

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

October 23rd, 2022



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

140 Russell Avenue
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1
Church: 905-685-8294
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
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Facebook: Lisa Gall www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC
Bulletin by email: Judy Mason chairman.outreach@christlutheransc.ca

A recording of Sunday's service will be uploaded to YouTube at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpING_TKTi9c_OIBbMqGwLw

Prayer: O God, whose almighty power is made known chiefly in showing mercy and pity, grant us the fullness of Your grace that we may be partakers of Your heavenly treasures; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

SERVICE CALENDAR - OCTOBER 2022

Sunday, October 23rd – Luke 18: 9-14 [Pharisee & Tax Collector] Creative Communion

Sunday, October 30th – Reformation [John 8: 31-36]

Luther's Chief part of the Catechism Service Order

DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:

Monday: Mark 8: 22-26 Wednesday: Col. 3: 12-17 Friday: 1 John 1: 5-10
Tuesday: Col. 3: 5-11 Thursday: Luke 19: 1-10 Saturday: Jude 20-25

Musician: Mayumi Munoz

Reader: Lorraine Kaija

EVENTS THIS WEEK:

Monday: 10:00 a.m. – Luther Manor Bible Study
Tuesday: 9:30—11:00 a.m. – Precious Moments
Thursday: 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. – SOUL
Saturday: 4:00 p.m. – FAMILY FUN NIGHT (see flyer in bulletin)

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:00 a.m. (before service) the **first 2 Sundays of each month**. Our focus this year is on *"God's Good Rules, His 10 Commandments"*. Parents are welcome to stay for a coffee and time to read their own devotions or join in Christian conversation.

PRECIOUS MOMENTS: We are thrilled to have our Precious Moments up and running again. If YOU or a "orcaregiver" you know has little ones (even babies), we invite them to join us. We meet at the church on Tuesday mornings between 9:30 - 11 a.m. The coffee and tea are always on (thanks to Judy!) and lots of playing, singing, reading a story, snack and craft. Hope to see you!

YOUTH CATECHISM CLASS 2022 with Pastor Todd is a time for young people to see their own unique place in God's Story of love, acceptance, and new life in Jesus Christ. Scripture-rich lessons focus on our identity as Jesus' brothers and sisters through our Baptismal faith. Preparation for receiving Jesus' Body and Blood in the Bread and Wine for Holy Communion makes for a meaningful life-long faith journey. Part of Catechism class is learning how to participate in Sunday worship and undertake opportunities to serve and "live their faith" in small local outreach projects. Altar candle lighting, ushering and training for assistance in Sunday services will be an integral part of class. Regular attendance during our Sunday worship is a requirement of all students. Young people who are beginning grade 5 through grade 9 are welcome to join. The start date and time will be set in the near future. Please email PastorToddHoeffs@gmail.com to let him know your intention for class. Feel free to ask any and all questions you may have about this. *Your servant in Christ, Pastor Todd*

LUTHER MANOR BIBLE STUDY: Mondays at 10 am in October and December.



Whether you are a family of 1 or 10,
WE INVITE YOU to join us

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29
4:00 – 7 P.M.

We will enjoy a time of singing,
Bible Study, share a Lasagna meal together and enjoy
Fellowship through various board Games ☺
We hope you will bring your favourites!

A sign-up sheet will be in the narthex.

“WALKING TOGETHER” HIKE: LCC youth, young adults, families, and friends alike are invited to go for a hike on **Saturday, November 5th**, meeting at 10:30 a.m. at Dundas Valley Conservation Area. Following our walk, we will travel back to Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Burlington for a shared meal (courtesy of Trinity, Fisherville), social time, and to listen to our guest speaker, Rev. Saulo Bledoff (of St. John's, Snyder) speaking on the theme of ***“Walking Together”***. We will continue the theme with an opportunity to worship together as brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. For more information contact Louise 905-329-8579.



TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS URN FUNDRAISER/WORKSHOP: We are excited to be going to the **Watering Can in Vineland** (3711 King St), to make our ***“own traditional urn”*** through step by step instructions. It will take place **Friday, November 11th**. Fellowship starts at 5:30 p.m., bring your own wine or other beverage (goodies supplied). Cost is \$75.00 (\$10 going towards Haiti Lutheran Missions Society School feeding program). Friends are welcome to join us. Secure your spot by giving your registration money to Wendy Shook (905-380-6544) by Sunday, November 6th.

LMWL-C/MARY MARTHA:

This is such an exciting time to welcome back and extend an invitation to everyone for our new Fall/Winter program. Please mark your calendars so that you may be able to join us:

Tuesday, November 15th - 7 p.m. Assembly of ***Warm Feet for the Streets*** sock blessings.

Saturday, November 26th - CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Tuesday, December 20th - 5:30 p.m. Advent/Christmas Dinner

We look forward to seeing familiar faces at our meetings and welcoming new faces! If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to call Lorraine at 905 964 5837!

¹⁴ And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Colossians 3: 14-16



BUFFET DINNER

In honour of

Pastor Todd and Pastor John

Saturday, November 19th, 2022
in the church basement

A Catered Meal including:

Chicken, Beef, Mashed Potatoes, Caesar Salad, Dessert, Coffee and Tea

Entertainment to follow!

Doors open at 4 p.m. with Supper at 6 p.m.

Everyone Welcome!

****RSVP on sign-up sheet at back of church****

<u>Last Sunday Attendance: October 16th, 2022</u>		<u>Attn: 10 a.m. – 92</u>			
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Weekly Need</u>	<u>Last Sunday</u>	<u>Year To Date</u>	<u>+ or – (--)</u>
Current:	283,291.00	5,554.73	2,053.00	164,669.68	(64,142.28)
LCC Missions	20,000.00	392.16	220.00	12,413.50	(3,740.35)
Property Improvement:			69.00	5,286.50	

FLOWERS have been placed on the altar this morning to the Glory of God by Frank & Ivy Parkhouse to celebrate both their Birthdays and their Wedding Anniversary.

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE: Tim Reck, Fellowship Chairman, needs volunteers for Events. Please contact him if you can help.

SILENT AUCTION: We will have a Silent Auction at the Bazaar on November 19th and need donations. We could use bottles of wine, tickets to hockey games or gift cards for restaurants, etc. Please speak to Judy Mason if you can help.

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYING for our adopted students from Concordia Seminary in St Catharines: **Jason Gillard** in his final year of Seminary after his year of vicarage and **Eduardo Farias** in his second year of study. Please remember them in your prayers as they continue in their studies to serve God's people. *"And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light."* Colossians 1:9-12

SEMINARY GUILD NOTE: Opportunity available to help Concordia Seminary as a Christ's contact person for the Seminary guild. This is the communicator/liaison between the guild and the local congregations. It is the Contact Person who works on getting memberships, and the distribution of the newsletter. Contact persons submit annual memberships on a form on the Seminary website. Please see Lorraine if you are interested. Thank you,



TURN CLOCKS BACK!!

Don't forget to turn you clocks back an hour
on **Saturday, November 6th, 2022.**

Notice to Church Extension Fund Depositors: The Church Extension Fund (CEF) is winding down its operations and as of now all depositors with current addresses have received their deposited funds plus the interest owing. However, we have a number of unclaimed savings accounts and savings certificates as we do not have current contact information for these. If you or someone you know thinks they may have a CEF account which has not been redeemed, please contact Darryll Holland at: 800-465-8179 ext4 or dholland@lceast.ca. Also if you are in possession of God Bank Savings Stamps or Tracky Stamps, these too can be redeemed by returning the books or stamps to: Lutheran East District, 275 Lawrence Ave., Kitchener, ON N2M 1Y3.



SAMARITAN'S PURSE SHOEBOX GIFTS

Operation Christmas Child has become a Holiday tradition for many of us here at Christ Lutheran. The love and care put into every shoebox gift has changed the lives of children worldwide, and I think we can say it has changed us as well.

Together, let's continue to make these children an important part of our Christmas celebration by extending Christ's love and compassion.

www.samaritanpurse.ca

HOW TO PACK YOUR SHOEBOX:

1. Pick up a designated shoebox from the narthex.
2. Decide on the category and age. Girl/Boy 2-4; 5-9; 10-14
3. Fill the box, and put an elastic around it. Mark if for gender/age.
4. Place a \$10.00 cheque in the offering basket and the congregation will send a combined donation. You will be tax receipted by CLC.
5. Drop the box off at the Church by Sunday, November 13th.

SUGGESTED GIFTS:

Toys:	slinky, yo-yo, kazoos, animals, stickers, dolls, balls, cars
School Supplies:	pens, paper, stamps, markers, calculators, pencil crayons & sharpener, colouring books
Hygiene Items:	soap, toothbrush, comb, washcloth, NO toothpaste or shampoo
Other:	hard candy only, sunglasses, ball caps, socks, flip flops, watches, hairclips, T-shirts, underwear, small picture books, flashlights, batteries

Please DO NOT include: used items, war related items, medicines, cosmetics, breakable items, perishable foods, liquids (shampoo, etc.), gum

Boxes are available in the Narthex. Please return your filled box by November 13



LWML-C / MARY MARTHA PROJECT

“Warm Feet for the Street” Kits for “Out of the Cold”

We would appreciate your help by contributing any of the following:

- LARGE SOCKS
- Warm gloves (adult size)
- Hand-warmers
- Scarves
- Toothpaste & Toothbrushes
- Lip Balm
- Hand & Body Lotion
- Deodorant
- Shampoo (travel size)
- Kleenex (little pkgs.)
- Band-aids
- Combs (pocket size)
- Small Soaps
- Portals of Prayer (*or similar, from any month or year*)
- UNDERWEAR (new)

Place in the box in the Narthex from now until November 13th.

We will make up the Kits at our November 15th meeting.

Remember that everything needs to be small enough to fit into the socks!!!

If you would like to help, but prefer for us to do the shopping,
a donation of money would be terrific too.

Contact Person: Wendy Hyatt

CREATIVE NEW COMMUNION SETTING

THE 20TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

October 23, 2022 + 10 AM Worship

FIRST HYMN

"His Name Is Wonderful!"

© 1959 Audrey Mieir

His name is Won-der-ful, His name is Won-der-ful. His name is
Won-der-ful, Je - sus, my Lord. He is the might - y King, Mas - ter of
ev - 'ry-thing, His name is Won-der-ful, Je - sus, my Lord. He's the Great
Shep-herd, the Rock of all a - ges, Al-might - y God is He. _____
Bow down be - fore Him, love and a - dore Him,
His name is Won - der - ful, Je - sus, my Lord.

CCLI Song # 1122230

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CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS:

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

You are my hiding place o Lord;

you will save me from trouble.

I sing aloud of your salvation,

because you protect me.

Then I confessed my sins to you;

I did not conceal my wrongdoings.

Looking for mercy from the Blessed Trinity, let us confess our sins together, as one people. O Gracious God,

our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and gift us with grace to grow more into the likeness and image of Your dear Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Amen.

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

LORD, HAVE MERCY

O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of David,

Son of the living God, have mercy on us and give us Your peace. Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE:

"He Is Lord"

divinehymns.com



He is Lord, He is Lord! He is ris - en from the
dead and He is Lord! Ev-'ry knee shall bow, ev-'ry
tongue con - fess That Je - sus Christ is Lord.

**He Is Love, He Is Love!
He Has Shown Us By His Life That He Is Love;
As we all employ with One Voice Of Joy
That Jesus Christ Is Love!**

**He Is Life, He Is Life!
He Has Died To Set Us Free And He Is Life;
And He Calls Us All To Live Evermore,
For Jesus Christ Is Life.**

Text: Based on Philippians 2:11

Tune: HE IS LORD, 6 11 10 6; traditional

PRAYER OF THE DAY

We pray: Lord God, our Righteous Judge, daily Your mercy surprises us with everlasting forgiveness. Strengthen our hope in You and help us, that all the peoples of the earth may find their glory in Your redeemer Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, for He lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE WORD

The Old Testament: *Jeremiah 14: 7-10, 19-22*

Although our iniquities testify against us, act, O Lord, for your name's sake; our apostasies indeed are many, and we have sinned against you. O hope of Israel, its saviour in time of trouble, why should you be like a stranger in the land, like a traveller turning aside for the night? Why should you be like someone confused, like a mighty warrior who cannot give help? Yet you, O Lord, are in the midst of us, and we are called by your name; do not forsake us! Thus says the Lord concerning this people: Truly they have loved to wander, they have not restrained their feet; therefore the Lord does not accept them, now he will remember their iniquity and punish their sins....Have you completely rejected Judah? Does your heart loathe Zion? Why have you struck us down so that there is no healing for us? We look for peace, but find no good; for a time of healing, but there is terror instead. We acknowledge

our wickedness, O Lord, the iniquity of our ancestors, for we have sinned against you. Do not spurn us, for your name's sake; do not dishonour your glorious throne; remember and do not break your covenant with us. Can any idols of the nations bring rain? Or can the heavens give showers? Is it not you, O Lord our God? We set our hope on you, for it is you who do all this.

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

The Epistle: *2 Timothy 4: 6-8, 16-18*

[St. Paul writes:] As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing. At my first defence no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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

CHOIR ANTHEM: ***“Wonderful Grace of Jesus”***

Wonderful grace of Jesus greater than all my sin, how shall my tongue describe it
Where shall its praise begin? Taking away my burden setting my spirit free
For the wonderful grace of Jesus reaches me—

Chorus:

Wonderful the matchless grace of Jesus -- deeper than the mighty rolling sea
Higher than the mountain, sparkling like a fountain
All-sufficient grace for even me
Broader than the scope of my transgressions
Greater far than all my sin and shame
O magnify the precious name of Jesus -- Praise His name!

Wonderful grace of Jesus reaching to all the lost
By it I have been pardoned saved to the uttermost
Chains have been torn asunder giving me liberty
For the wonderful grace of Jesus reaches me.

Chorus:

Wonderful the matchless grace of Jesus -- deeper than the mighty rolling sea
Higher than the mountain, sparkling like a fountain
All-sufficient grace for even me
Broader than the scope of my transgressions
Greater far than all my sin and shame
O magnify the precious name of Jesus -- Praise His name!

Wonderful grace of Jesus reaching the most defiled
By its transforming power -- making him God's dear child
Purchasing peace and heaven for all eternity
For the wonderful grace of Jesus reaches me

Chorus:

Wonderful the matchless grace of Jesus -- deeper than the mighty rolling sea
Higher than the mountain, sparkling like a fountain
All-sufficient grace for even me
Broader than the scope of my transgressions
Greater far than all my sin and shame
O magnify the precious name of Jesus -- Praise His name!

Holy Gospel: St. Luke 18: 9-14

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke, the 18th chapter:

Glory to You, O Lord.

Jesus also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax-collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, "God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax-collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income." But the tax-collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.' This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, Whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life + of the world to come. Amen.

GOSPEL SONG:

"What A Friend We Have In Jesus"

**What a Friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry, ev'rything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry, ev'rything to God in prayer!**

**Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged; Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful? Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness: Take it to the Lord in prayer.**

**Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our Refuge-Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In His arms He'll take and shield thee, Thou wilt find a solace there.**

*Words: Joseph Scriven, 1819-1886; Music: Charles Converse, 1832-1918 Public Domain
www.lyrics.fandom.com/wiki/Al_Green:What_A_Friend_We_Have_In_Jesus*

MESSAGE

OFFERINGS *are gathered.*

PRAYERS

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people as they have needs: For the faithful preaching and teaching of the Gospel, that we may never depart from the eternal truth of Christ crucified, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For Christ's Holy Church here and throughout the world, for all who hear the Word of God and are brought to renewal and faith, and for grace that God's people may be sustained in His Word, drawing strength in times of persecution, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For this congregation; for the work of God's kingdom that goes forth from this baptismal font, altar and pulpit; and for those who serve us in Christ's name here and throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For a faithful and fruitful life of prayer, praying not only for our needs but praying His promises that our hearts may rest in His perfect peace, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For the government of our land, for leaders of our nation, for godly lives as citizens, and for those who protect and defend our country both here and abroad, and for good government and secure people everywhere: let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For honest labour, for all worthy occupations, and for the culture and enrichment of the arts in service to God, that He may prosper them for our benefit and allow us to share of their fruits, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For those in any need, especially that the sick may be healed, the grieving comforted and the dying consoled, [*and especially for _____,*] and that God may give them all things good and necessary to them in their time of need, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For a long memory of the mercies God has shown to us and for a short memory of those who have wronged us, that our bitterness may give way to love and peace, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

And finally gracious God, bring us at last through all trials and deliver us into Your Kingdom without end; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

THE HOLY MEAL

HOLY HOLY HOLY

"Hosanna, Hosanna" Carl Tuttle © 1985 Mercy Pub.

1. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, Ho - san - na in the high -
2. Glo - ry, glo - ry, Glo - ry to the King of

est; — Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, Ho - san - na in the high -
kings; — Glo - ry, glo - ry, Glo - ry to the King of

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is written in a simple, rhythmic style. Below the first staff, there are two lines of lyrics. The first line is "1. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, Ho - san - na in the high -" and the second line is "2. Glo - ry, glo - ry, Glo - ry to the King of". Below the second staff, there are two lines of lyrics. The first line is "est; — Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, Ho - san - na in the high -" and the second line is "kings; — Glo - ry, glo - ry, Glo - ry to the King of". The lyrics are aligned with the notes on the staff.



est. _____
kings. _____

Lord, we lift up Your name,

With hearts full of praise; Be ex-alt-ed, O

Lord my God, Ho-san-na in the high est.

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THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION:

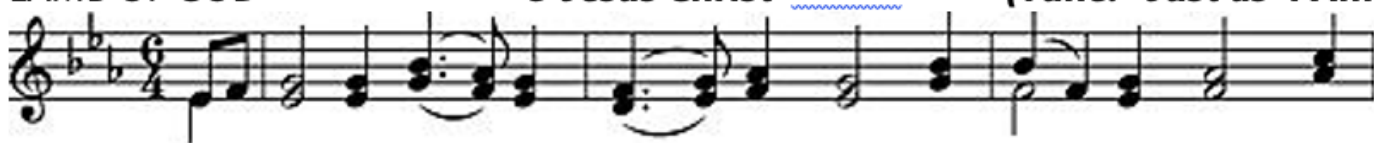
Our Lord, Jesus Christ, on the night in which He was betrayed, took bread and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying: "Take, eat; This is My + Body which is given for you, this do, in remembrance of Me. In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying "Drink of it all of you, this cup is the New Testament in My + Blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you**

LAMB OF GOD

"O Jesus Christ"

(Tune: "Just as I Am")



O Jes-us Chri-st, True Lamb of God; the sins of the world, You



Take a -- way. Have mer - cy on us, Lord, we pray;



And bless us with Your peace; A -- men.

PILGRIM STYLE DISTRIBUTION

COMMUNION HYMNS

"Come My Way"

[Holy Spirit, Light Divine tune]

Come my Way my Truth my Life; Such a way as gives us breath
Such a truth as ends all strife; Such a life as kills all death

Come my Light my Feast my Strength, such a light as shows a feast
Such a feast as mends in length, such a strength as makes his guest

Come my Joy my Love my Heart, such a joy as none can move
Such a love as none can part, such a heart as joys in love

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"Now Let Us From This Feast"

[O Blessed Spring tune O WALY WALY]

Now let us from this feast we share, renewed in body, mind and soul;
with Christ we die and rise again, his selfless love has made us whole.

With minds alert, upheld by grace, to spread the Word in speech and deed,
we follow in the steps of Christ, at one with all in hope and need.

To fill each human house with love, it is the blessed gift of care;
the work that Christ began to do, we humbly carry on and share.

Please give us grace, Companion-God, to choose again the pilgrim way
and help us to behold with joy – the challenge of tomorrow's day.

Words: Fred Kaan, © 1968 Hope Publishing Company, 380 S Main Pl, Carol Stream, IL 60188 –
https://hymnary.org/text/now_let_us_from_this_table_rise

POST COMMUNION SONG "Free Now To Go" [Tune: "This is the Day"]

Free now to go; free now to go, in Your prom-ised, peace, in Your
Prom-ised, peace; my eyes have seen, my eyes have seen, Your
Sav-ing grace, Your sav - ing grace! Peo-ple can see from the
Light You shine, Is-rael's true glo-ry-- now is mine;
Free now to go, free now to go, in Your peace, O Lord.

Words: Russell Schulz-Widmar, alt © 2006 Augsburg; Music: Les Garrett, © 1967 www.wordpress.com

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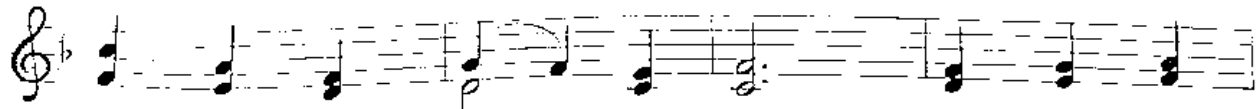
POST-COMMUNION PRAYER:

Pour out upon us Your blessed Holy Spirit, O Lord, that we who have shared in this Holy Communion feast of Your Body and Blood may find strength in the Fellowship and Confession of the One True Faith which sends us forth to proclaim Your redeeming love to the world and prepare us joyfully to see You face to face in glory; Who with the Father and the Spirit You live and reign as one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION: The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord upon you with favour, + and give you peace. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN:

"God Of The Fertile Fields"



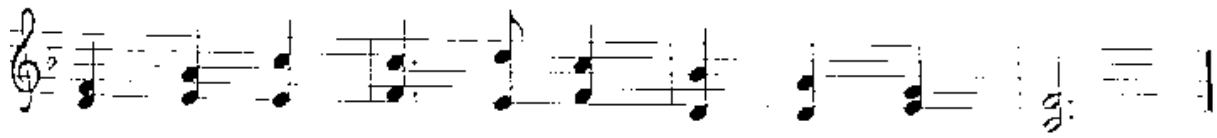
1 God of the fer - tile fields, sha - per of
 2 We would be stew - ards true, hold - ing in
 3 As grows the hid - den seed to fruit that
 4 God of the coun - try - side, dear to the



earth that yields our dai - ly bread: forth from your
 trust from you all that you give; help us in
 serves our need, so your reign grows. Let all our
 Christ who died to make us one: we pledge our



boun - teous hand come gifts your love has planned,
 love to share, teach us like you to care
 toil be used, no gift of yours a - bused,
 lives a - new in faith - ful love to you.



that all in ev - 'ry land be clothed and fed,
 for peo - ple ev - 'ry - where, that all may live,
 no hum - ble task re - fused your love be - stows,
 Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.

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REV. TODD HOFFFS

PENTECOST 20

Scripture: St. Luke 18:9-14

October 23, 2022

“God always liked YOU best...”

We compare things all the time. Maple Leafs or Senators? With the Baseball World Series in view, Yankees or Astros [and I'm hoping Yankees]? Chocolate or Strawberry ice cream? Roses or orchids? Wine or beer? What members have here the longest? Who volunteers the most? Who contributes the most or the best of whom they are? Most of the time comparisons are innocent and help create healthy competition motivating us to improve our skills and nurture growth.

Alberta Lutheran churches following the WW 2 years advertised envelope#s, names and amounts on narthex bulletin boards to inspire better giving. But this only negatively boosted pride and arrogance. Very unhealthy competition.

Competition can spiral into a nasty disease within individuals and communities. When the comparison changes from abilities to personal attacks, we've stepped into dangerous territory. It's then very easy assuming a person's value is strictly related to their contribution to society. And the more success one has, the more that person is valued over others. If we aren't at the top, shame fills our spirits and makes us feel as if we are worthless humans. [Like shut-ins in nursing homes who say 'I'm no good for nothing'...we need to encourage and support...] they can pray, empathize, care, even witness with whoever administers to them....

Jesus says we cannot earn our salvation but that by believing in Him, we have the gift of total and complete forgiveness. Our reputations in this life have NO bearing whatsoever on our salvation. Look at the people Jesus hung out with during his life.

Jesus speaks today of a Pharisee and a tax collector coming to the Temple. To Jesus' audience, the Pharisees aren't villains. They observe the law dutifully. They are respected and honoured. And, the Pharisee here goes above and beyond the letter of the law. He fasts twice a week instead of just once (as the law called for), he gives 10 percent on everything he gets, not just food and animals (again, as the law called for).

The tax collector, on the other hand, is most definitely the 'bad guy.' They're Jewish people working for their oppressors, the Roman Empire. The Romans required a certain amount of tax to be turned in, but anything extra these men made they'd keep. This made them traitors and religiously unclean. The fact that the tax collector goes home justified is unimaginable and made many listeners cringe with disgust.

We have two extremes described here. One who thinks he does everything right and one who knows he's doing wrong. The Pharisee thinks what he does makes him really good! As if he does nothing wrong. It's always someone else that messes things up. Just look at how bad the tax-collecting, lowlife traitor is. The Pharisee is in denial of his own sinfulness.

He hides it in the closet and locks the door while defending his behavior so that he feels acceptable because he believes that it is his good behavior that will save him. When he totally misunderstands that God's grace gives him and all people the ability to DO GOOD through that free grace!

This Temple setting is also important and very telling. At that time where a person could stand inside temple clearly indicates their 'place' in society. The temple had rules related to insiders and outsiders. The Pharisee and the Tax Collector would've stood far apart. Each held different positions, different standings, in the temple and in their minds, toward God. This will all be undone when at the moment of Jesus' death the curtain of the temple is torn in two from top to bottom, which forever breaks down the division between God and humanity. Jesus' life, death and resurrection changes everything, removes all boundaries.

We compare, even create fences around what we think of others. How often do we walk past those on the street in need doing everything we can to avoid eye contact? Where do we sit in a waiting room, or on a bus, or in a McDonalds? How often do we write off those we disagree with as

categorically wrong or simply stupid? “Thank God I’m not like that tax collector” today sounds like “Thank God I’m not like certain politicians or worse, like the people who support and vote for them?! The Pharisee’s posture before God is inward focused and based on doing perceived good things. And this is tied to his contempt for the tax collector.

When our focus is inward, when we’re convinced the most important part of our faith is what we DO or how we behave, then it isn’t long before we find ourselves judging others who don’t stack up to our hard work. When truth is because of Christ’s rigorous work to save us and the world our lives of faith are enough to being about good in the world.

Problem is, anytime we draw lines between who’s in and who’s out we will find God on the other side. In the end, this parable isn’t about self-righteousness and humility, it’s not about these two men. It is about GOD.

And what happens with all that comparing is that sometimes as the synod wide LCC church body, we appear to only welcome certain people. We welcome people who don’t have a house to live in as long as they’re on the way to living in a house some time soon. We welcome addicts as long as they’re seeking recovery. We welcome people with criminal records as long as they’ve turned their lives around. We welcome people who don’t look like us or talk like us or worship like us as long as they start changing to become like us. We as the larger church in the world tend to welcome sinners as long as they’re on the path to change.

And while the Word and Sacrament in the church DO create change and transformation and renewal, we can’t command it or expect it or assume it will look like the way we do it. We don’t always welcome perfectly here, but like we’re constantly learning, growing, *stretching*.

Whether we pray like the Pharisee or like the tax collector, we are people who can only hold out hope that we’re on the path toward being better BECAUSE OF CHRIST our Saviour WHO LIVES IN US AND DIRECTS OUT FEET INTO THE WAYS OF PEACE.

The tax-collector didn’t pretend he was good. He didn’t attempt to justify his actions or his own self-worth. He cheated people out of their hard earned cash and he KNEW it! As a matter of fact, the text doesn’t say anything about the tax collector changing his ways once he left the scene! He might be going out to do the same thing again tomorrow. He’s got his own sins that need God’s forgiveness and its more important that he deal with his own than to point at others. That’s also true for us. Out of humility, he couldn’t even look up as he beat his chest and confessed, God be merciful to me, a sinner! And Jesus says that the tax collector has gone home justified. He’s right with God!

If any person of the world could do everything truly right, what is the need for Jesus Christ?

This passage is an honest, important lesson in erasing any idea that we can do anything but fall on the mercy of God. The one who goes home justified isn’t the one who turns his life around or gets it more right than not. The one who goes home justified is the one who recognizes their utter dependency on the mercy of God. The Pharisee will fall apart sooner or later, for all of us do. Even the ones who seem to have it all together – there just isn’t anyone who’s got it perfect.

Except God. And He’s the One who willingly justifies sinners. Bends over backwards to ensure we all have a way into His Kingdom. And why does God do this? Well, since we don’t know if the tax collector actually changed his ways, God’s justification has absolutely nothing to do with what we do or even what we pray. God justifies sinners because He loves us and wants us in a relationship with Him. We don’t remain in friendships and relationships with people because of their perfect behavior, we do it out of love. And so does God.

God is so willing to fix things, to tear down comparison walls, that He lets His own Son pay the price. He descends from His Heavenly throne to get down deep into our mess, lower than the lowest, to simply lift up the whole world back to God washed clean in His shed Blood with His nail scarred hands as proof positive of our salvation! All Who see the cross as healing are lifted up to the Heavenly dwelling, while at the same time all who think they don’t need God nor Jesus’ cross are brought down. Jesus lifts up the lowly and brings down the arrogant. For He can only heal those who know they’re sick.

Our can say that we're a mess at times. And God blesses that confession! Jesus forgives because we humbly acknowledge that we've fallen short and need Christ's grace as much as anyone else. Through the blood of Jesus Christ, you and I are forgiven. Through our Baptism into Jesus' death our reasons to self justify melt away in the face of compassion and mercy waiting to embrace us.

And right up here Jesus fully embraces us as one forgiven family of believers. When we stand before the Lord's Table and God's altar and all judgements and selfish cares all fall away as we kneel elbow to elbow eating Jesus' Body and drinking Jesus' Blood. This Holy Communion makes us one and no matter how different we might seem God sees us all as His dear children in need of His Son's nourishing feast.

We need not be embarrassed or afraid. It's OK to say "I'm stuck. It's lost. I'm overwhelmed." And we the church respond with "I know what it's like down here and you're not alone." We don't try to fix everything because we can't. And yet, by being compassionately able to see the world as someone else sees it, to put attitudes aside, by moving to stand alongside others to help and listen, we can see the world as our Lord sees it – in need of saving and forgiveness. And in our Christian witness we'll connect through the Spirit with other people in ways we might never expect.

So may our comparisons remain healthy. May we walk in newly transformed footsteps out of this place justified, taking God's love and forgiveness into every corner that all may say with us: God be merciful to us all as His dearly redeemed sinners.

Amen.