with one heart and one voice; and have promised to hear the prayers of two or three who gather in your name. Fulfil now, we pray, the prayers and longings

of your people as may be best for us and for your kingdom. Grant us in this world to know your truth, and in the world to come to see your glory. **Amen.**

### **CONFESSION OF SIN**

Let us confess our sins to God.

**God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.**

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

### **THE PEACE**

*Celebrant*                      The peace of Christ be always with you.

*People*                              **And also with you.**

**GATHERING**                      *Will the Circle be Unbroken Vs. 1-2*  
*by Ada Ruth Habershon*

*(The people return to their seats to gather for the Liturgy of the Table.)*

There are loved ones in the glory, Whose dear forms you often miss;  
When you close your earthly story, Will you join them in their bliss?

**Refrain: Will the circle be unbroken, By and by, by and by?**  
**In a better home awaiting, In the sky, in the sky?**

In the joyous days of childhood, Oft they told of wondrous move,  
Pointed to the dying Savior, Now they dwell with him above. **Refrain**

## **THE HOLY COMMUNION**

**OFFERTORY SENTENCE** *Let us with gladness present the offerings and oblations of our life and labor to the Lord.*

**OFFERTORY** *Blessed Assurance*

*Arr. Rebecca Moore*

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

*Presider*            The Lord be with you.

*People*              **And also with you.**

*Presider*            Lift up your hearts.

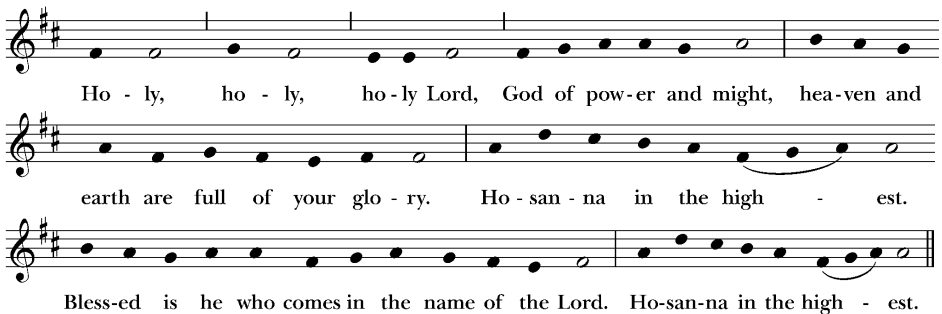
*People*              **We lift them to the Lord.**

*Presider*            Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People*              **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

All thanks and praise are yours at all times and in all places, our true and loving God; through Jesus Christ, your eternal Word, the Wisdom from on high by whom you created all things. You laid the foundations of the world and enclosed the sea when it burst out from the womb; You brought forth all creatures of the earth and gave breath to humankind. Wondrous are you, Holy One of Blessing, all you create is a sign of hope for our journey; And so as the morning stars sing your praises we join the heavenly beings and all creation as we shout with joy:

### SANCTUS S 124 *Holy, holy, holy (Hurd)*



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

Glory and honor are yours, Creator of all, your Word has never been silent; you called a people to yourself, as a light to the nations, you delivered them from bondage and led them to a land of promise. Of your grace, you gave Jesus to be human, to share our life, to proclaim the coming of your holy reign and give himself for us, an offering. Through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, you have freed us from sin, brought us into your life, reconciled us to you, and restored us to the glory you intend for us.

We thank you that on the night before he died for us Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, gave it to his friends and said: "Take, eat, this is my Body, broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper Jesus took the cup of wine, said the blessing, gave it to his friends and said: "Drink this, all of you: this cup is the new Covenant in my Blood, poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me." And so, remembering all that was done for us: the cross, the tomb, the resurrection and ascension, longing for Christ's coming in glory, and presenting to you these gifts your earth has formed and human hands have made, we acclaim you, O Christ:

**Dying, you destroyed our death.**

**Rising, you restored our life.**

**Christ Jesus, come in glory!**

Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine that they may be to us the Body and Blood of your Christ. Grant that we, burning with your Spirit's power, may be a people of hope, justice and love. Giver of Life, draw us together in the Body of Christ, and in the fullness of time gather us with all your people into the joy of our true eternal home. Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, we worship you our God and Creator in voices of unending praise. **Blessed are you now and for ever. AMEN.**

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

### **THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

#### **FRACTION ANTHEM**

We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

***We are one body, for we all share in the one bread.***

#### **COMMUNION INVITATION**

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

*(The bread and wine are given to the people. Please indicate that you would prefer a gluten-free wafer by placing your hands with palms together when you come up to receive Communion.)*



**COMMUNION HYMN *GTG #503 Lord, we have come at your own invitation***

Lord, we have come at your own invitation,  
chosen by you, to be counted your friends;  
yours is the strength that sustains dedication;  
ours, a commitment we know never ends.

Here, at your table, confirm our intention;  
give it your seal of forgiveness and grace;  
teach us to serve without pride or pretension,  
Lord, in your kingdom, whatever our place.

When, at your table, each time of returning,  
vows are renewed and our courage restored,  
may we increasingly glory in learning  
all that is means to accept you as Lord.

**POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Let us pray.

God of abundance, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation; you have united us with Christ and one another; and you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue for ever in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

**BLESSING**

**RECESSIONAL HYMN *GTG #35 Praise Ye the Lord, the almighty***

Praise ye the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!  
O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation!  
All ye who hear, now to his temple draw near;  
join me in glad adoration!

Praise ye the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,  
shelters thee under his wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!  
Hast thou not seen how thy desires e'er have been  
granted in what he ordaineth?

Praise ye the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!  
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him!  
Let the amen sound from his people again;  
gladly for aye we adore him.

## **DISMISSAL/COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Adult Christian Education, Sundays, 9:30 am

Grill & Chill, Sept. 21, 6:30 pm

Women's Group, Sept. 23, 10:00 am

Men's Group, Sept. 23, 9:00 am at Kosta's Kitchen, Fletcher

An Evening of Songs and Stories, Sept. 30, 4:00 pm

Blessing of the Animals, Oct. 8, Burning Blush Brewery, 3:00 pm

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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