

Sept 6 Worship

Readers- Chris Kenney/Dan Smith

Announcements/Joys

Time Of Quiet Meditation- *“We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.”* Romans 6:4

Opening Scripture- Psalm 149:1-3(page 546)

Opening Chorus- 302- Where The Spirit Of The Lord Is

Responsive Call To Worship-

Leader: Come, let's praise God together!

People: Sing a new song, a song of God's goodness and mercy, faithfulness and love.

Leader: For God delights in His people, crowning them with honor and glory!

People: Let's worship together.

Hymn of Praise- 292- Spirit Now Live In Me

Unison Prayer/Lord's Prayer- O Living God of past and future, we praise you for this present moment. Fill us with your joy and empower us with your Holy Spirit, that our strength may be renewed to sing a new song of your glory in a world which longs for your justice and peace. All this we ask in the name of Jesus, who taught us how to pray, saying...*Lord's Prayer...*

“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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

Gloria Patri- Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. World without end.
Amen, Amen.

Old Testament Scripture- Ezekiel 33:7-8(page 743)

Special Music-

Gospel Scripture- Matthew 18:15-20(page 852)

Baptism- Katrina Myran Simmons/Alexzander Jon Parkhurst

*Congregational Response

**Congregational Assent

Hymn- 291- Sweet, Sweet Spirit

New Testament Scripture- Romans 13:8-14

Message

“Give And Receive”

We have all heard the saying; “It is more blessed to give than receive.” These words are attributed to Jesus Christ but nowhere in the gospels does He say it. Paul says that Jesus said it in the book of Acts during an address to the elders of the Church at Ephesus. The gospels do not record every word of Jesus but there are references to His words in every other book in the Bible. The actual words of Paul were; “In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” (Acts 20:35) Giving aligns with Jesus’ example and serves as a testament to the gospel. Jesus came to earth “not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28). Therefore, giving reflects Christ-likeness and offers a way to live out the gospel with our resources. Christians are called to be generous because we serve a God who gives sacrificially.

Giving develops our character, fostering selflessness and countering the natural tendency toward self-contentedness. When we readily give of our money, time, talents, and gifts, we step beyond our little world and serve others. The generous person develops more virtues than the constant receiver and builds responsibility. Other virtues cultivated in our giving include compassion, kindness, joy, and love. Furthermore, giving fosters contentment. When we generously offer our resources, we express satisfaction in God’s blessings and acknowledge Him as the Ultimate Provider. While it is undoubtedly blessed to receive, it is even more blessed to give.

We all understand the good feeling we get when we do things or give things to others, just because.” We don't have to materially give in order to help others. Often times our giving can simply be in doing for others, helping out when needed or just in being there to support each other. It has the effect of actually relaxing us to do something good. Feeling good when we give of ourselves is rooted in both psychological and biological processes. When we offer our time, energy, or

resources to others, our brains release a cascade of “feel-good” chemicals such as dopamine, serotonin, and oxytocin. Dopamine is linked to reward and pleasure, serotonin supports mood stability, and oxytocin fosters feelings of trust, bonding, and connection. This neurochemical response is why giving often feels like a natural high.

God created us as creatures who require social contact. Unlike many animal species, we are bonded to others at birth because we are incapable of surviving without being nurtured. Everything we know or do is because we learned from someone, usually a parent especially a mother. We are one of many species that depend 100% on others in order to survive childhood. Giving strengthens these bonds, making us feel part of something bigger than ourselves. Acts of kindness, whether big or small, create a sense of shared humanity, reducing loneliness and boosting self-worth. Focusing on helping others shifts our attention away from our own worries, which can lower stress and anxiety. This mental shift provides a sense of relief and calm, making us feel more in control and purposeful.

We can classify giving into at least 3 forms; material giving, fearlessness giving and self-giving. Material giving is easy to define. It happens when we give food, money, and shelter or anything of substance. It is probably the easiest way of giving. Fearlessness giving can be a bit more difficult. It is when we offer safety and presence to someone who is afraid or hurting. This often puts us into a position of becoming personally involved in someone's life. The third, self-giving is when we provide mentorship, information and wisdom. This means opening ourselves up and sharing our personal self with others. Fearlessness giving is possibly the deepest giving we can become involved with since it requires us to give of our time, social support, comfort and care.

Have you ever heard the saying; “You can't out give God?” It means that God has given His people infinitely more than they could ever give to Him. Everything we have, everything we do, everything we are is because of God. When we speak about giving to God, we are not just talking about what we give to support our church. It is how we share with each other in times of hardship. It is when we reach out to help someone who is hurting. It is as simple as offering a kind word to someone who could use one. Often times it is the simplest kindness that can have the greatest effect on our day when things are not going well. Almost anything that we can do for others is the best form of giving.

Have you ever noticed how you feel when you do something kind for another person? Not only does our giving demonstrate God's character to the world, it results in increased faith for us. When we are willing to give, we declare that our faith does not depend on material possessions. Instead, we show that our faith is in God, who is always faithful to provide. We were created to serve each other, to care

for the well-being of those we know as well as those we don't. Just as God cares for us, we are meant to care for others who need us.

Today, we witnessed an example of God's giving and receiving. The sacrament of baptism is one of the most intense signs of reciprocal giving and receiving that I know of. We give ourselves to God through His Son and our Savior. God gives us a multitude of gifts in return. First, we are granted redemption and salvation, forgiveness of our sin and the promise of life eternal. In turn we give ourselves to Him and accept Jesus as Lord. Not a bad deal when you think about the alternative. Following our baptism, we are sent the gift of the Holy Spirit who comes with a whole bunch of extra gifts. In 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 we read; "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were heathen, you were led astray to dumb idols, however you may have been moved. Therefore, I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills."

We all have these gifts available to us when we accept Christ. Not all of us make the best use of these gifts. God freely gives to us, we should freely receive and give thanks. Don't waste the gifts. Give to God and receive the gifts. Praise Be to God. Amen.

Prayers of the People- We give you all thanks and praise, O God, It is indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God, for your delight is in your people, and the day of our salvation is near. You are our King and our maker, for all things came into being at your command. You came to save your people from slavery, striking the land of their oppressors, and setting free all who identified themselves with the blood of your lamb. In your child, Jesus, you have again come to save us. In his love we have seen the fulfillment of your law and the revelation of your desire to reconcile all people, to yourself and to one another. When he was killed you raised him to life, and marked us for salvation with his blood. Now wherever two or three gather, clothed in his love, you are present in the midst of us and we rejoice in you

forever. Therefore, with our hearts lifted high, we offer you thanks and praise at all times through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Communion Hymn- 370- Come Celebrate Jesus

Thanksgiving Prayer- Heavenly Father, You have nourished us with the Body and Blood of Christ, and we thank You for the strength that flows from this sacred meal. Empower us to face life's trials with courage and faith. When we are weak, remind us that Your strength is made perfect in our weakness. Let this holy nourishment be our support in all we do, that we may live a life pleasing to You. Amen.

Closing Hymn- 498- Without Him

Benediction- Go out in love, reconciled to one another in Christ. Lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Live honorably, fulfilling the law through love for all. And may God mark you out for salvation; May Christ Jesus be present among you always, And may the Holy Spirit reconcile you to one another and fulfill the law of love among you. We go in peace to love and serve the Lord, In the name of Christ. Amen.

***Congregational Response-**

Pastor- Members and friends in Christ, we gather now to celebrate the gift of grace in the sacrament of baptism/

People- There is one body and one spirit. There is one hope in God's call to us.

Pastor- There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Creator of us all.

****Congregational Assent-(Congregation Will Rise)**

Pastor- Jesus Christ calls us to make disciples of all nations and to offer them the gift of grace in baptism. Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament, promise your love, support, and care to those about to be baptized, as they live and grow in Christ?

People- We promise our love, support, and care.

Pastor- Let us unite with the church in all times and places in confessing our faith in the triune God. Do you believe in God?

People- I believe in God.

Pastor- Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

People- I believe in Jesus Christ.

Pastor- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

People- I believe in the Holy Spirit.