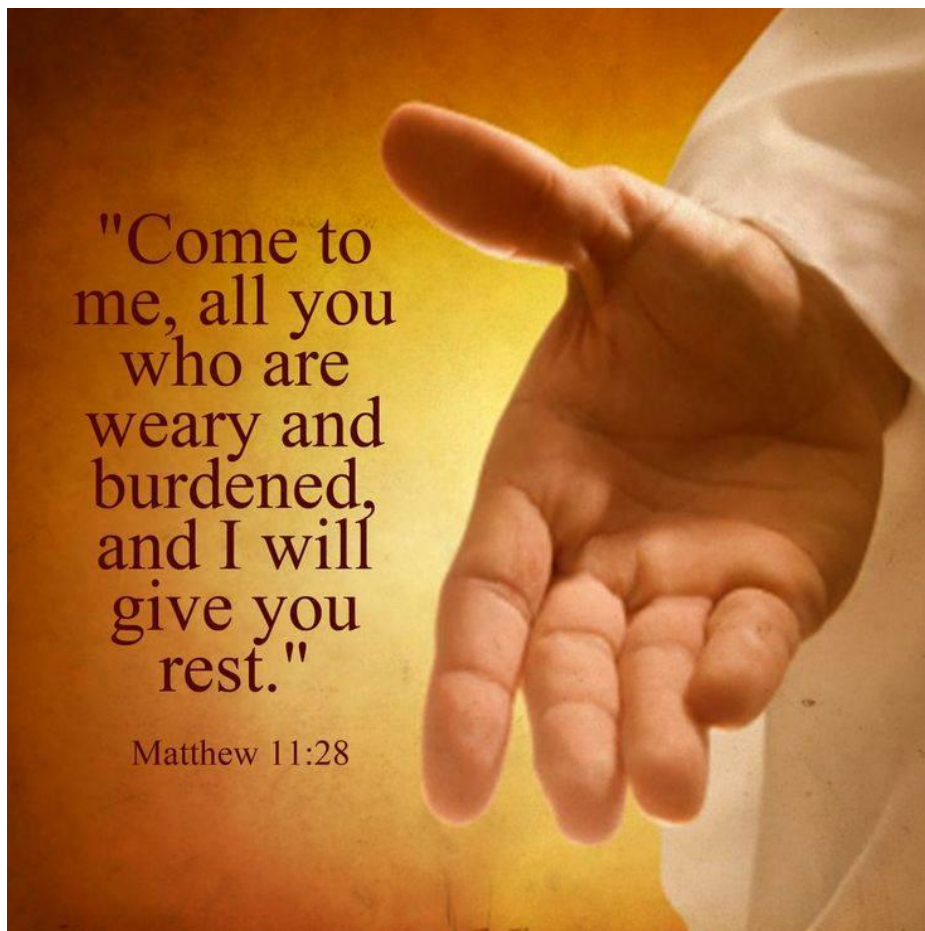


The Lutheran Church of the Covenant
"Reaching Out, Reflecting Christ, Renewing Lives"



"Come to
me, all you
who are
weary and
burdened,
and I will
give you
rest."

Matthew 11:28

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
July 5, 2020



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

The mystery of God's ways is sometimes hidden from the wise and intelligent. Jesus associates with those often excluded from the religious community. Like Paul, we struggle with our own selfish desires and seek God's mercy and forgiveness. We gather to be refreshed by Christ's invitation: "Come to me, all you that are weary." Gathered around word, water, and meal, we find rest for our souls.

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 *Come, Join the Dance of Trinity* (LEACH)

#412



1 Come, join the dance of Trin - i - ty, be - fore all worlds be - gun—
 2 Come, see the face of Trin - i - ty, new - born in Beth - le - hem;
 3 Come, speak a - loud of Trin - i - ty, as wind and tongues of flame
 4 With - in the dance of Trin - i - ty, be - fore all worlds be - gun,



the in - ter - weav - ing of the Three, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son.
 then blood - ied by a crown of thorns out - side Je - ru - sa - lem.
 set peo - ple free at Pen - te - cost to tell the Sav - ior's name.
 we sing the prais - es of the Three, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son.



The u - ni - verse of space and time did not a - rise by chance,
 The dance of Trin - i - ty is meant for hu - man flesh and bone;
 We know the yoke of sin and death, our necks have worn it smooth;
 Let voic - es rise and in - ter - weave, by love and hope set free,



but as the Three, in love and hope, made room with - in their dance.
 when fear con - fines the dance in death, God rolls a - way the stone.
 go tell the world of weight and woe that we are free to move!
 to shape in song this joy, this life: the dance of Trin - i - ty.

Prayer of the Day

You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen!**

First Lesson

Zechariah 9:9-12

The coming messianic king will inaugurate an era of disarmament and prosperity. Because of God's covenant with Israel, the people are designated as "prisoners of hope."

⁹Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
Lo, your king comes to you;
triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

¹⁰He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the war-horse from Jerusalem;
and the battle bow shall be cut off,
and he shall command peace to the nations;
his dominion shall be from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

¹¹As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.

¹²Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope;
today I declare that I will restore to you double.

The word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

⁸The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

⁹**LORD, you are good to all,
and your compassion is over all your works.**

¹⁰All your works shall praise you, O LORD,
and your faithful ones shall bless you.

¹¹**They shall tell of the glory of your kingdom
and speak of your power,**

¹²that all people may know of your power
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

¹³**Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; your dominion endures throughout all
ages.**

You, LORD, are faithful in all your words, and loving in all your works.

¹⁴The Lord upholds all those who fall
and lifts up those who are bowed down.

Second Lesson

Romans 7:15-25a

Life captive to sin is a catch-22 existence in which we know good but do not do it and do things we know to be wrong. Through Jesus Christ, God has set us free from such a futile existence.

¹⁵I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. ¹⁹For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. ²⁰Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

²¹So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. ²²For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, ²³but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ^{25a}Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

The word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

Gospel

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Jesus chides people who find fault with both his ministry and that of John the Baptist. He thanks God that wisdom and intelligence are not needed to receive what God has to offer.

The holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 11th chapter.

Glory to you, o Lord!

[Jesus spoke to the crowd saying:] ¹⁶“To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another, ¹⁷‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.’

¹⁸For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; ¹⁹the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

²⁵At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

This is the holy Gospel of our Lord!

Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon

Hymn of the Day *Lord of All Hopefulness* (STRUTHER)

#765



1 Lord of all hope - ful - ness, Lord of all joy,
2 Lord of all ea - ger - ness, Lord of all faith,
3 Lord of all kind - li - ness, Lord of all grace,
4 Lord of all gen - tle - ness, Lord of all calm,



whose trust, ev - er child - like, no cares could de - stroy:
whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe:
your hands swift to wel - come, your arms to em - brace:
whose voice is con - tent - ment, whose pres - ence is balm:



be there at our wak - ing, and give us, we pray,
be there at our la - bors, and give us, we pray,
be there at our hom - ing, and give us, we pray,
be there at our sleep - ing, and give us, we pray,



your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.
your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.
your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.
your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

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

Let us join together to pray to God, our stronghold, for all the needs of the world, responding to each petition with the phrase, “in mercy, receive our prayer.”

A brief silence.

God of us all, where Christians are assembling for worship, protect them from viral infection. Where Christians are worshipping with print and screen, grant them steadfastness in your word. Strengthen those believers who doubt your goodness. Bless worship leaders, deacons, and committee members as they serve the family in Christ during this difficult time.

O God, you are gracious and full of compassion:
in mercy, receive our prayer.

Creator God, grant renewal to the air, the waters, and the lands. Save the animals whose natural habitat is threatened by climate change or human carelessness, and direct us toward sustainable living.

O God, you are gracious and full of compassion:
in mercy, receive our prayer.

God of all the nations, keep your world from war. Protect citizens from the designs of autocratic rulers. Uphold our courts. Guide our national and state governments in finding ways to redress the wrongs of racism and to ensure equality for all.

O God, you are gracious and full of compassion:
in mercy, receive our prayer.

Healing God, we lift up those who are sick and suffering. Console the fearful, feed the hungry, house the homeless, shelter the run-aways. Heal the many who are newly afflicted with the coronavirus, and guide researchers in discovering a vaccine.

O God, you are gracious and full of compassion:

in mercy, receive our prayer.

God of all our years, continue to watch over infants and young children, that they be carefully tended. We pray for teens, that they keep patience throughout the contagion. We pray for school boards, that they find solutions for the fall semester. We pray for the unemployed, that they find jobs. We pray for medical workers, that they remain healthy. We pray for the aged, especially those in care facilities, that they find companionship in your presence.

O God, you are gracious and full of compassion:

in mercy, receive our prayer.

We give thanks for those who have died in faith. Comfort all who mourn their dead, and at the end, bring us and all your people into your eternal rest.

O God, you are gracious and full of compassion:

in mercy, receive our prayer.

Receive these prayers, O God, for the sake of him who bore the heavy yoke for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen!**

Music Interlude (*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 *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* (SCRIVEN, CONVERSE)

#742



- 1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
- 2 Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y - where?
- 3 Are we weak and heav - y - lad - en, cum - bered with a load of care?



What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!
We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged—take it to the Lord in prayer.
Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge—take it to the Lord in prayer.



Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit; oh, what need - less pain we bear—
Can we find a friend so faith - ful who will all our sor - row share?
Do your friends de - spise, for - sake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.



all be - cause we do not car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!
Je - sus knows our ev - 'ry weak - ness—take it to the Lord in prayer.
In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a so - lace there.

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 week ending 6/28/2020: \$2114.00

Lectionary Blog: Choosing the Right Yoke



I'm writing this reflection in the midst of the national, and indeed, global response to the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police and so many unarmed African American women and men before him. Christians of all backgrounds and political persuasions are looking to what Jesus wants from them and for God's beloved community. Some urge action, some urge study and some urge quietism.

As Lutheran Christians, we have a particular witness that is important. We know that humans are sinful creatures and that we cannot save ourselves. It is only God's grace, the faithfulness of Jesus and the inspiring of the Spirit that allow us to move forward into God's kingdom. But God's work doesn't lead to our passivity in the face of injustice. We hear frequently in Lutheran circles: "God does not need your good works, but your neighbor does." I think that is Jesus' position. I'm grateful for this long summer and fall studying Matthew, where we can spend extended time studying Jesus' teachings, practices and life. Meditating on the life *of* Christ helps us move forward through life *in* Christ.

Jesus had a pronounced distaste for lukewarm responses (Revelation 3:15-16). While reflecting on the ministry and life of his relative, John the Baptizer, Jesus pointed out that many people weren't attracted to either of their very different ministries. John ate bugs, lived in the wilderness, wore scratchy clothes and yelled at people. Jesus ate at fancy dinner parties, went from town to town, wore at least one fancy garment, and mostly—but not always—spoke conversationally. Both men were proclaiming the kingdom of God in very different ways, but they were proclaiming the arrival of the same kingdom. Jesus was frustrated by people who responded to neither. He compared that generation to people in a marketplace who neither danced with music nor mourned with wailers (Matthew 11:17). These people remained unmoved by the emotions of people around them.

I can't help but think of people who, in response to protests that involve a limited number of people rioting and damaging property, remark: "Why can't you peacefully protest?" But people who peacefully protest are told to shut up or are ignored. Either way, the response to both peaceful and destructive demands for redress of systemic wrongs are met with inaction. In other words, in response to our modern prophets who return us to the words and imagery that Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Amos and the rest used to denounce injustice, we neither dance nor mourn with those who call out for us to hear them and respond.

And yet, we do not, cannot—and must not—take the weight of the world on our shoulders. We are not called to solve the problems of the world. We are called to faithful obedience to the one who has overcome the world. And Jesus calls us to work—but in that peculiar, Jesus way. To those who are carrying heavy burdens that weigh them down, Jesus tells them to put down those onerous burdens and carry them no longer (Matthew 11:28).

But then to *everyone*—those who have been carrying heavy burdens and those who have been standing on the sidelines, not working at all—Jesus calls us to take up his yoke (Matthew 11:29). Now, a yoke is a farming implement that a beast of burden wears to pull a plow. The plow breaks up the ground to prepare it for growth and productivity. Rabbis used the term “yoke” to signify their corpus of commandments and teachings that they would place on their disciples and expect them to live out and teach their own disciples, in turn. When Jesus spoke of his yoke, he meant his understanding of how to obey his commandments and live life in a way that would allow for the growth of good fruits for the kingdom of heaven.

So what were Jesus’ commandments? We will spend the next several months exploring that question. For this week, it’s enough to say that Jesus expects us to respond—and to do *something*. Whether we mourn with those who mourn, or dance when something beautiful is born, Jesus calls us away from the twin dangers of crushing over-functioning and paralyzing inaction. To love God with our whole selves and to love our neighbors as ourselves are simple commandments, but they surely aren’t easy ones. Buyt Rabbi Tarfon reminds us: “You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to desist from it” (Pirke Avot 2:21).

We, and our good works, won’t be the saviors of the world. That position is already filled. But we can be—and must be—the hands and feet of Jesus, bearing the aroma of Christ in the middle of those who are safe and those who are being destroyed (2 Corinthians 2:15).



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.

This, and other resources for the journey of faith, available at LivingLutheran.org, as well as our own website: covenantmaplehts.org.

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 next Sunday, 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.



Bird Word Search



B	G	H	O	U	S	E	S	P	A	R	R	O	W	N	O	O
Q	J	F	X	O	F	S	Y	V	K	X	Z	V	W	T	X	B
L	W	J	B	L	U	E	J	A	Y	L	D	S	U	R	F	C
H	G	H	S	I	L	S	J	O	P	Q	K	R	G	E	K	R
O	P	M	O	C	K	I	N	G	B	I	R	D	O	E	P	O
U	N	C	S	G	S	Z	K	E	X	O	C	I	L	S	V	C
S	V	M	M	U	T	E	S	W	A	N	G	Q	D	P	B	K
E	Y	D	U	G	F	P	G	O	S	J	S	N	F	A	E	D
F	G	K	J	Y	P	O	C	O	G	T	J	P	I	R	Z	O
I	G	C	H	I	C	K	A	D	E	E	L	W	N	R	W	V
N	H	I	J	U	P	O	V	P	I	O	T	G	C	O	K	E
C	V	N	A	X	O	M	J	E	H	B	P	A	H	W	Y	N
H	V	W	C	E	Z	Z	X	C	R	O	W	I	Q	N	A	C
X	Q	Z	Y	R	A	J	W	K	D	A	E	A	Z	S	I	F
O	Y	A	Y	C	L	W	R	E	N	U	A	A	V	G	R	G
G	V	W	Q	O	N	N	W	R	E	A	D	G	Y	H	V	I
G	S	T	A	R	L	I	N	G	E	F	Q	N	L	A	H	T
B	I	Q	B	L	A	C	K	B	I	R	D	T	Q	E	Y	T
A	V	W	V	P	Y	S	O	N	G	S	P	A	R	R	O	W

HOUSE SPARROW

ROCK DOVE

STARLING

MUTE SWAN

WOODPECKER

CROW

BLUE JAY

CHICKADEE

SONG SPARROW

GOLDFINCH

HOUSE FINCH

WREN

MOCKINGBIRD

TREE SPARROW

BLACKBIRD

