

Martin Luther Chapel – Pennsauken, NJ
7th Sunday After Pentecost – 28 July 2019
Friendship Sunday

Color: Green

Propers: 12

Divine Service: I

Proper Preface: Common

Sermon Text: Gospel Reading / Luke 11: 1 – 13

Sermon Title: “How much more!”

My brothers and sisters in Christ, our Lord **gathers us together**

 on this Friendship Sunday,
 **offering much more** than we dare
† ask
† or expect.

 Each Sunday of this month He has **called us to sit at His feet,**

 **encouraging** us to rejoice
† that our names are written
† in the Book of Life
† that is in heaven,

 **exhorting** us, heirs of eternal life, to go and give
† His **unmerited mercy,**
† His **steadfast love,**
† His dearly paid for forgiveness of sin
† to those
‡ fallen upon by the evil one,
‡ beaten and stripped
‡ and left half dead,

 and to receive Him into both our hearts and homes where
He gives us the one thing needful –
† Himself –
† the Lamb of God
† that takes away the sin of the world.

Today, He **calls us**

 to boldly ask,
 to unhesitatingly seek
 and to faithfully knock
† where justice and mercy
† are found.

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 Abraham was an imprudent friend who
 courageously beat on the heart of God,
 shamelessly petitioned God
 to be true to His Name
 † and not destroy the holy ones
 † with the profane ones,
 boldly negotiated
 † for the better deal
 † by confessing God's nature is
 † just and merciful,
 unhesitatingly reminded God of the holiness of His name
that must be kept holy,
 and faithfully acknowledged and praised God's
 † steadfast love
 † and unmerited mercies.

 Abraham's shameless petitions for
 justice and mercy were successful
 for God **promised not to destroy** Sodom and Gomorrah
if there were
 † fifty,
 † then forty-five,
 † forty,
 † thirty,
 † twenty,
 † ten righteous among the wicked.

 God **mercifully spared** Lot and his family from the divine
justice that fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah –

 His holy ones were not destroyed with the wicked.

 Do you and I grasp
 how much more God did
 than what Abraham petitioned?

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Now the Lord shows us “how much more” God gives than we are inclined or able to ask of Him.

 At that moment Jesus was

 moving **steadfastly and intentionally** toward His death in Jerusalem,

 **faithfully praying** to His Father,

 **steadfastly doing** His Father’s will,

 and **tirelessly preaching, teaching and healing** those imprisoned in the darkness of

† sin,

† death

† and the power of the devil.

 On that day a disciple came and asked Jesus to teach them to pray like John taught His disciples.

 Like the seventy-two that returned exuberant over their work of healing and casting out demons

 and the scribe who sought to test Jesus with the question of inherit eternal life”

 this disciple asks a question

† that also falls short of the mark,

† seeking to put the disciples

† on a level with John’s

† and completely oblivious to the fact that

† he knocked on The One who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

 Up to this point they have thought of God as

† the God of their fathers,

† the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,

† the Father of the fatherless (Psalm 68: 5),

† and the Father of the Messiah (Psalm 89: 26).

 Jesus **responds** with much more –

 just as God’s response to Abraham’s petition so Jesus’ to the disciple’s request.

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 Jesus **reveals** that God the Father **calls all mankind** into
† an intimate,
† a familial,
† and a Baptismal relationship
† to Himself through Jesus
† by the power of the Holy Spirit.
† The God of creation **beckons** His holy ones to call
Him –
‡ Abba –
‡ Father –
‡ for He owns you and me
‡ as His own children
‡ for Jesus' sake.

 The Teacher **does not allow any ambiguity** to enter His
prayer but **clearly identifies our heavenly Father** as He
 who **reigns over all creation.**

 From whose hand every living creature receives its
† sustenance,
† strength,
† protection,
† contentment,
† and salvation.

 The Messiah further **drives home the fact** that our heavenly
Father

 is the Holy One whose name the Jews dared not speak
 but now Jesus **boldly instructs us to call** our heavenly
Father,

 **raising us up** as His brothers and sisters.

 Yet, it is much more

 it is also the name of Jesus.

 It is also the name of the Holy Spirit.

 it is the name with which you and I were baptized.

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 It was the name God has placed on all His children, you and me.

 Jesus **unites heaven and earth** in Himself for He,

 the **exact radiance of God**,

 **knew and accomplished** the will of God

† by **taking upon Himself**

‡ your sins

‡ and my sins

‡ and the sins of every man, woman and child that

 has lived,

 is living today,

 and will ever live

‡ as He hung upon the cross

‡ and paid for them

 once and for all –

 completely and fully.

† until **He comes again**.

 Our heavenly Father's **ordained**

 to **validate** Jesus' salvific death

 by **raising Him** on the third day

 and **seating Him** at His right Hand,

 both **guaranteeing** us that

† **He completely and eternally cancelled** the record of our debt

† AND that

‡ having **joined us** to Jesus in a death like His

‡ He will **surely raise us up to eternal life** just as He did for Christ Jesus.

 Jesus,

 **true God and true man**,

 **ensures** we

† believe,

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† teach and confess

 we are both mortal and immortal creatures

 with our cry to our heavenly Father

 for our daily bread for both the body and the spirit,

† richly providing our food that we eat at our tables for
physical strength and health

† and the true manna from heaven and His life-giving
blood at this altar that gives us

‡ true and eternal life,

‡ salvation,

‡ forgiveness of our sins,

‡ and freedom from the power of sin, death and
the devil.

 The Lamb of God **calls us to**

 **exercise our forgiveness** from our sinful thoughts,
words, and deeds

 by humbly, joyfully, and immediately extending our
forgiveness

† to anyone who has sinned against us in

† thought,

† word

† and deed.

 The Suffering Servant then **reminds us**

 that our faith and the new creature in Christ must be

† strengthened and safeguarded

† through daily prayer

† as He leads us on the upward Path of Life

† to our heavenly Father's home

 even as the evil one schemes and plots to tempt us to
question God's

† **steadfast love,**

† **unfailing truthfulness,**

† **unmerited mercy**

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† **and unwavering faithfulness** as revealed in Holy Scriptures,

† to seek paths that gratify the flesh and lead through the many deceptive entrances into unrepentant sin, death and the slavery of the devil.

👤 How much more is His prayer superior to John the Baptizer's, yours, mine, or any other person's.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, God has

👤 **heard our cries** this week

† and answered our prayers

† according to His will

† and with His means.

👤 He has **seen our struggles**

† against the many dark and profane forces

† that sought to enshroud and blind us

† and **shined the light of His justice and mercy**

✠ into our hearts

✠ that we would see clearly

✠ with the eyes of faith.

👤 He who **teaches us to pray**

👤 **calls us** to

† see,

† believe

† and embrace

† how much more **God gives**

† **above and beyond**

✠ our requests

✠ or expectation.

👤 He does not teach us to pray

† as John's disciples to the God of

✠ Abraham,

✠ Isaac

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✠ and Jacob

† but

✠ as His brothers and sisters

✠ to our heavenly Father.

✠ He does not teach us

† distant prayers to the Holy God

† but

✠ **boldly,**

✠ **confidently**

✠ **and unashamedly**

✠ **brings us** into the very throne room of God.

✠ He does

✠ not give us old and tired formulas and matrixes as helps to pray

✠ but **gives us the Holy Spirit who**

† **“helps us** in our weakness.

† For we do not know what to pray for as we ought,

† but **the Spirit himself intercedes for us**

✠ with **groanings**

✠ **too deep** for words.

† ²⁷ And he who **searches hearts**

† knows what is the mind of the Spirit,

† because the Spirit **intercedes for the saints**

† according to the will of God.” (Romans 8: 26)

✠ Therefore, if we,

✠ who are evil,

† know how to pray

† for good bodily things,

✠ **how much more** God the Son

† **knows how to pray** to God the Father,

† **giving** you and me His prayer

† that by the **power of the Holy Spirit**

† we would pray for every good thing for

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✠ body
✠ and spirit.

Amen and Amen