



July 16, 2023 Time After Pentecost

An asterisk * invites you to stand in body or in spirit,
and you are invited to read aloud responses found in **bold**.

We welcome you to First Lutheran Church!

we GATHER

Prelude — “I Will Sing New Song of Gladness” from *Biblical Songs* Antonin Dvorak
Naomi Karstad, soprano

We sing of
“sparks that are
sown in us like
seed” and of
“God’s free
redeeming word”
in this
**Gathering
Hymn**, pointing
to our gospel
parable of the
sower.

***Words of Welcome**

***Gathering Hymn** — no. 524

“What Is This Place”

***Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who greets us in this and every season,
whose word never fails, whose promise is sure. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of our neighbors.
Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God, **we confess that we have sinned. We have hurt our community. We
have squandered your blessings. We have hoarded your bounty.
In the name of Jesus, forgive us and grant us your mercy.**

Righteous God, **we confess that we have sinned. We have failed to be honest. We
have lacked the courage to speak. We have spoken falsely. In the name of Jesus,
forgive us and grant us your mercy.**

God is a cup of cold water when we thirst. God offers boundless grace when we fail.
Claim the gift of God’s mercy: you are freed and forgiven in the name of † Jesus
Christ. **Amen.**

***Kyrie** — page 203, front of hymnal, from *ELW Setting Ten*

***Canticle of Praise** — page 204, front of hymnal, from *ELW Setting Ten*

***Prayer of the Day**

May God be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray.

Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy
Spirit, help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and
love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

we LISTEN and RESPOND

A Reading from Isaiah — Isaiah 55:10-13

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.
For you shall go out in joy,
and be led back in peace;

the mountains and the hills before you
shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;
and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial,
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

Word of God. Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 65:9-13 — *spoken responsively by half verse*

You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous;
the river of God is full of water.

You prepare the grain, for so you provide for the earth.

You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges;

with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.

You crown the year with your goodness,

and your paths overflow with plenty.

May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing,

and the hills be clothed with joy.

May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak themselves with grain;

let them shout for joy and sing.

A Reading from Paul's Letter to the Romans — Romans 8:1-11

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

Word of God. Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

***Gospel Acclamation** — from *ELW Setting Ten*

“Alleluia”



***Gospel** — Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

The Gospel of Matthew, the 13th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!”

“Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

In direct response to Jesus' parable, we sing this simple yet meaningful prayer asking for a heart plentiful with “good soil” to receive God's word.

Sermon

Pastor John Malm

***Hymn** — no. 512, *sung twice*

“Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil”

***The Apostles' Creed**

Let us confess our faith together:

**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 power of 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**

Confident that God receives our joys and concerns, let us offer our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

Guide your church, O God, to sow seeds of forgiveness and righteousness on good soil. Direct your people to proclaim your love in this congregation and throughout the world. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Sustain your creation, O God, by sending favorable weather, causing trees and fields to grow, protecting waterways from pollution, and instilling in all people the need to be good stewards. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Maintain peace among all people, O God, and raise up lawyers to work for justice in the courts, advocates to speak for the downtrodden, and politicians to work on behalf of the common good. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Heal those who are sick, O God. Guide health care workers to care for those who suffer, scientists to conduct lifesaving research, and counselors to care for victims of sexual abuse and exploitation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Answer the prayers of those gathered in worship, O God. Protect those who travel near and far, accompany visitors to this congregation, and nurture our faith. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Inspire us by the faithful departed, O God, examples of your embodied love, whose confidence in the resurrection guides us in living lives worthy of the gospel. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, in the name of the one who reconciled all creation to himself, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Offering

Music During Offering

“God Is My Shepherd” from *Biblical Songs*

Antonin Dvorak
Naomi Karstad, soprano

***Offering Prayer**

God of field and forest, sea and sky, you are the giver of all good things. Sustain us with these gifts of your creation, and multiply your graciousness in us, that the world may be fed with your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

we SHARE the meal

***Great Thanksgiving & Preface** — page 206, front of hymnal, from *ELW Setting Ten*

***“Holy, Holy, Holy”** — page 207, front of hymnal, from *ELW Setting Ten*

*Words of Institution and The Lord's Prayer

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.

God, remember us in your love, and teach us to pray: **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.**

We will observe continuous communion this morning and sing this hymn of growth and harvest, which can be read as a metaphor for the work of God's word in our lives. May we use the faith that we nurture through the word "in the help we give our neighbor."

We joyfully sing, "The seed of Christ's teaching...shall blossom in action for God and for all." May it be so!

*Invitation to the Table

All people are called to Christ's table. Come, eat what is good.

Distribution of Communion

"Lamb of God" — page 208, front of hymnal, from ELW Setting Ten

Hymn — no. 679

"For the Fruit of All Creation"

Prayer After Communion

We thank you, generous God, for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table. Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

we DEPART to serve the world

Announcements

***Sending Hymn** — no. 547

"Sent Forth by God's Blessing"

*Blessing & Dismissal

The God who calls across the cosmos and speaks in the smallest seed the Father, the Son \dagger and the Holy Spirit bless, keep, and sustain you now and to the end of the age. **Amen.**

Go in peace. Share the harvest. **Thanks be to God!**

***Postlude** — "For the Fruit of All Creation"

Setting by Christine Sullivan

Acknowledgements

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Worship Assistants

Pastor: Chris Culuris

Director of Music: Emily Bruflat

Pulpit Supply: John Malm

Audio/Video: Brad Chambers

Greeter: Sharon Malm

Reader: Barb Wilkinson

Ushers: John Nadeau

Musicians: Naomi Karstad, soprano

Communion Preparers: Judy & David Fienen

Communion Servers: Barb Wilkinson, Cindy Nadeau

Bread Bakers: Diane Stewart

Announcements

- Have you signed up your children or grandchildren for VBS yet? It’s going to be held at Trinity, Aug. 6-10 from 4:30 - 7:30pm, and it will be fun for our youth. FLC is paying for our members to attend free of charge! The deadline to register is July 23rd. Thank you to the Kunze Family for hosting our Bible Camp staff members!
- Stop in the office to buy Moondog tickets for July 30. \$10 includes admission and a meal ticket!
- Pr. Chris will be away from July 15 -21. Please contact the church office should you have an emergency.
- Next week we will worship outdoors weather permitting. Please bring a chair if you prefer a special spot; folding chairs will be provided.
- Our next Monday Funday will be held on July 24th. We will gather at 6:30pm in the Dining Hall to watch the movie “The Star”. We will sing Christmas carols and share treats. Please be sure to join us!
- Save the date for August 6, when we will be hosting a Swedish Fiddle Choir during worship, fellowship time, and for an afternoon concert! We are providing GAC lunch bags for our 15 guests. These cost about \$10 per lunch. If you can donate toward one meal for a choir member, please talk with Karen or designate a donation to “Fiddle Choir Lunch” in an envelope. Let’s show them our wonderful hospitality!

Prayers

We lift up prayers for those on our long-term list: Elgene Lund, Chuck Petry, Bob Cady, Joan Williams, Betty Gustafson, Erika Schuldt, Ursula McRostie, Karen Wendroth, Allen Storkson, Gene Roemhildt, Karen Smithers, Paul Aasen, Shirley Storkson, Claire Cardwell, Alana Gage, Ella Twaddle, Tim Schwartz, and Sarah Smith.