

Sebastopol United Methodist Church
Sunday, September 27, 2020 – 17th 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:

God's presence in the times of our severe hardship.

Call to worship:

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

Pastor: Give ear to God's teaching.

People: **We gather to hear the stories of our ancestors.**

Pastor: Incline your ears to parables and dark sayings of old.

People: **We come seeking stories of God's wondrous power.**

Pastor: Tell the coming generations of God's glorious deeds.

People: **We will not hide them from our children.**

Pastor: Come to the fount of living water.

Unison: **We shall drink deeply from the waters of life. Taste the wellspring of our salvation. We gather to worship as people are reborn. Amen.**

Prayers for Children

Centering & Prayer of Illumination:

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

O Faithful and Loving God, when we doubt your strength you assure us, renew us, and love us. You lead us to the foundation of life and affirm us with Christ. You entrust your Son to us in order to receive love everlasting. We are ready to hear your wonderful words and grant that your spirit remain within us, in your mighty name. Amen.

Readings from Scripture: **Philippians 2:1-13** **Matthew 21:23-32**

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

*Message: **ACTION MATTERS!***

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 Generous God, we come with gratefulness for your wonderful works. We thank you for the many blessings received by all of your children. As we are offering these gifts, we remember all the hands and all families who honor their promises to you, so that they may be showered with your love and your grace. We pray with faithful trust in your son Jesus's name. Amen.

Blessing and Benediction:

Stay healthy and be happy.

Be faithful and trust God.

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Scripture Readings – September 27, 2020

*first reading -- **PHILIPPIANS 2:1-13***

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something

to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

second reading – MATTHEW 21:23-32

When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.” So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.

For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

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Thank you for worshipping with us today.