

2nd Sunday after Pentecost  
June 2, 2024

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, throughout time you free the oppressed, heal the sick, and make whole all that you have made. Look with compassion on the world wounded by sin, and by your power restore us to wholeness of life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

### **FIRST READING: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]**

*At a time when visions are rare and unexpected, the LORD comes to Samuel and calls him to speak the divine word. Though just a boy, Samuel responds to God obediently, as Eli the priest has taught him to respond. This marks the beginning of Samuel's prophetic ministry.*

### **Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18**

You have searched me out and known me. (*Ps. 139:1*)

### **SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 4:5-12**

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

*When we carry out God's ministry we do so not for our glory but for the sake of Jesus Christ whom we proclaim as Lord. The power for ministry comes from God, not us, so that we persevere no matter what, trusting in God's power and promises at work through us.*

### **GOSPEL: Mark 2:23—3:6**

*Jesus challenges the prevailing interpretation of what is lawful on the sabbath and tells his critics that the sabbath was made for humankind, not the other way around. Healing the man with the withered hand is work that cannot wait until the next day.*

### **GOSPEL MESSAGE**

#### **What's the Point?**

Here's what the point of this gospel reading is *not*: it's not about grain, and it's not about bread, and it's not about Pharisees, and it's not about David, the temple, or the priests; it's not about the synagogue, a withered hand, or lawfulness, and it's not even, finally, about the sabbath—as important as all these details are to the story.

The point of this gospel is to set eyes on and crack open hearts to what is most holy. Jesus would, over and over again, insist in word and deed that compassion and mercy trump tradition and supersede ritual when it comes to the sacred. As scandalous as that may look in action, and as unsettling as it felt to cautious stewards of the religious order, it is precisely what Jesus meant when he argued that “the sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath.” Elsewhere, he similarly challenged the religious elite, “For the sake of your tradition, you make void the word of God” (Matthew 15:6), and preached audaciously in his Sermon on the Mount that he had not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17).

Elie Wiesel, a Jewish survivor of the Nazi Holocaust who became a writer, activist, and teacher, taught that “if even the most authoritative teaching, the most sacred text, leads to dehumanization, to humiliation, to harm, then we must reject it.” So, too, did Jesus reject the misuse of the law, demonstrating instead how God intended it as gift, as grace. He exposed the broken-open heart of God’s love for humanity in all the places where people react to mercy with hostility. Not only grieved but angry at the hardness of heart of those around him, at their silence and resistance to doing mercy and choosing compassion, in a mere four words—”Stretch out your hand”—Jesus defied tradition and chose the holy, the sacred—making his point. That’s gospel.

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

We come before the triune God to pray for our communities, ourselves, and our world.

Guide your church to expressions of faith that bring rest and release. Teach your faithful people to be attentive to the spiritual, physical, and societal weariness of our neighbors, that we proclaim your grace through tangible acts of mercy and justice. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Keep us mindful of the rhythms of nature as the days lengthen and the seasons shift toward summer. Grant relief to areas facing flooding or drought and bring favorable weather for the flourishing of crops, gardens, and orchards. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Where there is affliction in our world, bring healing. Where world leaders are perplexed, bring clarity of vision. Give a spirit of discernment to political advisors, institutional researchers, economic analysts, and all vocations that inform the work of governments and policymakers. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Provide wholeness and respite to all who are weary: those who struggle in any way and those who care for them *especially* Sandra Gagnon, Karen Weigold, Keith Weckwerth, Karen O’Day, Shirley Glickman, Marilyn Schneider, Denita Wolfgram, Stephanie Yourth, Christopher Yourth, Linda Boland, Glenda Panke, Debbie Thom, Donna L Hoffman, Walter Hobden, Harold Yourth and those in long term care facilities and senior residences. In this moment of silence we name out loud or in the quiet of our hearts those who need your healing touch. Strengthen first responders and health care workers in their times of exhaustion or frustration. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Stir our hearts toward abundant generosity among neighbors who experience hunger and food insecurity. Bless feeding ministries and community food efforts, especially community gardens, farmers markets, food pantries and Little Free Pantries. Open both our hearts and our tables. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

We remember the communion of saints whose lives made visible the saving life of Jesus Christ. Today we remember our brothers Randy Schauer and Gary Churchill. Guide us by their example

to embody the treasure of your love for the sake of our world, until we come to our final rest in you. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Receive our prayers, O God, and come quickly to our aid, through the power of the Spirit and the love of Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

**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.**

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**