Service for the Public Worship of God

29th Sunday in Ordinary Time ~ October 18, 2009
Eleven O'clock, A.M.

Pastor: Rev. Dr. James E. Swanson
Choir Director/Organist: Beverly Antis
Liturgist: Sarah Morrison

OUR SERVICE OF WORSHIP BEGINS WITH THE MUSIC OF THE ORGAN

*** PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONE DURING WORSHIP ***

FLU SEASON IS UPON US!

THE PRELUDE *Christ, the Redeemer* Alexandre Guilmant

THE CHORAL INTROIT *Surely the Lord is in This Place* Robert Lau

*THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN 370 *Just As I Am* WOODWORTH

*THE PRAYER OF ADORATION

THE PSALM OF THE DAY 104:1-9, 24, 35c *(Pew Bible p. 532)*

THE INVITATION TO CONFESSION

THE PRAYER OF PUBLIC CONFESSION

Lord, when we first placed ourselves into Your loving care, we knew Your Spirit's power to remake us and claim us for Your own. We promised then to love and follow You, but we have found the way hard.

Despite our best intentions, we find ourselves sliding back and losing ground. We neglect the good and fall easily into temptation. We have been slow to take our stand for You, and slow to accept Your help.

Forgive us, Lord, and remake our hearts by Your overwhelming love. In Christ we pray.

A TIME FOR SILENT CONFESSION

THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: Hear and believe the Good News!
Our past is finished and gone.
In Christ everything and everyone is being made new.

People: **Praise God! In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

*THE GLORIA PATRI 579 GLORIA PATRI

*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *PC (USA) Study Catechism, Questions 17-19*

Leader: [Question 17.] What does our creation in God's image reflect about God's reality?

People: **Our being created in and for relationship is a reflection of the Holy Trinity. In the mystery of the one God, the three divine persons — Father, Son and Holy Spirit — live in, with and for one another eternally in perfect love and freedom.**

Leader: [Question 18.] What does our creation in God's image reflect about God's love for us?

People: **We are created to live wholeheartedly for God. When we honor our Creator as the source of all good things, we are like mirrors reflecting back the great beam of love that God shines on us. We are also created to honor God by showing love toward other human beings.**

Leader: [Question 19.] As creatures made in God's image, what responsibility do we have for the earth?

People: **God commands us to care for the earth in ways that reflect God's loving care for us. We are responsible for ensuring that earth's gifts be used fairly and wisely, that no creature suffers from the abuse of what we are given, and that future generations may continue to enjoy the abundance and goodness of the earth in praise to God.**

*THE GREETINGS OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP *(nod, bow or bump!)*

THE SHARING OF JOYS, CONCERNS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE CHORAL PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION
Abide, O Dear Redeemer Melchoir Vulpius

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING Job 38:1-7, 34-41 *(Pew Bible p. 468)*

Liturgist: This is the word of the Lord.
All: **Thanks be to God**

THE EPISTLE READING Hebrews 5:1-10 *(Pew Bible p. 205)*

Liturgist: Here ends the reading of the Epistle.

All: **Praise be to you, O Lord.**

THE GOSPEL READING Mark 10:35-45 *(Pew Bible p. 44)*

Pastor: The gospel of our Lord.

All: **Glory to you, O Christ.**

THE CONGREGATIONAL CANTICLE (Hymn Tune # 310, ST. AGNES)

Lord, let Thy Word illumine us, with truth and love divine,
And make us faithful to the Christ, 'til we are wholly Thine. Amen.

THE SERMON " IN LOWLY SERVICE " Dr. Swanson

THE PASTORAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER (using *debts* and *debtors*)

THE TWO-FOLD AMEN Dresden

THE PRESENTATION OF TITHES, OFFERINGS & GIFTS

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM *Canticle of Thanksgiving* John Rutter

*THE DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below,
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*THE UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Use us, O God of miracles, and the offerings we have brought, to bring life and health and hope to your world. Make us generous and faithful stewards of your mysteries, as we share the bounty which you have granted unto us; through Christ we pray. Amen.

*THE RECESSIONAL HYMN 477 *Ye Servants of God* HANOVER

*THE BENEDICTION

*THE CHORAL RESPONSE *A Clare Benediction* John Rutter

*THE TIME OF SILENCE

*THE CHARGE AND DISMISSAL

Pastor: In Christ we have been forgiven, freed, and made whole. Go now, giving witness to God's peace by sharing it with others, as we wait for, work for, and witness to salvation.

Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

People: **Thanks be to God!**

*THE POSTLUDE *I Will Extol Thee* Steven Scott

---

* THOSE WHO ARE ABLE, PLEASE STAND

YOU WERE GREETED TODAY by Donna Hobaugh.

THE FLOWERS IN THE SANCTUARY
are placed this morning by Linda Peters
in Memory of Sam's birthday on October 21st

FELLOWSHIP HOUR immediately follows this worship service downstairs in the Assembly Room. Everyone is cordially invited to attend. Hosting today's Fellowship Hour are the members of our Chancel Choir. (Great cooks as well as gifted singers, all!)

WELCOME! GRACE AND PEACE TO ALL!

We are delighted to have you with us if you are visiting today! Please indicate your attendance by signing one of the cards in the pew rack, and kindly place it in the offering plate when passed.

Then following worship, linger a bit longer and join us for Fellowship Time in the Assembly Room downstairs.

TODAY'S DISCOVERY TRIP IS CANCELLED

We will <u>not</u> be traveling to Villa Maria Community Center this afternoon to walk the Labyrinth. The organizers (wisely) cancelled the walk due to unseasonably cold weather.

Alternate Event: Cuddle up with a cup of hot chocolate (or your favorite beverage) and a pile of snacks… then watch the Steelers as they take on the Cleveland Browns beginning at 1:00 pm today! ☺

P.S. It wouldn't hurt if you took time to say a special prayer following the 2-minute warning at the end of the 4th quarter!

In The Life of Our Church

Prayer Concerns:

Chuck Schlicht . . . . . at Sunnyview (Rm. 103) for rehabilitation
Phyllis Thoma . . . . . Not feeling well, health concerns
Mary Lee Marten . . . . . Upcoming knee surgery on Oct. 26 (in Butler)

For Continued Prayer:

Minnie Anderson; Julie & Bud Bruno; Marion Campbell; Marian Curran; Eleanor Ritts; Gladys & Ken Strobel; John Towns; Bill & MaryLou Wilson

Birthdays this Week: Ellie Walchesky (October 22)
Rosamond Curry (October 25)

Anniversaries: Andy & Shari Swanson (October 20)

SEEKERS' SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

always provocative speakers, interesting topics & lively discussions

Sundays at 9:30 a.m. ~ Assembly Room

October 25th & November 1st

Dr. Steven S. Tuell

Associate Professor of Old Testament,
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Topic:
"In The Beginning: What Genesis Says and What it Doesn't Say"

Coffee, tea, juice and a snack are available before class—served from the small kitchen beginning at 9 a.m.

Meetings This Week—

- ✓ *Admin. & Stewardship:* Monday, October 19th @ 7 pm (Connell)
- ✓ *Session:* Wednesday, October 21st @ 7 pm (Assembly Rm.)

UPCOMING DISCOVERY TRIP
Wednesday, October 28

Here's a mid-week opportunity to re-visit one of our favorite sacred spaces in Pittsburgh – Temple Rodef Shalom in Oakland. We will depart Butler at 9:00 am to arrive in time for the 75th Annual Freehof Book Review Series (beginning at 10:30 am). Rabbi Aaron Bisno will review *The Evolution of God* by Robert Wright. Following the program, depending upon the interests of the group, we may decide to stop by East Liberty Presbyterian Church or Pittsburgh Seminary… and of course "do lunch" before heading home. Car pooling/rides provided.

Please call the church office if you want to go!

BEGINNING this WEDNESDAY

October 21 at 1:00 p.m.

FALL BIBLE STUDY
Led by Pastor Jim &
Rev. Merry Meloy

(Continuing every other Wednesday—same time, here at Covenant)

October 21, November 4, November 18, December 2

We will be studying materials by John J. Pilch entitled
"Introducing the Cultural Context of the Old Testament"

Organ Concert
In Memory of Dr. LaMonte Crape

Sunday, November 1st ~ 3:00 pm
at St. Peter's Episcopal Church (next door)

Dr. Crape was an organ teacher at Butler High School during the late 50's and early 60's. The concert will be given at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, where he served as organist for many years.

The public is invited.

Commentary on Today's Gospel

"Acquiring Honor"

By John J. Pilch, Georgetown University

The group that Jesus gathered around himself is technically called a "faction." Members of such a group each have a direct, important, and relatively strong relationship with the leader, but very little knowledge of or relationship with each other.

In today's gospel, James and John, two blood relatives, do something very normal and customary in their Middle Eastern culture within factions — they jockey for a higher position of honor in the group and care nothing about the others. When Jesus receives his full measure of honor, these two brothers want a share in it by gaining the most prestigious positions next to him. In this culture, everything is always about honor.

Honor can be inherited (by virtue of the status of one's family) but can also be achieved, most often through "honor contests." One person asks of another certain questions in hopes of shaming him and thereby increasing his own honor.

The request of James and John is yet another way of achieving honor — by personal effort. Here, the effort is little more than the request for a favor. Since Jesus is the acknowledged leader of this group, he can do a favor for individual members and grant them privileges that would make them stand out in relationship to others. Of course, the others are incensed to learn of the brothers' move and express indignation (v. 41).

Instead of granting the favor, Jesus asks if the brothers "can drink the cup" that he drinks which constitutes his claim to achieved honor. Like all metaphors, this one, too, developed from a real-life custom. In Mediterranean culture the head of the family fills the cups of all at table. Each one is expected to accept and drink what the head of the family has poured. Since all theology is essentially based on analogy, and the behavior of God is assumed to be like the behavior of human beings in a given culture, the "cup" came to represent the lot in life which God has assigned for each person (see Psalms 11:6; 16:5; 23:5).

If Jesus accepts his assigned lot in life, he will attain the honor determined by God (Mark 14:36). The brothers impetuously affirm that they can indeed accept and fulfill the same lot assigned to Jesus. At this point, Jesus reminds them that he is just a broker in the kingdom and not its patron. He can put others in touch with God—the patron, but it is God alone who determines each person's lot and deserved honor.

Copyright © 1996 by The Order of St. Benedict, Inc., Collegeville, Minnesota. All rights reserved. Used by permission from *The Liturgical Press*, Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

October 18, 2009

"Our service should be devoted to God. It must be a *lowly service* (no job too small), a *loving service* (inspired by the love of Christ), a *loyal service* (our freedom is in our service to God), and a *lasting service* (it will go on for all eternity)."

–Ralph Douglas West, *Meditation on Romans 12*

O Master, let me walk with thee
In lowly paths of service free;
Tell me thy secret; help me bear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.

Teach me thy patience; still with thee
In closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
In trust that triumphs over wrong;

-- Hymn "O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee"
Words by Washington Gladden, 1879

The Reverend Dr. James E. Swanson, Pastor

Home: 724-752-8383

Church Office: (724) 287-7731

Website: http://covenantbutler.org