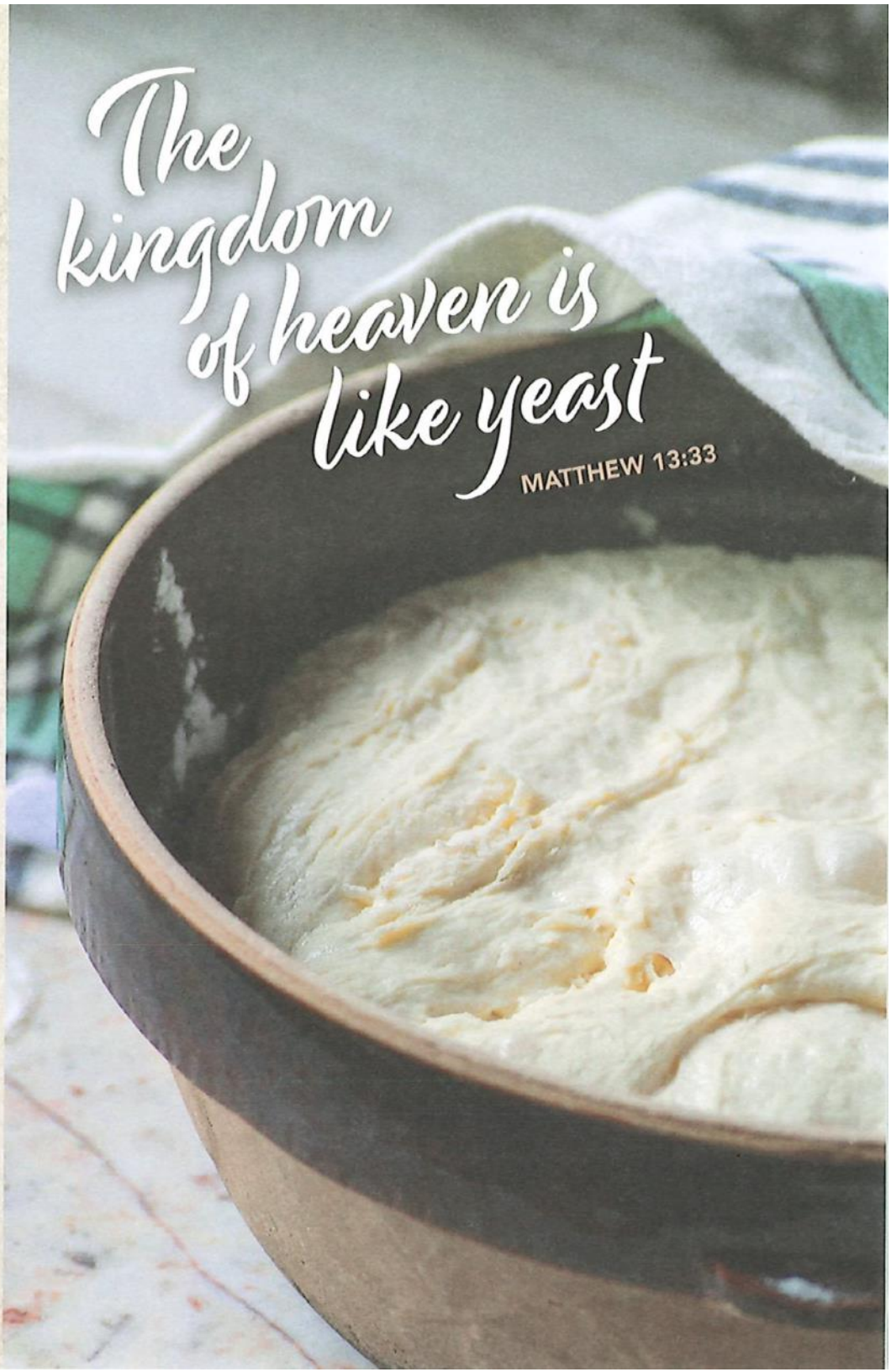


The  
kingdom  
of heaven is  
like yeast

MATTHEW 13:33



# St. Paul's Lutheran Church

25 W. Springettsbury Ave., York, PA 17403

Church Office 717-843-8155

Email: [st.paulsyork@comcast.net](mailto:st.paulsyork@comcast.net)

[www.stpaulsyork.org](http://www.stpaulsyork.org)

[www.stpaulspreschoolyork.com](http://www.stpaulspreschoolyork.com)

## Announcements

**WELCOME** Thank you for being with us.

We are a Christian church within the Lutheran tradition (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) and we welcome people of all Christian traditions as well as people of other faiths and people of little or no faith. Christian worship has been offered to God in this congregation for 184 years. By worshipping with us today, you become part of that living tradition.

**Restrooms** are available in the Good Shepherd Room (Springettsbury lobby) and the narthex. Baby changing stations are provided in these restrooms.

**Thank you for your faithfulness** in sending your offering through the mail or by using online options from your financial institution or through the “Donate” now from the church website **stpaulsyork.org**. Your gifts are keeping us current with the commitments associated with St. Paul’s and our ministry partners.

**Ushers are urgently needed** now that we are holding services in the church nave. New guidelines are in place. Please contact the church secretary if you can serve. (New procedures were emailed to those who historically served and are also in the August *Our Church* newsletter)

**Cottage Meeting** hosts are anticipating your call! Please select a meeting date, time, and location that works for your schedule.

We continue to experience a surge in families needing assistance through the Food Pantry. We can use some additional volunteers. We are seeking folks who are not in the “at risk” category for COVID-19. Simply notify Larry or Janet Moore if you can help on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday morning. **Our most critical need is with help on Tuesday mornings.**

Members of our COVID-19 task force will assist us as we work to open up St. Paul’s and to do so in the safest, healthiest way possible. Please thank Deacon Ellen Doughty, Dr. Jessica Ericson, Sheridan Palmer, Deacon Harold Sargeant, and Tim Yakim for their service.

## STAFF

Pastor  
Youth Director  
Organist, Choir Director  
Bookkeeper  
Secretary  
Sexton  
Preschool Director

Reverend Stanley Reep	<a href="mailto:prreep.stpaulsyork@comcast.net">prreep.stpaulsyork@comcast.net</a>
Kelly Moore-Spencer	<a href="mailto:kmoorespencer.stpaulsyork@comcast.net">kmoorespencer.stpaulsyork@comcast.net</a>
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Deb Becker	<a href="mailto:director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com">director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com</a>

## **Guidelines for Worship during the time of COVID-19**

### **Entering and Leaving the Church:**

*Face masks are required both inside and outside. If you do not have a mask you may use one of the pre-packaged masks located at the entrances or at the usher stations. (If a face mask was provided upon arrival, kindly deposit it in the specially marked basket at the exterior doors or at the usher stations as you leave so that it can be properly washed and prepared for use again.)*

*Kindly sign in at the door through which you entered. This will help if we need to be in contact.*

*Please take your service bulletin with you or dispose of it properly. Please don't place it back into a basket.*

### **Offerings:**

*Monetary offerings may be placed in the basins provided at the entrances to the nave or at the usher stations outdoors prior to the service or immediately following the service. You may also donate via our website at [www.stpaulsyork.org](http://www.stpaulsyork.org)*

### **While in the Nave or on the lawn:**

*You may sit together as a family. Outside worshippers should place their lawn chairs using social distancing. Inside worshippers should sit in designated pews only (green card 10:30 AM. We ask that you practice social distancing from one family to the next within the pew.*

### **Communion Procedure:**

***For the outside service:*** *Communion positions are designated with a chalk cross marked on the sidewalks on Springettsbury Ave. and surrounding the lawn. Wearing your face mask., proceed to the closest sidewalk and take your place at a Communion position.*

***For inside services:*** *Ushers will direct you. The pulpit side of the nave communes first followed by the font side.*

*Wearing your face mask, come to the chancel step taking your place at one of the five positions marked on the chancel floor with a green cross.*

*Your entire household may gather at one of the five positions marked by the green cross.*

### ***For all to receive the sacrament:***

- *Extend your arms and cup your hands together to receive the host.*
- *Please do not reach out to take it from the minister.*
- *Once the minister has moved to the next group, remove your mask, receive the host, replace your mask and return to your pew/seat by the closest side aisle. There is no need to hurry.*
- *We will be receiving communion in one kind only.*

### ***In our prayers we remember...***

***Margie Martin, David List, Sandy Shellenberger, Brian McKenna, Gene Shue, Abbie Gayle Guyton, Amanda, Jim Young, Penny Bailey, Eddie Turner, Sr., Jessica Ericson, Kristine Gross, Porter Stacey . Please keep all medical personnel and those in the military and in mission work in your daily prayers.***

# Eighth Sunday of Pentecost

July 26, 2020      8:00 & 10:30 AM  
During the time of COVID -19

## GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**10:30 AM PRELUDE**      *Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen*      Larry Shackley

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*The assembly stands. The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

In the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**  
Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*Silence for reflection and self-examination.*

Most merciful God,

**We confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen**

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

## KYRIE

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.      **Lord, have mercy.**  
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.      **Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.      **Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.      **Amen**

## GLORIA IN EXCELSI

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

*All*

**Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father:**

*Women*

**We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.**

*Men*

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God:**

*Women*

**You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**

*Men*

**You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.**

*Women*

**For you alone are the Holy One,**

*Men*

**You alone are the Lord,**

*All*

**You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray. . **Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

*Sit*

**READING 1 Kings 3:5-12** (on back page)

*At the conclusion of the reading*

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

**Psalm Psalm 119:129-136** *8:00 AM Spoken responsively by half verse*

*10:30 AM Sung by the cantor to a setting by Mark Mummert*

<sup>129</sup> Your de- | crees are wonderful;\*

**therefore I obey them with | all my heart.**

<sup>130</sup> When your word goes forth | it gives light;\*

**it gives understanding | to the simple.**

<sup>131</sup> I open my | mouth and pant;\*

**I long for | your commandments.**

<sup>132</sup> Turn to | me in mercy, \*

**as you always do to those who | love your name.**

<sup>133</sup> Steady my footsteps | in your word;\*

**let no iniquity have dominion | over me.**

<sup>134</sup> Rescue me from those | who oppress me, \*

**and I will keep | your commandments.**

<sup>135</sup> Let your countenance shine up- | on your servant\*

**and teach | me your statutes.**

<sup>136</sup> My eyes shed | streams of tears, \*

**because people do not | keep your law.**

*Stand*

**ALLELUIA**

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? **You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

## **GOSPEL**     **Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52**

*(back page)*

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*At the conclusion of the Gospel.*

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

*Sit*

## **SERMON**

Pastor Reep

*Stand*

## **APOSTLE'S CREED**

We confess our faith using the words of the Apostle's Creed.

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended into hell.\***

**On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again 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**

*Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world,  
and all who are in need.*

*A brief silence.*

*Merciful God, your reign is revealed to us in common things: a mustard shrub, a woman baking bread, a fishing net. Help us witness to the surprising yet common ways you encounter us in daily life. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.***

*Increase our understanding and awe of your creation; guide the work of scientists and researchers. Treasuring the earth, let us live as grateful caretakers of it. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.***

*As the birds of the air nest in branches of trees, gather the nations of the world into the welcoming shade of your merciful reign. Direct leaders of nations to build trust with each other and walk in the way of peace. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.***

Give comfort to the dying, refuge to the weary, justice to those who are oppressed, and healing to the sick. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

You show steadfast love and direct us to ask of you what we need. Help us ask boldly for what is most needed. Refresh us with new dreams of being your people in this place and time. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Strengthen us by the inspiring witness of your people in all times and places. Embolden our witness now and one day gather us with all your saints in light. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.                      **And also with you.**

## **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Blessed are you,

**O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

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

## **PREFACE**

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; 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 the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## **SANCTUS**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might:**

**Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**



## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,  
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,  
who preached good news to the poor,  
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.  
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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,  
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out your Holy Spirit,  
that by this Holy Communion we may know  
the unity we share with all your people  
in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory 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**

**FRACTION** *The bread is broken. A brief silence is kept.*



## AGNUS DEI

*Pastor* Lamb of God  
*Men* Lamb of God you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.  
*Women* Lamb of God you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.  
*All* Lamb of God you take away the sin of the world, grant us peace. Amen

*Sit The pastor cleanses hands and prepares for the distribution of Holy Communion.*

## COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

*Instructions for receiving the sacrament are on the inside front cover of the bulletin.*

*Stand*

## POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

We give you thanks, almighty God that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**HYMN** *All Things Bright and Beautiful Stanza 3 (back pages)*

## BLESSING & DISMISSAL

Almighty God, Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen**  
Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**10:30 AM POSTLUDE** *Today Dear Christianity Sings* Ernst Pepping

*Pastor Reep will be at the Springettsbury Ave. entrance.*

*Please be respectful of distancing and personal space as you leave. Feel free to gather outside for conversation.*

*Please take your service bulletin with you or dispose of it properly. Please don't place it back in the basket*



This week's flowers are given to the Glory of God in memory or our son, Neil Shue, by **Gene & Norma Shue**; and in memory of our parents by **Axel and Ann Ulrich**.

# All Things Bright and Beautiful

*Refrain*



All things bright and beau - ti - ful, all crea-tures great and small,



all things wise and won - der - ful, the Lord God made them all.



- 1 Each lit - tle flow'r that o - pens, each lit - tle bird that sings,
- 2 The pur - ple - head - ed moun-tains, the riv - er run - ning by,
- 3 The cold wind in the win - ter, the pleas - ant sum - mer sun,
- 4 God gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell

*Refrain*



God made their glow - ing col - ors, God made their ti - ny wings,  
the sun - set, and the morn - ing that bright-ens up the sky.  
the ripe fruits in the gar - den, God made them ev - 'ry one.  
how great is God Al - might - y, who has made all things well.

Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–1895, alt.

Music: ROYAL OAK, English tune, 17th cent., adapt. Martin Shaw, 1875–1958

## **Cottage Meetings have begun!**

**Please call today!**

**Sundays Now through August 9, 2020**

Cottage meetings have served our congregation well over the past several years. They are scheduled for Sunday afternoons and evenings beginning on July 12 and concluding on August 9. A complete list of host families is included. Rather than randomly assigning you, the members and friends of St. Paul's, to a specific location, we are asking you to contact the host that best fits your geographical location, day and time. We really do need you to make a contact so that adequate preparations can be made. We purposely planned that these gatherings could take place out of doors so you may need to pack a lawn chair. Your host family will be delighted to respond to your questions about maneuvering in their lawn or home. A special word of thanks and appreciation is extended to our hosts who graciously agreed to open their homes for our gatherings this summer.



July 26 @ 3:00 p.m., Jeff & Rose Riese, 2800 Maple Dr., Red Lion – 717-891-3058

July 26 @ 7:00 p.m., Ann Anstadt, 116 Valmere Path, York – 717-741-0589

August 2 @ 3:00 p.m., Tina & Antolin Llorente, 7669 Grand Lake Dr., Seven Valleys  
717-676-9929

August 2 @ 7:00 p.m., Wayne & Amber Dull, 1918 Cedar Dr., Spring Grove – 410-829-2601

August 9 @ 7:00 p.m., Sheridan & Jamie Palmer, 40 Dressage Ct., York – 717-451-3415

August 23 @ 7:00 p.m., Dan & Kathryn Garber, 3533 Cimmeron Rd., York – 508-873-8173



Boy Scout Troop 19 is taking orders for the sale of popcorn and/or nuts in the upcoming months of August and September. We will not be selling in-person this year. Our order will be placed in mid-October and will be available on November 14. If interested in helping out our troop and their program, please call Nancy Banta @ 717 848 6627 for more information. Thanks so much.

Choice. We hear a lot about it lately. We see it posted on placards. Most of the time choice is preceded with another word we hear a lot about and see posted, freedom. This morning the biblical witness presents us with texts dealing with choice. In the Bible we hear about choice but the word which precedes it is not freedom but faithful. Faithful choice that is what we are on about in Christian community.

We are presented with another set of parables, kingdom parables. These are parables about the importance of recognizing the priorities of God's kingdom and acting on them. The kingdom of heaven is like...a mustard seed, yeast being mixed into flour, treasure hidden in a field, a merchant in search of fine pearls, a net thrown into the sea. Recognizing the priorities of God's kingdom and acting on them; sowing, mixing, selling, fishing brings the listener to a point where she or he needs to make a faithful choice.

In the reading from First Kings this is what we find Solomon doing (Solomon is David's son he is next in succession for the kingship). He is making a faithful choice. He is a prime example of faithful choice in harmony with God's will. He is at Gibeon, the nation's most important high place. High places in the Bible are associated with closeness to God. In such settings we can anticipate a theophany, an appearance of God. In this case it comes in the form of a dream. Solomon is presented with a choice. The choice is about how the kingdom will operate, function under his leadership, his kingship.

There are, historically speaking, two kinds of kingdoms: a kingship of glory or a kingship of the spirit of Deuteronomy. Solomon makes a faithful choice; he chooses the second type of kingship, the Deuteronomy style based on God's law.

Solomon doesn't ask for the trappings of worldly possessions, that's kingship of glory.

He doesn't ask for success, that's kingship of glory.

He doesn't ask for long life, that's kingship of glory.

He doesn't ask for the death of his enemies, that's the kingship of glory.

He doesn't ask for the death of the opposition, that's kingship of glory.

Instead, Solomon chooses the pattern of kingship under the law (Deuteronomy). Later in the biblical story it will be kings like Hezekiah and Josiah that make such a faithful choice in their successive reigns.

In a kingship of the law, the king, in our case this morning Solomon is **God's servant**. The goal of such kingship is **the welfare of God's people**, not the glory of the king! In order to do this, to lead in this way, to provide for the welfare of the inhabitants, you need talent. This is what Solomon asks for in the dream sequence that we heard read this morning.

Solomon wants talent. And talent has to do with an understanding mind (ancient world, hearing heart). He wants this hearing heart so that he can discern between good and

evil. This will provide understanding to discern what is right so that he can hear and judge. So Solomon needs a wise and discerning mind (heart). This of course has been modeled by God's *hessed*, God's steadfast love. The heart is an organ with skill to listen; thought and will are moved by it. Solomon makes a faithful choice about kingship and by so doing all these other things, all these good things, things for which he did not ask, are added to his life.

This sounds a little bit like when Jesus is teaching on the Sermon on the Mount in chapter 6. He too is at a high place. And we hear his admonition to "Seek first the kingdom of God (righteousness) and all these things shall be yours as well (Matthew 6:33). We know that Bible verse better when set to the tune, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you, al-le-lu-allelu-ia." Jesus prescribes this same pattern for his disciples. And through baptism he prescribes this same pattern for you and for me.

Making the faithful choice is not easy. It is all rather challenging work. It takes both thought and will. What starts us along the right path is the ability to recognize the priorities of kingdom life. We can't act on them if we can't identify them. It will be easy to be pulled off, sidelined, ambushed on our journey of faith if we aren't looking for signs of the kingdom, and recognizing kingdom life when it is presenting its self before us. The take away from Solomon is to be; listening, looking, discerning, hearing, the welfare of God's people. The welfare of God's people is sure to set us on a right path.

Jesus wants us to recognize the priorities of God's kingdom and to act on them. That is why we sing "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God." Notice, however that the examples that Jesus sets forth in the parables that day when he is teaching the crowds and his disciples, the examples are not about some sort of distant heavenly angelic harped gold clad streets and halos! The kingdom of heaven is like...a mustard seed sown and providing housing in harmony with the environment, yeast being mixed into flour creating food, treasure hidden in a field and the discernment of risking everything for the sake of what has been found, a merchant in search of fine pearls stumbling across the pearl of incalculable worth, a net thrown into the sea bringing forth a diverse catch. Jesus' examples move us like King Solomon desiring the talent needed to recognize the priorities of God's kingdom and acting on them; sowing, mixing, selling, fishing all bring the listener to a point where she or he needs to make a faithful choice seeking the welfare of God's people above all else.

Jesus of course seeks above all else our welfare. He provides righteousness for us through his suffering and death and opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers. His faithful choice, choosing the likes of us, did not lead to his glorification or to selfish desires. His choice led to death on a cross. He made a way when it seemed that there was not a way to right all of the wrongs. He looks upon us with *hessed* the steadfast love of God.

Choice. Solomon made a faithful choice that day, choosing the welfare of God's people. Jesus made a faithful choice that fateful day when the crowds shouted "crucify" by choosing us. He admonishes us to "Seek the kingdom of God" seek the welfare of God's people. And all these things shall be yours as well. Amen.

**FIRST READING: 1 Kings 3:5-12**

At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you."<sup>6</sup>And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today."<sup>7</sup>And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in.<sup>8</sup>And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted.<sup>9</sup>Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?"

<sup>10</sup>It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this.<sup>11</sup>God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right,<sup>12</sup>I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you."

**Psalms 119:129-136**

**SECOND READING: Romans 8:26-39**

The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.<sup>27</sup>And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

<sup>28</sup>We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.<sup>29</sup>For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family.<sup>30</sup>And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

<sup>31</sup>What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? <sup>32</sup>He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not

with him also give us everything else? <sup>33</sup>Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.<sup>34</sup>Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.<sup>35</sup>Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>36</sup>As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

<sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.<sup>38</sup>For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,<sup>39</sup>nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**GOSPEL: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52**

[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;<sup>32</sup> it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

<sup>33</sup>He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

<sup>44</sup>"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

<sup>45</sup>"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls;<sup>46</sup> on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it."

<sup>47</sup>"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind;<sup>48</sup> when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad.<sup>49</sup> So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous<sup>50</sup> and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

<sup>51</sup>"Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes."<sup>52</sup>And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

**Next Sunday's Readings:** Isaiah 55:1-5; Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21; Romans 9:1-5; Matthew 14:13-21.

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