

***The Lutheran Church of the Covenant***  
***“Reaching Out, Reflecting Christ, Renewing Lives”***



*Fourth Sunday after Pentecost*  
*June 28, 2020*



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

## Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

*The welcome of baptism is for all God's children. This baptismal gift sets us free from the power of sin and death. In today's gospel, Christ promises that the disciple who gives a cup of cold water to the little ones serves Christ himself. From worship we are sent on our baptismal mission: to serve the little ones of this world and to be a sign of God's merciful welcome.*

Confession & Forgiveness

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as we take time to recognize our shortcomings, while also remembering God's relentless grace.*

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

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

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, as the Holy 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!**

Gathering Hymn *Baptized and Set Free* (SKOGEN-SOLDNER)

#453



1 We are peo - ple cre - at - ed, cho - sen by God.  
 2 We are fed and we're nour - ished, filled and re - freshed.  
 3 We are nour - ished by wa - ter, all liv - ing things,  
 4 Now with praise and thanks - giv - ing, we join the song.



Then we're washed, ev - er gent - ly, in mer - cy and love.  
 Then our hun - ger re - turns and a - gain we are blessed.  
 and by life that the Spir - it a - bun - dant - ly brings.  
 All are wel - come! We gath - er to sing loud and strong.



Sin has pow - er no more. Je - sus o - pened the door  
 For what - ev - er the need, God is great - er in - deed:  
 As we jour - ney toward home, may your pres - ence be known:  
 Not en - slaved, but set free! From now on, all will be



to a foun - tain bring - ing heal - ing, and whole - ness and more.  
 end - less o - cean, al - ways deep - er than all of our need.  
 pre - cious riv - er, ev - er - flow - ing, now car - ry us home.  
 one in Je - sus, one in wa - ter, bap - tized and set free!

## Prayer of the Day

O God, you direct our lives by your grace, and your words of justice and mercy reshape the world. Mold us into a people who welcome your word and serve one another, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen!**

### First Lesson

Jeremiah 28:5-9

*Through a symbolic action Jeremiah insisted that Judah and all the surrounding nations should submit to the king of Babylon (Jer. 27). Hananiah contradicted the word of Jeremiah, who in reply insisted that Hananiah's rosy prediction should not be believed until it came true. God confirmed the word of Jeremiah and sentenced the false prophet Hananiah to death (vv. 16-17).*

<sup>5</sup>The prophet Jeremiah spoke to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of the LORD; <sup>6</sup>and the prophet Jeremiah said, "Amen! May the LORD do so; may the LORD fulfill the words that you have prophesied, and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the LORD, and all the exiles. <sup>7</sup>But listen now to this word that I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. <sup>8</sup>The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. <sup>9</sup>As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes true, then it will be known that the LORD has truly sent the prophet."

The word of the Lord!

**Thanks be to God!**

### Psalm

Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18

<sup>1</sup>Your love, O LORD, forever will I sing;  
from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.

<sup>2</sup>**For I am persuaded that your steadfast love is established forever;  
you have set your faithfulness firmly in the heavens.**

<sup>3</sup>"I have made a covenant with my chosen one;  
I have sworn an oath to David my servant:

<sup>4</sup>**I will establish your line forever,  
and preserve your throne for all generations."**

<sup>15</sup>Happy are the people who know the festal shout!  
They walk, O LORD, in the light of your presence.

<sup>16</sup>**They rejoice daily in your name;  
they are jubilant in your righteousness.**

<sup>17</sup>For you are the glory of their strength,  
and by your favor our might is exalted.

<sup>18</sup>**Truly, our shield belongs to the LORD;  
our king to the Holy One of Israel.**

## Second Lesson

Romans 6:12-23

*Sin is an enslaving power which motivates us to live self-serving, disobedient lives. Sin's final payoff is death. We, however, have been set free from sin's slavery to live obediently under God's grace, whose end is the free gift of eternal life.*

<sup>12</sup>Do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. <sup>13</sup>No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. <sup>14</sup>For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

<sup>15</sup>What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! <sup>16</sup>Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? <sup>17</sup>But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, <sup>18</sup>and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. <sup>19</sup>I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.

<sup>20</sup>When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. <sup>21</sup>So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. <sup>22</sup>But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. <sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord!

**Thanks be to God!**

## Gospel

Matthew 10:40-42

*When Jesus sends his disciples out as missionaries, he warns them of persecution and hardships they will face. He also promises to reward any who aid his followers and support their ministry.*

The holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**Glory to you, o Lord!**

[Jesus said to the twelve:] <sup>40</sup>“Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. <sup>41</sup>Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; <sup>42</sup>and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”

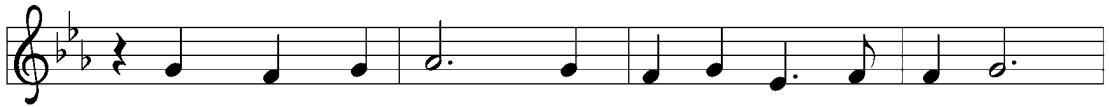
This is the holy Gospel of our Lord!

**Praise to you, O Christ!**

## Sermon

Hymn of the Day *This Is My Song* (SIBELIUS, STONE, HARKNESS)

#887



1 This is my song, O God of all the na - tions,  
2 My coun - try's skies are blu - er than the o - cean,  
3 This is my prayer, O God of all earth's king - doms,



a song of peace for lands a - far and mine.  
and sun - light beams on clo - ver - leaf and pine.  
your king - dom come; on earth your will be done.



This is my home, the coun - try where my heart is;  
But oth - er lands have sun - light too, and clo - ver,  
O God, be lift - ed up till all shall serve you,



here are my hopes, my dreams, my ho - ly shrine;  
and skies are ev - 'ry - where as blue as mine.  
and hearts u - nit - ed learn to live as one.



but oth - er hearts in oth - er lands are beat - ing  
So hear my song, O God of all the na - tions,  
So hear my prayer, O God of all the na - tions;



with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.  
a song of peace for their land and for mine.  
my - self I give you; let your will be done.

## 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

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray together for our shared world.

*A brief silence.*

God of companionship, encourage our relationships with our siblings in Christ. Bless our conversations. Shape our shared future and give us hearts eager to join in a festal shout of praise. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of abundance, you make your creation thrive and grow to provide all that we need. Inspire us to care for our environment and be attuned to where the earth is crying out. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**



God of mercy, your grace is poured out for all. Inspire authorities, judges, and politicians to act with compassion. Teach us to overcome fear with hope, meet hate with love, and welcome one another as we would welcome you. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of care, accompany all who are in deepest need. Comfort those who are sick, lonely, or abandoned. Renew the spirits of all who call upon you. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of community, we give thanks for this family of Covenant. Give us passion to embrace your mission and the vision to recognize where you are leading us. Teach us how to live more faithfully with each other. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of love, you gather in your embrace all who have died. Keep us steadfast in our faith and renew our trust in your promise. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen!**

Music Interlude *Be Still My Soul* (LARSON)

*Please use this time to pray for those near and dear to your heart.*

Thanksgiving for the Word

Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things:  
you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos,  
and brought life into being.

For your Word of life, O God,  
**we give you thanks and praise!**

By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts:  
freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey,  
a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you.

For your Word of life, O God,  
**we give you thanks and praise!**

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness:  
forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death,  
the way of your self-giving love.  
For your Word of life, O God,  
**we give you thanks and praise!**

Holy Spirit, rekindle your gifts within us:  
renew our faith, increase our hope,  
and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need.  
Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you;  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be all honor and glory forever and ever.  
**Amen!**

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

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. 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!**

## Sending Hymn *Give to Our God Immortal Praise* (WATTS, HATTON)

#848

1 Give to our God im - mor - tal praise! Mer - cy and  
2 He sent his Son with pow'r to save from guilt and  
3 Give to the Lord of lords re - nown; the King of

truth are all his ways. Won - ders of grace to  
dark - ness and the grave. Won - ders of grace to  
kings with glo - ry crown. His mer - cies ev - er

God be - long; re - peat his mer - cies in your song.  
God be - long; re - peat his mer - cies in your song.  
shall en - dure when lords and kings are known no more!

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The lyrics are placed between the vocal and bass lines. The first system contains three verses of lyrics. The second system contains two lines of lyrics. The third system contains three lines of lyrics. The score ends with a double bar line.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you!

**Thanks be to God!**

### **Praying Together**

**... for those who are homebound, ill, hospitalized or recuperating:** Gayle Agg, Bob Buettner, Alexis Carr, Joan Clarke, Steve Dobush, Barbara Fossa, Carolyn Frajter, Ken Frajter, Nealie Gage, Barb Gaglione, Rosa Garnett, Alex Hohenstein Judy Jones, Tom Juhasz, Ralph Kane, Dylan King, Marge Kriynovich, Jason Lanese, Andrea Lanzalaca, Sara Mendes, Phyllis Nemeth, Bernice Novak, Don Rusher Jr., Arlene Stoltz, Tim Susanek, Tom Susanek, Phyllis Treichel, Phyllis Welker, Linda Wright, Wilma Dancy, Bill Helmick, Nancy Helmick, Robert Lambrecht, Kim (Novak) Leonhardt, Laura Mele, Judy Morgan, Kris Sandor, Bill Wilkens, Eugene Winfrey, the Copeland/Lane Family

### **LAST WEEK**

General Fund receipts for weeks ending  
6/18/20: \$428      6/23/20: \$2673

## ***Lectionary Blog: Receiving a Prophet's Reward***



Let's be honest: listening to the many and varied voices that speak as Christian leaders, we hear a lot of different things. And that's a beautiful and necessary thing. If we learn anything from Scripture, it's that context matters. Jesus didn't say the same things to the ruling elites that he said to the poor and downcast. Paul's messages to the Philippians and the Corinthians were different. Reading through the letters to the seven churches in

Revelation, one gets a sense of an intimate knowledge about what different messages were needed for different contexts. So when we hear Christian leaders focusing on different issues in different times and places it's not only OK, but deeply biblical. And yet ....

Sometimes we hear leaders downright contradicting each other, calling each other liars or accusing one another of misrepresenting God. This, unfortunately, also has biblical precedent. During the first year of Zedekiah's reign (about 597), there was a quarrel between the prophets Hananiah and Jeremiah. See if any of this sounds familiar. There had been a massive catastrophe where a large part of the population was lost to sudden death while others were separated from their families. The people who spoke for God had differing responses to the calamity. Hananiah reassured the people that all would be better and life would go back to normal. They would see their families and friends again just like they used to. He even gave a timetable for the return to normalcy—less than two years (Jeremiah 28:3, 11).

Jeremiah, on the other hand, had been warning about this calamity for almost 30 years. Like any human, he preferred good news to bad and said he wished that Hananiah's prophecy would come true (Jeremiah 28:6). But he reminded Hananiah and all those listening that a prophet's job was to prophesy war, famine and pestilence as judgments against the countries that intentionally defied God and abused the powerless (Jeremiah 28:8). Jeremiah, himself, early in his career, exclaimed:

*Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your doings, and let me dwell with you in this place. ... For if you truly amend your ways and your doings, if you truly act justly one with another, if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own hurt, then I will dwell with you in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your ancestors forever and ever (Jeremiah 7:3-7).*

Harming people and looking to other sources of power instead of God have real consequences. Jeremiah goes on to say that those who prophesy prosperity and a certain timeline for return to peace and normalcy are only to be believed **after** what they prophesy has come to pass (Jeremiah 28:9). In other words, if someone proclaims judgment when God's people fail to live up to God's desires for caring for foreigners, widows, children and the poor, take her seriously. If someone proclaims unlimited prosperity and peace, no matter what systemic evils persist, do not take him seriously.

In the short Gospel reading for this week, Jesus advises us to welcome true prophets. Jesus proclaims that whoever welcomes a prophet will receive a prophet's reward (Matthew 10:41). Welcoming a prophet, I argue, is taking that person seriously about the importance of changing behavior that hurts people and disappoints God. The 20th-

century prophet of prophets, Rabbi A.J. Heschel, pointed out that true prophets see the world differently than most of us do:

*Indeed, the sort of crimes and even the amount of delinquency that fill the prophets of Israel with dismay do not go beyond that which we regard as normal, as typical ingredients of social dynamics. To us a single act of injustice—cheating in business, exploitation of the poor—is slight; to the prophets, a disaster. To us injustice is injurious to the welfare of the people; to the prophets it is a deathblow to existence: to us, an episode; to them, a catastrophe, a threat to the world. Their breathless impatience with injustice may strike us as hysteria. We ourselves witness continually acts of injustice, manifestations of hypocrisy, falsehood, outrage, misery, but we rarely grow indignant or overly excited. To the prophets even a minor injustice assumes cosmic proportions (The Prophets, Harper and Row, year).*

We can't afford to pretend we live in a world of peace when we don't. The welcoming of such a prophetic vision is very much in line with the words of Paul from Romans. He sees humanity in slavery, working toward the active production of evil. Instead of being slaves of systemic sin (Paul speaks of "sin" as a singular noun here and elsewhere, not as individual "sins") that harms others and disappoints God, we are to be slaves of righteousness (Romans 6:17-18). Paul sees humanity as either serving sin or serving God's righteousness. In the words of that other 20th-century prophet Bob Dylan, "you gotta serve somebody."

To welcome a prophet means to take her seriously, as conveying the importance that God places on the moment, and on humans loving God and/through loving our neighbors. Jeremiah the prophet warns that messages of peace, normalcy and lack of repercussions for abuse are to be believed only when they come true. On the other hand, God's displeasure with abuse and enjoyment of righteous service toward neighbors is a consistent message throughout Scripture. Let us win a prophet's reward by taking seriously the messages of the prophets these days who help us remember God's love for the downtrodden and insistence that we love and serve "the least of these" (Matthew 25:40).

*Cory Driver is a minister of word and service, and the director of the Transformational Leadership Academy in the Indiana-Kentucky Synod. He earned his doctorate in Jewish religious cultures from Emory University, Atlanta. Cory lives with his family in Indianapolis.*

## *Survey Considerations*

We encourage you to take time to let us know how you think worship went this morning as we continue to learn together what may be best for our Covenant family in worshiping together during this time of physical distancing. You may let us know by e-mailing Jen or Pastor Brad, calling the church office, or mailing in your responses. Some possible questions to consider:

- How do you think worship went today?
- Were there certain parts of the worship you missed from worships before?
- Did you feel safe and comfortable worshipping outdoors?
- Were you able to hear the entire worship, including the music?
- We plan on celebrating holy Communion soon, by having each car pick up their own elements (wafers and wine/grape juice), which will be packed in little containers, placed beside the bulletins, as you drive in for worship that day. You would keep the elements with you until we get to the Communion liturgy. The blessing will be made on all the elements at once before communing from wherever we are at the same time. How do you feel about that process?
- How did the bulletin work out for you to use for worship? Do you like the possibility of the bulletin being e-mailed ahead of time, allowing you the opportunity to print it yourself before arriving that following Sunday?
- Was today a worshipful experience?
- Other thoughts or ideas?

We know this is not ideal, but we know we are in this together, and we value your opinion in this family of Covenant. Please do not hesitate to let us know your thoughts and feelings.



# Musical Orchestra Word Search



VIOLA  
VIOLIN  
CELLO  
DRUM  
CLARINET

PIANO  
HARP  
BRASS  
FLUTE  
TRIANGLE

TROMBONE  
ORGAN  
SAXAPHONE  
TRUMPET  
LUTE

