

Worship Plan - Church Year A

2022-2023



Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 15) - 8/20/2023

SERIES THEME

THE CHURCH GOD WANTS

“I want a church that...” How would you complete that statement? Would you focus on size—big or small? Would you think more about style—formal versus laid back? Is it certain desired church programs that come to mind? What exactly do you want in a church?

In this worship series, we see that that is not the right question. Scripture says Jesus bought the Church with his blood. So, the right question then becomes: what does God want in a church? You might find a church that runs all the youth programs you want or has a vibe that you enjoy or is in your ideal location. But if that church is not doing what Christ wants it do, then it really is not a spiritually healthy place to be. So, let us think about the church God wants. What does it look like? What are its priorities? What does it all do? Our worship follows this pattern:

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost – A Church for All People
Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost – A Church That Really Knows Jesus
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost – A Church That Takes Up Its Crosses
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost – A Church Willing to Say Hard Things
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost – A Church That’s Quick to Forgive

THEME OF THE DAY

A CHURCH FOR ALL PEOPLE

“All are welcome!” Is that true at our church? Historically, it rarely is true. In the gospels, the average Jewish person would have thought it odd, even offensive, if someone who wasn’t an Israelite walked into their place of worship. Taking it a step further, some of the Jewish religious leaders would imply that church was meant for those who zealously followed religious customs and traditions. Those were “good church folk.” So church was meant for people of the right heritage and who behaved the right way. What about us? Is it conceivable that a stranger could walk into our church and for some reason you would ask yourself, “What is someone like that doing here?” Or, just perhaps, you are asking that question about yourself? “There are some seemingly godly people here. I’m not like them. Do I really belong?”

Today, Jesus shows us that God wants church to be for all people. All of us—regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, or social status—have the same problem of sin. And we all have the same Savior. Therefore, anyone who comes to Christ’s Church and cries out, “Lord, have mercy!” is more than welcome.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 56:1, 6-8 – Through Isaiah the LORD told the world that all God-fearing people would have a place in the house of his Church.

SECOND READING

Ephesians 2:13-22 – Christ takes foreigners and strangers and, upon the foundation of God’s Word, builds them into a holy temple—his Church.

GOSPEL

***Matthew 15:21-28 – In the face of Jesus’ test a Canaanite woman demonstrates great faith, proving that God’s Church is meant for all people.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Conservative:

The Service (hymn tune canticles)

Ambitious:

Opening Hymn:

914 - Christ Is Our Cornerstone

Psalm of the Day:

67

Gospel Acclamation Proper Verse:

Alleluia. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. Alleluia.

Gospel Acclamation setting:

Additional Settings in Service Builder

Hymn of the Day:

855 The Church's One Foundation

Third Hymn or Distribution Hymn:

768 - Lord of All Nations, Grant Me Grace

Closing Hymn:

860 - In Christ There Is No East or West

Optional New Hymns, perhaps requiring advance preparation/cantors:

Notes for the conservative service:

Notes for the ambitious service:

Worship Plan - Church Year A 2022-2023



Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 16) - 8/27/2023

SERIES THEME

THE CHURCH GOD WANTS

“I want a church that...” How would you complete that statement? Would you focus on size—big or small? Would you think more about style—formal versus laid back? Is it certain desired church programs that come to mind? What exactly do you want in a church?

In this worship series, we see that that is not the right question. Scripture says Jesus bought the Church with his blood. So, the right question then becomes: what does God want in a church? You might find a church that runs all the youth programs you want or has a vibe that you enjoy or is in your ideal location. But if that church is not doing what Christ wants it do, then it really is not a spiritually healthy place to be. So, let us think about the church God wants. What does it look like? What are its priorities? What does it all do?

THEME OF THE DAY

A CHURCH THAT REALLY KNOWS JESUS

Jesus asked, “Who do you say that I am?” Make no mistake. That is the most important question in the world. And it is a question every human must answer. A complimentary answer can still be dead wrong. Some in Jesus’ day thought he was John the Baptist or the prophet Elijah come back from the dead. Complimentary, but dead wrong. Today plenty of people believe Jesus existed. They believe he was a wise teacher or a role model for love. Complimentary, but dead wrong if missing the main point.

Jesus is both Lord and Savior, the Messiah, the Son of the living God. This truth is the core of saving faith. It is the central message God has called our church to proclaim. What does God want in a church? He wants a church that really knows Jesus.

FIRST READING

***Exodus 34:5-9 – God proclaimed to Moses what he was like. Likewise, the Church’s job is to proclaim to the world who Christ is and what he is like.

SECOND READING

Romans 10:5-13 – St. Paul teaches that those who know in their heart that Jesus is both Lord and Savior will be saved. They really know Jesus.

GOSPEL

Matthew 16:13-20 – The truth upon which God builds his Church is this: Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Conservative:

Setting 3

Ambitious:

Opening Hymn:

869 - Onward, Christian Soldiers

Psalm of the Day:

138

Gospel Acclamation Proper Verse:

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

Gospel Acclamation setting:

Setting 3

Hymn of the Day:

510 In Christ Alone

Third Hymn or Distribution Hymn:

*899 - Lord Jesus Christ, Our Savior-King

Closing Hymn:

607 - Ten Thousand Reasons

Optional New Hymns, perhaps requiring advance preparation/cantors:

607 - Ten Thousand Reasons

Notes for the conservative service:

Notes for the ambitious service:

Worship Plan - Church Year A 2022-2023



Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 17) - 9/3/2023

SERIES THEME

THE CHURCH GOD WANTS

“I want a church that...” How would you complete that statement? Would you focus on size—big or small? Would you think more about style—formal versus laid back? Is it certain desired church programs that come to mind? What exactly do you want in a church?

In this worship series, we see that that is not the right question. Scripture says Jesus bought the Church with his blood. So, the right question then becomes: what does God want in a church? You might find a church that runs all the youth programs you want or has a vibe that you enjoy or is in your ideal location. But if that church is not doing what Christ wants it do, then it really is not a spiritually healthy place to be. So, let us think about the church God wants. What does it look like? What are its priorities? What does it all do?

THEME OF THE DAY

A CHURCH THAT TAKES UP ITS CROSSES

Some churches teach that if one follows God, God responds by granting prosperity and peace. Today Jesus teaches that is nonsense. The Son of God tells us that if we are his disciple, if we are part of his Church, we will have to bear crosses. Believers will suffer in this world, oftentimes for no other reason than they are believers. It is painful to struggle against the temptations and priorities of this world. It can be agonizing to face the same scorn and ridicule Jesus faced.

Why bother? We carry our crosses in gratitude for Jesus carrying his cross, one too heavy for us to bear because it was weighted down with our sin. We carry our crosses because we know that in those moments of struggle, we are forced to turn to Christ and rely on his strength. The church takes up its crosses, because this is the Christian path, the one Jesus himself walked: first the cross, then the crown.

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 15:15-21 – When the prophet Jeremiah grew tired of carrying his cross and complained, the LORD called on him to repent and promised salvation.

SECOND READING

Romans 8:18-25 – St. Paul teaches God’s Church that no cross can compare with the crown of glory that is waiting.

GOSPEL

***Matthew 16:21-26 – Jesus calls his Church to walk in his path: first comes the cross, then comes the crown.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Conservative:

Setting 3

Ambitious:

Opening Hymn:

600 - All Praise to Him

or

601 - All People That on Earth Do Dwell

Psalm of the Day:

31

Gospel Acclamation Proper Verse:

Alleluia. Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. Alleluia.

Gospel Acclamation setting:

Setting 3

Hymn of the Day:

694 Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken

Third Hymn or Distribution Hymn:

831 - Why Should Cross and Trial Grieve Me

Closing Hymn:

867 - Afflicted Saint, to Christ Draw Near (esp v. 4)

Optional New Hymns, perhaps requiring advance preparation/cantors:

600 - All Praise to Him

867 - Afflicted Saint, to Christ Draw Near

Notes for the conservative service:

600 - may not need introduction but prob wouldn't be a bad idea to introduce a stanza

867 is simple tune and may not need intro

Notes for the ambitious service:

Worship Plan - Church Year A 2022-2023



Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 18) - 9/10/2023

SERIES THEME

THE CHURCH GOD WANTS

“I want a church that...” How would you complete that statement? Would you focus on size—big or small? Would you think more about style—formal versus laid back? Is it certain desired church programs that come to mind? What exactly do you want in a church?

In this worship series, we see that that is not the right question. Scripture says Jesus bought the Church with his blood. So, the right question then becomes: what does God want in a church? You might find a church that runs all the youth programs you want or has a vibe that you enjoy or is in your ideal location. But if that church is not doing what Christ wants it do, then it really is not a spiritually healthy place to be. So, let us think about the church God wants. What does it look like? What are its priorities? What does it all do?

THEME OF THE DAY

A CHURCH WILLING TO SAY HARD THINGS

Imagine, late one night, you notice the house across the street is on fire. You see no activity inside. You say to yourself, “Pounding on the door in the middle of the night might scare the family. I’m sure they’ll realize what’s going on eventually.” Ridiculous! You would never do that! To let a family sleep while flames surround them would be cruel. Your inaction would make you a killer. The truth is you would pound on their door at 3:00 AM, screaming. You would throw a brick through their front window if that was what it took to warn them. You would not care if it startled the family. This is a matter of life and death! Love compels you to do whatever it takes.

God wants the people of his church to be willing to say hard things to people when that is what is necessary to save them from an even worse type of fire. Warning against sin is not easy. It upsets people, even offends them. But saying hard things is the loving thing to do when it is a matter of eternal life and death.

FIRST READING

Ezekiel 33:7-11 – The LORD told the prophet Ezekiel if he didn’t warn the Israelites about their sin, he was going to hold Ezekiel accountable for their blood.

SECOND READING

***Galatians 2:11-16 – Paul is put in the uncomfortable position of having to confront Cephas (also known as Peter). In doing so, Paul wins Peter over to the truth of the gospel.

GOSPEL

Matthew 18:15-20 – Jesus teaches us how to lovingly practice Christian discipline as we seek to win our straying brother or sister over.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Conservative:

Setting 3

Ambitious:

Opening Hymn:

839 - Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

Psalm of the Day:

32

Gospel Acclamation Proper Verse:

Alleluia. God wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. Alleluia.

Gospel Acclamation setting:

Setting 3

Hymn of the Day:

654 Jesus Sinners Does Receive

Third Hymn or Distribution Hymn:

*559 - If Your Beloved Son, O God

Closing Hymn:

926 - Lead Me, Lord

Optional New Hymns, perhaps requiring advance preparation/cantors:

926 - Lead Me, Lord

Notes for the conservative service:

926 would be good to learn as a repertory closing hymn for a congregation; for introduction, its brevity means it could be sung twice with cantor/small group singing the first time

Notes for the ambitious service:

Worship Plan - Church Year A 2022-2023



Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 19) - 9/17/2023

SERIES THEME

THE CHURCH GOD WANTS

“I want a church that...” How would you complete that statement? Would you focus on size—big or small? Would you think more about style—formal versus laid back? Is it certain desired church programs that come to mind? What exactly do you want in a church?

In this worship series, we see that that is not the right question. Scripture says Jesus bought the Church with his blood. So, the right question then becomes: what does God want in a church? You might find a church that runs all the youth programs you want or has a vibe that you enjoy or is in your ideal location. But if that church is not doing what Christ wants it do, then it really is not a spiritually healthy place to be. So, let us think about the church God wants. What does it look like? What are its priorities? What does it all do?

THEME OF THE DAY

A CHURCH THAT'S QUICK TO FORGIVE

“Pay it forward.” That phrase means that when someone does something for you, instead of paying that person back directly, you pass along kindness to another person instead. Doing something kind for someone else is a way of thanking the person who originally did something kind for you.

Today God applies that concept to forgiveness. God forgave our countless sins. He was willing to pay an incomprehensible price—the death of his Son. Obviously, we will never have occasion do the same for God. We will never have to forgive God because everything he does for us shows perfect love and care. God never wrongs us. But others may do us wrong. Others may cause us pain. And when we are quick to forgive, it is one way we thank God for being so quick to forgive us. This is what God wants in his Church—people who, like him, are quick to forgive.

FIRST READING

***Genesis 50:15-21 – Joseph’s brothers had treated him badly. Joseph was quick to forgive them and free them from the prison of their past.

SECOND READING

Ephesians 4:29-5:2 – St. Paul teaches that kindness, compassion, and forgiveness are marks of God’s Church.

GOSPEL

Matthew 18:21-35 – Through a parable Jesus teaches that the ability to forgive others comes when the Spirit enables us to understand how much God has forgiven us.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Conservative:

Setting 3

Ambitious:

Opening Hymn:

579 - His Mercy Is More

Psalm of the Day:

103

Gospel Acclamation Proper Verse:

Alleluia. Bear with each other and forgive one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. Alleluia.

Gospel Acclamation setting:

Setting 3

Hymn of the Day:

587 Come Down, O Love Divine

Third Hymn or Distribution Hymn:

733 - Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive

Closing Hymn:

731 - Oh, How Good It Is

Optional New Hymns, perhaps requiring advance preparation/cantors:

579 - His Mercy Is More

731 - Oh, How Good It Is

Notes for the conservative service:

579 - may be good to introduce; make sure to clarify music path, per note in hymnal pew edition

731 - prob doesn't need introduction anymore

Notes for the ambitious service: