

Worship in the time of COVID-19

An order of worship for Sept 13, 2020

The Season After Pentecost

Prelude by Shirley Bergman

Welcome by Pastor Kristen

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

Pastor: Dear God, you are our Teacher, Creator, and Guide through life's classroom.

Congregation: We thank you for pens and pencils.

Pastor: Bless the words that flow from these pens, and bless the ones that write with them.

Congregation: We thank you for crayons and markers.

Pastor: Bless the art that they create, and the ones who draw and color with them.

Congregation: We thank you for notebooks, folders and binders.

Pastor: Bless these things, and bless the ones who fill them with writing and drawings.

Congregation: We thank you for the books we read.

Pastor: Bless books and the stories they tell, and bless the ones who read them.

Congregation: We thank you for our backpacks that carry everything we need.

Pastor: Bless our backpacks, and bless the ones who wear them.

Congregation: We thank you for our teachers and all others who work at school.

Pastor: Bless them as they fill our children's minds with knowledge, who nurture their spirits, and who protect them while in their care. Watch over them this year as they implement new rules and guidelines to protect themselves and others.

Congregation: We thank you for our parents, grandparents, guardians, and childcare providers.

Pastor: Bless them as they support and encourage their students in all that they do. Watch over them this year as they deal with all the challenges the Covid-19 pandemic has brought them.

Congregation: We thank you for all students.

Pastor: Strengthen their bodies, minds and spirits throughout this school year; that their knowledge might grow and their imaginations soar with new thoughts, new achievements, and new dreams. In the name of Jesus, the Great Teacher, we pray. **Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION OF BIBLES

*Congratulations to our 3rd graders who are receiving Bibles this year:
Brinley Bergman, Keaton Lysne, and Carsyn Niichel.*

Pastor: Let us pray. Holy God, when these children were baptized, you claimed them as your beloved children, and their parents promised to raise them in the Christian faith. Bless them now, as they receive these Bibles, as they continue in their walk of faith. **Amen.**

Psalm: Psalm 103:8-13

8Lord, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;
9you will not always accuse us,

nor will you keep your anger forever.

10 You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.

**11 For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.**

12 As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.

**13 As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O Lord.**

Gospel: Acts 9:1-22

9 Meanwhile, Saul was still spewing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest, 2 seeking letters to the synagogues in Damascus. If he found persons who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, these letters would authorize him to take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. 3 During the journey, as he approached Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven encircled him. 4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice asking him, "Saul, Saul, why are you harassing me?"

5 Saul asked, "Who are you, Lord?"

"I am Jesus, whom you are harassing," came the reply. 6 "Now get up and enter the city. You will be told what you must do."

7 Those traveling with him stood there speechless; they heard the voice but saw no one. 8 After they picked Saul up from the ground, he opened his eyes but he couldn't see. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. 9 For three days he was blind and neither ate nor drank anything.

10 In Damascus there was a certain disciple named Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

He answered, "Yes, Lord."

11 The Lord instructed him, “Go to Judas’ house on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying. 12 In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias enter and put his hands on him to restore his sight.”

13 Ananias countered, “Lord, I have heard many reports about this man. People say he has done horrible things to your holy people in Jerusalem. 14 He’s here with authority from the chief priests to arrest everyone who calls on your name.”

15 The Lord replied, “Go! This man is the agent I have chosen to carry my name before Gentiles, kings, and Israelites. 16 I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.”

17 Ananias went to the house. He placed his hands on Saul and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord sent me—Jesus, who appeared to you on the way as you were coming here. He sent me so that you could see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” 18 Instantly, flakes fell from Saul’s eyes and he could see again. He got up and was baptized. 19 After eating, he regained his strength.

He stayed with the disciples in Damascus for several days. 20 Right away, he began to preach about Jesus in the synagogues. “He is God’s Son,” he declared.

21 Everyone who heard him was baffled. They questioned each other, “Isn’t he the one who was wreaking havoc among those in Jerusalem who called on this name? Hadn’t he come here to take those same people as prisoners to the chief priests?”

22 But Saul grew stronger and stronger. He confused the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

Sermon

Special Music: Shirley Bergman

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, using waves or peace signs.

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

You welcome us when we are weak in faith. Uphold your church throughout the world; make it a place of welcome. Strengthen faith through Bible studies and Sunday schools, confirmation classes and youth ministries. Nurture new ministries of education and growth. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

The heights of the heavens show us the vastness of your steadfast love. Have compassion on your creation. Where human selfishness has brought ruin and destruction, we look to you to heal, renew, and redeem your world. Bless the efforts of all who are continuing to rebuild after the derecho and after Hurricane Laura, and watch over those who are dealing with wildfires in the western United States. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Make your ways known to the nations. Speak kindness to our bitter grudges. Settle our hearts when we want to settle accounts with violence. Bless our leaders with patience and wisdom, that they might make decisions that work for the good of all people. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Bring healing and justice wherever harm is dealt. Provide vindication for all who are oppressed. Free victims of human trafficking and forced labor; deliver all who are bound by debt. Feed all who hunger, and guard refugees fleeing famine, poverty, and war. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Teach us to forgive. Remind us that you do not always accuse us. Still our tongues when we are tempted to pass judgment and argue over opinions. Make this congregation a community of mercy for one another and for all our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

In this continued time of pandemic, give us endurance to deal with the restrictions we face, and help us make choices that help us love our neighbors. Bring healing to all who suffer from Covid-19, and comfort to all those who mourn losses caused by this disease. Guide the work of researchers and medical personnel who are continually seeking treatments and vaccines for Covid-19. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Whether we live or whether we die, we are yours. Watch over those who mourn the loss of loved ones including the family of Marilyn Schultz. We thank you for those who have shown us faithfulness, for the knees that taught us how to bow to you and the tongues that taught us to praise you. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Confession & Forgiveness


Let us pray. God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we

have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the  Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

Invitation to Communion

Friends of Jesus, receive nourishment for your journey. Taste and see that the
Lord is good.

Receive the body of Christ, given for you.
Receive the blood of Christ, shed for you.

*All are invited to eat and drink the communion elements they brought with them.
If desired, individuals from the same household may serve each other.*

Prayer after Communion

God of the welcome table,
in this meal we have feasted on your goodness
and have been united by your presence among us.
Empower us to go forth sustained by these gifts
so that we may share your neighborly love with all,
through Jesus Christ, the giver of abundant life.

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.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

And have fun doing it.

We will! Amen!

Postlude by Shirley Bergman

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BY THE NUMBERS

Check Register Balance 9/12/2020
\$14,602
Operating Bank Loan: \$5,662.27
PPP Loan Balance: No charge

Offering: 9/6/2020
Current: \$1,780
Benevolence: \$132
Improvement: \$85
Lutheran Disaster Relief: \$150

EWALU Fall Work Days Sept. 26 and Oct. 24

Volunteers are invited to Camp EWALU to help with a variety of outdoor service projects. Days start at 9:00 a.m. Sack lunch provided. Please RSVP to camp@ewalu.org or call 563-933-4700.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Lutheran World Relief School Kits: It is that time of year again when stores have an abundance of school supplies for the coming academic year and parents are busy shopping for these supplies. The Sunday newspapers have sale flyers with their Back to School specials. Although the coming school year may be a bit different from what we are accustomed to, the need for school supplies remains. The same is true for Lutheran World Relief School Kits. For many years, American Lutheran has prepared many backpack school kits to be sent to Lutheran World Relief which we would like to continue again this year. Despite the coronavirus pandemic the need for these does not go away. Therefore, we are asking for donations of supplies to meet a goal of 25 backpacks. The requested items needed are:

- 70 sheet wide or college-ruled spiral bound notebooks (4 are needed per backpack)
- 30-centimeter ruler or a ruler with cms on one side & inches on the other (1 per backpack)
- Small pencil sharpener (1 per backpack)
- Pair of blunt scissors (1 per backpack)
- Blue or black ballpoint pens (no gel ink) (5 needed per backpack)
- Box of 16 or 24 crayons (1 per backpack)
- 2 ½ inch pencil eraser (1 per backpack)

Heavy-duty cotton fabric is needed to make the backpacks. If you would like to donate money toward the purchase of this material, you may do so by placing funds in an envelope referencing the Lutheran World Relief School Kit project and given to Mike Waring, Financial Secretary. If more money is collected than needed for the school kits, it will be directed to purchase needed materials for the LWR quilts that are made each year. The Quilters of our congregation will be making the drawstring backpacks in which to place the school kits.

Since the church building is currently closed due to the coronavirus pandemic, supplies can be dropped off at the home of Mary Adams, 1215 Hawley Street, Jesup. A table will be set up in the garage just inside the walk-in door for drop off. She can be reached at 827-3365 or (319) 269-3478 if you need to call.

Items will be needed by October 15th and will be packed up and taken to the Fall In-Gathering scheduled for November 7th. Thank you for your continued support of this annual fall project.

