

**Stokesdale
United
Methodist
Church**



**16th Sunday
after Pentecost
September 17, 2023**

The
**Journey
Begins**

Worship Series

How Many Times?

The Journey Begins Worship Series



Welcome!

Rev. Dr. Ed McKinney

We Gather for Worship!

We are reflecting

God's love

at the heart

of the community

How Many Times?

The Journey Begins Worship Series



Choral Call to Worship

“Nothing But the Blood”

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*Greeting

Children of God, when we face strife, upset, and harm in our midst, we so often turn to God and ask:

How many times should I forgive?

When Jesus answers that we should forgive again and again and again, we are tempted to repeat the question:

How many times should I forgive?

Until God turns the question around:

“How many times have I forgiven you?”

Seventy times seven.

“How many times have I loved you?”

Seventy times seven.

“How many times has my grace been sufficient for you?”

Seventy times seven.

Let us learn, then, how to forgive not out of our own power, but out of God's, who forgives us that we might be free to learn to live with one another well.

Amen.

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock,

Discipleship Ministries, March 2023.



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***Hymn of Praise**

“A King Once Told His Servants”

Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

Biblical References: Matthew 18:25-35;
Matthew 6:12, 14-15; Matthew 18:21-22
Tune: Traditional Welsh melody, from
Daniel Evans' *Hymnau a Thonau (Hymns
and Tunes)*, 1865 ("Lead On, O King
Eternal"; "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers")
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A king once told his servants,

"Now pay me what is mine!"

One came to him and begged him,

"I'll pay! Just give me time!"

And so the king forgave him,

though that man's debt was great.

What joy to be unburdened!

What cause to celebrate!

**Though he had been forgiven,
that man was not so kind.
He threatened one who owed him,
"Now pay me what is mine!"
He would not show compassion
toward one whose debt was small.
What judgment came upon him!
How bitter was his fall!**

**O God, in Christ you freed us;
now may we not forget.**

**Our sin was overwhelming
but you once paid the debt.**

**May we live lives of mercy,
forgiving, blessing, too;**

**And may our grace toward others
reflect our thanks to you.**

Prayer of Confession

Loving God, we confess that we struggle to forgive, and we struggle to create space for forgiveness to happen. We rush ourselves to excuse the harmful speech and actions of others as a way of suppressing

We confess that we fear what is different. We confess that it's easier to lock the doors of our community than to receive those who don't look like we look, love like we love, or vote the way we vote. We confess that we have not lived out your call to share in abundant life and unconditional love.

We believe that you have the power to turn us around to a more inclusive way of living, so we ask you to do that. We ask you to give us the courage to change. We ask that you give us the energy, intelligence, imagination, and love to be your people in all we say and do. Amen.

RESPONSE *“Day By Day”*

Day by day Day by day

Oh Dear Lord Three things I pray

To see thee more clearly

Love thee more dearly

Follow thee more nearly

Day by day



Children's Sermon

Brisha Compton



Choral Anthem



“There’s Life in Jesus’ Name”

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Gospel Lesson

Matthew 28:21-35 (NRSV)

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.”

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

Sermon

Rev. Dr. Ed McKinney

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RESPONSE *“Day By Day”*

Day by day Day by day

Oh Dear Lord Three things I pray

To see thee more clearly

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**Sharing of Joys
and Concerns**

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

**Forgive us our trespasses as
we forgive those
who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory forever.
Amen.**

TITHES & OFFERINGS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

- Mail your check to the church at:
PO Box 38
Stokesdale, NC 27357
- Give on-line at:
www.stokesdaleumc.org/give
- Drop your check at the church office
- Create bill pay with your bank

****Doxology***

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Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts!

Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!



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***Hymn of Dedication**

“Freely, Freely”

**¹ God forgave my sin in Jesus' name
I've been born again in Jesus' name
And in Jesus' name I come to you
To share His love as He told me to**

**He said, "Freely, freely you have
received**

Freely, freely give

**Go in my name, and because
you believe**

Others will know that I live"

**2 All power is givin' in Jesus' name
In earth and Heaven in Jesus' name
And in Jesus' name I come to you
To share His power as He told me to**

**He said, "Freely, freely you have
received**

Freely, freely give

**Go in my name, and because
you believe**

Others will know that I live"

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Dismissal with Blessing

Rev. Dr. Ed McKinney, Pastor

Jeff Fink, Music Director

Beth Kasai, Music Assistant

Robin Howerton, Handbell Director

Sarah McKinney, Youth Director

Sharon Moon, Office Manager

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***Thanks for
worshiping with us!
See you next week!***

**Be
Blessed**