

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



Second Sunday after Pentecost
June 6, 2021



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



We welcome you to worship here at the Lutheran Church of the Covenant! As long as the weather cooperates, we gather outside in God's Creation so that we may more safely come together and worship with singing and loud shouts of praise.

- Bulletins and Communion (wheat or gluten-free wafers, wine or grape juice options) are available to be picked up at the side driveway. Please keep in mind potential wind that may affect your Communion cups.
- You may stay in your vehicle or setup a chair anywhere you like. Speakers will be set up front by the worship leaders so that everyone can hear and participate from their respective spots.
- It is your choice whether you wear a mask or not, as well as how much distance you wish to keep from others. We are mindful of everyone's varying comfort levels with what we hope to be improving circumstances with COVID-19.
- We encourage you to participate throughout the worship by speaking the **bold** print and singing along with the hymns!
- You will not be asked to stand during the worship, so feel free to remain seated throughout.
- An offering basket is placed up-front by the podium.

Our Worship Leaders & Staff

Ministers
Presiding Minister
Pianist
Lector
Parish Administrator
Custodian

All People
The Rev. Bradley Ross
Robin Crawford
Bert Zahn
Jennifer Lasher-Dobush
Vince Besednjak

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Second Sunday after Pentecost

A house divided against itself cannot stand. Jesus makes this observation in light of charges that he is possessed. He is possessed, not by a demon, but by the Holy Spirit. We who have received the Holy Spirit through baptism have been joined to Christ's death and resurrection and knit together in the body of Christ. Those with whom we sing and pray this day are Jesus' family. With them we go forth in peace to do the will of God.

Prelude *Grateful* (HAYES)

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,
the God of manna,
the God of miracles,
the God of mercy.

Amen!

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God, our provider,

help us.

It is hard to believe there is enough to share.

**We question your ways when they differ
from the ways of the world in which we live.**

**We turn to our own understanding
rather than trusting in you.**

**Share with us the words of eternal life
and feed us for life in the world.**

Amen.

Beloved people of God:
in Jesus, the manna from heaven,
you are fed and nourished.
By Jesus, the worker of miracles,
there is always more than enough.
Through Jesus, † the bread of life,
you are shown God's mercy:
you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.
Amen!

Gathering Hymn *Come, Ye Disconsolate*

#607



1 Come, ye dis - con - so - late, wher - e'er ye lan - guish;
2 Joy of the des - o - late, light of the stray - ing,
3 Here see the Bread of life; see wa - ters flow - ing



come to the mer - cy - seat, fer - vent - ly kneel.
hope of the pen - i - tent, fade - less and pure;
forth from the throne of God, pure from a - bove.



Here bring your wound - ed hearts, here tell your an - guish;
here speaks the Com - fort - er, ten - der - ly say - ing,
Come to the feast of love; come, ev - er know - ing



earth has no sor - row that heav'n can - not heal.
"Earth has no sor - row that heav'n can - not cure."
earth has no sor - row but heav'n can re - move.

Text: Thomas Moore, 1779–1852, sts. 1–2; Thomas Hastings, 1784–1872, st. 3
Music: CONSOLATOR, Samuel Webbe Sr., 1740–1816

Prayer of the Day

Hopeful God, in Jesus Christ you turned death into life and defeat into victory. Increase our faith and trust in him, that we may triumph over all evil in the strength of the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen!**

First Lesson

Genesis 3:8-15

Immediately after Adam and Eve eat the forbidden fruit, they hide from God. Neither takes responsibility for their sin, instead blaming each other, the snake, and even God. The curse on the snake was understood as a messianic prophecy by the early church, who associated Eve's "offspring" with Christ.

⁸[Adam and Eve] heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" ¹⁰He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." ¹¹He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" ¹²The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." ¹³Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." ¹⁴The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. ¹⁵I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

Word of God, word of life!

Thanks be to God!

¹Out of the depths

I cry to you, O Lord;

²**O Lord, hear my voice!**

Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

³If you were to keep watch over sins,

O Lord, who could stand?

⁴**Yet with you is forgiveness,**

in order that you may be feared.

⁵I wait for you, O Lord; my soul waits;

in your word is my hope.

⁶**My soul waits for the Lord more than those who keep watch for the morning,
more than those who keep watch for the morning.**

⁷O Israel, wait for the Lord, for with the Lord there is steadfast love;
with the Lord there is plenteous redemption.

⁸**For the Lord shall redeem Israel
from all their sins.**

Second Lesson

2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

Life in the present is transitory and cannot compare with the eternal home God has prepared for us. So we do not despair no matter what life might bring because we know that as God raised Jesus from the dead, God promises to bring us into eternal life.

¹³Just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—"I believed, and so I spoke"—we also believe, and so we speak, ¹⁴because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. ¹⁵Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

¹⁶So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, ¹⁸because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

^{5:1}For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Word of God, word of life!

Thanks be to God!

In response to charges that he is possessed, Jesus wonders aloud how anyone who is demon-possessed can cast out demons. Those who do the will of God are possessed by the Holy Spirit, siblings of Christ.

[Jesus went home;] ²⁰and the crowd came together again, so that [Jesus and the disciples] could not even eat. ²¹When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, “He has gone out of his mind.” ²²And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, “He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons.” ²³And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. ²⁷But no one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

²⁸“Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; ²⁹but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”—³⁰for they had said, “He has an unclean spirit.”

³¹Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. ³²A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you.” ³³And he replied, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” ³⁴And looking at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.”

This is the holy Gospel of our Lord!

Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon

Hymn of the Day *My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less*

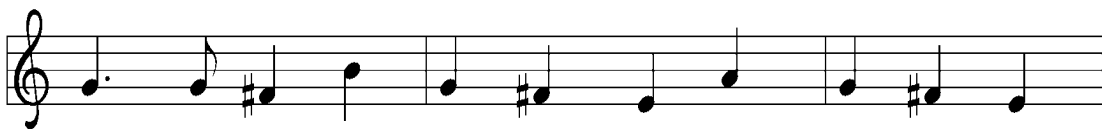
#597



1 My hope is built on noth - ing less than
2 When dark - ness veils his love - ly face, I
3 His oath, his cov - e - nant, his blood sus -
4 When he shall come with trum - pet sound, oh,



Je - sus' blood and righ - teous - ness; no mer - it of my
rest on his un - chang - ing grace; in ev - 'ry high and
tain me in the rag - ing flood; when all sup - ports are
may I then in him be found, clothed in his righ - teous -



own I claim, but whol - ly lean on Je - sus' name.
storm - y gale my an - chor holds with - in the veil.
washed a - way, he then is all my hope and stay.
ness a - lone, re - deemed to stand be - fore the throne!

Refrain



On Christ, the sol - id rock, I stand; all oth - er ground is sink - ing sand.

Text: Edward Mote, 1797–1874, alt.
Music: MELITA, John B. Dykes, 1823–1876

Prayers of Intercession

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

A brief silence.

God of wholeness, watch over your precious children all over the world. Unify us in service of the gospel, that we may work together as beloved siblings to share your love with all. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the cosmos, continue to nurture your creation: the gardens, waterways and creatures near to us and diverse forms of life that remain unseen. Teach us to treat the natural world with reverence, seeking restoration when human divisions have caused harm to your beloved creation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of all people, we yearn for harmony among the nations. Cast out from us unclean spirits of greed and fear, that we may work in solidarity with one another for the common good. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of abundance, tend to those who are oppressed or in any need. Encourage those who have begun to lose heart. Strengthen and renew us with your compassion. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of righteousness, nourish our whole Covenant family. Set our gaze upon things eternal, that in thanksgiving for your mercy, we may extend grace to more and more people. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the ages, in your goodness you have sent us faithful witnesses for every time and place. We give you thanks for those saints who now rest in your eternal embrace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace. **Amen!**

Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy God,
our Maker, Redeemer, and Healer,
in the harmonious world of your creation,
the plants and animals, the seas and stars
were whole and well in your praise.

When sin had scarred the world,
you sent your Son to heal our ills
and to form us again into one.

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 acts of healing, his body given up,
and his victory over death,
we await that day when all the peoples of the earth
will come to the river to enjoy the tree of life.

Holy Spirit, continue to come upon us and upon this meal:
as grains scattered on the hillside become one bread,
so let your church be gathered from the ends of the earth,
that all may be fed with the Bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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 *Come, Ye Disconsolate* (RODRIGUEZ)

Prayer after Communion

Jesus, Bread of life,
we have received from your table
more than we could ever ask.
As you have nourished us in this meal,
now strengthen us to love the world with your own life.
In your name we pray.
Amen!

Blessing

The blessing of God,
who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us,
✠ be upon you now and forever!
Amen!

Sending Hymn *I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me*

#860



1 I'm so glad I'm so glad
 2 Sa - tan had me bound, Je - sus lift - ed me. Sa - tan had me bound,
 3 When I was in trou - ble, When I was in trou - ble,



Je - sus lift - ed me. I'm so glad
 Sa - tan had me bound, Je - sus lift - ed me,
 When I was in trou - ble,



sing - ing glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! Je - sus lift - ed me.

Text: African American spiritual
 Music: JESUS LIFTED ME, African American spiritual

Dismissal

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ!

Thanks be to God!

Postlude *A Mighty Fortress is Our God* (HANSEN)

Praying Together

... for those who are homebound, ill, hospitalized or recuperating: Gayle Agg, 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, Bernice Novak, Robert Ridgell, 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 5/30/2021: \$828



**VISIT OUR
WEBSITE**

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

Check us out on Facebook for the latest updates for community activities and a dose of Good News on your news feed!



facebook

Lectionary Blog: Who Do You Follow?

1 Samuel 8:4-11; Psalm 138;
2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1; Mark 3:20-35*

Both the Hebrew Bible and Gospel texts for this week carry strong admonitions about serving the Lord God instead of some other lord. Whether tempted by a human authority figure or not knowing the difference between the work of God and that of Beelzebub, humans roundly reject God's kingship in this week's readings to grave consequences.

In the first reading, the prophet Samuel has followed in the footsteps of his old mentor, Eli, by raising two wicked sons, Joel and Abijah. The plan had been for Samuel's sons to be seer-judges like him and conduct a traveling justice circuit around the country. But they didn't follow his ways (1 Samuel 8:5), so the people asked for a king to serve as judge instead.

Hearing this, Samuel and God commiserated about feeling rejected. God quickly noted that the people hadn't rejected Samuel (or his family) but God (7). But then God did agree that Samuel had had a similar experience and now knew what it was like to be forsaken by the people (8).

Samuel and God then set out to warn the people that a king would make their sons serve in his army and their daughters would become maidservants. The king would take their possessions to give to his royal attendants and keep their servants and animals for himself. But the people insisted that they wanted a king to fight for them, even though they eventually would become his slaves—and God would not save them (17-18).

I have to say, I feel bad for the people here. Obviously, the best option is to rely on God for leadership. But it seems like they were choosing between Samuel's sons who "turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice" (3) and a king. While they were warned that a king would enrich himself from their possessions, they weren't told that he would be as corrupt as Samuel's sons already were. Again, I know those probably weren't the only two options. But I can't help but wonder: If Samuel had spent more time teaching his sons and less time on the judging circuit (1 Samuel 7:16), would the people have chosen them to take over leadership? Then, would David have eventually been a shepherd-prophet instead of a king?

But the fact remains that the people chose a king and a monarchy. Although righteous kings are mentioned in the Southern Kingdom of Judah, it seems that the monarchy overall was the negative influence that Samuel and God had warned that it would be. Qohelet, someone who knew the inside of the palace quite well, warned:

If you see the poor oppressed in a district, and justice and rights denied, do not be surprised at such things; for one official is eyed by a higher one, and over them both are others higher still. The increase from the land is taken by all; the king himself profits from the fields (Ecclesiastes 5:8-9; NIV).

The people rejected God's direct rule over them.

Hundreds of years and many dynasties later, Jesus drove out demons and exercised authority over unclean spirits. Some Jerusalem religious notables argued that Jesus cast out demons under the authority of the prince of demons. Beelzebub seems to have been a

Canaanite god who was appropriated by the Philistines and worshiped at Ekron. Beelzebul, the name used in Mark, is a circumlocution for the name of the pagan god and in Aramaic meant something like “lord of poop/filth” (Beelzebub itself is probably a play on the actual name of the god—it means something like “lord of flies” instead of the similar sounding “lord of the [holy] house”). By the first century, Beelzebul seems to have been understood to occupy a position as the first or second most powerful demon in a complicated hierarchy.

Jesus was greatly incensed at the claim that he was working for a foreign, pagan god for two reasons. The first is its ridiculousness. Why would the prince of demons drive out demons? That’s working against your own team. Jesus uttered the great adage: a house divided against itself cannot stand. Whoever honestly drives out demons from people must be working for God and against evil.

The second reason Jesus is angered at this claim is because it’s a terrible slander against the Spirit of God, who empowered his work (Mark 3:28-30). For Jesus, it was an unforgivable sin to say that what God, ruler of the universe, did was really the work of an unclean spirit because it makes a mockery of God’s power, goodness and role in the world. Those who, in their disapproval of Jesus, rejected God’s sovereign ability to free people from demon possession were calling the ultimate good evil. In this, they insulted the Great King and aligned themselves with God’s enemies. Jesus was obviously all about forgiving sins, but this is one sin too far.

God is serious about God’s kingship. God doesn’t abide challengers, whether for the actual kingship over the people or for the acknowledgement of God’s role in freeing people from demonic possession. God demands we acknowledge God’s lordship. We are God’s people if we follow our king.

** The Lectionary Blog is based off the semicontinuous reading option for the lectionary, so the first reading and psalm will be different than what we use in worship.*

Cory Driver is the director of both the Transformational Leadership Academy of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod and the Southern Ohio Synod's Leadership Academy. His book on wilderness spirituality, Life Unsettled, is available from Fortress Press. Cory lives with his family in Indianapolis.

God's Creation

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

ANIMALS	BEGINNING	BIRDS	BLESSED
CREATED	EARTH	FEMALE	FISH
FRUITFUL	GOD	HEAVENS	IMAGE
LAND	LIGHT	MAN	MOON
NIGHT	PLANTS	SKY	STARS
SUN	WATER		