

Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost

September 19th at 10:00 a.m.

"Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all."

Mark 9:35

Greeting and Welcome

Prelude Music

Call to Worship

Jesus calls us to servant ministry.

We must be willing to help others, not counting the cost or rewards.

Pretense, disharmony, greed have no place in discipleship.

Serving God means receiving each person as though they were a beloved child.

Lord, help us to truly become your disciples.

Create in us hearts for ministries of compassion and kindness.

Opening Prayer

Lord, be with us this day, helping us to put our priorities in order; so that we may faithfully serve you by serving your people. Heal our spirits. Enable us to follow your ways all the days of our lives. Amen.

Opening Hymn of Praise "What Gift Can We Bring" UMH #87. Words and Music: Jane Marshall, 1980. *Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-733303. All rights reserved. Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.*

1. What gift can we bring, what present, what token?

What words can convey it the joy of this day?

**When grateful we come, remembering, rejoicing,
what song can we now offer in honor and praise?**

**2. Give thanks for the past, for those who had vision,
who planted and watered so dreams could come true.**

**Give thanks for the Now, for study, for worship,
for mission that bids us turn prayer into deed.**

**3. Give thanks for tomorrow, full of surprises,
for knowing whatever tomorrow may bring,
the Word is our promise always, forever,
we rest in God's keeping and live in God's love.**

**4. This gift we now bring, this present, this token,
these words can convey it the joy of this day!**

When grateful we come, remembering, rejoicing,

this song we now offer in honor and praise.

Prayer of Confession

God of patience and mercy, we come to you, offering “lip service” to serving you, but when things get difficult; when we are called to do something, which is hard for us, we shy away from the duty and the opportunity. We turn our back on service out of fear of failure. Forgive us, gracious Lord. Heal our fears and our weaknesses. Strengthen us and give us courage to truly be your disciples, not counting the rewards, but rejoicing in the work. In Jesus’ Name, we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance

This day the Lord reaches out to you in healing love and compassion. Receive the blessings which God offers to you. Be healed and made whole. Be ready to serve. Amen.

Responsive Hymn “Make Me A Servant” TFWS #2176. Words and Music: Kelly Willard, 1982. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-733303. All rights reserved. Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.

Make me a servant, humble and meek,
Lord, let me lift up those who are weak.
And may the prayer of my heart always be:
make me a servant, make me a servant,
make me a servant today.

Recognition and Commissioning of Acolytes

Congregational prayer: **O God, who has inspired your people to worship you in the beauty of holiness, grant these acolytes both faithfulness and joy in their appointed tasks, that Christ may be seen in the service they perform. We offer this prayer in His name. Amen.**

Scripture Reading Mark 9:30-37 (NRSV)

They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.” But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.” Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.”

Sermon "True Greatness" Rev. Matthew B. Sergent

Hymn: "Together We Serve" TFWS #2175. Words and Music: Daniel Charles Damon, 1998. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-733303. All rights reserved. Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.

1. Together we serve,
united by love,
inviting God's world to the glorious feast.
We work and we pray
through sorrow and joy,
extending your love to the last and the least.

2. We seek to become
a beacon of hope,
a lamp for the heart and a light for the feet.
We learn, year by year,
to let love shine through
until we see Christ in each person we meet.

3. We welcome the scarred,
the wealthy, the poor,
the busy, the lonely, and all who need care.
We offer a home
to those who will come,
our hands quick to help, our hearts ready to dare.

4. Together, by grace,
we witness and work,
remembering Jesus, in whom we grow strong.
Together we serve
in Spirit and truth,
remembering love is the strength of our song.

Prayers of the People/Lord's Prayer

Sending Forth Hymn "Lord, You Gave the Great Commission" UMH #584. Words: Jeffery Rowthorn, 1978 Music: Cyril V. Taylor, 1941. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-733303. All rights reserved. Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.

1. Lord, you give the great commission:
"Heal the sick and preach the word."
Lest the Church neglect its mission,

and the Gospel go unheard,
help us witness to your purpose
with renewed integrity.
With the Spirit's gifts empower us
for the work of ministry.

2. Lord, you call us to your service:
"In my name baptize and teach."
That the world may trust your promise,
life abundant meant for each,
give us all new fervor,
draw us closer in community.
With the Spirit's gifts empower us
for the work of ministry.

3. Lord, you make the common holy:
"This my body, this my blood."
Let your priests, for earth's true glory,
daily lift life heavenward,
asking that the world around us
share your children's liberty.
With the Spirit's gifts empower us
for the work of ministry.

4. Lord, you show us love's true measure:
"Father, what they do, forgive."
Yet we hoard as private treasure
all that you so freely give.
May your care and mercy lead us,
to a just society.
With the Spirit's gifts empower us
for the work of ministry.

5. Lord, you bless the words assuring:
"I am with you to the end."
Faith and hope and love restoring,
may we serve as you intend,
and, amid the cares that claim us,
hold in mind eternity.
With the Spirit's gifts empower
us for the work of ministry.

Benediction

Go in confidence and peace, joyfully serving the Lord who walks with you. Bring hope to the hopeless, joy to those who sorrow, peace to the afflicted. Be true witnesses to the love of God through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Postlude

Call to Worship, Opening Prayer, Confession, and Benediction taken from Worship Connection, Ministry Matters, by Nancy C. Townley, July 25, 2021.