

AUG 24, 2008 FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

Jesus declares that the church will be built on the rock of Peter's bold confession of faith. God's word of reconciliation and mercy are keys to the church's mission. Paul urges us to not be conformed to this world, but to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, using our individual gifts to build up the body of Christ. From the table we go forth to offer our spiritual worship through word and deed.

**After a moment of silent meditation to prepare ourselves for worship,
we will begin the liturgy.**

*PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Redeemer of the world, we pray that all divisions that separate your people may be healed and that Christians everywhere will grow in holy love towards one another.

Hear us, O God;
Your mercy is great.

God of all, we offer ourselves in service to the world and all our brothers and sisters. Help us to transform creation into your vision of what is good, acceptable, and perfect.
your mercy is great.

Lord of heaven and earth, we pray for those who work for justice and peace in our communities, especially police officers, social workers, and court officials. Protect them and give them strength to advocate for those in need, so that all may enjoy the goodness of your creation. Hear us, O God;
your mercy is great.

Healing Lord, we ask your comforting presence to embrace the dying, hospitalized, and sick. Console the suffering with the knowledge that you are at their side. Hear us, O God;
your mercy is great.

Saving God, we ask you to bless mission congregations and missionaries everywhere. Help this and every congregation to make disciples, having faith

that you call all people to yourself. Hear us, O God;
your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of eternal love, give comfort to all who mourn. Give joy to all who sorrow.
We give thanks for all who have followed your call and who now rest from their
labors. Hear us, O God;
your mercy is great.

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in
your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lector: Please read the introduction, then the citation (i.e.. “The First Reading is from..... chapter of, verses” then the text.)

OLD TESTAMENT READING - Exodus 1:8—2:10

The brave Hebrew midwives defied Pharaoh to save many infants from death. When the mother of Moses placed him in a basket in the Nile, the daughter of Pharaoh found him, adopted him, and brought him up. But the sister of Moses and his mother played crucial roles in this drama.

Exodus 1:8—2:10

Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, When you act as midwives to the Hebrew

women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live. But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?" The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live."

Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it.

When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. "This must be one of the Hebrews' children," she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's

mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, "because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 124

If the LORD had not been on our side,
let Israel now say;
if the LORD had not been on our side,
when enemies rose up against us,
then would they have swallowed us up alive
in their fierce anger toward us;

**then would the waters have overwhelmed us
and the torrent gone over us;**

then would the raging waters
have gone right over us.

Blessed be the LORD

who has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.

We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler;
the snare is broken, and we have escaped.

**Our help is in the name of the LORD,
the maker of heaven and earth.**

NEW TESTAMENT READING

In response to God's merciful activity, we are to worship by living holistic, God-pleasing lives. Our values and viewpoints are not molded by this age, but are transformed by the Spirit's renewing work. God's grace empowers different forms of service among Christians, but all forms of ministry function to build up the body of Christ.

Romans 12:1–8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God — what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.