

Order of Worship for 9-26-21 8:30 AM

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Opening Hymn “*Son of God, Eternal Savior*” - Hymn #842

Entrance Psalm:

P: Your name, O LORD, endures forever,

C: Your renown, O LORD, throughout all ages.

P: Praise the LORD! Praise the name of the LORD,

C: give praise, O servants of the LORD,

P: who stand in the house of the LORD,

C: in the courts of the house of our God!

P: Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good;

C: sing to His name, for it is pleasant!

P: Your name, O LORD, endures forever,

C: Your renown, O LORD, throughout all ages.

P: For the LORD will vindicate His people

C: and have compassion on His servants.

ALL: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

P: Your name, O LORD, endures forever,

C: Your renown, O LORD, throughout all ages.

Hymn of Praise “*Voices Raised to You We Offer*” - Hymn #795

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Everlasting Father, source of every blessing, mercifully direct and govern us by Your Holy Spirit that we may complete the works You have prepared for us to do; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever

C: Amen.

Old Testament Reading: Numbers 11:4–6, 10–16, 24–29

R: Now the rabble that was among [the children of Israel] had a strong craving. And the people of Israel also wept again and said, “Oh that we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt that cost nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. But now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at. . .” Moses heard the people weeping throughout their clans, everyone at the door of his tent. And the anger of the LORD blazed hotly, and Moses was displeased. Moses said to the LORD, “Why have you dealt ill with your servant? And why have I not found favor in your sight, that you lay

the burden of all this people on me? Did I conceive all this people? Did I give them birth, that you should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries a nursing child,' to the land that you swore to give their fathers? Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they weep before me and say, 'Give us meat, that we may eat.' I am not able to carry all this people alone; the burden is too heavy for me. If you will treat me like this, kill me at once, if I find favor in your sight, that I may not see my wretchedness." Then the LORD said to Moses, "Gather for me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them, and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you... So Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD. And he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tent. Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. And as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied. But they did not continue doing it. Now two men remained in the camp, one named Eldad, and the other named Medad, and the Spirit rested on them. They were among those registered, but they had not gone out to the tent, and so they prophesied in the camp. And a young man ran and told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp." And Joshua the son of Nun, the assistant of Moses from his youth, said, "My lord Moses, stop them." But Moses said to him, "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!"

R: This is the Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Holy Gospel: Mark 9:38–50

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the ninth chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

P: John said to [Jesus], "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." But Jesus said, "Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work in My name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of Me. For the one who is not against us is for us. For truly I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward. "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.' For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

Response to Jesus' Words (on screen)

Children's Message: (8:30 AM)

Sermon Hymn: *"Jesus Lead Thou On"* - Hymn #718

Sermon: *"On God's Side"* - Mark 9:38-50

A couple of weeks ago, if you wanted to know who was supporting a team, you just had to look around. Iowa State fans were proudly wearing their cardinal and gold, and Iowa fans were wearing black and gold. Yet sometimes it was difficult. If someone was wearing just gold, they could be supporting either team. If they were wearing more neutral colors, it was difficult to tell which team they were cheering for. Even the Iowa State football team on the field wore uniforms that didn't have any cardinal or gold on them, only black and white. But if you wanted to know which side people were on, you watched to see who they cheered for.

The disciples in the Gospel lesson see someone who seems to be on God's side, too, and they question Jesus about him. They've seen someone driving out demons in the name of Jesus, and that's a problem for them for two reasons. The first is that they don't know this guy. They don't know who he is, how he heard about Jesus, or what his credentials are. The second is that he is doing something they were unable to do themselves. They'd failed to drive out a demon themselves, and had to go to Jesus for help. This guy they don't know could do it. They are not overjoyed that Jesus' name has spread so far that people they don't know are calling on it to do miracles. They are just concerned about their own place as Jesus' followers, and this outsider who is showing them up. They know they are on God's side, and this other guy can't be, can he?

When they raise this question, though, they don't speak for God. They speak out of pride and ambition. They speak out of the same pride and ambition that led them to argue about which one of them was the greatest earlier on the road. They speak out of fear, since this unnamed disciple is doing what the main disciples could not.

Jesus knows this unnamed exorcist isn't an imposter. He tells his disciples, "For the one who is not against us is for us." Jesus knows that no one can drive out demons in his name without faith, just as Paul would later write that "no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:3). Jesus knows this man is on God's side because of how he uses his name. Instead of condemning the man like the disciples wanted him to, Jesus commends him.

Who's on God's side? We still face that question. We face it as we watch political drama unfold, with both sides claiming to be on God's side to find out the truth. We face it as religious leaders declare political positions. We face it as we look at the divisions caused by the pandemic and our response to it, divisions over masks and vaccines. We face it as we look at other groups that claim to be acting in Jesus' name. Who's on God's side?

How are you showing that God's on your side? Are you using the name of Jesus to build others up, to pray, praise, and give thanks? Are you using it to glorify God?

Or are you using God's name to make yourself look better? Are you using God's name to make your opinion more believable, or to try to place your opinion above criticism? Are you using God's name to merely add emphasis?

And then the question becomes, is, how does your use of God's name show whose side you are on? Does your use of God's name point people to Jesus, who loves them and cares for them and went to the cross for them and their sins? Or does it point people way from Jesus?

That's why Jesus went to the cross. All the sin of the world, all of the rebelliousness that keeps us from being on God's side, was placed on him there, when he fulfilled the law that reads "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree" (Galatians 3:13). The author of Hebrews also reminds us that "Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood" (Hebrews 13:12). Jesus went away from God's side to be with us, to take the punishment we deserved, so we could be restored to God's side.

During the American Civil War, the fighting was sometimes fiercest because it was between people who claimed to follow the same rules, who had the same ancestry, who thought alike. Both sides were also often Christians, and preachers from both sides could quote scripture passages to show God was on their side. When questioned about this, President Abraham Lincoln replied, "my concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right."

When I was growing up, we went on a lot of field trips. Whenever we went somewhere, our teachers reminded us that we were representing not just ourselves, but our group, our school, and our community. The name of our school, the name of our community, the name of our group went wherever we did, and the impressions we left would follow that name. Were we the group that caused noise complaints in the hotel, or did we leave our rooms better than we found them? What we did represented not just us, but the names that we carried and used.

A few years ago, the Beta Sigs shared an article that reminded the fraternity brothers that they are always wearing the name of their fraternity, or as the article put it, you are always wearing your letters. The article read, in part:

When you go to the grocery store, you represent us. If you fall asleep in class or earn a weak grade, you represent us. When you drive down the road and slow down so a pedestrian can cross the street, you represent us. When you turn 21 and hit the town, you represent us. When you become a leader of another campus organization, you represent us. When you insult someone or talk badly about another fraternity, you represent us. When you break up with someone and make decisions about how you behave during that difficult time, you represent us. When you go on Spring Break, you represent us. When you go home and sit at your mother's dining room table, you represent us. When you get a job and go to work for a company or organization, you represent us. When you commit your life to that special person, someday, you represent us. You are always wearing your letters.

As Christians, we are always wearing our letters. We are always wearing the name of Christ. They may not always be visible. You may not always have a cross around your neck, a WWJD

bracelet on your wrist, a Christian t-shirt on, or a Christian bumper sticker on your car. But when people know who you are and what you believe, your actions reflect the name of Christ. You show which side you're on by what you wear and how you act.

How do we recognize who is on God's side? Those who use God's name correctly, who use it in prayer and praise, not to lie or bolster their image. Those who call on God for forgiveness, who confess their sin and unworthiness. Those who see in Jesus how God came alongside us to teach us and show us how much God loves us. Those who cross man-made lines to share a cool cup of water or a home cooked meal. That's who is on God's side. That's the side we should be on, too.

Prayer of the Church:

P: We hear the words of our lesson this morning from James as we prepare to pray.

Epistle: James 5:13–20

R: Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Prayers

P: Lord in Your mercy . . .

C: hear our prayer.

Admitting Our Sin and Receiving God's Forgiveness

P: We hear these words from James that remind us that as we join in forgiveness You can use us to restore each other to You: "My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins."

C: Christ Jesus we have all gone astray from You. We exchange Your truth for the lies of this world. Forgive us.

P: By the command of My Lord Jesus Christ, I, a called servant of His Word, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Lord's Prayer:

Closing Prayer:

P: God of love, You know our frailties and failings. Give us Your grace to overcome them; keep us from those things that harm us; and guide us in the way of salvation; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen.

Blessing (Pastor)

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: “*Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer*” - Hymn #918

Postlude