

¹⁰ For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Isaiah 55:10-11

How does your garden grow? How is the soil in your tomatoes and flowers look? Dry? Hard to keep them watered? In this heat do you find yourself ready to feel a bit of snow? Well, maybe that is a stretch, yet, not. The prophet Isaiah is using beautiful poetry to share at the end of what scholars define as Second Isaiah to speak of rain and snow, either one cannot help but nourish the earth. In the torrents of rain and the foot of snow, in all of even that chaos, the earth is refreshed.

God says, “So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth. It will not return empty.” His words are important, they matter, and they will succeed in the purpose they were sent. God’s Word will make a difference.

In these times of feeling like we are in exile from the normal and routine times of our lives taken away, we hear what God proclaims. Even in hard times, in turbulent times, in total chaos of what was and is and changing each and every day, God’s word is not going away. God did not turn away. He loved us so much he sent his Son to teach, preach, love and grant grace upon grace. With Jesus’ teaching and his death and resurrection we are granted peace and mercy each and every day, a new beginning.

Last Sunday during our worship, Diane sang, “Light Dawns on a Weary World (Worship, Page 726)” It is under the Justice/Peace section of our Hymnal. Light dawns, love grows, and hope blooms on a weary world are the three verses. The refrain goes like this:

The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands gush with springs; the hills and mountains shall break forth in singing. We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace, as all the world in wonder echoes shalom.

May light, love and hope walk with you always. Clap like the trees and sing like the mountains. Let God’s Word continue to go out and not return empty. Be lead out in peace, always peace.

In God’s Word,

Pastor Brenda Wicklund

Isaiah 55: 12

¹² For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Pastor Brenda Wicklund

July 12, 2020

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

“We are called by God to grow in faith together, sharing Christ’s love with each other and our community”



God’s word is like the rain that waters the earth and brings forth vegetation. It is also like the sower who scatters seed indiscriminately. Our lives are like seeds sown in the earth. Even from what appears to be little, dormant, or dead, God promises a harvest. At the Lord’s table we are fed with the bread of life, that we may bear fruit in the world.

Welcome

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation.

C: Amen.

L: Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

L: Reconciling God,

C: we confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives. We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts. We fail to believe that you provide enough for all. We abuse your good creation for our own benefit. We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us. We sin in thought, word, and deed. By your grace, forgive us; through your love, renew us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.

L: Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through ☩ Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Song-Diane Ausmus "Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty"

Red Worship Book 533

Greeting

Red Worship Book pg. 203

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Kyrie

Red Worship Book pg. 203

C: Have mercy on us, Lord, and hear our solemn prayer. We come to hear your living word; it saves us from despair.

Have mercy on us, Christ, and wash away our sin. Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may begin.

Have mercy on us, Lord, make sin and shame depart. Renew us with your saving pow'r; create in us new hearts!

Canticle of Praise

Red Worship Book pg. 204

C: Come, let us join our cheerful songs with angels round the throne; ten thousand thousand are their tongues, but all their joys are one.

"Worthy the Lamb that died," they cry, "to be exalted thus!" "Worthy the Lamb," our lips reply, "for he was slain for us!"

Jesus is worthy to receive honor and pow'r divine; and blessings, more than we can give, be, Lord, forever thine.

Let all creation join in one to bless the sacred name of God who sits upon the throne, and to adore the Lamb.

Prayer of the Day

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

C: Amen.

God's word to Israel's exiles is as sure and effective as never-failing precipitation. Their return to the Holy Land in a new exodus is cheered on by singing mountains and by trees that clap their hands.

First Reading: Isaiah 55:10-13

¹⁰For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

¹¹so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

¹²For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

¹³Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

Psalm 65: [1-8] 9-13

L: You are to be praised, O God, in Zion;

C: to you shall vows be fulfilled.

L: To you, the one who answers prayer,

C: to you all flesh shall come.

L: Our sins are stronger than we are,

C: but you blot out our transgressions.

L: Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your courts to dwell there!

C: They will be satisfied by the beauty of your house, by the holiness of your temple

L: Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation,

C: O hope of all the ends of the earth and of the oceans far away.

L: You make firm the mountains by your power;

C: you are girded about with might.

L: You still the roaring of the seas,

C: the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of the peoples.

L: Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs;

C: you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy

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

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

L: You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges;

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

L: You crown the year with your goodness,

C: and your paths over- flow with plenty.

L: May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing,

C: and the hills be clothed with joy.

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

C: let them shout for joy and sing.

There is no condemnation for those who live in Christ. God sent Christ to accomplish what the law was unable to do: condemn sin and free us from its death-dealing ways. The Spirit now empowers proper actions and values in our lives and gives us the promise of resurrected life.

Second Lesson: Romans 8:1-11

¹There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned

sin in the flesh, ⁴ so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, ⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

Gospel Acclamation

Red Worship Book pg. 205

C: Alleluia! Lord and Savior: open now your saving word. Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred. Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

Red Worship Book pg. 206

C: Glory to you, O Lord. (spoken)

In Matthew's gospel, both Jesus and his disciples "sow the seed" of God's word by proclaiming the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near." Now, in a memorable parable, Jesus explains why this good news produces different results in those who hear

Gospel: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

¹ That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ² Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³ And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶ But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ Let anyone with ears listen!"

¹⁸ "Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³ But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.

"The Gospel of Our Lord

C: Praise to you, O Christ. (spoken)

Red Worship Book pg. 206

Sermon

Listen and Hear

Pastor Brenda Wicklund

Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23

Grace mercy and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit that is promised to us through Christ, to walk with us always. Amen.

Summer came on quickly and strong. High heat and humidity and just a tat bit of water at my house has made for some lovely garden produce or the beginning of hopefully much to come. How do they produce so

lovely and strong a plant from such a little seed? How do the tomatoes from the very small plant I bought from the greenhouse arrive so huge and hanging now waiting to ripen? Oh, and now some of the weeds too are so high and it is so dry I couldn't even pull it out? How does that happen and why do other people say that their garden doesn't have a weed in it, yet mine does? Yet, I digress. How indeed did all of this happen with once cold ground spur such lovely greens?

Certainly the ground and tilling matter, fertilizer and preparation. Yet, I ask myself, did I put the seeds in right, to far apart, to close, to wet or to dry, and even though I made some mistakes, still the garden and greens grow. Even the weeds.

Jesus is teaching and preaching to the crowds from the boat due to the huge crowds. He told them a parable. A farmer went to sow seeds and I am not sure, but it might have looked a bit like me trying to just get the seeds in, yet he just threw it all over. He just threw around these seeds everywhere and furthermore he had to know that some would grow. He threw them anyway. Some where the birds just ate it up, some where it was rocky, you know the places, where usually the weeds come through, some in the thorn patch, (I have some of that right next to my garden, comes up great and keeps creeping in) some fell on the good parts. Then Jesus says, "He who has ears, let him hear." Matthew 13:1-9

Parables. Professor Arland J. Hultgren wrote a book on parables, and he said "If you think parables aren't difficult to write, or if you think they are not wise, try writing one." Now the reading skips down to verse 18, yet we miss the part where the disciples ask Jesus the question, "Why do you speak in parables?" (Matthew 13:10). The knowledge of the Kin(g)dom has been given to you. Understanding will be difficult this life with him has to be made up of hearing and understanding. These people have not perceiving and hearing and they have a heart and ear issue. "But blessed are your eyes because they see and your ears because they hear." Matthew 13:16.

Jesus goes on to explain that some hear his message do not understand and the evil one comes and snatches it from the heart. Some receive it hears it with great joy, but alas is not strong enough when times get tough and falls quickly away. Some receive it but oh the worries of life get in the way and chokes out what naturally would be just the time for Jesus to help, yet maybe wealth gets in the way. The one on good soil the one who hears and understands it and yields plenty.

Sounds simple enough. Yet we might all imagine we get confused, we hear yet sometimes it doesn't fall on the best ears and our hearts just have issues. This parable might bring us confusion for our kin(g)dom of God here on earth. When we hear different things around our lives, we wonder if what we are doing is right, if what we are hearing or listening to is the truth the God would have us hear. We know the seeds the sower is let land just anywhere or anyplace is the difference between the truth of the world or the truth of the Word of God. Kingdom of heaven versus the kingdom of earth. The fight is real: evil, persecution, backlash, worry, and wealth, not all of these things give up without a fight (Matthew Skinner). Just like the weeds in the garden, it can take over.

It is a struggle. Some people feel that God is not fair. I mean why not have everyone just listen and believe? What if the fruits of our labor doesn't show growth? What if all the preaching in the world hasn't changed a heart that is new to hear or one that has heard and now just has allowed our hearts to harden? Thanks be to God, as we continue to learn and grow with him.

We are all there on different days. We have the Good News of Jesus Christ to come back too, only his news, and even if we do not understand the whys and the how's, we continue as disciples being taught by Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Matthew and in each other. We have hope, while others do not, you can tell by how fearful and angry they are, so we navigate with Jesus Christ and the peace he promises. We know we are his disciples as we continue to take the time to listen and see, to trust and even obey the wonderful life of Jesus Christ that he promises.

We do not know if Jesus brought this parable to all the people and the disciples because they needed to hear it. He might have wanted them to know it was not going to be easy, that they might just hang it up right then that maybe some hardened hearts were sitting right in front of him. He didn't send them away he continued to walk with them and teach. He ended up on the cross, suffered and died, yet he overcame death and lives. We will live too.

We live in the promise of the good soil and good Word. We hear from the Master, "But blessed are your eyes and ears....."

If the heart starts hurting and the ears have a hard time listening, which we all have on some days, hear King David in the midst of all the noise and pray to God....

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Amen.

Song-Diane Ausmus

"Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil"

Red Worship Book 512

Nicene Creed

Red Worship Book pg. 104

C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son,* who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Offering Prayer

L: God of goodness and growth, all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens. Water and word, wine and bread: these are signs of your abundant grace. Nourish us through these gifts, that we might proclaim your steadfast love in our communities and in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song.

C: Amen

Prayers of Intercession

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

A brief silence

L: Gracious God, your word has been sown in many ways and places. We pray for missionaries and newly planted congregations around the world. Inspire us by their witness to the faith we share. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Creating God, the mountains and hills burst into song and the trees and fields clap their hands in praise. We pray for the birds and animals who make their home in the trees, and for lands stripped bare by deforestation. Empower us to sustainably use what you have given. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Reigning God, we pray for our nation's leaders. Increase their desire for justice and equality. We pray for our enemies. Bridge the chasms that divide us and guide authorities to a deep and lasting peace. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Abiding God, care for all who are in need. For those who are doubting, renew faith. For those who are worrying, provide release. For those who are struggling, ease burdens. For those in fear, give hope. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Renewing God, revive your church in this place. Nourish and nurture the seeds you have planted, that we might grow as disciples. Replace what has been depleted. Sustain our ministries (*especially*) and deepen relationships with the wider community. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Eternal God, we give thanks for all who have died. Comfort us in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Words of Institution

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

The Lord's Prayer

Red Worship Book pg. 208

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.

Song-Diane Ausmus

"On What Has Now Been Sown"

Red Worship Book 550

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

the worship is ended ... let the service begin...



Prayer Concerns ~ (Names will be on for one month unless requested longer.)

Kay Conway, George and Joan Wells (brother/sister-in-law of Gary and Gail Wells), Eric Mettling (deployed for service), Gracie Edin, Kyalani Robbins, Jessica Lindahl, Rebecca Karp (Marina Vork's niece), David Stephenson and Annetta Eberlein (brother and sister-in-law of Kevin Stephenson), Carol Bostrom, Leigha Ness (Pastor Brenda's great-niece), and Barbara Ekberg (sister of Loretta Sprado.)

You have 4 options for Sunday Worship Services:

1. In-person Worship in the Sanctuary at 9:30 am.
2. “Live” at 9:30 am on Facebook (firstlutheranhinckleyelca) or watch later on Facebook.
3. “Live” 9:30 am on YouTube (goggle First Lutheran Church Hinckley, MN) then play **or** watch it on our webpage (flchinckley.org) under events, YouTube.
4. You can come to the Church parking lot at 9:30 am, sit in your car, tune into 90.7 FM on your radio and listen to the Service live.

Please feel free to choose any of the following options.

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