

This Week at Grace
Sunday, November 12, 2006
The Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

INTRODUCTION

All that we have—our lives, families, possessions, labor, and talents—comes from God and belongs to God. From the Christian perspective, we are not owners but stewards of all that the Creator has given us. And all that we have is given to us for the good of others. The divine economy works with equity for all, a hand always open to the poor, the outcast, and the forgotten ones. God's bounty gives us the grace to hold nothing back in serving God.

FIRST READING 1 Kings 17:8–16

The books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings present a theological perspective derived from the book of Deuteronomy. One of the basic themes of this theological perspective is that faithful obedience to God's Law brings blessing while disobedience brings curse. Today's reading dramatizes God's power over nature to reward obedience to the Law (survival) and to punish disobedience (drought).

⁸ Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, ⁹ Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you. ¹⁰ So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, "Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink." ¹¹ As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, "Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand." ¹² But she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die." ¹³ Elijah said to her, "Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son." ¹⁴ For thus says the LORD the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the LORD sends rain on the earth." ¹⁵ She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. ¹⁶ The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah.

PSALM *Psalm 146*

The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down. (Ps. 146:8)

Hal- | lelujah!

Praise the LORD, | O my soul!

² I will praise the LORD as long | as I live;

I will sing praises to my God while I | have my being.

³ Put not your | trust in rulers,

in mortals in whom there | is no help.

⁴ When they breathe their last, they re- | turn to earth,

and in that day | their thoughts perish.

⁵ Happy are they who have the God of Jacob | for their help,

whose hope is in the | LORD their God;

⁶ who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that | is in them;

who keeps promis- | es forever;

⁷ who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to | those who hunger.

The LORD sets the cap- | tive free.

⁸ The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who | are bowed down;

the LORD | loves the righteous.

⁹ The LORD cares | for the stranger;

the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way | of the wicked.

¹⁰ The LORD shall | reign forever,

your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. | Hallelujah!

SECOND READING *Hebrews 9:24–28*

The letter to the Hebrews describes Christ as a high priest who offers himself as a sacrifice for our sin. Christ does not die again and again each year. He has died once, is alive with God, and will reveal himself on the last day.

²⁴ For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made by human hands, a mere copy of the true one, but he entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. ²⁵ Nor was it to offer himself again and again, as the high priest enters the Holy Place year after year with blood that is not his own; ²⁶ for then he would have had to suffer again and again since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to remove sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁷ And just as it is appointed for mortals to die once, and after that the judgment, ²⁸ so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

GOSPEL *Mark 12:38–44*

After engaging in a series of public arguments with religious leaders in the temple, Jesus

contrasts the proud and evil ways of those leaders with the sacrificial humility and poverty of the widow.

³⁸ As he taught, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, ³⁹ and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! ⁴⁰ They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

⁴¹ He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴² A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. ⁴³ Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. ⁴⁴ For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

THIS WEEK AT GRACE

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| TODAY: | 8:30a | and 11:00a | Worship Services |
| | 9:30a | | Coffee Fellowship |
| | 9:45a | | Sunday School/Education Hour |
| MONDAY: | 7:30p | | Cantori Rehearsal |
| TUESDAY: | 9:00a | | Staff Meeting |
| | 9:30a | | Ladies Bible Study |
| | 11:00a | | Pastor's Text Study |
| | 2:30p | | 3-D Meeting |
| | 6:30p | Circle | Bible Study Leaders |
| Meeting | 6:30 or 7:00p | | Ministry Team Meetings |
| | 7:30p | | Altar Guild Meeting |
| | 8:00p | | Church Council Meeting |
| WEDNESDAY: | | | <i>December Newsletter Deadline</i> |
| | 9:00a | | Sewing Day |
| | 5:00p | | Chew-n-Chat |
| | 5:30p | | Cherub/Chancel Choirs |
| | 6:30p | | 7 th -8 th gr. Confirmation |
| | 6:30p | | 9 th gr. Confirmation |
| | 6:30p | | Bells of Praise |
| | 7:30p | | Adult Choir |
| THURSDAY: | 6:00a | | Early Morning Bible Study |
| | 2:30p | | Sr. Tower Friendship Group |
| | 7:00p | | New Member Orientation Meeting |
| | 7:00p | | Evening Bible Study |

FRIDAY: 1:30p ThorneCrest Bible Study
3:30p Youth Room for 4th-6th Graders

NEXT SUNDAY: *GLCW Appreciation / Thankoffering*
Sunday
8:30a and 11:00a Worship Services
9:30a Coffee Fellowship
9:45a Sunday School / Education Hour
2:00p Girl Scout Meeting
7:00p Becknell Duo in Concert

MISSIONARY FOR A DAY: [Nov. 12: Given by Pastor Milt & Delores Ost.] [Nov. 12: Sunday School] [Nov. 12: In honor of Pastor Ost on his birthday given by Babe & Lois Brandt.] [Nov. 15: GLCW].

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS our members and friends known to have been hospitalized this past week: (no one reported).

PLEASE REMEMBER those needing the continuing prayers of our congregation: Ella Anderson (granddaughter of Dan & Bonnie Anderson), Janice Anderson, Larry Bergo, Kathy Diaz, Mark Fisher (father of Lynn Stadheim), Theresa Gamble, Dan Hagen, Tara Hanson, April Hustoft, Marlys Jahnke, Lucille Kittelson, Anna Kycek, Conrad & Rose Masyga (parents of Kris Heine), Vern Nasby, DeAnna Nelson, LeMoyne Oakland, Marian Odson, Lissa Parrish, Joyce Schreiber, Sally Skrlin, LaVon Stewart, Marliss Sward (sister of Marlene Sorenson), Sally Witham (mother of Greg Witham), and Eleanor Wolfe.

WE NEED YOUR HELP! We believe there are many times when we are unaware that someone is in the hospital. This can happen for a number of reasons. You don't want to bother the pastors. You enter through emergency or urgent care. You think your name is being placed on the list we have access to and it does not get on the list for some reason. It is our desire to provide pastoral care to all who are hospitalized for whatever reason. Please help us by letting us know you are in the hospital or will be hospitalized. Thank you for your help! -- Pastors John and Todd

FUNDRAISING CONTINUES! Youth attending next summer's servant trip to Appalachia are selling holiday cut-out cookie dough (cookies ready to bake and decorate) and sensational frozen soup. You may choose from cheddar vegetable, New England clam chowder, cream of broccoli w/cheese, vegetable beef, chicken noodle, cream of potato, and chicken w/wild rice. All of these items are perfect for your busy Christmas schedules. The youth are selling these items through tomorrow, Nov. 13th, with delivery to the church set for Wednesday, Nov. 29th.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY is dedicating it's latest home this afternoon at 2:00p,

located at 239 S. Pearl St. (near Trinity Lutheran Church) here in Albert Lea. The walls of this home were constructed by youth at Good Earth Village as part of the Youth Servant Leader Institute program. Hundreds of volunteers from the Albert Lea area helped to complete the home. All are welcome.

SR. HIGH YOUTH – YOU ARE SO INVITED!

It is time to get the Grace Lutheran Sr. High Bible Study going again, and we can't do it without you! Youth who have been confirmed are invited to come and explore our faith and spend time together on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 until 7:30/8:00 (first meeting, Nov. 29th in the Youth Room). If you have any questions, contact Denae, and by all means if you have a friend interested in coming as well – invite them along!

DON'T HAVE TO BAKE – BUT GIVE LIKE YOU DID!

GLCW will be holding a "No Bake" Bake Sale next Sunday, Nov. 19th, GLCW Appreciation Day. Please consider donating the amount you would normally put on your donated baked good to sell at a traditional bake sale. Cake pans will be used as collection plates and will be part of the GLCW display in the narthex. This "bake sale" is to help raise funds for the GLCW general budget. The GLCW Board voted to hold this fundraiser instead of participating in the September Mall Charity Day fundraiser (because of the poor customer outcome last year) in hopes to make more money for our 2007 budget.

DON'T FORGET – your Thankoffering Boxes will be collected next Sunday, Nov. 19th.

ALTAR GUILD MEETING: Tuesday, 7:30p

Altar Guild will meet Tuesday evening, Nov. 14th, 7:30p, in the altar area and will be decorating the altar for Thanksgiving. Guild members and any congregational members who would like to share items for decorating (apples, squash, potatoes, flowers, etc.) are asked to bring items to the Altar Guild Room on the east side of the Sanctuary before 7:00p on Tuesday.

THURSDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY CONTINUES

We will meet each Thursday evening through Dec. 14th, except for Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 23rd). Please join us as we study the culture and struggles during the era of the Apostle Paul's ministry, and take a look at what was his first preserved document (1 Thessalonians) and his last (Romans).

BECKNELL DUO IN CONCERT: Next Sunday, Nov. 19th, 7:00p

LaJuanda Menssen (violinist) and Hollie Shaver (pianist) founded the Becknell Duo this spring in the metropolitan Atlanta area. Their mission is to extend their love of music to the world through quality performance and educational outreach. Their inaugural season has included performances, lectures, and clinics at schools, churches, and their private teaching studios. The concert will include J.S. Bach's second suite for unaccompanied viola and Johannes Brahms's second sonata for viola and piano, along with Rebecca Clarke's *Passacaglia on an Old English Tune*. (LaJuanda Menssen is married to Jason Menssen, son of Grace members, Allen & Judy Menssen.) The concert is free and open to the public. (A freewill offering to help defray transportation expenses will be received.)

Please join the Becknell Duo for an enlightening and enjoyable evening of chamber music!

GRACIOUS CHRISTIANITY MEETING: Tuesday, Nov. 21st, 7:00p

The next gathering of the Gracious Christianity group will be held Tues., Nov. 21st, 7:00p, at the home of David & Carol Larson (111 South Lane). We will be looking at how Jesus might handle the sentencing of Saddam Hussein, and capital punishment in general. Come join the discussion as we enjoy the pursuit of, and seek to understand, the radical Jesus, our Lord! Please come, and bring a friend! Questions? Call David (377-3561), or Mary (373-1727).

COULD YOU HELP? Grace Lutheran will be serving coffee at St. John's Home on Sunday afternoon, Nov. 26th. We are asked to provide assorted desserts, along with two workers to serve that day. Sign-up sheets are located in the narthex this morning. Your help would brighten the holiday season for many residents and their families.

THE MEAL MINISTRY VOLUNTEERS have met and are in the process of developing the service delivery model. The plan is to begin the ministry in early December. Additional information will be made available to the congregation at that time. We are excited to be able to offer this service for individuals and families in times of need.

THE GLCW CHRISTMAS PARTY is coming. Please mark your calendars and save the date. On Thursday, Dec. 7th, all Grace members (male and female, young and old) and their friends are invited to hear the Albert Lea High School Chorale, join in a Christmas devotional, sing some Advent songs, and share in warm fellowship. There will be Christmas treats following the program and meeting. Hope to see you there!

GIVING AT GRACE:

The Property and Finance Ministry appreciates your generous support.
Your faithful stewardship is essential for us to continue to support our ministries at Grace.

| | Sunday, Nov. 5th | <u>Year to Date</u> |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| General Fund Giving | \$ 10,617.00 | \$ 417,052.00 |
| Budgeted Need | \$ 9,803.00 | \$ 431,332.00 |
| Quarters for World Hunger | \$ 54.00 | \$ 2,264.25 |
| Stones, Rocks, Boulders Fund | \$ 177.00 | |

Attendance Last Sunday - 448; Last Year - 522