

July 11th, 2010 Seventh Sunday After Pentecost

Introduction to the Day

To love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind is to reflect God's mercy in responding to one's neighbor. That mercy found its most profound expression in the "gospel that has come to you"—namely the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That gospel mercy comes to us again today: at the font, at the altar, and from the pulpit. It is very near to you.

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

Prayers of the People

Gathered together as God's people in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

Holy, loving God, spread your mercy to all corners of your church, and unite all traditions and peoples in Christ's mission. Bind us together in a spirit of service to you and love toward others. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Soften the impact of storms that batter coastlines in this season. Give early warning through people who watch the weather and quick recovery through those who respond to disasters. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Foster goodwill among all tribes and peoples. Foster in us a spirit of loving care and concern for all who inhabit the earth, and help us come to the aid of those who are not like us. Grant us a vision of your reign as we see people working in cooperation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Attend to the needs of all who live in fear, injury, and uncertainty. Give them peace by surrounding them with caring helpers who extend fullness of life through their love of God and neighbor. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Open the hearts of this congregation to all who come seeking Christ. Lead us to extend hospitality to all visitors, as Christ welcomes us into his presence. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Rejoicing in the lives of the faithful departed, give us a full measure of the love you have for all the saints. Make us bear fruit as witnesses to your goodness for all people. 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.

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

First Reading - *Amos, a shepherd from the southern village of Tekoa, is called by God to preach against Israel, the Northern Kingdom, in a time of economic prosperity. Today's reading illustrates how Amos's stinging criticism of Israel alienated him from those in authority, including King Jeroboam and the priest Amaziah.*

Amos 7:7–17

This is what he showed me: the LORD was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. And the LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the LORD said,

"See, I am setting a plumb line
in the midst of my people Israel;
I will never again pass them by;
the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate,
and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste,
and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very center of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos has said,

'Jeroboam shall die by the sword,
and Israel must go into exile
away from his land.'"

And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'

"Now therefore hear the word of the LORD.

You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel,

and do not preach against the house of Isaac.'
Therefore thus says the LORD:
'Your wife shall become a prostitute in the city,
and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword,
and your land shall be parceled out by line;
you yourself shall die in an unclean land,
and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land.'"

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 82

God stands to charge the divine council assembled,
giving judgment in the midst of the gods:

**"How long will you judge unjustly,
and show favor to the wicked?**

Save the weak and the orphan;
defend the humble and needy;

**rescue the weak and the poor;
deliver them from the power of the wicked.**

They do not know, neither do they understand; they wander about in
darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

**Now I say to you, 'You are gods,
and all of you children of the Most High;**

nevertheless, you shall die like mortals,
and fall like any prince.'"

**Arise, O God, and rule the earth,
for you shall take all nations for your own.**

Second Reading - *The letter to the Colossians was written to warn its readers of various false teachings. The first part of the letter is an expression of thanks for the faith, hope, and love that mark this community, including a prayer for strength and courage from Paul.*

Colossians 1:1–14

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,
To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, and he has

made known to us your love in the Spirit.

For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

* **Gospel Reading** - *Jesus is challenged to explain what is involved in obeying the greatest commandment. Jesus tells a parable rich in surprises: those expected to show pity display hard hearts while the lowly give and receive unexpected and lavish mercy.*

Luke 10:25–37

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live." But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.