

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



**YOUR
KINGDOM
COME**
THE LORD'S PRAYER

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
July 24, 2022



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 worship with singing and loud shouts of praise (if not, we will worship in the sanctuary).

- 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.
- 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
Flute
Lector
Parish Administrator
Custodian

All People
The Rev. Bradley Ross
Robin Crawford
Ann Droste
Ted Lockmiller
Jennifer Lasher-Dobush
Vince Besednjak

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Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Persistence in prayer is encouraged by Jesus and wins the attention of God when Abraham intercedes for Sodom. The life of the baptized—to be rooted and built up in Christ Jesus—is to be nurtured with prayer. God hears and answers prayer and so strengthens God’s own. “When I called, you answered me; you increased my strength within me.”

Prelude *Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy* (Long)

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 *Gather Us In*

ELW #532



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing, now is the dark-ness
 2 We are the young, our lives are a mys-t'ry, we are the old who
 3 Here we will take the wine and the wa-ter, here we will take the
 4 Not in the dark of build-ings con-fin-ing, not in some heav-en,



van-ished a-way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
 yearn for your face; we have been sung through-out all of his-t'ry,
 bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ters,
 light years a-way— here in this place the new light is shin-ing,



brought here to you in the light of this day.
 called to be light to the whole hu-man race.
 call us a-new to be salt for the earth.
 now is the king-dom, and now is the day.



Gath-er us in, the lost and for-sak-en, gath-er us in, the
 Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty, gath-er us in, the
 Give us to drink the wine of com-pas-sion, give us to eat the
 Gath-er us in and hold us for-ev-er, gath-er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a-wak-en,
 proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low-ly,
 bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash-ion
 make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo-ples to-geth-er,



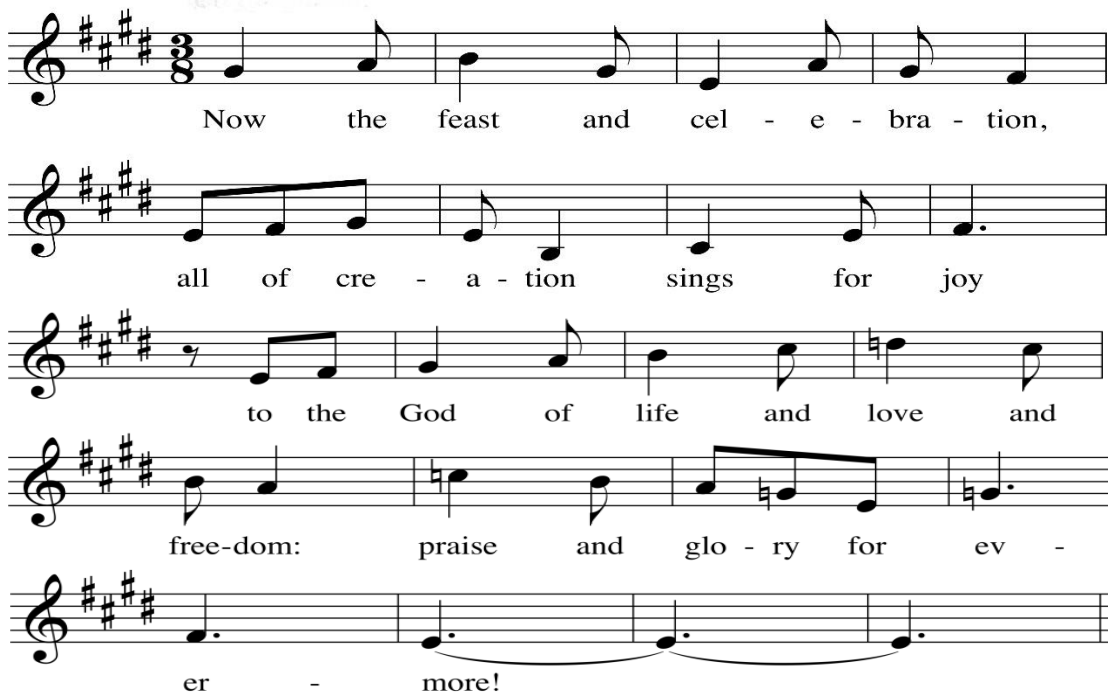
we shall a-rise at the sound of our name.
 give us the cour-age to en-ter the song.
 lives that are ho-ly and hearts that are true.
 fire . . . of love in our flesh and our bone.

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.**

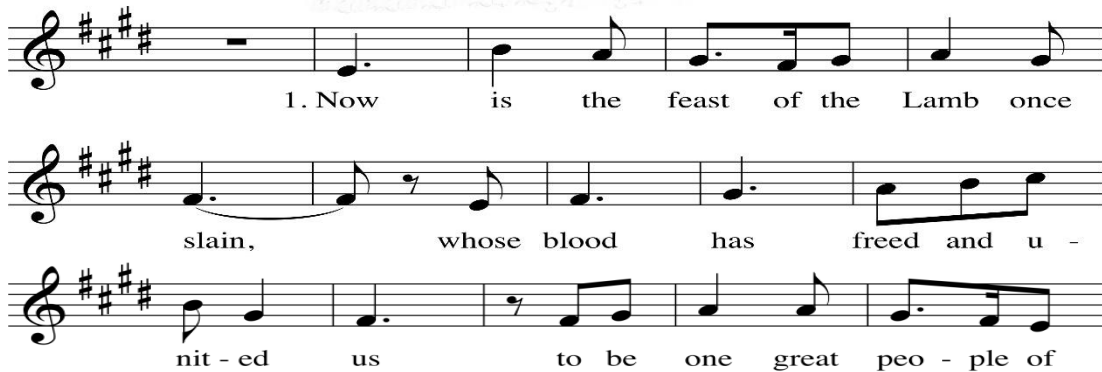
Canticle of Praise *Now the Feast*

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!

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

Almighty and ever-living God, you are always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and you gladly give more than we either desire or deserve. Pour upon us your abundant mercy. Forgive us those things that weigh on our conscience, and give us those good things that come only through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen!**

In today's reading, Abraham undertakes the role of a mediator between God and sinful humanity. Appealing to God's justice, Abraham boldly asks for mercy for the city of Sodom for the sake of the few righteous people there, including Abraham's nephew, Lot.

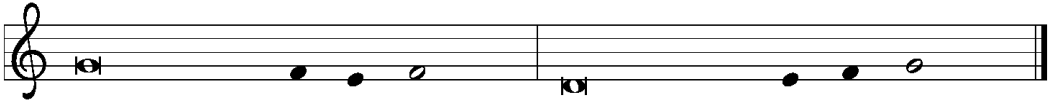
²⁰Then the LORD said, "How great is the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin! ²¹I must go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me; and if not, I will know."

²²So the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the LORD. ²³Then Abraham came near and said, "Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? ²⁴Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you then sweep away the place and not forgive it for the fifty righteous who are in it? ²⁵Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" ²⁶And the LORD said, "If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place for their sake." ²⁷Abraham answered, "Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. ²⁸Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?" And he said, "I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there." ²⁹Again he spoke to him, "Suppose forty are found there." He answered, "For the sake of forty I will not do it." ³⁰Then he said, "Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there." He answered, "I will not do it, if I find thirty there." ³¹He said, "Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there." He answered, "For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it." ³²Then he said, "Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there." He answered, "For the sake of ten I will not destroy it."

Word of God, word of life!

Thanks be to God!

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



Antiphon: *Your steadfast love endures forever; do not abandon the works of your hands.* (Ps. 138:8)

¹I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with ¹ my whole heart;
before the gods I will ¹ sing your praise.

²**I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name, because of your steadfast ¹ love and faithfulness;**

for you have glorified your name and your word a- ¹bove all things. *Antiphon*

³When I called, you ¹ answered me;
you increased my ¹ strength within me.

⁴**All the rulers of the earth will praise ¹ you, O LORD,
when they have heard the words ¹ of your mouth.**

⁵They will sing of the ways ¹ of the LORD,
that great is the glory ¹ of the LORD.

⁶**The LORD is high, yet cares ¹ for the lowly,
perceiving the haughty ¹ from afar.**

⁷Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you ¹ keep me safe;
you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right ¹ hand shall save me.

⁸**You will make good your pur- ¹ pose for me;**

O LORD, your steadfast love endures forever; do not abandon the works ¹ of your hands. *Antiphon*

The writer of this letter warns the congregation in Colossae about “the empty lure” of philosophies and traditions that compromise faith. Through the gift of faith, the church is mystically connected with Christ in his death and resurrection which is enacted in baptism.

⁶As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

⁸See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. ⁹For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ¹⁰and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority. ¹¹In him also you were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision, by putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ; ¹²when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, ¹⁴erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it.

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 11:1-13

In teaching his disciples this prayer, Jesus also reminds them to focus on God's coming reign, God's mercy, and the strengthening of the community. Jesus encourages his disciples to childlike trust and persistence in prayer.

The Gospel according to Luke, 11th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord!

¹[Jesus] was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."²He said to them, "When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

³Give us each day our daily bread.

⁴And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial."

⁵And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; ⁶for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.'⁷ And he answers from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.'⁸ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

⁹"So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? ¹²Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? ¹³If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

This is the holy Gospel of our Lord!

Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon



1 Ask the com - pli - cat - ed ques - tions.
 2 Seek the dis - con - cert - ing an - swers,
 3 Knock on doors of new i - de - as,
 4 For in strug - gle we dis - cov - er



Do not fear to be found out; for our God makes
 fol - low where the Spir - it blows; test com - pet - ing
 test as - sump - tions long grown stale, for Christ calls from
 truth both sim - ple and pro - found; in the knock - ing,



strong our weak - ness, forg - ing faith in fires of doubt.
 truths for wis - dom, for in ten - sion new life grows.
 shores of won - der, dar - ing us to try and fail.
 ask - ing, seek - ing, we are o - pened, an - swered, found.

Text: David Bjorlin, b. 1984

Music: RESTORATION, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

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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

Trusting in God's extraordinary love, let us pray to the Holy One who is near to us always.

A brief silence.

Rooted and built up in Christ, we lift up your whole church, including our Covenant family. Embolden leaders to take risks for the sake of the gospel, and equip the baptized to proclaim your extravagant love for the whole world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

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!
Bless - ed is the One who comes in your name. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, 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 *O Savior, Hear Us* (Von Gluck)

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 *What A Friend We Have In Jesus*

ELW #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 - rowsshare?
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.

Text: Joseph Scriven, 1820–1886

Music: CONVERSE, Charles C. Converse, 1832–1918

Dismissal

Go in peace. Love your neighbor as yourselves!

Thanks be to God!

Postlude *At The Lamb's High Feast We Sing* (Powell)

General Fund receipts for week ending 7/17/2022:

Praying Together

... for those who are homebound, ill, hospitalized or recuperating: Gayle Agg, 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, Mary Ann Noll, Sam Reddig, Steve Senderak, Gary Smith, Arlene Stoltz, Marie Storms, Tom Susanek, 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.



We join our siblings in Christ of Church of the Master for another summer of Picnic & Praise, concluding this Wednesday, July 27, starting at 6pm with a potluck meal (feel free to bring something to offer to eat, if you like) and moving into a time of song and Scripture with reflection. Come, let us worship the Lord!

Lectionary Blog: God Loves Bold Requests

I have strong memories of growing up in churches, listening to the prayers of the people and learning that prayers were simply to request that God would perform God's will. I know it's not this way in every congregation, but I was told repeatedly and disciplined to believe that humans should never ask for what we want but only for what God wants. But as I grew and began to read Scripture more, I came across examples of times when it was not only acceptable for people to ask boldly for what they wanted but to even ask God to change God's mind, if our Creator was willing (e.g., Exodus 32:9-14; Numbers 14:11-20; Amos 7:3-6; Jeremiah 26:12-19; Jonah 3:10; Matthew 26:39). In this week's lectionary readings, we have two models of bold requests.

Jesus included bold requests as the very foundation of his lessons on prayer for his disciples. In response to a request that he be a little more like his relative John the Baptizer, Jesus taught them a formal prayer. The disciples were to open by addressing God as Father, an address neither revolutionary nor particularly incendiary in first century Judaism. God refers to Godself as a parent in Scripture (Isaiah 63:16, 2 Samuel 7:14 and elsewhere), and by the beginning of the second century, an early version of the popular liturgical song "*Avinu Malkeinu*" ("Our Father, Our King") was already being recited.

After blessing God's name and asking that God's kingdom come, Jesus told the disciples to make three bold requests. First, they were to ask for their daily bread. Second, they were to ask that God forgive them their sins *because* they forgave those who were in debt to them. Make no mistake, the disciples' willingness to release others from principally economic obligations was to be the reason for God to forego punishment for their sins, at least in this version of the prayer. Finally, Jesus told his disciples to ask God to spare them from times of trial.

But Jesus wasn't done insisting that his disciples should pray boldly. Perhaps noticing that some of them were a bit uncomfortable with the requests he was telling them to make of God, Jesus told a parable to show them how bold they should be. You have to know that few people would have intentionally left bread out overnight in Southwest Asia. Just a few verses earlier, the disciples were instructed to pray for daily bread, and it means what it sounds like. Each day households made bread for the day, and most didn't have much or anything that was wasted, especially during the heavy taxation of the Herodians

for the Romans. So the idea that someone already curled up for sleep would have any bread, much less three loaves, is ludicrous. And yet, because of the shamelessness of the repeated request, the friend will give whatever is asked of him, including firing up the oven and making more bread. Jesus says God is like this friend, who is willing be roused by bold requests.

Looking back to the beginnings of the biblical narrative, Abraham also made bold requests. When he heard God's plan to interrogate the wickedness of the cities of the plain and destroy them if the report of their sin was accurate, Abraham intervened. Remember, in addition to his nephew's family, Abraham knew the people of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim and Zoar, whom he had already personally rescued and brought out of captivity (Genesis 14:8-16). Abraham challenged God to not destroy the righteous with the wicked, going so far as to shame God as a potentially bad judge if God were willing to inflict collective punishment (18:25). God relented to each of Abraham's six requests to save the cities if a decreasing number of righteous people could be found there. That there were not enough righteous people to save the town notwithstanding, Abraham practiced what Jesus taught his disciples: bold conversation with God that asks for exactly what the person wants, even if it means that God might change God's mind.

A quick word as I close. Obviously, God isn't a cosmic vending machine where we can simply insert a prayer and out comes what we want. Sometimes we pray faithfully but the answer is "no." Even Jesus, who spent hours prior to his arrest asking God to remove the cup of crucifixion, apparently received a negative reply. That said, Jesus instructs those who would follow him to boldly ask for what we want. Hebrews 4:16 invites us to boldly approach the throne of grace so that we may find mercy and grace. For me, this is still a stretching task, as I am much more comfortable saying "thy will be done" than asking God to change my cup. How can we lean in to bold prayer and, in so doing, obey Jesus' instruction?

This Lectionary Blog, and other resources for the journey of faith, available at LivingLutheran.org.

*Cory Driver is an ELCA missionary serving as the director of graduate studies at the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Cairo (Egypt). His book on wilderness spirituality, *Life Unsettled*, is available from Fortress Press.*