

# TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—PROPER 16

August 23, 2020 – 9:30 a.m.

## PRELUDE

### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**People: who made heaven and earth.**

Pastor: If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

**People: But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

Pastor: Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

**People: Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

### SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Almighty God, whom to know is everlasting life, grant us to know Your Son, Jesus, to be the way, the truth, and the life that we may boldly confess Him to be the Christ and steadfastly walk in the way that leads to life eternal; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### FIRST READING *Isaiah 51:1–6*

“Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the Lord: look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, that I might bless him and multiply him. For the Lord comforts Zion; he comforts all her waste places and makes her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song. Give attention to me, my people, and give ear to me, my nation; for a law will go out from me, and I will set my justice for a light to the peoples. My righteousness draws near, my salvation has gone out, and my arms will judge the peoples; the coastlands hope for me, and for my arm they wait. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and they who dwell in it will die in like manner; but my salvation will be forever, and my righteousness will never be dismayed.”

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### EPISTLE *Romans 11:33–12:8*

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?” “Or who has

given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **HOLY GOSPEL** *Matthew 16:13–20*

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixteenth chapter.

**People: Glory to You, O Lord.**

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

### **APOSTLES' CREED**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### **SERMON** Matthew 16:18 "On This Rock...."

- I. Important People and Passages
- II. "You are Peter, and on this rock" (18a; 16)
  - What is the "rock?"
  - What does the word "Christ" entail?
  - What does "living" stress?
- III. "I will build" (18b; 17)
  - Who is the builder?
  - What does He use?
  - "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts,

sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.”

IV. “My church” (18c)

- What does the word “church” mean?
- Ephesians 5:25-27: “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word [i.e. baptism!], so that He might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.”

V. “the gates of hell shall not prevail” (18d)

- What is the promise Jesus gives? What are some examples of it?

When you think of the most influential and important person of the last century, who comes to mind? Maybe it is a famous scientist like Albert Einstein, an inventor and entrepreneur like Henry Ford or Bill Gates, or a religious guru like Ghandi. Maybe it is a leader and politician like FDR, Winston Churchill, or the infamous Joseph Stalin. While all good guesses, some argue it is none of them! If it is none of those guys, then who could it possibly be? I’ll give you a hint. First name of the person starts with a “g.” Does that help? I’ll give you another clue. This person’s last name starts with a “p.” The initials “G.P.” Did that help you solve it? Does that ring any bells? If not, that is okay. For a person who is so important, they are a bit obscure. Who is the person I’m talking about? It is Gavrilo Princip. And what is his claim to fame? He assassinated Arch Duke Franz Ferdinand of Austria. Princip’s pull of the pistol on June 28, 1914, started the events that led to World War I, which then set the stage for World War II, and the Cold War. His action inadvertently led to the deaths of over 100 million people, roughly 3% of the world’s population at the time! For such an influential and important person, he is actually quite an after thought. Our Gospel texts for the next two weeks, Matthew 16:13-20 and 21-28, are similar to him. They are important texts, but often are in the shadows, in the background. They can be afterthoughts.

If you were asked to name some important Bible passages, what would say? How would you answer? Maybe you say Genesis 1-3, which is creation and the fall. Maybe you might say the Christmas story in Luke 2, or Lord’s Passion and crucifixion. A resurrection account at the end of the Gospel would be another good choice. Who could fault even a passage like John 3:16, Romans 3:23-24, or the Great Commission in Matthew 28. I would be willing to say that Matthew 16:13-28, probably does not often make this list. But, it should. It deserves to be there.

In 15 verses, we have so much teaching. We learn about Who God is, how He works, and who we are. It talks about salvation, the effects of sin, and discipleship. It teaches about the church, ministry, pastors, the end times, Jesus, and our Savior’s work. It tells about the work of the devil, God’s hiddenness, and Jesus’ death and resurrection. The passage practically touches it all! This passage is important! Today, we’ll focus on just one verse, the most important one in our text. It is verse 18. **“And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”**

Let’s look at the first chunk: **“You are Peter, and on this rock....”** First things first, what is the “rock?” The “rock” is Peter’s confession that he made back in verse 16. There, Jesus was asking His disciples about who people said He was. They answered with John the Baptist, Jeremiah, Elijah, or one of the prophets of old. As Jesus hears their answers, He turns the tables and wants to hear *their* answer. He says, **“But who do you say that I am?”** Peter then steps forward and gives the answer for the ages. When Peter gets it, he gets it. He says, **“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”** That is the rock that Jesus is talking about. The rock is the confession that Jesus is Christ and Son of the Living God. That is what He builds on. This is a loaded confession that Peter gives. It is a literal theological powder keg!

**“You are the Christ.”** “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word “Messiach,” or “Messiah,” which means “anointed one.” The Messiah was the promised Old Testament deliverer Who would save God’s people. The Messiah was the promised King Who would be descended from David and sit on his throne. The Messiah was the promised prophet Who would be like Moses. He is the One Who would gather and restore God’s people, and usher in His reign. The Messiah is the One Who was Isaiah’s Suffering Servant, Jeremiah’s

Branch, Daniel's Son of Man, and the Rock in Zechariah. That is what "Christ" entails. But Peter calls Him more.

"Son of the Living God." Jesus has already been confessed as the Son after He walked on the sea. This shows His identity as true God and true man. But, Peter adds "living." That stresses that He is the source of life. Death has no authority or power over Jesus, and won't! Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ and Son of God. This is the rock that Jesus refers to. That isn't to say that Peter and the apostles aren't important, they are. The focus is on the confession. That is the rock.

**"You are Peter, and on this rock...I will build."** Whenever I have been in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, I have always gone to Point Iroquois Lighthouse. It is a beautiful and neat building. It is a large white home with white bricks, teal trim, and a bright red roof. Next to it towers the white lighthouse tower, almost looking like a spire from a medieval castle. I cannot tell you how many family pictures that have been taken in front of it. While it is a neat building, I find the fence around it just as neat. Around the house and lighthouse tower is a rock and stone fence. In it, there are no two rocks the same. They are all different shapes, oblong, oval, or squarish, and different colors, grey, rust-orange, navy, black, beige, with moss in between and on the mortar. It is a little uneven, but sturdy, stable, and strong, despite its weathered look and decades of being exposed to harsh elements and people climbing on it. I think I find the fence cooler than the building! I find this fence to be a helpful picture of this verse and of the Church.

Jesus builds His Church. He is the builder. Each individual member is a living stone, brought together in Him. Each person looks different like those stones and their color. Each person has different talents, abilities, backgrounds, and experiences, but Jesus the Master Builder takes those things, those people, those different shaped stones, and makes them His Church. It looks and stands just like that fence at Point Iroquois Lighthouse!

How does He do it? How does He build? He builds through you and me, by our words, witness, and work. He builds with the means of grace, His trusty and unfailing tools. He uses baptism, where He claims us as His own, marks us with His name, gives us His promises, and makes us part of His Church. He has a place in mind where He will set you! He builds through His Word, which calls, gathers, and enlightens us by His Spirit.

Jesus' work is summarized well with Martin Luther's words explaining the Third Part of the Apostles' Creed. In the Small Catechism, he writes, "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith." Don't we see this when Jesus says that this faith and confession was revealed to Peter? It wasn't on Peter's own insight or understanding that he got it, but God gave it. Jesus calls. He reveals. In other words, *He builds*.

He builds what? **"My church...."** The word "church" comes from the Greek word "ecclesia," and it is a compound word. It comes from "ek," which means "out of," and the verb "caleo" or "klesia," which means "to call." Put it together, and it means "to call out of" or "ones called out." That is the Church. The Church is those whom Jesus has called. It is those who He has called out of darkness, out of sin, out of the world, out of death, and out of Satan's clutches and into His marvelous light and mighty hand. That is you! The Church is the assembly of believers, gathered around Word and Sacrament. It is the body of believers created and sustained by God. It is people, *His* people.

Did you notice the pronoun before this? "My" Jesus says, "It is *my* Church." It is His. You belong to Him. You are bought and paid for. Ephesians 5:25-27 says it well when Paul writes, **"Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word [i.e. baptism!], so that He might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish."** You are included in this. This is what Jesus does for *His* church. It is what He does for you!

What is the result of this? **"And you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church...and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."** There is the old saying, "There are only two certainties in life: death and taxes." The reality though, is this: There are only two certainties in life: Christ's return and the preservation of His people until that day. **"The gates of hell shall not prevail"** That is what Jesus promises for His Church. It is a timely promise given our current circumstances. The pandemic is putting Jesus' assurance to the test.

Whatever the “new normal” might be, and whatever Bible Study, worship, and our life together looks like now and in the future, the Church *will endure*. She is enduring. The Church endured the Romans in those early centuries. It survived destructive wars and deadly plagues. It made it through Nazi Germany and Communist Europe. The existence of our Church in worship, whether online or in person, is the latest proof of this. The gates of hell won’t prevail! It didn’t prevail against Christ when He burst forth from His tomb, and it won’t prevail against us now. In a world where everything is up in the air, sports, schools, stocks, our sanity, there is certainty in Jesus. He will get us through this, just as He always has done. He will not fail. IN JESUS’ NAME, Amen.

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

## **MUSIC DURING PREPARATION**

### **PREFACE**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

### **SANCTUS**

**People: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;**

**Heav’n and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name.**

**Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;**

**Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!**

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In Your righteous judgment You condemned the sin of Adam and Eve, who ate the forbidden fruit, and You justly barred them and all their children from the tree of life. Yet, in Your great mercy, You promised salvation by a second Adam, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and made His cross a life-giving tree for all who trust in Him.

We give You thanks for the redemption You have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may faithfully eat and drink of the fruits of His cross and receive the blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation that come to us in His body and blood.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

**People: 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 trespasses as we forgive those**

**who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

### **THE WORDS OF OUR LORD**

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My T body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My T blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

### **PAX DOMINI**

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**People: Amen.**

### **DISTRIBUTION**

*You are invited to receive the Lord's Supper if you believe and confess that Jesus Christ is your Savior from sin, you are a baptized child of the Triune God, and you believe that He gives you His body and blood in the bread and wine you receive. White grape juice can be found in the center of each tray for those who cannot receive alcohol. Children are welcome to come forward for a blessing.*

### **POST-COMMUNION COLLECT**

Pastor: Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### **BENEDICAMUS**

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **BENEDICTION**

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

**People: Amen.**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **POSTLUDE "How Great Thou Art" LSB 801**

1. O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder

Consider all the works Thy hand hath made,

I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,

Thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed; *Refrain*

*Refrain:* Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee,

How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee,

How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

2. When through the woods and forest glades I wander,  
I hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;  
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur  
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze; *Refrain*
3. But when I think that God, His Son not sparing,  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in—  
That on the cross my burden gladly bearing  
He bled and died to take away my sin; *Refrain*
4. When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation  
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!  
Then I shall bow in humble adoration  
And there proclaim: “My God, how great Thou art!” *Refrain*

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**GENEROSITY THOUGHTS:** *Matt. 16:27* – “*For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.*” St Paul talks about rewards on the Last Day in 1 Corinthians 3, and Jesus says more about this “repaying” in *Matt. 19:27-30*. Bottom line: Your good works can’t buy you heaven, but in Christ your good works do matter. They are pleasing to your Heavenly Father, and they will be rewarded. In other words, our sacrifices for the Lord’s Kingdom are not in vain, and they are not unnoticed by your Father. This should encourage you in your faithfulness.

**SEW MASKS AT HOME, HELP LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF!** Kits are ready! During the months of August and September the Social Ministries and Fellowship Committees are sponsoring a mask sewing project as part of the Lutheran World Relief 75,000 More! Face Mask Challenge. The masks will be delivered with International Personal Health Kits in vulnerable communities. Kits of materials and instructions are now available in the narthex. If you don't see what you need or would like us to drop off a kit or two please contact Marilyn P or Marie G. The deadline is September 10th to have our masks done. The elastic was provided through a Thrivent Action Grant. Thank you!

**HEAR “THE LUTHERAN HOUR”** on Sunday mornings at 6:05 a.m. on WCCO 830 AM radio. Next week’s broadcast: “Fear and Faith” Speaker Emeritus of The Lutheran Hour: Rev. Dr. Ken Klaus. Are you living in fear or living by faith? We present a classic message from Pastor Ken Klaus. It’s “Archives August.” (Hebrews 11:1)