

READINGS FOR September 17, 2017 Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

End each reading with: The Word of the Lord or The Word of God, word of life.

First Reading: Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Second Reading: Romans 14:1-12

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. ⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. ⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written, As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

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."

Prayers of Intercession for September 17, 2017

Pastor: Open to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

Good and gracious God, we pray for the church. Bless the ministries of congregations in our community especially Trinity Lutheran Church of Kalamazoo and Maple City Community Church. Unite us in the proclamation of your life-giving gospel. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for our council, ministry committees, call committee, and all who guide this congregation's ministry. We ask you to prepare a candidate to come to Immanuel as our shepherd and lead us in your work. Lord in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader Creator God, you spoke light into being, you separated the waters, you formed the dry land. Protect and enliven the creation you so love, and make us willing partners in its care. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader: God of the nations, you love all tribes, peoples, and languages. We pray for all who govern. Give them wise and generous hearts for those they serve. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader: Divine Healer, calm the anxiety of those who are wrongly accused, who suffer under crushing debt, or who are in prison. Reassure those who are lonely, impatient, brokenhearted, homebound, hospitalized, or ill, especially Bishop Craig Satterlee, Rev. Fred Overdier, Mike Erdman, Kathy Crouse, Don Boersma, Sandy Altemann, Ken Nash, Julius Nelson, Laura Regas, Mickey Viox (VEE-ox), Lindsay LePow, Sara Collins, Alana Kiple, Dave Regner, Rodney Wailes, Jack Gossett, Jan Sims, Don Kiessel, Nick Popovici (pa-po-vitch), Judy Aebig (A-big), Richard Dale, Steve Stroh, Paul Feickert and our shut-ins, Helen Bahle and Dorothy Stanow. Lord in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader We pray for this assembly; for our guests and visitors, for newcomers to this community, for those who are certain and those who doubt, and for all who seek you in this place. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader: Make us free in your presence to raise to you our individual petitions that we share aloud, or in the silence of our hearts . . . *pause* . . . Lord in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader We remember and give thanks for the faithful of every age who did not live to themselves but lived to you. Raise us with them on the last day. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting the power of Christ and the gifts of the Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.