

THE 7TH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
February 20th, 2022



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

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
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Secretary:	Pat Kimpel		secretary@christlutheransc.ca
Facebook:	Lisa Gall		www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC
Bulletin by email:	Judy Mason		chairman.outreach@christlutheransc.ca

Prayer: O Lord; keep your family and Church continually in the true faith that they who lean on the hope of your heavenly grace may ever be defended by your mighty power, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Children’s Message: Psalm 37:3 <https://youtu.be/EfLzDjL5w4k>

Organist: Louise Gondosch

Readers: 9 a.m. — Chris Mason; 11 a.m.— Howard Bogusat

DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:

Monday: 1 Cor. 1: 26-31

Wed.: Rom. 3: 21-28

Friday: Matt. 10: 40-42

Tuesday: Phil. 1: 27-30

Thurs: 1 Cor. 3: 5-9

Saturday: Luke 17: 5-10

INTERESTED in memorizing scripture? Join us as together we focus on and memorize one verse from the Psalm of the week.

Today's Verse: Psalm 37:3: ***"Trust in the Lord and do good."***

WORSHIP NOTE:

- A recording of Sunday’s service 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.
- Archived videos of Sunday’s service will be uploaded to christlutheransc.ca – “Worship” page.

Any questions or concerns, please check out our church website (<http://christlutheransc.ca/>), contact Judy Slingerland (chairman.worship@christlutheransc.ca) or Pastor Todd (pastortoddhoeffs@gmail.com). or phone the church office. May the peace of the risen Lord be with you all.

YOUTH CATECHISM CLASS will be offered by Pastor Todd in-between the services Feb. 20 & Feb. 27, 10:10—10:45 AM. NO ADULT BIBLE STUDY FOR FEBRUARY OR MARCH.

ASH WEDNESDAY: MARCH 2, 7 PM - Holy Communion Worship with ashes. This reverent service begins our Season of Lent in preparation for our Lord's death and resurrection. Please join us.

MIDWEEK LENTEN BIBLE STUDY begins **March 9, 7-8 PM**, and every Wednesday until Easter. Led by Pastor Todd in the church sanctuary. Materials will be provided. *"LIFT HIGH THE CROSS -- Jesus' Focus For Our Freedom: A Lenten Journey Through Matthew's Gospel account of the Passion."* More information is yet to come. Please join us. **ALL ARE WELCOME!!**

LWMLC/MARY MARTHA SOCIETY: According to the government’s re-opening plan, we should be able to meet in person for our March meeting when we hope to have a guest speaker and make Easter cards for our shut-ins.

LWML-Canada, Ontario District, Niagara Zone, is hosting our District Convention in St. Catharines at Grace Lutheran Church (accommodation at Niagara College) on June 9 to 11th, 2022. More details will follow. If at all possible, please plan to attend. It is a wonderful time to get to know and renew friendships with our sisters in Christ from around the province! It is a time to focus on ***"Joy, Patience, Prayer"*** which is the theme of the Convention. (Romans 12:12) *Our Seminary Student Eduardo Farias and his wife Daniella will be our wonderful entertainment for Friday evening!*

LUTHERAN CHURCH - CANADA NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING:

Lutheran Young people from across Canada will be gathering together this **July 15-19, 2022 in Winnipeg, Manitoba**. The theme for the gathering is "**IN NOT OF**" from Philippians 3:20 "But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, The Lord Jesus Christ." Information packages are available from Louise. Save the date, check out the website at <http://www.lccnyg.ca>, start following the Facebook and Instagram pages and check out this fun announcement from Pastor Glenn Worcester
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68gXVYofMY>

Last Sunday Attendance: Feb. 6th, 2022 Attn: 9 A.M. – 40; 11 A.M. – 32; Total: 72

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Weekly Need</u>	<u>Last Sunday</u>	<u>Year To Date</u>	<u>+ or - (--)</u>
Current:			2,135.00	14,348.27	
LCC Missions			260.00	1,083.50	
Property Improvement:			126.00	356.50	

MEMORIAL DONATIONS have been given to Christ Lutheran Church in memory of Josie Knoll by Kathy DeKouchay, Judy Slingerland, Tom & Kathy Kuhl, Louise & John Gondosch, Pat & George Fejedelem, Steve Duga, Anna Schneikart, Fran Porteous, Janice Muller, Glenn & Carole Pink, Frank & Ivy Parkhouse, Karen & Mark McCumber, Susan Honey, Rev. Gary & Wendy Kuenzel; To Mary Martha by Sam & Pearl Backus; To CLTS by Twila Gall; To SOUL by Helen Stark; To CLWR by Rev. John & Linda Makey.

2021 DONATION RECEIPTS are in your mailbox. Please help save the Church postage by picking them up before February 20th as any not picked up by that date will be mailed.

FLOWERS have been placed on the altar this morning to the glory of God by Lynn Jerchel in honour of her mother, Rhoda Lipischak's 90th birthday; By Kurt & Gloria Meyers on the occasion of their Wedding Anniversary; and by Ralph & Mary Muller on the occasion of their Wedding Anniversary.

EXTRA HANDS & BODIES NEEDED: With offering both 9 am and 11 am services, we are finding ourselves short staffed of volunteers. Particularly for the late service, we need your help in the following areas:

- 1) Preparation of our PowerPoint worship services [editing the Google Doc Slides, can be done at home]
- 2) Operation of the PowerPoint during church services [training with written instruction will be provided]
- 3) Taking a turn preparing the Altar for Communion and seasonal colour cloth changes [Altar Guild]
- 4) Ushering people to pew seats and directing people to line up for communion
- 5) Lighting and extinguishing of altar candles
- 6) Recording services using newly installed equipment [training with written instructions will be provided]

We pray that you consider helping. We need participation from all ages. Should you wish more information about what is involved, please speak to Judy Slingerland, Tom Kuhl or Pastor Todd.

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: Darryl 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/?pagelid=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.

SCRIPTURE & SONGS

February 20, 2022 + 9 AM Contemporary Worship

GATHERING

BEGINNING SONG:

"Take My Life & Let It Be"

LSB # 783

Take my life and let it be, consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days, let them flow in endless praise.

Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet and let them be -- swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice and let me sing, always, only for my King.
Take my lips and let them be, filled with messages from Thee.

Take my will and make it Thine, It shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own, It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love, my Lord, I pour, at Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself and I will be, ever, only, all for Thee.

Reprinted from: www.library.timelesstruths.org/music/Take_My_Life_and_Let_It_Be/

WE BEGIN IN GOD'S NAME

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

Amen.

I was glad when they said to me,

Let us go to the House of the Lord!

Unless the Lord builds the House,

In vain do the builders labour.

Surely the Lord is in this place.

This is the House of God, this is the Gate of Heaven!

You are gracious and merciful, O God,

Slow to anger, rich in love.

Receive our prayers and worship as You have promised

And uphold us by Your Spirit,

Until all things, mended by Your mercy,

Are made whole and well in You,

Through Jesus Christ

Our healer and our hope. Amen.

KYRIE--PRAYING FOR MERCY



Have mer-cy O Lord, have mer-cy O Christ, have mer-cy Lord—



Give peace, we pray, give peace, to-day, my Lord--; my Lord--.

[tune: Israeli – SHALOM]

CONFESSION OF SINS & FORGIVENESS

To You, O Lord God,

All hearts are open, to You all desires are fully known. We come to You, moved by Your Word and Spirit, as sinners, confessing our sins. Forgive us in Your mercy. Remember us in Your love. Show us Your way, teach us Your path, lead us in truth and faithfulness, for the sake of our neighbour and for Your sake, O Lord God, in the hope of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

By water, Word and Spirit, our God gives you new birth and through the death and resurrection of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in His name and in His stead, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

When the Son sets you free, you are free indeed!

Praise be to God!

GLORY TO GOD

“Shout To The Lord”

**My Jesus, my Saviour
Lord there is none like You
All of my days I want to praise
The wonders of Your mighty love**

**My comfort, my shelter
Tower of refuge and strength
Let every breath all that I am
Never cease to worship You**

Chorus:

**Shout to the Lord
All the earth let us sing**

**Power and majesty
Praise to the King
Mountains bow down
And the seas will roar
At the sound of Your name
I sing for joy
At the work of Your hands
Forever I'll love You
Forever I'll stand
Nothing compares to the promise
I have in You.**

CCLI Song # 1406918 -- Darlene Zschech. © 1993 Wondrous Worship (Admin. by Music Services, Inc.) For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com -- CCLI License # 775293

GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Hear my prayer O Lord,

Listen to my call for help.

We pray: Lord God, Gracious Father, we ask You to keep Your family, the Church, always faithful to You, that all who lean on the hope of Your promises in Your Son may gain strength and bear fruits of love; we pray through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE:

Old Testament: *Genesis 45:3-11, 15*

Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?' But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence. Then Joseph said to his brothers, 'Come closer to me.' And they came closer. He said, 'I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither ploughing nor harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, "Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all

Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.” And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Epistle: *1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50*

[St. Paul writes:] But someone will ask, ‘How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?’ Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, ‘The first man, Adam, became a living being’; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven. What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SUNG GOSPEL VERSE:

“Halle, Halle, Halle”

[Caribbean melody]

Halle, halle, halle--lujah.

Halle, halle, halle--lujah.

Halle, halle, halle--lujah.

Hallelu-jah, hal-lelu-jah.

The Holy Gospel: *St. Luke 6:27-38*

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke, the 6th chapter:

Glory to You, O Lord.

[Jesus says]: ‘But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you. ‘If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. ‘Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.’ This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ!

THE APOSTLES' CREED:

God has made us His people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess the faith.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the + life everlasting. Amen.

GOSPEL SONG:

"Servant Song"

www.hymnary.orgELW



1 Will you let me be your ser - vant, let me be as
2 We are pil - grims on a jour - ney, we are trav - 'lers
3 I will hold the Christ - light for you in the night - time
4 I will weep when you are weep - ing; when you laugh I'll
5 Will you let me be your ser - vant, let me be as



Christ to you? Pray that I may have the grace to
on the road; we are here to help each oth - er
of your fear; I will hold my hand out to you,
laugh with you. I will share your joy and sor - row
Christ to you? Pray that I may have the grace to



let you be my ser - vant, too.
walk the mile and bear the load.
speak the peace you long to hear.
till we've seen this jour - ney through.
let you be my ser - vant, too.

Text: Richard Gillard, b. 1953
Music: Richard Gillard; arr. Betty Pulkingham, b. 1928
Text and music © 1977 Scripture In Song, admin. Integrity Music

THE SERVANT SON
87B

MESSAGE

PRAYERS:

We pray now to our Gracious Father, for the world in which we are called to let our light shine; for the people who will see our good deeds; and for the church in which the light of the gospel is proclaimed.
Hear us O God –

Your mercy is great.

Provide faithful pastors to share your good news and to teach your ways. Strengthen the faith of your people through Your Word and Baptism, Forgiveness and Communion. Bless the members of our congregation that they may be salt and light in the world. Bring to faith those who do not yet know you.

Hear us O God –

Your mercy is great.

Have mercy on all nations, and bless our own land. Be the comforter to war-torn communities where violence and oppression reign. Bring honesty and justice, peace and safety everywhere. Bless and protect people in work and leisure.

Hear us O God –

Your mercy is great.

You know every hair on our heads. Yet we do not always know each of our neighbors. Equip and ignite our outreach, inviting and welcoming efforts and help us know all those living around us, even those in our midst, who benefit from Christ in us.

Hear us O God –

Your mercy is great.

Pour out Your Holy Spirit on all who struggle, especially.....Ease the pain of families enveloped in abuse or division. Give Your life-giving breath to fellowship, conversations and the coming and going of people, that we may be ready to offer our hands, feet, ears, mouths and hearts to serve all who cry out for help.

Hear us O God –

Your mercy is great.

Comfort those who are suffering, downcast or oppressed. Lift up the fallen and satisfy the needs of the hungry, refugees, the homeless and those who lack even basics such as clothing. Help all who are in any trouble. *Hear us O God –*

Your mercy is great.

Your love knows no bounds. May Your perfect love strengthen our own ability to love and include into our lives those who need and inspire us. May our days be a time to comfort those You have given us to love and remember this as a witness to the faith and love only You can provide. *Hear us O God –*

Your mercy is great.

Father, your Son is the light shining in the darkness of our world. Teach us to love one another as you love us, so that we may bring peace and joy to the world. Hear our prayers, for the sake of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

CLOSING PRAYER FOR THE WORD:

Blessed Lord God, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Help us so that we may hear, read, mark, learn and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your Holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray, Who with the Father and Spirit You rule and reign as one God, now and forevermore. Amen.

THE BLESSING

Jesus is the great Shepherd of the sheep. May you hear His voice and keep His Word.

Amen, thanks be to God.

Jesus is the Pathway that leads to life. May You follow in His narrow way.

Amen, praise be to God.

Jesus is the Vine and we are the branches. May you be rooted and grounded in His Word and love.

Amen. Glory to our God.

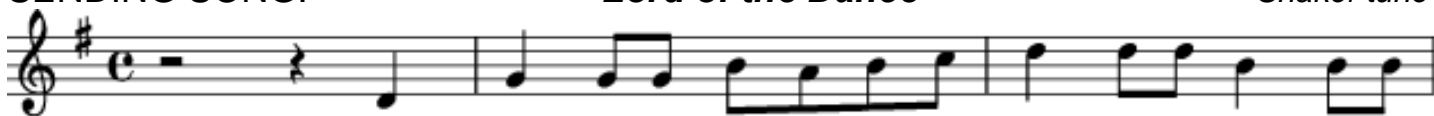
May the Almighty God, the Father, Son + and Holy Spirit, bless and keep you now and always.

Amen.

SENDING SONG:

“Lord of the Dance”

Shaker tune



I danced in the morn- ing when the world was be- gun. And I



danced in the moon and the stars and the sun. And I came down from Hea- ven and I



danced on the Earth. At Beth- le- hem I had my birth. Dance then, Where-



e- ver you may be. I am the Lord of the Dance, said he. And I'll lead you all, Where-



e- ver you may be. And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said he.

Verse 2:
I danced for the scribe
And the Pharisee
But they would not dance
And they wouldn't follow me
I danced for the fishermen

**For James and John
They came with me
And the Dance went on..**

**Chorus: Dance then wherever you may be
I am the Lord of the Dance said He
And I'll lead you all wherever you may be
And I'll lead you all in the Dance said He**

**Verse 3: I danced on the Sabbath
And I cured the lame
The holy people
Said it was a shame
They whipped and they stripped
And they hung me on high
And they left me there
On a Cross to die;**

Chorus:

**Verse 5: They cut me down
And I leapt up high
I am the life
That'll never never die
I'll live in you
If you'll live in me
I am the Lord
Of the Dance said He.**

Chorus

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LUTHERAN SERVICE OF THE WORD

February 20, 2022 + 11 AM Traditional

OPENING HYMN:

“O God Of Mercy, God Of Might”

Tune: Drawn To The Cross

**O God of mercy, God of might, in love and mercy infinite,
Teach us, as ever in Your sight, to live our life to You.**

**You sent Your Son to die for all -- that our lost world might hear Your call;
O teach us lest we stray and fall, we rest our hope in You.**

**Teach us the lesson Jesus taught; to feel for those His Blood has bought;
That ev'ry word and deed and thought may work a work for You.**

**For all are kindred far and wide, since Jesus Christ for all has died;
grant us the will and grace provide, to love them all in You.**

**And may Your Holy Spirit move, all those who live, to live in love,
'till You receive in Heav'n above, those who have lived for You.**

Godfrey Thring, 1845 public domain https://hymnary.org/text/o_god_of_mercy_god_of_might

INVOCATION & CATECHISM GREETING:

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

Amen

Do you believe that you are a sinner?

Yes, I believe it. I am a sinner.

How do you know this?

From the Ten Commandments, which I have not kept.

Are you sorry for your sins?

Yes, I am sorry that I have sinned against God.

Do you hope to be saved?

Yes, that is my hope.

In whom then do you trust?

In my dear Lord Jesus Christ.

What has Christ done for you that you trust in Him?

**He died for me and shed His blood for me on the cross for the forgiveness
of sins.**

In full confidence that our Lord is slow to anger and abounding in never ending love, let us humbly confess our sins and find comfort in His forgiving grace:

Almighty and most merciful Father, I am a sinner who has made mistakes and wandered away from Your ways like a lost sheep. I have followed the desires of my own heart. I have offended against Your holy laws. I have left undone those things which I should have done; and I have done those things which I should not have done; and there is nothing good in me. O Lord, have mercy on me. Help all who confess sins. Restore all who are sorry and with Your grace, change all manner of life; according to Your promises declared unto all in Christ Jesus our Lord. Grant that I may live a godly, righteous, and worshipful life; to the glory and honour of Jesus' name. Amen

Receive the forgiveness Christ Jesus Himself has won for you by His suffering, death and resurrection. In the place of and by the Word of Christ I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

KYRIE HYMN

[Tune: Alas, and did my Saviour Bleed]

**O God, be merciful to me because Your love is strong;
Now wash me from iniquity, and cleanse me from all wrong.**

**These words are old, but still they live within our hearts today.
We cry to You: "O God, forgive!" And "Wash our sins away!"**

Carolyn Winfrey Gillette (2006) www.hymnary.org

GLORY TO GOD

"All Glory Be To God

(LSB Tune # 947) www.hymnary.org

S 159

All Glo -- ry be to God a -- lone, for -- ev -- er more the
high -- est One! Who did our sin -- ful race be-friend, and
grace and peace to us ex -- tend! A - mong us may His
Gra -- cious will all hearts with deep thanks -giv-ing fill, we
praise and bless You, Fath--er!

**Lord God, our King on Heav'n's high throne,
O Lord, the sole-begotten One
Dear Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, true God from all eternity,
O Lamb of God, to You we flee, You take the whole world's sins away,
Have mercy on us Je-sus!**

Text & Music: Martin Luther, trans. G.Pollack, 1890-1950, public domain

SPOKEN GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY:

The Lord be with you:

And with your spirit.

Lord God, Gracious Father, we ask You to keep Your family, the Church, always faithful to You, that all who lean on the hope of Your promises in Your Son may gain strength and bear fruits of love; we pray through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE WORD

Old Testament: *Genesis 45:3-11, 15*

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This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Epistle: *1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50*

[St. Paul writes:] But someone will ask, 'How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?' Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living being'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven. What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

ALLELUIA VERSE:

[Tune: "Seek Ye First"]

**Word of Life, O Jesus Christ; glory be to You;
Our hearts do burn as You open up Your Word: Allelu – Alle-lu—ia.**

The Holy Gospel: *St. Luke 6:27-38*

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke, the 6th chapter: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[Jesus says]: 'But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you. 'If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. 'Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.' This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ.**

THE APOSTLES' CREED:

God has made us His people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess the faith.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the + life everlasting. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY:

“O God My Faithful God”

www.hymnary.org

- 1. God, my faithful God, True Fountain ever flowing,
who good and perfect gifts in mercy are bestowing,
give me a healthy frame, and may I have within
a conscience free from blame, a soul unstained by sin.**
- 2. Grant me the strength to do with ready heart and willing
whatever you desire, my calling here fulfilling,
that I do what I should, while trusting you to bless
the outcome for my good, for you must give success.**
- 4. Lord, let me win my foes with kindly words and actions,
and let me find good friends for counsel and correction.
Help me, as you have taught, to love both great and small
and by your Spirit's might to live in peace with all.**

J.Heerman, 1630, Lutheran Service Book public domain

MESSAGE

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -
way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -
tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir-it. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH:

We pray now to our Gracious Father, for the world in which we are called to let our light shine; for the people who will see our good deeds; and for the church in which the light of the gospel is proclaimed.

Hear us O God -

Your mercy is great.

Provide faithful pastors to share your good news and to teach your ways. Strengthen the faith of your people through Your Word and Baptism, Forgiveness and Communion. Bless the members of our congregation that they may be salt and light in the world. Bring to faith those who do not yet know you.
Hear us O God –

Your mercy is great.

Have mercy on all nations, and bless our own land. Be the comforter to war-torn communities where violence and oppression reign. Bring honesty and justice, peace and safety everywhere. Bless and protect people in work and leisure.

Hear us O God –

Your mercy is great.

You know every hair on our heads. Yet we do not always know each of our neighbors. Equip and ignite our outreach, inviting and welcoming efforts and help us know all those living around us, even those in our midst, who benefit from Christ in us.

Hear us O God –

Your mercy is great.

Pour out Your Holy Spirit on all who struggle, especially.....Ease the pain of families enveloped in abuse or division. Give Your life-giving breath to fellowship, conversations and the coming and going of people, that we may be ready to offer our hands, feet, ears, mouths and hearts to serve all who cry out for help.

Hear us O God –

Your mercy is great.

Comfort those who are suffering, downcast or oppressed. Lift up the fallen and satisfy the needs of the hungry, refugees, the homeless and those who lack even basics such as clothing. Help all who are in any trouble. *Hear us O God –*

Your mercy is great.

Your love knows no bounds. May Your perfect love strengthen our own ability to love and include into our lives those who need and inspire us. May Your service through us this week be a time to comfort those You have given us to love and remember that our Christian witness displays the faith and love You provide. *Hear us O God –*

Your mercy is great.

Father, your Son is the light shining in the darkness of our world. Teach us to love one another as you love us, so that we may bring peace and joy to the world. Hear our prayers, for the sake of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Let us praise the Lord;

Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION:

The Lord bless you and keep you;

the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favour, + and give you peace.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN:

"Take My Life & Let It Be"

LSB # 783

**Take my life and let it be, consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days, let them flow in endless praise.**

**Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet and let them be -- swift and beautiful for Thee.**

**Take my voice and let me sing, always, only for my King.
Take my lips and let them be, filled with messages from Thee.**

**Take my will and make it Thine, It shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own, It shall be Thy royal throne.**

**Take my love, my Lord, I pour, at Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself and I will be, ever, only, all for Thee.**

Reprinted from: www.library.timelesstruths.org/music/Take_My_Life_and_Let_It_Be/

O God of Mercy, God of Light

1 O God of mer - cy, God of light, In love and
 2 You sent your Son to die for all, That our lost
 3 Teach us the les - son Je - sus taught: To feel for
 4 For all are kin - dred, far and wide, Since Je - sus

mer - cy in - fi - nite, Teach us, as ev - er
 world might hear your call; Oh, hear us lest we
 those his blood has bought, That ev - 'ry deed and
 Christ for all has died; Grant us the will, and

in your sight, To live our lives in you.
 stray and fall! We rest our hope in you.
 word and thought May work a work for you.
 grace pro - vide To love them all in you.

5 In sickness, sorrow, want, or care,
 Each other's burdens help us share;
 May we, where help is needed, there
 Give help as though to you.

6 And may your Holy Spirit move
 All those who live to live in love,
 Till you receive in heav'n above
 Those who have lived to you.

COMMITMENT, DISCIPLESHIP

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O God, My Faithful God



1 O God, my faith - ful God, true foun - tain ev - er flow - ing,
 2 Give me the strength to do with read - y heart and will - ing
 3 Keep me from say - ing words that lat - er need re - call - ing;
 4 When dan - gers gath - er round, oh, keep me calm and fear - less;



with - out whom noth - ing is, all per - fect gifts be - stow - ing:
 what - ev - er you com - mand, my call - ing here ful - fill - ing—
 guard me, lest i - dle speech may from my lips be fall - ing;
 help me to bear the cross when life seems dark and cheer - less;



give me a health - y frame, and may I have with - in
 to do it when I ought, with all my might—and bless
 but when, with - in my place, I must and ought to speak,
 help me, as you have taught, to love both great and small,



a con - science free from blame, a soul un - stained by sin.
 what - ev - er I have wrought, for you must give suc - cess.
 then to my words give grace, lest I of - fend the weak.
 and, by your Spir - it's might, to live at peace with all.



REV. TODD HOFFS**EPIPHANY 7****Scripture: Luke 6:27-38**

Title: “What goes around doesn’t always come back around...”!

February 20, 2022

The message is from Jesus’ words in Luke’s Gospel, chapter 6: ²⁷ “...love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. ²⁸ Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you ³⁷ “Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn others, or it will all come back against you. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ Give, and you will receive.”

Judging and loving. Two of the most talked about Christian ideals

And two of the most misunderstood Christian ideals.

It’s so easy to justify our reasons to judge And we could fill volumes with reasons not to love. I got to know my union shop steward Bob in the grocery store I worked in back in my high school days. He happened to be a Lutheran too. Once his produce manager, whom he liked, said something to really hurt him. Bob was livid for days afterward.

Bob and I often spoke about church and faith. So it was easy for me to ask him, “Bob, can you forgive him?” “Forgive him” he said back?! “No. He shouldn’t have hurt me in the 1st place.” And there you have quite a deeply rooted misunderstanding of judging and loving. Bob wasn’t a bad guy, nor was his co-worker.

It’s just that this deeply ingrained ideal is so effective in dimming the Gospel light. Love is hard to fully understand, as its used and abused too much.

Love, as agape in the Greek here, is sacrificial, giving of the self without fear of loss. Love usually gets viewed through the lens of popularity.

On facebook, you base a form of love on how many “likes” your posting receives.

Or texting, how soon you get a positive response. Or who says hello when you enter the room. Our identity as God’s people can’t be tied up with who likes us and who doesn’t. That’s too changeable and emotional as a measurement. Our identity can only

be based on who loves you unconditionally – Then you always know who you are.

And that unconditional love is from God. It’s on this kind of love A love that flows through us His children, That we can love unconditionally.

Love your enemies, Judge not so that you won’t be judged, Condemn not, or else you could be likewise condemned. Bless all who insult you, pray for those who hurt you.

So, how many of us truly live this out? Lol It’s a big ask isn’t it!?

Commands from Jesus’ mouth none of us live up to. Don’t think for a moment that this was popular with His listeners then.

Jesus is operating in a completely different world view--Bringing God's Kingdom of heaven down to the kingdoms of the earth.

He's dismantling this old tit for tat world view, the quid pro quo, bargain deal making-Like the Eastern belief of Karma, What goes around comes around, Which is always based in good getting the good and the bad getting the bad.

For those who judge others, Those who only love those who love them back, Those who only give to get something in return, Jesus is saying that doing this WILL give you exactly what you get. You will expect good, and good might come to you, but in the end—you will only get yourself.

Which is nothing, because apart from God we are nothing.

What goes around doesn't always come back around. It's a warning: You are your own reward. You are your own punishment You decide the fate! You are then in control. You're deciding who you are Your judgement on yourself and others WILL be your ending. If that becomes YOUR life, then, yes, any Godly compassion and mercy will fade away. Well-intentioned people [like ourselves] And easily slip into Selfishness and create an inward decay Leaving a cold, empty heart and soul in the end.

What goes around doesn't come back the way we think.

God is kind to the unkind. The nasty are blessed just as the humble.

Enemies win sometimes. Enemies in Jesus mind are any people who work against you, who seek your demise, who wish you nothing but harm. Often we talk ourselves into thinking this means all the terrible people out there, not anyone like us.

I'd have to say, in my 23 years of pastoral ministry, Any one coming close to being my enemy was another Lutheran or Christian. Those who know you best can easily be your enemy. We can even be our own worst enemy at times. You and I in the end of the day aren't called to change our enemy with force or judging. You and I are called simply to meet opposition with compassionate love. Loving people know how to love and be loved. Loving people stop judging and let God's love flow through them to others.

Sadly, most peoples' image of God is so toxic for so many reasons.

God is often viewed as a divine bully, who is angry, far away, ready to get even.

And even if you haven't ever thought this way, we all feel at times like we can never measure up to God's standard. Jesus says Love enemies – And Christian beliefs over the years makes us believe God hates his enemies – puts em all in hell – what goes around comes around right? It's easy to accept a strict reward and punishment system.

Jesus loves me this I know God is love – right?

This isn't naïve Sunday school rhetoric – It is the Gospel truth and needs to be lived out beyond the church walls. Life shapes us into living life looking out for number one,

loving those who love you [or agree with you] and hate those who hate you or disagree; This is a learned behavior. The Gospel transforms this, but truth be told, many Christian teachers falsely encourage this survival of the fittest mentality.

Jesus calls us away from emulating that.

This is one reason why countless Churches are only ½ full --- and maybe this is a good thing, something we can be thankful for and embrace --Because there is still hope for God's mercy to dominate, That love and compassion can flow from here and into the lives of people out there. When the Holy Spirit's breath flows through us and activates faith and hope in others. People everywhere are disillusioned, lost and angry.

Love isn't weak and silly And making judgements isn't being strong in the Lord.

Jesus says love your enemy, not make them change.

It's no secret that Christianity can be HIGHLY judgmental.

Jesus says to pray for those who hurt you, Turn the other cheek when one of them is hit. Few of us want to hear this or take it seriously. It doesn't mean Christians must be beaten to be true believers. Middle Eastern people who disagreed in Jesus' day would give a back-handed slap on the cheek. The slap escalated the disagreement.

Offering the other cheek isn't looking for abuse, it is taking a stand.

It's diffusing the anger. Restraint is true strength. Think about that. Restraint is love.

For your trust then is in God's love, not human fists. Same goes with giving when asked. Give with love and that love will be given back and flow out.

While we'd rather have harm come to someone who takes something from us,

What goes around doesn't need to come around in getting even but in being accepting of another person's need to be loved. It's so easy to see God as the great judge in Heaven. As opposed to the beloved Father spreading a scrumptious Banquet table. In 2022 we are in an era when over ½ of the population since 1970 Has not been exposed to a loving, Gospel centered Christian experience. They reject the judgmental model with good reason. There's nothing desirable about an exclusionary religion.

WHO IS NOT WORTHY? Look around here, who IS worthy? Who is deserving?

WHO DOES NOT BELONG?

What a waste of time! None of us are worthy None of us are deserving.

The infinite, unconditional love of God in Christ is the Gospel so needed today.

Our Lord Jesus is the embodiment of perfect worthiness.

He never received abuse that was out of His divine control.

His crucifixion is all part of God's love-based plan.

Jesus deafened His abusers with silence. They stole all of His clothes.

He let His body be whipped to shreds. Soldiers nailed His hands and feet to the cross,

for in loving all of His enemies, we all become His friends, His beloved brothers and sisters, followers of His way. As His followers, we do good to all, not just family and friends but to any and all in need. We do not judge. We proceed with mercy, love, care, help and compassion. Give as we wish to be given to, measured full, brimming over, with an abundance to enjoy. Infinite love is the issue – The Spirit will get it flowing God's love will keep coming to you through His Word, From the Baptismal font, From the Communion Table, And move your hands and feet leading the way to Jesus. If not, If the mission doesn't include everyone, Then why have Christianity at all? Christians aren't much different than others, sometimes worse.

Many have given up on us and maybe even God. They'll try to find mercy when they need it. They will, in a 'round-about way.'

Because no one can live long in this life without love and mercy.

You've been there, I've been there. Where would any of us be without God's unconditional love and acceptance in Christ? Forgiveness is what we share.

That's OUR BUSINESS; The Church's business. Christ living on in our living out His mercy. This isn't any one persons' fault. Seeing life as reward/punishment is easy. Like ballgames and elections, winners & losers.

But winning is never about love Winning only creates a culture of outsiders.

Like the talk of rights and privileges. None of us have rights.

Worshipping and following a crucified and resurrected Saviour is not about rights --

It's all about life as a gift And our faith as a gift And our calling from God as a gift

All is gift. The Spirit's work of love flowing through us is a gift. People who know they've been given to let the gift of grace flow through them to everyone else.

That's one of the best gifts Christ Lutheran Church has as Jesus' Body in the world.

Your willingness to embrace everyone, to welcome people, to be inclusive of all who gather together here Showing that there is a place for everyone.

That is Good news. That is loving and going good.

You are the hope for the world. You are that gift.

Doesn't matter how it looks or if people will be grateful or change or get their life all together.

God loves.

Jesus loves.

We love.

In this we are blessed with whatever comes around from God.

Amen.