

**Welcome to
Crestholme Presbyterian Church
14th Sunday after Pentecost
September 11, 2022**

At the *, please stand, if you are able.
Large Print Hymnals, Bibles, and Hearing Assist Devices are available upon request.

Gather for Worship

PRELUDE **"Our Blest Redeemer, Ere He Breathed"**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qQGGQXljqw>

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP "Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty"

Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CV7NwD0K6mc>

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: O God, you have searched us and known us.

All: You know when we sit down and when we rise up.

Leader: You discern our thoughts from far away.

All: Before a word is on our tongues, Lord, you know it completely.

Leader: Such knowledge is too wonderful for us, and so we humble ourselves in worship.

All: In this hour, search us and know our hearts, O God, and lead us in the way everlasting.

OPENING PRAYER

Storytelling God, we gather in your presence this day, called by the stories of your people over the centuries. You are the source of wisdom we seek. Your mercy eases the troubles that stir our hearts. And we come to praise you, for your stories have the power to challenge us and change us. Draw near to us as we draw near to you this day. Tell us the stories that will change our lives, through the grace of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

*** OPENING HYMN** **"Come Sing, O Church in Joy"** **Blue Hymnal #430**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DsmeJ79lnm0>

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We gather in your name Jesus to hear the stories you told, to gain wisdom, and to know your Spirit's guidance. Yet we confess that pride prevents us from hearing the good news and that we resist the power of your Word to change us. Forgive what we have been, help us amend who we are, and set us free to be who you have called us to be. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

St Paul asked, "Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ – and Christ died for us; Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us." Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and set free by God's most generous grace.

*** GLORIA PATRI**

Blue Hymnal #579

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUBxpypSblw>

*** SHARE THE PEACE OF CHRIST (From your seats, please)**

Leader: Peace be with you!

All: And also with you!

Leader: As God's forgiven people, share the peace of Christ with each other.

CHILDREN'S TIME

Books of the New Testament Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R8njRidwOhM>

Hear the word of God

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Lord, your words are spirit and they are spiritually discerned. We receive the Holy Spirit whom you have sent to open our ears to hear, our eyes to see, and our hearts to obey. Father, in the name of Jesus we thank you. Amen.

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+4%3A11-12%2C+22-28&version=NIV>

SECOND READING

Psalms 14

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+14&version=NIV>

CHORAL ANTHEM

"It Is No Secret What God Can Do"

Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KWT8BjS4aw0>

NEW TESTAMENT READING

1 Timothy 1:12-17

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Timothy+1%3A12-17&version=NIV>

GOSPEL READING

Luke 15:1-10

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+15%3A1-10&version=NIV>

SERMON

The Wrath of God

Fred Archer

Written by the Rev. Kirk Alan Kubicek

Perhaps it helps us to remember that the fourteenth chapter of Luke concludes, "Let anyone with ears to hear *listen!*" Then we hear, "All the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to *listen* to Jesus." Tax collectors were reviled because in the depressed economy of first-century Israel under Roman occupation, some of the people had taken the only jobs they could find: collecting taxes for the

emperor. For this, they were reviled and seen as traitors. As to sinners, well, Jeremiah 4 and Psalm 14 pretty well sum things up with phrases such as: "They are skilled in doing evil, but do not know how to do good," "My people are foolish, they do not know me," "The Lord looks down from heaven upon us all, to see if there is any who is wise, if there is one who seeks after God. Every one has proved faithless; all alike have turned bad."

The only comfort in such pronouncements is that we are all in this together! What is interesting in these little parabolic stories in Luke 15 is that some new folks are drawing near "to listen": the Pharisees and scribes, that is those who most often challenge Jesus to test and sniff out his orthodoxy. They have yet to grasp that we are all in this together and sneer, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them." Perhaps Jesus tells these stories as he notices that his simple practice of hospitality toward all persons has attracted a new group of listeners!

A sheep and a coin are lost. Their owners go to great lengths to find them, presumably a shepherd, which were most often men, and a housewife, a woman. Shepherds had particularly nasty reputations and were considered so outside the boundaries of civil life that they were not allowed to testify in legal proceedings. And yet, in Luke's story of Jesus, they are the first to announce, to testify, to the birth of the Christ child!

Going to the heart of these stories, the shepherd and the woman play the part of God. Despite the ongoing angst of some at having to admit it, the Bible frequently depicts God as a woman: as a mother nursing her child, as a mother hen gathering her chicks, and as this woman searching for a lost sinner. God is depicted as a woman! And here Jesus tells us what the parables are about: lost sinners are found and God and the angels in heaven rejoice. We might note in both stories the result is the same; both the shepherd and the woman invite all their neighbors, as in all, everyone without qualification, to "Rejoice with me, for I have found [that which] was lost." There is more joy over one sinner who is found than any 99 who have no need for repentance.

There's the rub. We try to understand the joke implied in Jesus' conclusion by making confession every Sunday either in the Eucharist or Morning Prayer. But often, we are like the scribes and Pharisees who think everyone else but them needs to repent, to turn, turn till they "come round right" as the Shaker hymn has it.

We can assume Jesus knows who is surrounding him to listen. The scribes and Pharisees are newly interested. They are sneering at the crowd with no

understanding whatsoever that they are now actually part of the very crowd at which they sneer! Sneering ranks low on the scale of Biblical virtues and high on the scale of sin itself.

There are lessons for all who have ears and listen – really truly listen to what’s going on here. For what we have is a story of God’s unstoppable goodness – God’s unstoppable love and compassion for all people, all creatures, and all creation itself. We are to note the great risk the shepherd takes in leaving the 99 in the wilderness while he pursues his search for the one who is lost – because as anyone who knows anything at all about sheep can tell you, when he gets back they will be as good as gone! Yet he still throws a party for everyone, which no doubt will cost him more than the value of the one sheep he has spent all his energy to find! Perhaps neither the tax collectors nor the sinners are lost, except in the narrow eyes and stereotyping of the scribes and Pharisees.

Similarly, the woman will have had to set aside all her daily household chores. She disrupts the world of her home – and, as extended families tended to live in several attached buildings or tents, the daily life of those in her whole family – just to find the one coin that may not in itself cover the cost for the block and neighborhood party she throws to rejoice!

What these stories are meant to do, by Jesus’ own interpretation, is to contrast the value system of Jesus’ challengers with that of heaven and God and the angels whom Jesus represents. And although the challengers object to the presence of tax collectors and sinners, surely even they would rejoice at one of those who turns, repents, and is found.

Given that Jesus says, “Let those with ears to hear listen,” is it too much to presume that the very presence of tax collectors and sinners who come to listen have made a first step in turning, in repenting? We would be remiss not to note that the parables are in part Jesus’ way of responding to the objections of his challengers in such a way that they might listen and hear – that they might know that there is still room for repentance in their value system to let go of stereotyping others who are not at all like them.

In a world in which demeaning others has become the commonplace, everyday rhetoric of people on all sides of all conflicts, can we place ourselves in this crowd of tax collectors, sinners, Pharisees, and scribes and listen to what is being said?

Until we accept that we are all lost, how can we ever be found? Because the witness of the Biblical story from Genesis to Revelation is that our God is indeed relentlessly compassionate, pursuing us even when we are at our worst.

To recall and slightly amend the words of Maggie Ross, "Christ, give us mercy to bear and accept your Mercy!" For the acceptance of God's mercy, love, and compassion requires us all to turn, to change, to repent of all thoughts and behaviors that stereotype and demean others. For in such turning will be our salvation. And our salvation is a gift from that power that is much greater than we are. And these stories are talking of the salvation of our whole community, the whole world, united in rejoicing that we have all finally turned and abandoned all rhetoric of exclusion!

Thank God for God's wrath, for one day we will be found.

* **HYMN** "Our God, Our Help, In Ages Past" **Blue Hymnal #210**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKP_XxCBDZY

Respond in Love and Service

* **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Leader: Why do we pray to God?

All: Because we were created to live with God, who desires the prayers of our hearts. Our hearts long for God, for we need God's help and guidance every day.

Leader: What do we do when we pray?

All: When we pray, we adore God, we confess our sins, we give God thanks, and we pray for the needs of others and ourselves.

Leader: How did Jesus teach his followers to pray?

All: He taught them the words of the Lord's Prayer.

Leader: What do we mean when we pray to God as "Our Father"?

All: As Jesus taught us, we call upon God like little children who know that God cares for them and loves them. Because Jesus prayed to God as his Father, we too can pray to God in this way.

Leader: What do we mean when we pray to God "in heaven"?

All: We mean that God draws near to us from beyond this world, and hears our prayers.

Leader: What do we ask when we pray "Hallowed be your name"?

All: We pray that God's name will be honored in all the world and everywhere treated as holy, because God's name really stands for God.

PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

In Jesus' parable, the woman who found the lost coin rejoiced over something precious. What we offer to God is precious to us. When we present it to God, God rejoices in our gifts. Let us bless God with our offering.

*** DOXOLOGY**

Blue Hymnal #592

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uyg6-htOtHU>

*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Lord God, receive our gifts offered in a spirit of generosity and humility. Bless and use them for the work that you long to do in the world in Jesus name. Amen.

*** HYMN FOR OUR NATION "Heal Our Land"**

Red Hymnal #800

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTm_rA54EGw

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Ever seeking God, we come before you in prayer,
for you have sought us out and claimed us as your own.
Thank you for showing us how we are precious to you through the life and love of Jesus Christ.
In our prayers we name before you other precious souls and situations.
With your Spirit, seek them out:
God of mercy,

Draw near to all who need you.

We pray for those who feel lost in life: those who are frightened or anxious,
those who are struggling with addiction or mental illness,
and those who are lonely or despairing:

(Silent pause for 10 seconds)

May your reassurance and comfort find them.
God of mercy,

Draw near to all who need you.

We pray for those who have wandered away:
for those separated from their families by conflict or distance;
for those whose relationship with the church is broken or forgotten;
and for those who have given up on the future in despair.

(Silent pause for 10 seconds)

May your healing and mercy find them.
God of mercy,

Draw near to all who need you.

We pray for those who feel forgotten:
for those who think that they are worthless or unloved;
for those who believe that their sins are too great to forgive;
and for those who are convinced that not even God can love them.

(Silent pause for 10 seconds)

May your love and grace find them.
God of mercy,

Draw near to all who need you.

Ever watchful God,
you keep seeking out wandering sheep and lost coins,
lives of all who are precious to you.
Thank you for your attentive love and your patient compassion for us all.
May we rejoice with you when any lost soul is embraced,
and never substitute our judgment of them for yours.
Make us servants of the mercy we meet in Jesus Christ
Who taught us to pray together:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever.

and all God's people say: AMEN.

CHORAL AMEN

Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zoYDislmHs8>

*** CLOSING HYMN "O God of Love, O God of Peace" Blue Hymnal #295**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qSbmGTtWPNk>

*** BENEDICTION**

Go in joy, knowing God rejoices over you; And care for others, knowing God rejoices over them, too! May the blessing of the God who made us, the Christ who mends us, and the Spirit who gives us life be with you now and always. Amen.

**The End of Today's Worship Service – The Beginning of Service
Announcements**

Welcome to worship with us this morning! We're glad that you're here! If you do not have a church home, we invite you to become a part of our compassionate church family... ask Carlos or an Elder about meaningful participation and membership!

Next Sunday Dr. Carlos Baladez will present our next sermon in the series "Knowing God by Name."

Weekly Calendar

TBD	TBD	Food Pantry
TBD	TBD	Clothes Closet
Sunday	10:00 AM	Sunday School
Sunday	11:00 Am	Worship Service

Holy Communion is observed the First Sunday of each month.

Crestholme Presbyterian Church Officers

Session

<u>Class of 2022</u>	<u>Class of 2023</u>	<u>Class of 2024</u>
Irene Thomas	Katie Lamb	Netsy Williamson
Steve Tovar		

Clerk of the Session: Dick Crist
Church Treasurer: Fred Archer

Trustees

<u>Class of 2022</u>	<u>Class of 2023</u>	<u>Class of 2024</u>
Fred Archer	Tommy Rudwick	Penny Christoff

Crestholme Presbyterian Church Staff

Stated Supply Minister	Vacant
Pulpit Supply Preachers	Dr. Carlos Baladez
	Elder Fred Archer
Choir Director	Robin Bernhard
Organist	Cathie Owen
Secretary/Coordinator	Vacant

Membership in the Presbyterian Church is open to those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Every member and officer will be more than happy to visit with you about salvation by faith in Jesus and membership at Crestholme.

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