

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



World Communion Sunday
October 3, 2021



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



We welcome you to worship here at the Lutheran Church of the Covenant! Here are a few notes to make you feel more at home as we praise this God of new life together!

- Bulletins and Communion (wheat or gluten-free wafers, wine or grape juice options) are available to be picked up at the back of the sanctuary.
- Portions marked with * are when we invite you to stand as you are able to do so.
- We encourage you to participate throughout the worship by speaking the **bold** print and singing along with the hymns!
- There will not be a separate time for an offering, so a basket is placed in the back for those who wish to support our local ministry as well as the wider church.
- We will commune from our respective seats, where the presiding minister will invite you to open your respective cups with the Communion elements. We believe this meal is for everyone who wishes to partake, regardless of church affiliation or lack thereof. This tangible gift of God's love is meant for the world to enjoy!
- Following the recommendation of the Cuyahoga County Board of Health regarding COVID-19, we ask that you wear a mask for the duration of your time in the building.

Our Worship Leaders & Staff

Ministers

Presiding Minister

Organist

Lector

Parish Administrator

Custodian

All People

The Rev. Bradley Ross

Andrea Alexander

Harry Werner

Jennifer Lasher-Dobush

Vince Besednjak

The Lutheran Church of the Covenant

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Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Today's gospel combines a saying that makes many of us uncomfortable with a story we find comforting. Jesus' saying on divorce is another of his rejections of human legislation in favor of the original intent of God's law. Jesus' rebuke of the disciples who are fending off the children should challenge us as well. What does it mean to receive the kingdom of God as a child does?

Prelude *A Prayer For Peace* (SHEA)

Welcome & Announcements

*Confession & Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at our baptism, remembering our everlasting bond with our Risen Lord.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose teaching is life,
whose presence is sure,
and whose love is endless.

Amen!

Let us confess our sins to the one who welcomes us with an open heart.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God our comforter:

like lost sheep, we have gone astray.

We gaze upon abundance and see scarcity.

We turn our faces away from injustice and oppression.

We exploit the earth with our apathy and greed.

Free us from our sin, gracious God.

Listen when we call out to you for help.

Lead us by your love to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Amen.

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
 but the gift of grace in † Christ Jesus,
 God makes you righteous.
 Receive with glad hearts the forgiveness of all your sins.
Amen!

*Gathering Hymn *God is Here*

#526



1 God is here! As we your peo - ple meet to of - fer
 2 Here are sym - bols to re - mind us of our life - long
 3 Here our chil - dren find a wel - come in the Shep - herd's
 4 Lord of all, of church and king - dom, in an age of



praise and prayer, may we find in full - er mea - sure
 need of grace; here are ta - ble, font, and pul - pit;
 flock and fold; here as bread and wine are tak - en,
 change and doubt, keep us faith - ful to the gos - pel;



what it is in Christ we share. Here, as in the
 here the cross has cen - tral place. Here in hon - es -
 Christ sus - tains us as of old. Here the ser - vants
 help us work your pur - pose out. Here, in this day's



world a - round us, all our var - ied skills and arts
 ty of preach - ing, here in si - lence, as in speech,
 of the Ser - vant seek in wor - ship to ex - plore
 ded - i - ca - tion, all we have to give, re - ceive;



wait the com - ing of the Spir - it in - to o - pen minds and hearts.
 here, in new - ness and re - new - al, God the Spir - it comes to each.
 what it means in dai - ly liv - ing to be - lieve and to a - dore.
 we, who can - not live with - out you, we a - dore you! We be - lieve!

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000
 Music: ABBOT'S LEIGH, Cyril V. Taylor, 1907–1991
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*Prayer of the Day

Sovereign God, you have created us to live in loving community with one another. Form us for life that is faithful and steadfast, and teach us to trust like little children, that we may reflect the image of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen!**

First Lesson

Genesis 2:18-24

Genesis 2 stresses that people are not meant to live in isolation but in relationship. Out of love for humanity, God creates them male and female, to provide companionship for each other and to become with each other “one flesh.” The Hebrew words used here are ish (man) and ishshah (woman).

¹⁸The LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.” ¹⁹So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. ²¹So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²²And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
this one shall be called Woman,
for out of Man this one was taken.”

²⁴Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

Word of God, word of life!

Thanks be to God!

Psalm

Psalm 8

¹O LORD our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!—

²you whose glory is chanted above the heavens out of the mouths of infants and children;

you have set up a fortress against your enemies, to silence the foe and avenger.

³When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,

⁴**what are mere mortals that you should be mindful of them,
human beings that you should care for them?**

⁵Yet you have made them little less than divine;
with glory and honor you crown them.

⁶**You have made them rule over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under their feet:**

⁷all flocks and cattle,
even the wild beasts of the field,

⁸**the birds of the air, the fish of the sea,
and whatever passes along the paths of the sea.**

⁹O LORD our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Second Lesson

Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12

Quoting from the psalms, this passage from Hebrews emphasizes that Jesus, the one through whom God created everything and who sits at God's right hand, is also the one who experienced human suffering and death in order to blaze the path of salvation for us.

¹Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. ³He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

^{2:5}Now God did not subject the coming world, about which we are speaking, to angels.

⁶But someone has testified somewhere,

“What are human beings that you are mindful of them,
or mortals, that you care for them?

⁷You have made them for a little while lower than the angels;
you have crowned them with glory and honor,

⁸subjecting all things under their feet.”

Now in subjecting all things to them, God left nothing outside their control. As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them, ⁹but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

¹⁰It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ¹¹For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, ¹²saying, “I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.”

Word of God, word of life!

Thanks be to God!

*Gospel

Mark 10:2-16

Jesus announced and enacted in history the new reality of God's surprising activity. These two stories demonstrate this new reality: Women and children are accepted and valued, not dismissed as inferior to adult men.

The Gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord!

²Some Pharisees came, and to test [Jesus] they asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” ³He answered them, “What did Moses command you?” ⁴They said, “Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her.” ⁵But Jesus said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. ⁶But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ⁷For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, ⁸and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

¹⁰Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. ¹¹He said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; ¹²and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”

¹³People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. ¹⁴But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. ¹⁵Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.” ¹⁶And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

This is the holy Gospel of our Lord!

Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon

*Hymn of the Day *This is My Song*

#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.

Text: Lloyd Stone, 1912–1993, sts. 1–2; Georgia Harkness, 1891–1974, st. 3

Music: FINLANDIA, Jean Sibelius, 1865–1957

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Outside USA: Music © Breitkopf & Härtel, Wiesbaden.

* 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 *For The Healing of the Nations*

(See Handout)

*Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy God,
our Bread of life, our Table, and our Food,
you created a world in which all might be satisfied by your abundance.

You dined with Abraham and Sarah, promising them life,
and fed your people Israel with manna from heaven.
You sent your Son to eat with sinners
and to become food for the world.

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 life given for us
and his rising from the grave,
we await his coming again to share with us the everlasting feast.

Holy Spirit, nurture and sustain us with this meal:
strengthen us to serve all in hunger and want,
and by this bread and cup make of us the body of Christ.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
both now and forever. **Amen!**

**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.**

Communion

Music Interlude *Prayer for Communion* (LIVINGSTON JR.)

*Prayer after Communion

Lord of life,
in the gift of your body and blood
you turn the crumbs of our faith into a feast of salvation.
Send us forth into the world with shouts of joy,
bearing witness to the abundance of your love
in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen!

*Blessing

People of God,
you are Christ's body,
bringing new life to the world.
The holy Trinity, † one God,
bless you now and forever!
Amen!

*Sending Hymn *God Bless Our Native Land*

#891



1 God bless our na - tive land; firm may it ev - er stand
 2 So shall our prayers a - rise to God a - bove the skies,



through storm and night. When the wild tem - pests rave, Rul - er of
 on whom we wait. Thou who art ev - er nigh, guard - ing with



wind and wave, do thou our coun - try save by thy great might.
 watch - ful eye, to thee a - loud we cry: God save the state!

Text: Charles T. Brooks, 1812–1883; John S. Dwight, 1813–1893
 Music: NATIONAL ANTHEM, *Thesaurus Musicus*, London, 1744

*Dismissal

Go in peace. The living Word dwells in you!

Thanks be to God!

Postlude *God Bless Our Native Land* (BROUGHTON)

Praying Together

... for those who are homebound, ill, hospitalized or recuperating: Gayle Agg, Vince Besednjak, Bob Buettner, Joan Clarke, John Crawford, Nicole Crawford, Barbara Fossa, Carolyn Frajter, Ken Frajter, Donna Franz, Nealie Gage, Barb Gaglione, Michelle Garnett, Rosa Garnett, Judy Jones, Matt Jones, Dylan King, Jason Lanese, Andrea Lanzalaca, Heather Lasher, Sara Mendes, Phyllis Nemeth, Don Rusher Jr, Arlene Stoltz, Marie Storms, Tom Susaneck, 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 9/26/2021: \$1332

We extend our heart-felt appreciation to Andrea Alexander, who is blessing us with her musical gifts at the organ/piano. Andrea will be with us the next few Sundays. Thank you very much, Andrea!



For our latest video recordings of worship, bulletins, newsletters, as well as links to daily devotions and other resources, please visit: covenantmaplehts.org.

Following worship, you are invited to join us in the parlor behind the sanctuary for an enriching discussion with others lead by Pastor Harry. All are welcome!



Lectionary Blog: “We Do See Jesus”

“As it is, we do not see everything in subjection to them, but we do see Jesus” (Hebrews 2:8-9).

Many people are seeking spiritual enlightenment. In recent public opinion polls, more people are willing to claim being “spiritual” than are willing to say that they are “religious.” People explore the latest prayer techniques and different churches and praise bands and labyrinth walks and Alpha Bible Studies and the Wild Women of the Bible Weekends and Seeking Your Inner Child Men’s Drum Circle Sweat Lodge and I don’t know what all. And whatever it is they think they’re looking for, if it isn’t where they are, well, it must be over the hill or around the corner or in the next place they look or the next.

“As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them, but we do see Jesus.”

The author of the book of Hebrews is, in this text, dealing with the fact that while the biblical witness is that God is in control of the world, when we look around us, it is difficult to see any evidence that God (or God’s angels, “them”) is controlling much of anything. As one of my unbelieving college professors put it, “If God is really in charge, he, she or it is doing a lousy job.” War, drugs, disease, natural disaster, economic collapse, starvation—need I go on? Does this look like “*everything in subjection*” to God?

“As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them, but we do see Jesus.”

And let’s be honest with one another. The church to which those of us who gather on Sundays have traditionally looked for hope and meaning is a confused place right now. In almost all denominational families, it is a time of change, uncertainty and discomfort. Arguments about sexuality, theology, worship and decline threaten to overwhelm all churches. It is a time when people are searching for what the graveside commendation in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship funeral service calls a “sure and certain hope” (ELW, p. 284).

“As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them, but we do see Jesus.”

The little word “yet” is vital to understanding not only this text but also the promises of God to us at times like these. *“As it is, we do not yet see.”* As much as we yearn for and look for and, yes, do battle for certainty and security, the Bible constantly reminds us of what Martin Luther referred to as the “hiddenness of God.” It is sometimes referred to as the “already-but-not-yet” kingdom of God.

As we look around the world for God, God is often difficult to see, difficult to pin down. And sometimes, just when we think we have the holy in our hands, it slips away, and we realize we were mistaken. The author of Hebrews reminds us that we are to look to Jesus to see what God is doing in the world. In particular, we are to look at the fact that Jesus gave up his place at the right hand of God to become human like us. *“Who for a little while became lower than the angels”* (2:9), the text says. And that, as a result of this coming into humanity with us, Jesus suffered and died and *“tasted death for everyone”* (2:9).

“We do not yet see everything in subjection to them, but we do see Jesus” is the promise that in Jesus all we hope for and all we need is present. In the community of faith, we see Jesus in the midst of a world where God is often hard to find. We hear Christ’s voice in the readings, hymns, songs, liturgies and sermons. We see our Lord’s face in the faces around us; we feel the divine touch in the touch of another’s hand at the passing of the peace. Most of all we see, feel and receive Christ in the meal, in the bread and wine, the body and blood of Jesus.

“We do not yet see everything in subjection to them, but we do see Jesus”

A post-communion prayer that comes to us from our full communion partner the United Methodist Church goes like this: *“Just as this bread and cup have been Christ for us; send us out to be Christ for the world.”* We are called to go out amid people who do not yet see all things in subjection to God, do not see goodness, justice and love prevailing anywhere—especially not in their lives. We are called to be Christian in their midst in such a way that people can say, *“But I do see Jesus.”* Amen and amen.

Delmer Chilton is originally from North Carolina and received his education at the University of North Carolina, Duke Divinity School and the Graduate Theological Foundation. He received his Lutheran training at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, S.C. Ordained in 1977, Delmer has served parishes in North Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee.

Countries of the World Word Search

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

Argentina	Canada	China	Egypt
England	France	Germany	Hungary
Israel	Italy	Japan	Mexico
New Zealand	Nigeria	Peru	Russia
Scotland	Sweden	Thailand	Turkey