

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



Third Sunday after Pentecost
June 26, 2022



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!

Our Worship Leaders & Staff

Ministers
Presiding Minister
Organist
Lector
Parish Administrator
Custodian

All People
The Rev. Bradley Ross
Robin Crawford
Harry Werner
Jennifer Lasher-Dobush
Vince Besednjak

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Third Sunday after Pentecost

We have no good apart from God. That makes Jesus' call to follow him an invitation to freedom. This is freedom to revel in the Holy Spirit's fruit: love, joy, peace, and patience. This is freedom to not be imprisoned by anything that would keep us from the fullness of the life God has given us. This is the path of life.

Prelude *Will You Come and Follow Me?* (Tillen)

Welcome & Greetings

*Confession & Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, uniting us as one family in Christ, and setting us free to serve as his disciples for the sake of the world.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose steadfast love endures forever.

Amen!

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,

**we confess that we have not always followed a path of steadfast love
but have often chosen our own way.**

**Instead of putting others before ourselves,
we long to take the best seats at the table.**

**When met by those in need,
we have too frequently passed by on the other side.**

Help us to see the path of new life and hope.

**Save us from ourselves,
and free us to love our neighbors with joy.**

Amen!

Hear the good news!
 God does not deal with us according to our sins
 but thoroughly delights in granting pardon and mercy.
 In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.
 You are set free to love as God loves the whole world.
Amen!

*Gathering Hymn *Will You Come and Follow Me*

ELW #798

*Greeting

The grace of our Risen Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all! **And also with you.**

Canticle of Praise *Now the Feast*
Refrain

Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion,
 all of cre - a - tion sings for joy
 to the God of life and love and
 free-dom: praise and glo - ry for ev -
 er - more!
 (continued)

Verse 1

1. Now is the feast of the Lamb once

slain, whose blood has freed and u -

nit - ed us to be one great peo - ple of

God. *to Refrain*

Verse 2

2. Pow - er and rich - es, wis - dom and

might, all hon - or and glo - ry to Christ

for ev - er. *to Refrain*

Verse 3

3. For God has come to dwell with us, to

make us peo - ple of God; to make

all things new. *to Refrain*

Prayer of the Day

Gracious God, dwelling in our hearts, you call us to follow your Son into the world you still love. Keep us faithful to the ways of your compassion and mercy, that, leaving behind all that hinders us, we may steadfastly embrace your ways of new life, through Jesus Christ, our Risen Savior and Lord. **Amen!**

First Lesson

1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21

In the story preceding today's reading, the prophet Elijah flees for his life to the security of God's mountain. There God reveals to Elijah that there are still other faithful people in Israel and commissions him to anoint new leaders, including his own successor, Elisha.

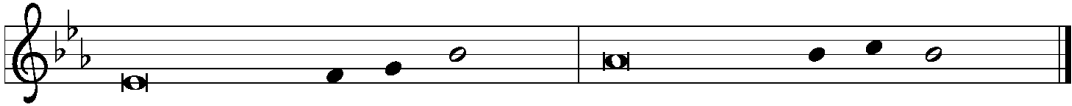
¹⁵Then the LORD said to [Elijah,] "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. ¹⁶Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel; and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place.

¹⁹So he set out from there, and found Elisha son of Shaphat, who was plowing. There were twelve yoke of oxen ahead of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle over him. ²⁰He left the oxen, ran after Elijah, and said, "Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." Then Elijah said to him, "Go back again; for what have I done to you?" ²¹He returned from following him, took the yoke of oxen, and slaughtered them; using the equipment from the oxen, he boiled their flesh, and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out and followed Elijah, and became his servant

Word of God, word of life!

Thanks be to God!

The bold verses are sung by the congregation using the tone below.



Antiphon: *I have set the LORD always before me.* (Ps. 16:8)

¹Protect me, O God, for I take ref- | uge in you;

I have said to the LORD, “You are my Lord, my good a- | bove all other.”

²**All my delight is in the godly that are | in the land,
upon those who are noble a- | mong the people.**

³But those who run after | other gods
shall have their troubles | multiplied.

⁴**I will not pour out drink offerings | to such gods,
never take their names up- | on my lips.** *Antiphon*

⁵O LORD, you are my portion | and my cup;
it is you who up- | hold my lot.

⁶**My boundaries enclose a | pleasant land;
indeed, I have a | rich inheritance.**

⁷I will bless the LORD who | gives me counsel;
my heart teaches me night | after night.

⁸**I have set the LORD al- | ways before me;
because God is at my right hand, I shall | not be shaken.**

⁹My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spir- | it rejoices;
my body also shall | rest in hope.

¹⁰**For you will not abandon me | to the grave,
nor let your holy one | see the pit.**

¹¹You will show me the | path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy, and in your right hand are pleasures for- |
evermore. *Antiphon*

For Paul, the freedom Christ gives is not permission to do whatever we want. It is the invitation to be what we could not be otherwise. The power and guidance of the Holy Spirit produce a different kind of life, one marked by the fruit of this Holy Spirit.

¹³For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. ¹⁴For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁵If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

¹⁶Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. ¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, ²¹envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²²By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. ²⁴And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

Word of God, word of life!

Thanks be to God!

* Gospel Verse



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we
go? You have the words of e - ter - nal
life. Al - le - lu - ia!

*Gospel

Luke 9:51-62

Jesus is unwavering in his commitment to his mission in Jerusalem and will not be swayed by pettiness. In a series of striking cases in point, he calls his disciples to a similar single-mindedness.

The Gospel according to Luke 9th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord!

⁵¹When the days drew near for [Jesus] to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. ⁵²And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; ⁵³but they did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. ⁵⁴When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” ⁵⁵But he turned and rebuked them. ⁵⁶Then they went on to another village.

⁵⁷As they were going along the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” ⁵⁸And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” ⁵⁹To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” ⁶⁰But Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” ⁶¹Another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” ⁶²Jesus said to him, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

This is the holy Gospel of our Lord!

Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon

Hymn of the Day *As the Wind Song*

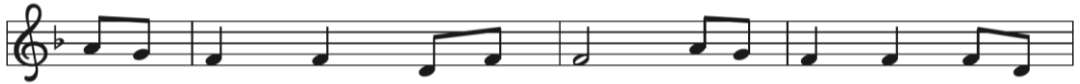
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1 As the wind song through the trees, as the stir - ring of the
2 As the rain - bow af - ter rain, as the hope that's born a -



breeze, so it is with the Spir - it of God,
gain, so it is with the Spir - it of God,



as the heart made strange - ly warm, as the voice with - in the
as the green in the . . . spring, as a kite on a . . .



storm, so it is with the Spir - it of God.
string, so it is with the Spir - it of God,



Nev - er seen, ev - er known where this wind has
mak - ing worlds that are new, mak - ing peace come



blown bring - ing life, bring - ing pow'r to the world,
true, bring - ing gifts, bring - ing love to the world,



as the danc - ing tongues of fire, as the soul's most deep de -
as the ris - ing of the yeast, as the wine at the . . .



sire, so it is with the Spir - it of God.
feast, so it is with the Spir - it of God.

Text: Shirley Erena Murray, 1931–2020

Music: WAIRUA TAPU, Lim Swee Hong, b. 1963

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***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.**

* Prayers of Intercession

United in Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the creation, and all in need.

A brief silence.

God of faithfulness, set the face of your church firmly on you, including through our Covenant family. Rooted in your self-giving love, may the entire body of Christ find freedom in loving our neighbor. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of gentleness, strengthen the earth's ability to heal. Where there are dangerous storms, bring calm. Where there are destructive fires, bring rain. Protect homes, habitats, and livelihoods threatened by climate disasters. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of peace, guide all who govern, that they place the good of their citizens above self-promotion. Anoint leaders of nations with a drive for neighborly love. Protect refugees and all who live under tyranny or conflict. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of kindness, reveal your healing presence to all who are sick. Uphold those who grieve. Support the needs of any who are unemployed, hungry, or have nowhere to lay their heads. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of love, attend to those struggling with addiction, depression, or uncontrolled anger. Provide support systems and loving companions as they work toward health, that they may rest in hope and know the fullness of joy in your presence. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of joy, we give thanks for all who have died and now celebrate the inheritance of life in you. Keep their examples of faithfulness always before us, that we trust your promises in life and in death. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of every time and place, in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Spirit, we entrust these spoken prayers and those in our hearts into your holy keeping. **Amen!**

* Great Thanksgiving

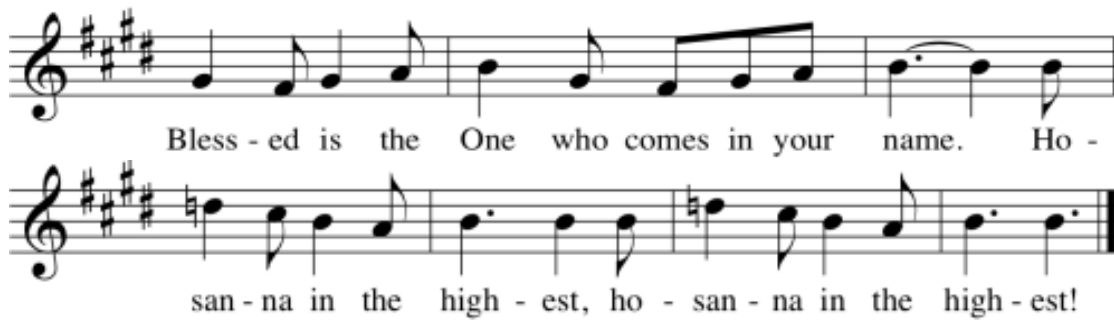
Presider: *Congregation:*
The Lord be with you. And al-so with you.

Presider: *Congregation:*
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Presider: *Congregation:*
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is
right to give God thanks and praise.

It is our duty and delight that we should everywhere and always offer thanks and praise to you, O God, through Jesus Christ who calls us to follow his way of humble service and love. And so with the church on earth and the host of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and
might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est!



*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.**

*Invitation to Communion
In Christ's presence there is fullness of joy.
Taste the banquet of everlasting life!
Thanks be to God!

Communion
Music Interlude *Come, Risen Lord* (Bouman)

Prayer after Communion

Life-giving God,
through this meal you have bandaged our wounds
and fed us with your mercy.
Now send us forth to live for others,
both friend and stranger,
that all may know your never-ending love.
This we pray in the name of Jesus, our Risen Lord. **Amen!**

*Blessing
The God of peace,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you, comfort you,
and show you the path of life
this day and always. **Amen!**

*Sending Hymn *Lead Me, Guide Me*

ELW #768

*Dismissal
Go in peace. Love your neighbor as yourselves!
Thanks be to God!

Postlude *Psalm of Glory* (Smith)

Praying Together

... for those who are homebound, ill, hospitalized or recuperating: Gayle Agg, Bob Buettner, Joan Clarke, Barbara Fossa, Carolyn Frajter, Ken Frajter, Donna Franz, Nealie Gage, Barb Gaglione, Michelle Garnett, Rosa Garnett, Clare Hanusz, Alex Hohenstein, Dylan King, Jason Lanese, Sara Mendes, Debbie Morris, Phyllis Nemeth, Sam Reddig, Steve Senderak, Gary Smith, Arlene Stoltz, Marie Storms, Tom Susaneck, Phyllis Treichel, Phyllis Welker, 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 6/19/2022: \$1272

Summer Worship

We will start worshipping from our parking lot next Sunday, July 3 (9am), and will continue to do so through the months of July and August. Bulletins and Communion will be available to be picked up by the side office door, and you will be invited to remain in your car or bring your own lawn chair, and enjoy the Creation, as we praise the still-Creating God! If the weather does not cooperate for any of those Sundays in July and August, we will move into the sanctuary.



We have started updating our Covenant congregation directory, not only with revised phone numbers, email and physical/mailling addresses, but also including pictures with this one as well. However, we're going to try something new this time around. Instead of having you come to Covenant for an appointment with a photographer, we're inviting you to

send in your own picture of yourself, you and your loved one, or your family. This does not have to be professionally done. Feel free to make it your own. Make it fun and creative, if you like. Take it outside in nature. Include your pets, if you want. It can be in-the-moment laughter. We would like this to be an enjoyable Covenant family project for the summer. Then, you can send the picture in via email, mail, or dropping it off at the church. If you need help taking a picture, please contact Jen at the church office, and we will be happy to make arrangements to do so.

Lectionary Blog: Jesus doesn't Give up on Folks

When I must do difficult things that I'm not looking forward to, I can be pretty grouchy. I was on the phone with customer service for three hours the other day, trying to rebook tickets after my flight was canceled. As a result, I raised my voice to my kids who were doing nothing wrong, other than making noise during the eternity that I was waiting for a travel solution. Where I was grouchy with my kids because of a long phone conversation, Jesus was kind to those who approached him, even as he walked to his death.

After Jesus decided to head toward Jerusalem to be "lifted up," he sent messengers on ahead to prepare a place for him in Samaria. Now, the Samaritans had an alternative worship site to the Jerusalem temple on Mount Gerizim. They thought the Jews who worshiped in Jerusalem were, at best, misguided. After all, hadn't Moses identified Mount Gerizim, rather than Mount Zion, as the mountain of blessings (Deuteronomy 11:29)? Frequently, Jewish pilgrims from Galilee took a longer route around Samaria to avoid confrontation with the Samaritans and the potential of contamination by the ickiness they associated with that population's religiosity.

But Jesus wanted to go to Jerusalem on a direct path and passed through Samaria. The Samaritans, however, weren't interested in playing host to another Jerusalem-bound pilgrim and denied him and the disciples hospitality. Incensed, James and John asked Jesus if they should call down fire upon the unwelcoming Samaritans. No doubt the disciples were thinking of Elijah calling down fire on the servants of Samaria in 2 Kings 1:9-15. Jesus had other ideas, however, and rebuked his disciples. Seeing that at least a couple of his disciples viewed him as a reborn Elijah, Jesus used the next interactions he had with people on the way to Jerusalem to compare himself with that prophet of old.

When someone told him he would "follow you wherever you go," Jesus replied that foxes have holes and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head (Luke 9:57-58). Jesus was probably referencing the time when Elijah sent away his servant and went into the wilderness to die, despairing of God's protection and provision. Yet, even in the desert God provided a broom bush under which Elijah could lay his head (1 Kings 19:3-5). Unlike Elijah, Jesus had not given up hope of God's salvation, and, unlike Elijah, he had no place to lay down (no Samaritan hospitality).

Jesus then commanded another person to follow him who apparently responded in the affirmative but requested to be allowed to bury his parent first. Jesus said the dead should bury their own dead and ordered the person to go and proclaim the kingdom of God (Luke 9:59-60). I wonder if Jesus is alluding to the sordid tale of Ahab, Jezebel and Naboth, where jealousy over a vineyard led to false accusations, murder and, ultimately, the end of a powerful dynasty (1 Kings 21).

In that story, God announced through Elijah that Ahab and his entire family would be killed because of his great evil. When Ahab repented, God told Elijah that the disaster would come not during Ahab's reign but that of his son, Jehoram. While Jehoram was a better king than his father and had removed the pillar of Baal that Ahab set up, in the end he was killed because he continued in the Samarian idolatry of his ancestors (2 Kings 3:1-3). In other words, Jehoram waited too long to bury the ways of his father and start working for the kingdom of God. Jesus didn't give his potential follower along the road the opportunity to make the same mistake as Ahab's son, and instead told him to get to work immediately spreading the kingdom of God without waiting to bury his father.

Lastly, another person asked to follow Jesus but wanted to say goodbye to his family first. Jesus said, with a twinkle in his eye no doubt, that no one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God (Luke 9:62). This is an allusion to the call of Elisha, Elijah's disciple. The joke is, of course, that Elisha had his hands on the plow and looked back to his family when Elijah called him (1 Kings 19:19-21). But instead of *not* being worthy of the kingdom of God, Elisha outshone even his master Elijah.

When Elijah tried to retire from prophethood on Mount Horeb, God told him to anoint three people: Hazael of Damascus, Jehu of Israel and Elisha (1 Kings 19:15-16). Elijah anointed none of them but merely tossed his cloak on Elisha callously without stopping (1 Kings 19:19). Elisha completed Elijah's tasks, however, informing Hazael on a trip to Damascus that he would become king (2 Kings 8:13) and causing Jehu to be anointed King of Israel (2 Kings 9:1-6). Jesus was pointing out, as a joke for those who catch the reference, that the one who has second thoughts at the beginning of ministry might be the same disciple who outshines the master.

In a tense time, on his way to his own death, Jesus conducts a walking Bible study to refute assumptions about who he was. James and John wanted to call down fire on folks from Samaria, like Elijah had centuries earlier. Instead, Jesus pointed out that, unlike

Elijah, he had not given up hope for the salvation of the people, that he would not abandon the people to perdition and, most important, that he doesn't give up on folks when we have second thoughts about following him. (Corey Driver, LivingLutheran.org)

First Things First

Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family." Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God." Luke 9:61-62 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Luke 9:51-62



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

BIRDS	HEAD	WALKING	FOXES	AIR
NESTS	LAY	HOLES	FOLLOW	ROAD
MAN	JESUS	PLACE	SON	MAN