

15th Sunday after Pentecost
September 13, 2020
Cross of Glory Lutheran Church
Brooklyn Center, MN

Today we celebrate the installation of Pastor Ali Tranvik. No matter how you're taking part in worship today, we are grateful for your presence and participation in it! If you'd like to tune in to the Zoom service in live time on Sunday at 9:30 am, you can connect with a computer or tablet by going to www.zoom.us, or with a phone by calling 312-626-6799. Enter Meeting ID 802 502 5123 and password 433131 when prompted.

PRELUDE

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Faithful God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We judge others before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before the needs of our neighbors. Humble us, have mercy on us, and turn us again to life in you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of † Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN #532 Gather Us In

1 Here in this place the new light is streaming
now is the darkness vanished away;
see in this space our fears and our dreamings
brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,
gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

4 Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven, light years away—
here in this place the new light is shining,
now is the kingdom, and now is the day.
Gather us in and hold us forever,
gather us in and make us your own;
gather us in, all peoples together,
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

verses 1, 2 and 4

2 We are the young, our lives are a myst'ry,
we are the old who yearn for your face;
we have been sung throughout all of hist'ry,
called to be light to the whole human race.
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty,
gather us in, the proud and the strong;
give us a heart, so meek and so lowly,
give us the courage to enter the song.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

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, amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Refrain: This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.

Power and riches, wisdom and strength, and honor and blessing and glory are his. *Refrain*

Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation: Blessing and honor, glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen. *Refrain*

For the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia. *Refrain*

PRAYER OF THE DAY The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray . . . **O Lord God, your compassion and mercy are great. Transform our hearts of stone into hearts full of love, that we may forgive others as you have first forgiven us; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

READING: Psalm 103:1-13

¹Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

²Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all God's benefits—

³who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases;

⁴who redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;

⁵who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

⁶O LORD, you provide vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.

⁷You made known your ways to Moses
and your works to the children of Israel.

⁸LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;
⁹you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.
¹⁰You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.
¹¹For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.
¹²As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.
¹³As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

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

SPECIAL MUSIC

Keith Williams

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

²¹Peter 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?” ²²Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, 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. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But 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.’ ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

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

SERMON

Bishop Ann Svennungsen

My third grandchild, Noah John, was born two days before the first case of Covid in Minnesota. My daughter and her husband had waited a long time for this, their first baby. And they became incredibly protective; a little crazy, maybe. So, they armed themselves with knowledge.

They knew how his eyesight would develop – when it would reach 20/20. They knew the exact environmental impact of cloth versus disposable diapers. They had a digital scale so precise they could weigh him before and after nursing to see how much he ate.

Even before I would finish sharing an insight about babies from my years of experience, they'd start googling to confirm or correct it.

Oh, I think I was pretty well informed when I had Noah's mom 33 years ago. But 1987 isn't 2020. Google didn't exist. Digital scales were rare. I did know a few things about cloth diapers.

One way we show our care for another is to learn about them. Which brings us to the 18th chapter of Matthew's gospel. With more detail than we ever expected, Jesus gives specific instructions on how to care for the church – that brand-new creation, born in Christ's death and resurrection and formed by the Spirit at Pentecost.

We heard the first of those instructions last Sunday. If someone hurts you, go in person to talk about it. If that doesn't resolve it, take two others with you for conversation. If it's still not resolved, go before the community of faith with the concern. If that doesn't do it, it's time to go your separate ways.

In today's text, you can almost see the wheels turning in Peter's brain. Well, how long must that go on? How many times do I have to do this whole, detailed process of reconciliation? How many times do I have to forgive someone who hurts me?

Like Peter, we'd like some numbers. Most of all, we want a limit. Well, Jesus says, that's not what it's all about. Both Jesus' instructions and his parable turn the question on its head.

Peter thought 7 was generous; greater than the current expectation to forgive 3 times. Talking about 77, Jesus is clear that it's not about an upper limit – but an unending call to forgive.

The numbers in the parable are even more outrageous. The king forgives a debt of 10,000 talents. That number is so big it would take the servant 150,000 years of wages to earn it, 3000 lifetimes.

But then, the servant is NOT willing to forgive a debt of 100 days' wages. No mercy. He's forgiven a debt gazillion dollars, but grabs the man who owes him pennies by comparison and throws him jail.

Peter's question is turned on its head. You see, forgiveness is a bit like love. If you ask, "how many times should I love my neighbor?" you sound pretty strange. Forgiveness – like love – is really about the relationship. How valuable is it to you? How important? When my daughter looks at my grandson, she's not thinking, "Ok, I have this limit on the number of times I will forgive you. So be careful."

Our very lives are defined by the mercy of God. We are here because God is merciful. If we aren't willing to forgive, we fail to recognize that mercy is the air we breathe, mercy is the home we're given. God is merciful to us, we are merciful to others.

Oh, there are some parameters to human love and forgiveness. And if you're really struggling with trying to forgive another, I commend the work of Lewis Smedes. SMEDES. You can google it. Like Noah's parents.

In a nutshell, he says: We're not called to tolerate. We name things as wrong; that's why they need to be forgiven. We don't continue in abusive relationships. We're called to love ourselves. We're not expected to forgive and forget – as if we could forget – like the guys in Men in Black with their zapping devices that clear all our memories. Finally, we know that, for us, human beings, forgiving someone can take time – with starts and stops.

Yes, Matthew 18 is filled with specifics about how to tend to the community of faith; that's because the community is so important; so precious. As precious as a newborn baby.

Today, I want to add some further wisdom beyond Matthew 18 on how to care for the beloved community that is Cross of Glory Lutheran Church.

You're installing a new pastor today. If I've learned anything in my 8 years as bishop, I've learned that good and faithful pastors are vital to the well-being of a congregation. Pastoral leadership matters.

So, commit yourself today, to support your pastor. Pray for her. Show your gratitude and affirmation.

Let her know you pray for her as she prepares sermons, visits the sick, as she leads the community in loving the neighbor. For all of us who lead in God's church – knowing you pray for us makes a world of difference.

Oh, Pastor Ali Tranvik brings extraordinary gifts to ministry. I know she's a good preacher because hers is probably the only sermon I remember from the year I served as St. Olaf's college pastor. She was a senior, I think. What I remember most is her introduction. Something about her family's garage being so cluttered that a neighbor stopped by thinking they were having a garage sale. I connected with that story. Both of Pastor Tranvik's parents are pastors – like my husband and I. It's a full life; especially when your kids are young. Our garage wasn't the only thing that was cluttered.

It's so great to have you in the synod Pastor Tranvik, so wonderful to install you at Cross of Glory Lutheran Church.

For my kids, having a baby in the time of Covid hasn't been easy. Risks are easily exaggerated; unknowns of the disease exacerbate the unknowns parents already face, just trying to understand this brand-new person they hold in their arms.

Beginning a new call – welcoming a new pastor; these aren't exactly easy things in a time of Covid. Indeed, Covid hasn't been an easy thing for any church.

Still, I'm amazed at all the new energy, the creativity and innovation, amazed at willingness to experiment and do things in new ways.

And I've seen renewed appreciation for time together – even on zoom; a deep and lively hunger to be in the company of those with whom we've covenanted to be a community of care.

And there are some other forces besides Covid that challenge the church. The lack of respect that shapes our public discourse continues to shock us. It seems with each new social media platform, we learn new ways – or feel freer to use old ways – of sewing discord or fostering division.

What IF – what if the church were a light to the world in these days? What if we practiced humility in our discourse, what if we practiced repentance for the sin of racism, what if we truly loved each other in our community of faith – and loved the people we meet in daily life.

The 60's song "They will know we are Christians by our love," not my favorite actually, might have a special message for us today – as love seems to be in short supply in our public conversation. Can others see our love, our humility, our willingness to forgive? Those are marks of beloved community.

Frederick Buechner has a great definition of grace:

"Grace is something you can never get but can only be given. There's no way to deserve it ... any more than you can deserve the taste of raspberries and cream or bring about your own birth. A good sleep is grace, and so are good dreams. Most tears are grace. The smell of rain is grace. Somebody loving you is grace....."

I've thought about adding another thing to Buechner's list: A good congregation is grace. Being a part of a church you can call home – that is grace. It is grace to hear God's word proclaimed, to be drawn into the mystery of God through worship, to be connected in community. It's within the church that our lives are transformed, that our brokenness is made whole. And it is within the congregation that we find courage to act as servants in the world, courage to resist the idolatries of our culture, and courage to act for justice.

May you know grace upon grace as you move into this next chapter of your life together in this congregation: the grace of God in Jesus Christ that starts it all; and the grace of God in a congregation you call home. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY #605 Forgive Our Sins As We Forgive

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| <p>1 "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.</p> <p>3 In blazing light your cross reveals
the truth we dimly knew:
how trifling others' debts to us;
how great our debt to you!</p> | <p>2 How can your pardon reach and bless
the unforgiving heart
that broods on wrongs and will not let
old bitterness depart?</p> <p>4 Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls
and bid resentment cease;
then, by your mercy reconciled,
our lives will spread your peace.</p> |
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INSTALLATION OF PASTOR ALI TRANVIK

PRESENTATION

Bishop Ann Svennungsen

Having been authorized by the church to install Pastor Ali Tranvik, our co-worker in the gospel, as Lead Pastor, I now ask for certification of this call.

Judy Lewis, Council President

After prayerful deliberation, we, of Cross of Glory Lutheran Church have called Pastor Ali Tranvik. I present her and this letter certifying the call.

ADDRESS AND QUESTIONS

Bishop Ann Svennungsen

A reading from John: Jesus said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.

Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." (John 20:21-23)

A reading from Matthew: Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

A reading from First Timothy: Set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Attend to the public reading of scripture, to exhorting, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying of hands by the council of elders. Put these things into practice, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; continue in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers. (1 Timothy 4:12-16)

Pastor Ali Tranvik, in the presence of this assembly will you commit yourself to this new trust and responsibility, in the confidence that it comes from God through the call of the church?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you preach and teach in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church? Will you carry out this ministry in harmony with the constitutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you be diligent in your study of the Holy Scriptures and in your use of the means of grace? Will you love, serve, and pray for God's people, nourish them with the word and sacraments, and lead them by your own example in faithful service and holy living?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you give faithful witness in the world, that God's love may be known in all that you do?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Almighty God, who has given you the will to do these things, graciously give you the strength and compassion to perform them.

Amen.

People of God, will you receive Pastor Ali Tranvik as a messenger of Jesus Christ sent to serve all people with the gospel of hope and salvation? Will you regard her as a servant of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God?

We will, and we ask God to help us.

Will you pray for her, help, and honor her for her work's sake, and in all things strive to live together in the peace and unity of Christ?

We will, and we ask God to help us.

Pastor Ali Tranvik, the office of Lead Pastor is now committed to you in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

COMMISSION

You have been called to be among us to baptize, to teach, and to forgive sins.

You have been called to be among us to proclaim the good news.

You have been called to be among us to preside at the Lord's supper.

You are called to be among us as we serve, celebrate, and partner for ministry in God's world.

BLESSING

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make you complete in everything good so that you may do God's will, working in you that which is pleasing in God's sight; through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. **Amen.**

CONFESSION OF FAITH Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead? On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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.

OFFERTORY

Given we are unable to collect our regular offering during this time, we invite you to send your offering to the church office (5929 Brooklyn Blvd, Brooklyn Center, MN 55429). We are so grateful for the ways you continue to generously support the work of Cross of Glory in this time apart!

OFFERTORY RESPONSE His Mercy is More

1 What love could remember no wrongs we have done
Omniscient all knowing He counts not their sum
Thrown into a sea without bottom or shore
Our sins they are many His mercy is more

2 What patience would wait as we constantly roam
What Father so tender is calling us home
He welcomes the weakest the vilest the poor
Our sins they are many His mercy is more

3 What riches of kindness He lavished on us
His blood was the payment His life was the cost
We stood 'neath a debt we could never afford
Our sins they are many His mercy is more

Chorus

Praise the Lord His mercy is more
Stronger than darkness new every morn
Our sins they are many His mercy is more

OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. You have given us these gifts of your good creation. Empower us now to share them for the sake of our neighbor, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

As the psalmist writes, "you are full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love." When we fail to receive these gifts, when we fail to grant them to others, when we harbor hatred toward our neighbor, when we constantly measure what we think we're owed, surprise us again with your abundant grace, that we might be guided by it in all that we say and do. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

On this God's Work Our Hands Sunday, we give you thanks for the many different hands that do your work in the world. Bless the hands that greet the stranger, that comfort the sick, that feed the hungry. Bless the hands that tend to the grieving, that hold pain, and that comfort the lonely. Bless the hands that disrupt the powerful and that lift up the lowly. Bless the hands of workers and laborers, artists and musicians, students, and teachers. Bless the hands of parents caring for young children, and children caring for aging parents. May all our hands be open to the work you are calling us in this new season of ministry. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

By the work of your hands, you brought life into being. Have compassion on your creation. Where human selfishness has brought ruin and destruction, forgive us. And by your Spirit, empower us to take part in the work of healing, restoring, and renewing the world that you so love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Tend to all those in need of your loving presence today. For those who are lonely and craving community. For those who are grieving. For those struggling with depression, anxiety, or addiction. For those who ache in mind, body, or spirit. We pray especially for Bev Hoium, Karen Earnst, Gil Hartlage, Terry Stejskal, Jeffery, son of Harriet Halvorsen, and Bonnie and Kevin, family of Carol Sjoquist. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We praise you for the cloud of witnesses who have gone before us. May we too be witnesses to all that you have done, are doing, and will do. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

As we lift before you these prayers and those that remain in the silence of our hearts, O God, let all that is within us bless your holy name; **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered together as one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray the prayer Jesus taught us...

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.

BLESSING

Mothering God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into life. **Amen.**

SENDING FORTH SONG

Chorus

It is the cry of my heart
To follow You
It is the cry of my heart
To be close to You
It is the cry of my heart
To follow
All of the days of my life

- 2 Open my eyes so I can see
The wonderful things that You do
Open my heart up more and more
And make it wholly devoted to You
Oh oh whoa
All of the days of my life (4X)

Cry of My Heart

- 1 Teach me Your holy ways oh Lord
So I can walk in Your truth
Teach me Your holy ways oh Lord
And make me wholly devoted to You
Oh oh whoa

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Love your neighbor.

Thanks be to God.

The Order of Service is from Evangelical Lutheran Worship which is commended for use in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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Community Announcements

- Following today's Zoom worship service, you're invited to Virtual Coffee Hour, an opportunity to connect with each other for a brief time of small-group fellowship. Friends, family, and first-timers are warmly welcome!

- Bible Study continues to meet on Tuesday mornings at 9:30 am on Zoom. Join us as we explore the texts for the upcoming week.
- Join us this Sunday, Sept 13 as we celebrate the installation of Pastor Ali Tranvik! Drive-by the church parking lot between 12-2 to greet Pastor Ali and Isak, receive an ice cream treat, and drop off school supplies for local students and families. See the green insert for more info!
Attention football fans: *For those who plan to watch the Vikings-Packers game, we've added a half hour to the front end of the Drive-By (thanks for cutting Pastor Ali some slack as she readjusts to living in MN). The Drive-By will now run from 11:30-2. Non-football fans are encouraged to stop by later in that window to help traffic flow. Looking forward to seeing you there!*
- We hold students, families, and teachers in prayer as the new school year begins. If you're interested in supporting students at Progeny Academy this fall through 1:1 tutoring, pen pals, etc., please let Pastor Ali know.
- Cheer on the Cross of Glory softball team on Monday 9/14 at 8:20 pm at the north field of Evergreen Park. Fans will sit physically distanced - bring your own lawn chair!
- The Glory Banner will resume in October. If you have an article you'd like to submit, please email to Sue (svukelich@crossofglory.us) by September 21, 2020. Thank you!
- Please contact Pastor Ali with any other announcements or pastoral concerns and needs. You can reach her by email (atranvik@crossofglory.us) or phone (763-533-8602).

COVID-19 Task Force Update:

The COVID-19 Task Force has been meeting and is developing a COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan. We are working hard to create a plan that will guide our church community as we begin to assess possibilities for future safe in-person gatherings. This plan is shaped by our values of welcome, neighborly love, and care, informed by guidelines from the ELCA, the Minneapolis Area Synod, the state of Minnesota, and the city of Brooklyn Center, and modeled after the plans of fellow Wildfire churches. Two things you will notice immediately:

- First, while our church building is still essentially closed for in-person gatherings, we have adopted a set of guidelines to be followed whenever essential volunteers or staff are in the building. These include staying home if you are feeling ill or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, signing in and out at the Welcome Center upon arriving and leaving, wearing a mask while in the building (except when leading worship while safely distanced), sanitizing your hands upon entry, maintaining a minimum of 6-ft physical distance, and entering and exiting through marked doors.
- Second is the approval of rotating in lay readers and musicians to take part in our online worship recordings, with appropriate safety guidelines followed.

We look forward to sharing more information in the coming weeks, and we are grateful for your ongoing patience and grace as we navigate these complicated circumstances. As Bishop Ann Svennungsen reminds us, "Our God is a God of faithfulness and steadfast love, and we are a community called and committed to stand with those who are suffering. We're a church that faces challenges together, a church that exists for the sake of the world."

We are grateful to be the church with *you*,

The Cross of Glory COVID-19 Task Force

Mark Trease (Co-chair), Linda Knudsen (Co-chair), Dawn Bailey, Gayle Merritt, Lori Balzer, Brenda Edstrom, Rev. Ali Tranvik