

Sebastopol United Methodist Church
Sunday, September 20, 2020 – 16th Sunday after Pentecost

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Order of Worship, including Scripture

Seasonal Theme:

The teaching and ministry of Jesus the Christ.

Theme for the day:

The generosity of God is provided according to our needs and not our merit.

Call to worship:

*(please read the **BOLD** text, aloud or silently as you prefer)*

Pastor: Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name.

People: **Make known among the nations what he has done.**

Pastor: Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of his wonderful acts.

People: **Glory in his holy name.**

Pastor: Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord.

Unison: **Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always. Amen.**

Centering & Prayer of Illumination:

(please read along with Pastor, aloud or silently as you prefer)

O Faithful, Mighty God, empower us with your grace and encourage us with your steadfast love. Fill us with your Spirit, so that your words will be heard and become the light and lamp on our pathways. We will stand firm on the foundation of Christ and as a community of faith, we will be one in your presence and always be faithful in your son Jesus's name. Amen.

Readings from Scripture: **Philippians 1:21-30** **Matthew 20:1-16**

[texts of Scripture follow the service, beginning on page 2]

Message: **GRACE IS FOR ALL !**

Pastoral Prayer

With thanksgiving for God's gifts to us, let us offer ourselves and the fruits of our labor for God's work in the world. Thank you for continuing to send your offerings and pledges by mail.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication:

(please read along with Pastor, aloud or silently as you prefer)

O Gracious God, as we remember your wonderful works we are grateful for your many blessings, and are honored to return these gifts to you. As we return them to you, bless them and send them forth, so that others may be showered with your love and your grace. In faithful trust, we pray in your son Jesus the Christ's name. Amen.

Blessing and Benediction:

Stay firm with the strength of the Holy Spirit.

Stay in love with His Grace.

Stay blessed in God's presence, always.

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Scripture Readings – September 20, 2020

first reading -- **PHILIPPIANS 1:21-30**

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

(reading continues on the next page)

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well— since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

second reading – MATTHEW 20:1-16

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you.

(reading continues on the next page)

Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

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Thank you for worshipping with us today.