

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

June 13th, 2021



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

140 Russell Avenue
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1
Church: 905-685-8294 Fax 905-685-7661
www.christlutheransc.ca

Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday—9 a.m. – 12 noon

Bulletin Announcements: Please send to secretary@christlutheransc.ca.

Deadline for submission is Thursday at 9 a.m.

Pastor:	Pastor Todd Hoeffs	(289-362-0113)	pastortoddhoeffs@gmail.com
Parish Assistant:	Louise Gondosch	(905-329-8579)	parish.assistant@christlutheransc.ca
Business Manager:	Karen McCumber		business.manager@christlutheransc.ca
Secretary:	Pat Kimpel		secretary@christlutheransc.ca
SOUL Ministry:	Trinda Rensen/Gillian Leaver		
Facebook:	Lisa Gall		www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC
Bulletin by email:	Judy Mason		chairman.outreach@christlutheransc.ca

Prayer: O God, from whom all good proceeds, grant to us, Your humble servants, that by Your holy inspiration we may think the things that are right and by Your merciful guiding accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, our Lord who lives and reigns with You, and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Musician: Mayumi Munoz

Reader: Greg Jack

WELCOME GUESTS & VISITORS: Welcome to Christ Lutheran Church! May our gracious and loving Lord bless you as you worship Him.

Sunday School: Fathers – <https://youtu.be/IRvde33WngE>

Precious Moments: Timothy — https://youtu.be/K_exdOp9s0c

Children’s Message: Apple Seeds – <https://youtu.be/mjPvm18dQdU>

DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:

Monday: Acts 6: 1-7	Wed.: Matt. 11: 25-30	Friday: 1 Cor. 1: 20-25
Tuesday: Eccles. 5: 1-6	Thurs: Luke 14: 12-15	Saturday: Jas. 2: 1-9

COVID 19 – PROTOCOL: Dear Brothers and Sisters of Christ Lutheran Church, let us continue to be mindful of COVID 19 by following all safety measures and protocols. If you have any of the symptoms outlined by Public Health, please remain at home. Services are available online.

If attending worship, please:

- *Wear a mask covering both your mouth and nose at all times.*
- *Sanitize your hands frequently*
- *Practice social distancing, 2 metres or 6 feet apart*
- *Ensure you have a temperature check before entering*
- *Ensure your attendance is noted at the entrance doors.*

WORSHIP NOTE:

Dear family of Christ Lutheran Church: At our council meeting in May, the decision was made that we would offer only the 10 AM Blended worship service until further notice.

In compliance with Ontario Provincial Step 1, effective June 13, we can now offer in-person worship at 15% capacity (40-45 people).

We will update information on this as the province-wide plan of opening unfolds by regions and sectors over the next number of weeks. If you have any questions or concerns, please check out our church website (<http://christlutheransc.ca/>), phone the church office or email Pastor Todd [pastortoddhoeffs@gmail.com].

- **Sunday Service will be live-streamed at 10 AM** on Facebook: (<https://www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC>).
- Following the service, a recording will be uploaded to YouTube – “Gathering the Scattered” at: (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3a4p6prdJGEyP5S-q-cNSq>).
- A PDF version of the order of service for each Sunday will also be posted on our church website: christlutheransc.ca.

Any questions or concerns, please contact Judy Slingerland (chairman.worship@christlutheransc.ca) or Pastor Todd or phone the church office. May the peace of the risen Lord be with you all.

LWMLC NATIONAL ONLINE - CONVENTION - July 8-10, 2021: The LWMLC Convention will be online and can be attended from your home, church, or wherever you may be. Registration is now open and is \$80 per person. Please check the LWMLC website (<https://lutheranwomen.ca/>) for more Convention information as well as how to register: <https://lutheranwomen.ca/events/national-convention-information>

Last Sunday Attendance: June 6th, 2021 10 a.m. – 10

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Weekly Need</u>	<u>Last Sunday</u>	<u>Year To Date</u>	<u>+ or - (-)</u>
Current:	271,175.00	5,214.90	1,150.00	72,234.53	(42,493.35)
Missions	20,000.00	384.62	155.00	7,272.50	(1,189.04)
Property Improvement:			30.00	2,533.50	

COLLECTION NOTE: At this point we are not collecting any materials for the church. This means no milk bags for making mats; no SOUL bingo prizes; no Christmas cards for Sunday School or SOUL; no puzzles for exchange, etc. Thank you.

FLOWERS FOR ALTAR: If you would like to place flowers on the altar, please sign your name at the back of the church or email: secretary@christlutheransc.ca. Cost is \$25/bouquet

THE CANADIAN LUTHERAN: The Canadian Lutheran is available to read online at: WWW.CANADIANLUTHERAN.CA

SUPPORTING YOUR CHURCH DURING THE PANDEMIC: It's important for members to keep in mind that expenses for payroll, utilities, maintenance, etc. continue to accumulate even when you are not comfortable attending service.

1. THROUGH EFT DONATIONS: Lutheran Church - Canada, East District Corporation continues to facilitate this service for us. To assist you in continuing your financial support to your church, we encourage you to fill out the form that is available for printing at:

http://christlutheransc.ca/?page_id=96 and then mail the form along with a voided cheque to:

Lutheran Church-Canada, East District Corporation
275 Lawrence Ave., Kitchener, ON N2M 1Y3
Attn: Darryll Holland

2. BY MAIL: cheques can still be mailed to:

Christ Lutheran Church
140 Russell Ave. St. Catharines, ON L2R 1W1
or dropped in the Church mailbox at the East entrance.

3. ONLINE VIA LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA: Lutheran Church-Canada has opened a web portal that allows parishioners to donate directly to their home church:

<https://lutheranchurch-canada.tng-secure.com/?pageId=donation-edit&categoryId=10972>

select "St. Catharines-Christ Lutheran-30950" from the drop down menu, enter the amount of your donations and LCC will transfer your donation to Christ. Donation is via VISA or Mastercard. Tax receipts will be issued by LCC (not Christ).

This opportunity will be in effect until the COVID-19 emergency is over.

Seminary Student Housing Needed: Dear friends in Christ, Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary has at least two young single students who are searching for an apartment or room for rent in the St. Catharines area for the upcoming school year. If you or someone you know is interested in renting to one of these pastoral student candidates, please contact Dr. Harold Ristau at hristau@brocku.ca. Thank you. In Christ, Dr. Harold Ristau.

LUTHERAN SERVICE OF WORD & PRAYER

Adapted from the Lutheran Church of Australia Worship Materials

3RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

June 13, 2021

GOD WELCOMES US

FIRST HYMN:

"Have Thine Own Way, Lord"

Have Thine own way, Lord,
Have Thine own way;
Thou art the Potter, I am the clay.
Mould me and make me
After Thy will,
While I am waiting, Yielded and still.
Have Thine own way, Lord,
Have Thine own way;
Search me and try me, Father, today.
Cleanse me from sin, Lord,
Wash me just now,
As in Thy presence Humbly I bow.
Have Thine own way, Lord,
Have Thine own way;
Hold o'er my being Absolute sway.
Fill with Thy Spirit
Till all shall see
Christ only, always, living in me.

INVOCATION, CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

But if we confess our sins, God, Who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[Brief silence for reflection]

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father:

Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us, forgive us, renew us and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your Holy Name. Amen.

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake, forgives you all of your sin. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

SPOKEN KYRIE

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

HYMN OF PRAISE

"Glory To God"

Tune: Woodlands



1 Glo - ry to God, we give You thanks and praise;
2 Lord Je - sus Christ, the Fa - ther's on - ly Son,
3 A - lone, O Christ, You on - ly are the Lord,



Of heav'n - ly joy and earth - ly peace we sing.
You bore for us the load of this world's sin.
At God's right hand in maj - es - ty most high:



We wor - ship You, to You our hearts we raise,
O Lamb of God, Your glo - rious vic - t'ry won,
Who, with the Spir - it wor - shiped and a - dored,



Lord God, al - might - y Fa - ther, heav'n - ly King.
Re - ceive our prayer, grant us Your peace with - in.
With all the heav'n - ly host we glo - ri - fy.

GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you: **And also with you.**

Let us pray: O God, the Protector of all who trust in You, without Whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Multiply your mercy upon us that, with You as our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through this life according to Your grace and never lose such things that are eternal; we pray through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Saviour, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE WORD

The Old Testament *Ezekiel 17:22-24*

Thus says the Lord God: I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of a cedar; I will set it out. I will break off a tender one from the topmost of its young twigs; I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain. On the mountain height of Israel, I will plant it; in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar. Under it every kind of bird will live; in the shade of its branches will nest winged creatures of every kind. All the trees of the field shall know that I am the Lord. I bring low the high tree, I make high the low tree; I dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I the Lord have spoken; I will accomplish it. This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Epistle: *2 Corinthians 5: 1-10, 16-17*

[St. Paul writes:] 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. For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling— if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For all of us must appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil... From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! This the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL VERSE

**To God, be the glory, to God, be the glory, to God, be the glory,
for the things He has done.**

**With His Blood, He has saved me, with His pow'r, He has raised me,
to God, be the glory, for the things He has done.**

The Holy Gospel: *St. Mark 4:26-34*

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark, the 4th chapter: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[Jesus] also said, 'The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.' He also said, 'With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.' With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples. This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.



1 Faith and truth and life be - stow - ing, O - pen now the
2 May the Spir - it's pow'r un - ceas - ing Bring to life the



Scrip - tures, Lord, Seed to life e - ter - nal sow - ing,
hid - den grain, Dai - ly in our hearts in - creas - ing,



Scat - tered on the wind a - broad. Let not hearts, Your
Bear - ing fruit that shall re - main. So in Scrip - ture,



Word re - ceiv - ing, Like a bar - ren field be found, Choked with
song, and sto - ry, Sav - ior, may Your voice be heard. Till our



thorns and un - be - liev - ing, Shal - low earth or ston - y ground.
eyes be - hold Your glo - ry Give us ears to hear Your Word.

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, b. 1926
Tune: *Columbian Harmony*, Cincinnati, 1825; setting: Margaret W. Mealy, b. 1922
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HOLY MANNA
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Matt. 13:3-23; Col. 1:3-6; 2 Cor. 9:10; Luke 4:16-22

MESSAGE: *St. Mark 4 + "What Would Attract Birds To Your Branches?" (print-out follows)*

GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Heavenly Father, we pray for your church. We ask that you would make it grow like seeds in the ground and bring a rich harvest. We pray for the pastors, teachers and lay people of Your church and all others who sow your seed in their varied callings. Give them strength, honesty and diligence in their work.

Hear us, O Lord: **As our prayer comes before You;**

We pray that the church would hear and proclaim Christ's teachings about Your Kingdom. Open people's ears and hearts so that they may hear and believe the saving truth. Hear us, O Lord: **As our prayer comes before You;**

Guide the work of farmers everywhere. Watch over this year's crops and send rain and sunshine as required. We pray especially for people in areas where there is drought. Give them comfort and strength as their watch continues, hearings also the pleas for help in areas of extreme weather.

Hear us, O Lord: **As our prayer comes before You;**

Help all Christians to live their lives in faith and confidence, guided by the love of Christ. Open our eyes to see beyond the surface and to see how you are faithfully at work, even when we least expect it. May this nation and every land use our talents to create peace and safety. Hear us, O Lord: **As our prayer comes before You;**

Comfort everyone in need and despair with the love of Christ, who died for all. We pray especially for all those who are sick or recovering in our community, especially (*insert names*). Hear us, O Lord: **As our prayer comes before You;**

Heavenly Father, we ask you to give us all these things and whatever else we need on the journey to our heavenly home, for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

GOD BLESSES US

GREETING & BLESSING

Let us praise the Lord:

Thanks be to God

The blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son + and Holy Spirit, be with you now and always.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN:

"God of the Fertile Fields"

"God Whose Almighty Word" tune Italian hymn

**God of the fertile fields,
shaper of earth that yields
our daily bread:
forth from your bounteous hand
come gifts your love has planned,
that all in every land
be clothed and fed.**

**2 We would be stewards true,
holding in trust from you
all that you give;
help us in love to share,
teach us like you to care
for people everywhere,
that all may live.**

**3 As grows the hidden seed
to fruit that serves our need,
so your reign grows.
Let all our toil be used,
no gift of yours abused,
no humble task refused
your love bestows.**

**4 God of the countryside,
dear to the Christ who died
to make us one:
we pledge our lives anew
in faithful love to you.
Guide all we say and do.
Your will be done.**

REV. TODD HOEFFS

PENTECOST 3 (series B)

Scripture: St. Mark 4 Sower parable & mustard seed

June 13, 2021

I grew up gardening. My dad loved it. He spent at least an hour everyday through the summer months taking care of it. It was his calm, happy place.

He HATED his 28-year long assembly line job at a GM plant.

Creating a vegetable garden gave him peace. I got to help dig up the soil, plant seeds, water, weed...he even got me to create little signs to mark which row grew which plant.

Beans, corn, tomatoes & squash. He found great satisfaction in the growth. Now all that gardening experience would be handy as our own yard has so many different things growing which appear to have been there for many years.

Gardening wasn't my favourite thing, but through the gardening I got to hear dad's stories of his past growing up on a dairy farm. Working with animals. Clearing fields.

Plowing, harvesting. Gardening provided a way to hear about dad's family history.

Jesus' gardening story of sowing seeds offers a way into understanding God's idea of growing His Kingdom. Jesus is the farmer sowing seeds.

The seed is God's Word—with the purpose of planting faith.

He very freely and liberally scatters the seeds. Not caring where they fall.

Not worrying about how any of it takes root. Just spread the seed far and wide and the Kingdom WILL grow. The scattering is what's valuable in this story.

And....the unusual part! No good farmer throws his seed around, wildly and indiscriminately. Seeds were valuable then, and costly. Throwing it around was wasteful and considered poor technique. There's no real way of predicting how any good growth could happen. But Jesus isn't teaching agriculture. He's teaching HOW His Father's Kingdom of grace must be shared. And Jesus' choosing a mustard seed as this great image for God's Kingdom is even more unusual.

Mustard seeds were the tiniest of all seeds (similar to canola seeds today.)

And they grew very wildly everywhere, looking like bushy shrubs, growing as high as up to 10 feet tall. Reminds me of a weed we encountered in our backyard –

Choke weed. Grows fast and wild and covers the ground so well. Looks nice at first, but soon takes over everything, like other kinds of wild growth, mustard tree bushes were a nuisance, an aggressive, uncontrollable weed.

Why use such a common, ordinary, pest of a plant as a picture of God's Kingdom?

Why not big beautiful cedar trees, or date trees with sweet fruit?

No, Jesus chooses a mustard seed bush. Not so grand and certainly not wanted.

That's the point isn't it? This is precisely how God's Kingdom must take over.

You can refuse to plant it. You can pull it up. You can cut it down.

Regardless, it is there and it keeps coming back. This is how God's Kingdom flourishes. Looks powerless, unwanted, a nuisance – but so all encompassing and powerful in God's eyes. This is the way we as Christians are called to share God's Word and the riches of our faith as seeds thrown around every piece of ground we walk upon.

We don't always think about the scattering.

Usually, the details of the types of soil get our attention.

Some seeds fall on hard ground, rocky ground, some are eaten by birds, some get burned up in the scorching sun, some fall into thorn and thistle-infested ground, and then some fall on nice, good soil. This is very telling of the sinful, human heart and how God penetrates our rocky hard stubborn ways.

Sowing the seed is what's important. Christ the seed-sower shares His presence as the living ancient Word made flesh come into the world.

He spends time near and far with all kinds of people He welcomed with open arms.

Christ offers Himself to all regardless of how He's received.

Even though people have read & heard God's Word for centuries

leading up to His birth, still Jesus' coming to teach & heal & save forever changed how God's Kingdom would grow. It's not up to us to figure out HOW the seed will penetrate the hearer, just sow the seeds.

In university years I worked at a K-mart garden shop centre.

My job centered around watering hundreds upon hundreds of flowers, trees and shrubs. My manager told me very clearly, "water as many as you can, cuz you can't save 'em all." That's important. Sharing the seed of God's amazing message of hope is our calling as baptized believers. How it actually takes root and penetrates the human heart is God's work.

You and I can't save 'em all – it's not about you or I saving...anyone.

It's Christ and His Holy Spirit Who brings our witness and our message and He makes sure it impacts the human hearts we encounter.

Last year, *Lutheran Hour Ministries funded a BARNA statistics report.*

25 years earlier they funded a similar report and now the findings have been compared. The most interesting piece is:

- *25 years ago, over 80 percent of people asked said the CHURCH'S JOB IS TO EVANGELIZE AND BRING THE MESSAGE OF CHRIST TO PEOPLE.*
- *Now, 25 years later, only 19 percent of people asked believe the CHURCH'S ROLE IS IN SHARING THE MESSAGE OF CHRIST.*
- *Reason: "the local church" is somehow separate from the people who are a part of it or too many personal and cultural barriers to sharing faith.*

THAT'S A HUGE DIFFERENCE. The church is no longer seen as relevant in spreading the faith to all others. WOW!

- Careful seeding isn't the answer
- Picking the right soil and the right location isn't the answer
- Good farmers do this
- The church isn't called to farm, JUST SPREAD SEEDS.
- Pastors and people spreading the good news, the gospel truth that God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son to live among us and die to save us from all that harms us.
- That our God loves each one of us so much He forgives us and wants us to be with Him forever and will one day raise us all up from the dead in His new Kingdom.

That's the good news of Jesus Christ. This Gospel seed message might be in words of comfort to someone grieving the death of a loved one.

- It might be in you telling the reason why you believe.
- It might be answering questions about a God Who allows so much destruction in culture, with pandemics, with harmful politics all over the world.
- It might be just giving our time and a listening ear to a person needing hope.

As the church, it's our mission to tell everyone. We need not think its wasteful
Or fear rejection or be too concerned that nothing will grow.

God's good seed word of faith seems so insignificant when our problems and the
worlds' problems seem so much bigger and more important....

But sharing the message of Christ is just as important for OUR growth as it is for others
hearing it. We're transformed by the message we hold dear.

We are built up in the assurance that Christ crucified and risen for the life of the world
saves us as it saves the entire world. If we don't share, we don't grow
and others won't see Christ through our lives. The forgiveness we receive gives us a
new chance to start over each day with renewed hope and joy. God's kingdom
expands as we tell the story and show His grace. Just throw the gospel around—
tossing out handfuls of God's love, care & mercy to all who need to hear it and feel it. It
will grow. Just as the tree of the cross grows because of Jesus' shed blood.

A living tree whose branches create shelter and healing and rejuvenation.

The bare wood which held Jesus now blossoms large and tall drawing all people from
all nations into its foliage. The fruits of His cross we are invited to eat and drink. Holy
Communion flows from the cross and the church's calling to make sure Christ is given
to all who come in faith. A divine meal celebrating true unity, real fellowship, and a
family of faith.

Whether you're male or female, child or student, old, young, middle aged,
it's everyone's calling and way of life to daily spread Jesus' seed of hope.

Stepping out of our comfort zones and a stepping into areas where seeds of faith are
needed. What a wonderful opportunity we meet a world thirsty for compassion
ready for seeds of faith and hope not knowing who to trust

We do. We walk by faith, live in trust, relying upon a God who says just share His grace
and He'll take care of the rest.

We can't save 'em all because HE ALREADY HAS.

Amen.