



Milton Lutheran Parish

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church – 1125 Mahoning Street, Milton, PA 17847 – 570-742-7473

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Deacon Gary Schaeffer, Interim Pastor

Dear Friends of the Milton Lutheran Parish,

In this week's Gospel Jesus tells us the parable of the mustard seed. This parable says "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and planted in his field, though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree so that the birds come and perch in its branches."

The mustard seed is our faith. "With faith like the grain of mustard seed, you can move mountains. From small things are great things brought to pass." So we need to sow seeds by faith. A church that is not sowing seeds of faith will become a dead church. What stops us from "moving mountains" is doubt. We doubt our faith and ourselves, because nothing seems to change when we are sowing our seeds. Not all the "seeds" you plant will grow. We know that from our home gardens. Not everything we plant comes to fruition. But, even if one of our seeds of faith takes root and spreads more seeds, then we have changed the world. And no seed can sprout if you don't take the effort to plant in the first place.

We can plant our seeds of faith in so many ways. You don't have to go door to door with a Bible and preach, or accost people at the store and ask if they know Jesus. Plant your seeds each and every day by doing simple things . . . hold the door for someone at the store, help someone carry a load, write a note to a shut-in or call them, mow a neighbor's grass for them. Even very simple things like a friendly smile and a "Good morning" can plant a seed. Invite someone to a service. Now is a great time--no crowds at church! Even wearing masks we can smile at folks and say a few nice words. Those strangers in the grocery aisle, the cashier, people in the parking lot, at the drug store! Think of all the strangers you see every day that you could nod to or talk to and maybe change their day for them. Plant those seeds!

My prayer for this week is that we all are thankful for what we have in our lives and our church. And that we try to spread some of those seeds of thankfulness to those around us.

Blessings to you and yours!

Donna Riccio, Parish Office Administrator

Questions to ask yourself:

1. How can I plant seeds of faith?
2. What stops me from planting those seeds?
3. How can I express my faith each day?

Notice About Special Congregational Meetings

This is to inform you that on Sunday, August 2, 2020, at 6:30 p.m., we will be having an outdoor "parking lot" worship service and special congregational meetings of the Milton Lutheran Parish. The service will be led by Deacon Gary Schaeffer, and will be held in the parking lot of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church. Please plan to arrive beginning at 6 p.m. so that informational documents can be distributed prior to the service. We will have an FM radio channel set up so that you can hear the service directly in your car OR you may choose to set up a lawn chair in the grassy area behind the church. Pray for good weather! We are excited to inform you that the agenda item for the special congregational meetings is to vote to call a pastor for the Parish. And, we thank our call committee for their unprecedented work to complete this process during a pandemic! In order to have an official and complete vote to call our new pastor, we need as many of our members to show up to provide your support to the call committee and let your voice be heard. We look forward to "seeing" you all during this special service!

Sunday, July 26, 2020, Worship Bulletin
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
Milton Lutheran Parish- Milton, PA



Welcome and Announcements

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn: #759

Confession and Forgiveness

P- Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose steadfast love is everlasting,
whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation.
Amen.

P- Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.
Silence is kept for reflection.

C- Reconciling God,

**we confess that we do not trust your abundance,
and we deny your presence in our lives.**

**We place our hope in ourselves
and rely on our own efforts.**

**We fail to believe that you provide enough for all.
We abuse your good creation for our own benefit.**

**We fear difference and do not welcome others
as you have welcomed us.**

We sin in thought, word, and deed.

**By your grace, forgive us;
through your love, renew us;
and in your Spirit, lead us;**

so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.

Beloved of God,
by the radical abundance of divine mercy
we have peace with God through † Christ Jesus,
through whom we have obtained grace upon grace.
Our sins are forgiven.
Let us live now in hope.
For hope does not disappoint,
because God's love has been poured into our hearts
through the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

First Reading: 1 Kings 3:5-12

⁵At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you." ⁶And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have

chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?"

¹⁰It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹²I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you."

Psalm: Psalm 119:129-136 (read responsively)

¹²⁹Your decrees are wonderful;

therefore I obey them with all my heart.

¹³⁰**When your word is opened it gives light;
it gives understanding to the simple.**

¹³¹I open my mouth and pant

because I long for your commandments.

¹³²**Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as you always do to those who love your name.**

¹³³Order my footsteps in your word;

let no iniquity have dominion over me.

¹³⁴**Rescue me from those who oppress me,
and I will keep your commandments.**

¹³⁵Let your face shine upon your servant
and teach me your statutes.

¹³⁶**My eyes shed streams of tears,
because people do not keep your teaching.**

Second Reading: Romans 8:26-39

²⁶The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 13:31-33,44-52

³¹Jesus put before the crowds another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

³³He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

⁴⁴"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great

value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵²And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

Sermon

Hymn: #781

Apostles Creed

Let us confess our faith in the words of the Apostles Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s 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 to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

Prayers of Intercession

Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Merciful God, your reign is revealed to us in common things: a mustard shrub, a woman baking bread, a fishing net. Help your church witness to the surprising yet common ways you encounter us in daily life. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

When your word is opened, it gives light and understanding. Increase our understanding and awe of your creation; guide the work of scientists and researchers. Treasuring the earth, may we live as grateful and healing caretakers of our home. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

As the birds of the air nest in branches of trees, gather the nations of the world into the welcoming shade of your merciful reign. Direct leaders of nations to build trust with each other and walk in the way of peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Your Spirit helps us in our weakness and intercedes for the saints according to your will. Help us when we do not know how to pray. Give comfort to the dying, refuge to the weary, justice to those who are oppressed, and healing to the sick, and who else and what else shall the people of Milton Lutheran Parish pray for. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You show steadfast love and direct us to ask of you what we need. Help this congregation ask boldly for what is most needed. Refresh us with new dreams of being your people in this place and time. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In you our lives are never lost. Strengthen us by the inspiring witness of your people in all times and places. Embolden our witness now and one day gather us with all your saints in light. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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;
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.**

Blessing

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

God, the creator, † Jesus, the Christ,
and the Holy Spirit, the comforter,
bless you and keep you in eternal love.

Amen.

Closing Hymn: #547

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C: Thanks be to God.