

Hear what the Spirit is saying

Sunday Morning at St. Hugh's in Idyllwild, California

September 13, 2020 | Pentecost +15

Collect for Proper 19

O God, because without you we are not able to please you, mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. ~BCP 233

Genesis 50:15-21 NRSV

In our Hebrew scripture lesson Joseph's brothers fear his wrath upon learning of the death of their father Jacob.

¹⁵ Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, 'What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?' ¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, 'Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷ "Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you." Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father.' Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, 'We are here as your slaves.' ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, 'Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.' In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Romans 14:1-12 NRSV

In this reading Paul calls upon the Roman disciples to live with tolerance for one another's scruples, recognizing that everything can be done to honor the Lord with whom each Christian has a relationship.

¹ Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷ We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.' ¹² So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Matthew 18:21-35 NRSV

In the gospel lesson Jesus bids his disciples to offer a forgiveness which is, for all practical purposes, unlimited, and he tells a parable about a man who, although forgiven much, still himself had no mercy.

²¹ Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²² Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times."

²³ "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

Psalm 103:8-13 BCP 733

The Psalm Response is a hymn of blessing in thanksgiving for healing forgiveness and for all the Lord's acts of compassion and justice.

- 8 The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, *
slow to anger and of great kindness.
- 9 He will not always accuse us, * nor will he keep his anger for ever.
- 10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, *
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.
- 11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, *
so is his mercy great upon those who fear him.
- 12 As far as the east is from the west, *
so far has he removed our sins from us.
- 13 As a father cares for his children, *
so does the Lord care for those who fear him.

Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times."

MATTHEW 18:21-22

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SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

**“Forgive our sins as we forgive” Hymn 674 in Hymnal 1982**

On Sunday, September 13th we'll use the hymn “Forgive our sins as we forgive” after we've heard the reading from Romans and before we hear the Gospel passage. What follows is an essay by C. Michael Hawn, distinguished professor of church music at Perkins School of Theology. He is also director of the seminary's sacred music program. Discipleship Ministries of the United Methodist Church is a dependable online resource for study. I recommend the site. ~Fr. Dan

Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, “Forgiveness is not an occasional act, it is a constant attitude.” Accepting and giving forgiveness may be one of the most important aspects of living. I believe that the Assurance of Pardon is one of the most significant parts of Christian worship: “In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!” These words may offer healing and hope

for many in worship, even beyond anything else said or sung. Forgiveness is not only a personal way of living, but also an attribute of societies. How many times do we observe centuries of hate and hurt that, because of the inability to forgive, continue to fester and cause suffering, death, and destruction?

Portions of the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) have been cited in many hymns. For example, the militant missionary hymn, "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations" (United Methodist Hymnal, 569) echoes "Thy kingdom come on earth" in the refrain: "And Christ's great kingdom shall come on earth." Presbyterian hymnologist Louis Benson concludes his Communion hymn "For the Bread which You Have Broken" (United Methodist Hymnal, 614, 615) with the first petition, "let your kingdom come, O Lord." Forgiveness has received less attention, however.

With "Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive" by Rosamond Herklots (1905-1987), we receive a full treatment of Matthew 6:12: "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." (KJV) Luke 11:4 states: "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us." "Trespases" first appeared in William Tyndale's translation in 1526 and was retained for use in the first *Book of Common Prayer* in English in 1549. The English Language Liturgical Consultation (1988), a group of ecumenical liturgists in the English-speaking world, proposed "and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." A companion Scripture is Colossians 3:13, "bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive" (ESV).

The Companion to Hymns and Psalms (1988), the companion to the 1983 Methodist hymnal used in England, provides the origins of this hymn:

This hymn was written in June 1966 and printed soon afterward in the parish magazine of St. Mary's Church, Bromley, Kent. The idea of the hymn had occurred to Miss Herklots when she was digging out weeds in her nephew's garden; she reasoned that their deep roots, obstructing the growth of the flowers near them, resembled the bitterness and resentment that can become entrenched and hinder the Christian's growth in grace.

Herklots' language is potent in describing the blessings we miss when our "heart . . . broods on wrongs and will not let old bitterness depart" (stanza two) In stanza three, she contrasts the "trivial debts [that] are owed to us" with "our great debt to [Christ]!"

The final stanza is a prayer of petition “cleanse . . . our souls” and “bid resentment cease.” Forgiveness leads to establishing “bonds of love” so that “our lives will spread [Christ’s] peace.”

Rosamund Eleanor Herklots was born in Masuri, India, in 1905 to missionary parents. She was educated at Leeds Girls’ High School and the University of Leeds in England. Working as a teacher and secretary, she began writing hymns in the early 1940s. She submitted hymns for the “Hymns for Britain” competition, two of which were selected to be sung on television. Her total corpus of hymns numbered more than seventy. Herklots died in Greenwich, London, in 1987.

British hymnologist J. R. Watson noted changes in the original text: “At some point after 1978, when an unauthorized inclusive language version was published in the USA, the author modified the third and fourth verses: ‘How small the debts men owe to us’ became ‘What trivial debts are owed to us,’ while ‘Then, reconciled to God and man’ was altered to ‘Then, bound to all in bonds of love.’” This is the version that appears in The United Methodist Hymnal.

I was in South Africa in 1998 during the presidency of Nelson Mandela. Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu presented President Mandela with the bound volumes containing the results of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I was sitting among a group of black and white Methodist ministers watching this historic occasion on television as Tutu referenced one of the many important revelations that took place during the process that the Commission hoped would lead to healing and hope for South Africa. At one point, Tutu recalled a black woman who asked him, “Who murdered my husband?” Tutu responded, “We do not know.” She was insistent, however, and continued, “I must know who killed my husband.” Again, the patient Tutu responded, “I’m sorry, but we may never know who killed your husband.” Still her question persisted. Finally, Tutu asked, “My dear lady, why must you know who killed your husband?” She responded simply and quietly, “So I can forgive him.”

There are many variations of this hymn on YouTube here are two:

- [Amazing Worship TV](#)
- [drolas94](#)

Forgive our sins as we forgive by Rosamund Herklots

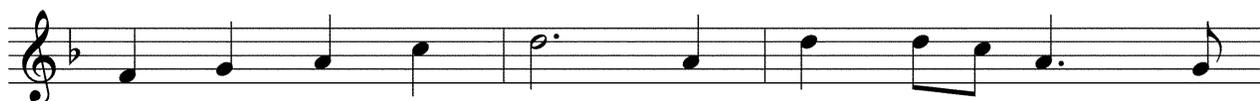
1. 'Forgive our sins as we forgive,
' You taught us, Lord, to pray,
But you alone can grant us grace
To live the words we say.

2. How can your pardon reach and bless
The unforgiving heart
That broods on wrongs and will not let
Old bitterness depart?
3. In blazing light your Cross reveals
The truth we dimly knew:
What trivial debts are owed to us,
How great our debt to you!
4. Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls
And bid resentment cease.
Then, bound to all in bonds of love,
Our lives will spread your peace.

Text: Rosamund Herklots, b.1905, © Oxford University Press



1. "For - give our sins as we for - give," You
2. How can your par - don reach and bless The
3. In blaz - ing light your Cross re - veals The
4. Lord, cleanse the depths with - in our souls And



- taught us, Lord, to pray, But you a - lone can
un - for - giv - ing heart That broods on wrongs and
truth we dim - ly knew: What triv - ial debts are
bid re - sent - ment cease. Then, bound to all in



- grant us grace To live the words we say.
will not let Old bit - ter - ness de - part?
owed to us, How great our debt to you!
bonds of love, Our lives will spread your peace.

Text: Rosamund Herklots, 1905-1987, © Oxford University Press

Tune: DETROIT, CM; Supplement to *Kentucky Harmony*, 1820; harm. by Gerald H. Knight, 1908-1979