

## A Message to First Lutheran Church:

I would like to take this opportunity to say “Thanks” to three different groups that have worked hard during this difficult time as we deal with the effects of Covid-19 at First Lutheran.

First, to the teams who met to discuss how we might follow mandates given by our Governor’s Office. The wonderful Church Staff, Pastor Brenda, our Smart Team and Church Council. Many hours beyond our normal business of the church has been spent in an effort to keep the safety of our members as a top priority.

Secondly, to the crew that makes “Church” happen each Sunday so we can watch on Facebook live, see it later or hear it on an FM station from a safe distance. You are all a blessing!

And finally to all of our members at First Lutheran for your faithful giving and continued prayers for each and every one of us. God definitely is moving in so many people behind the scene!

Thanks again!

Rick Dunkley

President of Church Council

### Safe/Smart Meeting : In-Gathering Worship

Those in attendance were Rick Dunkley, Ron Jensen, Jeremy Storlie, Kevin and Nancy Stephenson, Mindy Johnson, Diane Ausmus, Kathryn Souer and Pastor Brenda Wicklund. This motion approved and passed by church council. 6-21-2020

Opening July 5, 2020

Maximum of 100 people, including fellowship hall.

Social Distancing (marked pews, tables, and chairs aligned in fellowship hall)

Strict cleaning procedures before and after: Kathryn Souer point person

Hymnals and envelopes out of sanctuary

No singing except the ones leading special music.

No passing of the peace, no passing the offering plate passed, plates available when leave

Still continue to film on line and transmit for radio

Worship: Come in only the front door

Sanitize your hands when you enter.

Rest rooms: One in the bathroom at a time, each person sanitize when they leave.

Social distance, sit with families

Masks will be used and we will some available

No bulletin handed out: bring from home, projection on wall if possible.

Pre-packages of Holy Communion handed out by usher with gloves.

Ushers direct people where to sit.

Ushers lead people out of the pews for social distancing.

Water fountain not in use

No food served at church at this time : no fellowship time

**Notes and Suggestions for In-Gathering Worship For Ushers.**

Maximum of 100 people, including fellowship hall. Ushers count as they arrive

Social Distancing (marked pews, tables, and chairs aligned in fellowship hall will be taken care of).

25-30 people in fellowship hall and 70-75 in Sanctuary

No passing of the peace.

No passing the offering plate they will dispense when they leave.

Worship Morning: Come in only the front door (families may sit together)

Ushers lead people out of the pews for social distancing.

Exit 6 feet -ushers back to front on sides, one pew at a time.

Rest rooms: One in the bathroom at a time, each person sanitize when they leave.

Social distance, sit with families

Masks highly recommended ushers hand out as needed.

No bulletin only one you would bring from home

Pre-packages of Holy Communion handed out by usher with gloves.

Ushers direct people where to sit.

Bible studies one hour long, starting.

As always, we take one day at a time. IF you are feeling ill, are vulnerable or do not feel safe, please worship in one of the other three ways of worship. The church is not just the sanctuary it is us and wherever we are. Our main objective is to keep all of us safe. If our worship and gathering time does not look safe and we are finding it is too hard to follow the instructions-for everyone's safety, we will have to cancel ingathering worship. Please allow grace at this time and prayers for us all.

Peace, Pastor Brenda



## FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

July 5, 2020

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT:



The mystery of God's ways is sometimes hidden from the wise and intelligent. Jesus associates with those often excluded from the religious community. Like Paul, we struggle with our own selfish desires and seek God's mercy and forgiveness. We gather to be refreshed by Christ's invitation: "Come to me, all you that are weary." Gathered around word, water, and meal, we find rest for our souls.

**Welcome "Opening Softly and Tenderly"**

**Red Worship Book #608**

### **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.**

### **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 203**

**Red Worship Book pg.**

**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: You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

*The coming messianic king will inaugurate an era of disarmament and prosperity. Because of God's covenant with Israel, the people are designated as "prisoners of hope."*

### **First Reading: Zechariah 9:9-12**

<sup>9</sup>Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. <sup>10</sup>He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war-horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

<sup>11</sup>As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. <sup>12</sup>Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double

### **Psalm 145:8-14**

L: The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,

**C: slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

L: LORD, you are good to all,

**C: and your compassion is over all your works.**

L: All your works shall praise you, O LORD,

**C: and your faithful ones shall bless you.**

L: They shall tell of the glory of your kingdom

**C: and speak of your power,**

L: that all people may know of your power

**C: and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.**

L: Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; your dominion endures throughout all ages.

**C: You, LORD, are faithful in all your words, and loving in all your works.**

L: The Lord upholds all those who fall

**C: and lifts up those who are bowed down.**

*Life captive to sin is a catch-22 existence in which we know good but do not do it and do things we know to be wrong. Through Jesus Christ, God has set us free from such a futile existence.*

### **Second Lesson: Romans 7:15-25a**

<sup>15</sup>I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.

<sup>16</sup>Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. <sup>17</sup>But in fact it is no longer I that

do it, but sin that dwells within me. <sup>18</sup>For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in

my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. <sup>19</sup>For I do not do the good I want, but the evil

I do not want is what I do. <sup>20</sup>Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin

that dwells within me.

<sup>21</sup>So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. <sup>22</sup>For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, <sup>23</sup>but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. <sup>24</sup>Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? <sup>25a</sup>Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

### **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**

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

**Red Worship Book pg. 206**

*Jesus chides people who find fault with both his ministry and that of John the Baptist. He thanks God that wisdom and intelligence are not needed to receive what God has to offer.*

### **Gospel: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30**

[Jesus spoke to the crowd saying:] <sup>16</sup>“To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

<sup>17</sup>“We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.”

<sup>18</sup>For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; <sup>19</sup>the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

<sup>25</sup>At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; <sup>26</sup>yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. <sup>27</sup>All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

<sup>28</sup>“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

### **The Gospel of Our Lord**

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

**Red Worship Book pg. 206**

**Sermon**

**Pastor Brenda Wicklund**

This Generation Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Have you ever had a hard time choosing something? When the last time someone has told you something and it was hard to believe? When s the last times you wondered what the truth really is or was?

This generation. To whom is Jesus Christ talking? Well, he has some people in his followers and hearers and at his time that were having a hard time seeing who he was. He tells the crowds that John the Baptist wasn't accepted along with many other prophets. Jesus Christ is wondering about this generation and compares them with children. "First we played the flute and you didn't dance, they we wailed and cried and you did not mourn." Matthew 11:16

"John did not eat or drink, and you called him a demon and the Son of Man came eating and drinking and they say, 'Look, a glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' Yet wisdom is [vindicated](#) by her deeds." Matthew 11:18 They are judging Jesus by who he hangs around with and what he is eating, by appearances and they do not know the truth. Jesus is described by the company he keeps. He might even be saying that they are acting like children. The Son of Man is right in front of them, yet they don't know it or look hard enough to see it. They have a free reign of stereotyping John the Baptist and worse yet, Jesus Christ. It is very disappointing if someone is seeing you without really knowing who you are.

We might be saying the same things now at this time and this place. What is the truth and who to believe sometimes makes it hard to not judge or not find condemnation. Yet, the Gospel of Matthew is a teaching Gospel. Jesus Christ himself is teaching and helping the disciples, He has said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations....." Matthew 28: 19a. Jesus teaches and as many great teachers have known or in any area of expertise, you must be taught before you can teach.

Teaching, learning and growing grant you wisdom. Truth is easier to comprehend if you learn and become better at seeing the situation and the truth.

***Wisdom clarifies our vision. When Jesus declares that wisdom is vindicated by her deeds, he is lifting up an important aspect of his Jewish heritage, the wisdom tradition. Wisdom grants us the ability to understand beyond our sensory perception. If wisdom is vindicated by her deeds, what are her deeds? Wisdom provides order to chaos. (Proverbs 8:27–31). She grants us humility (Psalm 11:12) and protects and guards us (Psalm 4:6). Wisdom is a life-giving gift that comes with the Lord's favor. According to the book of James, godly wisdom "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17). The results of wisdom are evident. Jennifer T. Kaalund Working Preacher***

Of course, the opposite is true if we do not seek wisdom and use the word as an act. Jesus is saying that even children receive this hidden wisdom. Wisdom calls but so does foolishness. The same can be true of hearing Jesus telling, not asking, not suggesting but telling, "Come to me all who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me. For I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30

Come to me. With heavy burdens and weariness, and you will find rest. Learn. I will be gentle with you and you will find rest for your souls. What more in this life of chaos and heartache, how much more now more than ever do these words find peace for you. Listening to Jesus

Christ telling us to let him have all the worries and cares of which he knows will be many. He knows will be full of concerns and trials, yet he is teaching and granting you wisdom so that you may know that all the anger and hurt in the world is not going to affect your life in Jesus Christ.

We walk together learning and granting wisdom as we go into scripture into the truth that God brings us. Knowing with confidence that our learning and continued understanding allows us to know God and for God to know us. Jesus is saying when all these things happen and definitely are right now in this time and place; we remember what our core is and where it lands. In the hands of God our Father and Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is a promise and a refreshment of whom we belong to and what he stands for, the promise of love and forgiveness, and he gives us the instrument to change. For the good us our neighbor and for our own good.

Jesus asks us to claim our Christianity, to live in truth not anger, to identify with him as best we can and find rest for your soul. Come to me. Take my yoke upon you and rest in His arms. Child of God, be at peace and find rest. Jesus Christ has got you covered. Amen

A prayer of Catherine of Siena. Power of the eternal Father, help me. Wisdom of the Son, enlighten the eye of my understanding. Tender mercy of the Holy Spirit, unite my heart to yourself. Eternal God, restore health to the sick and life to the dead. Give us a voice, your own voice, to cry out to you for mercy for the world. You light give us light. You wisdom, give us wisdom. You, supreme strength, strengthen us. Amen.

Naming the fear aloud is the first step in freeing our first case scenario and we hear Jesus giving the disciples and us calls to resist fear and bring and be the light.

Worry can bring us despair. God cares even for the sparrows Jesus tells us (so many of them and only the poor used). He counts even the hair on our head. The mission does not even bring peace; it brings us in division at times. The disciple's fate and ours may be at times like that of Jesus Christ himself, humiliation, suffering, shame, opposition and then faith that allows us to take up our cross. The disciples were to go to the marginal, slaves and rebels at the time, which again was against the powers of Rome. They were still called to take up their cross and follow Jesus Christ.

They were called to lose their life for the sake of the Gospel, no matter how that played out, and they did. We are called as well. The Gospel calls us to division and conflict in the world because we will use mercy and compassion to battle anything that comes up. Name your fears and be comforted knowing that you will not be defined by suffering because God will overcome because of who he is and what he proclaims to us and what we are to tell others.

This time and this place call us to follow Jesus Christ and not to fear. If we speak up for others, especially when it is not popular, we may lose family, job, friends and even our faith at times, yet we speak the language of Jesus Christ. I have heard all of the above in the last few weeks from different people. Yet we fear not because we follow and believe in the promise of God. We are stronger together because we follow a God of promise, who sent his Son so that we may fashion ourselves like him, act like him, love like him, show mercy and forgiveness like him and have compassion like him.



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

*A brief silence*

L: We pray for the church. Sustain us as we share your word. Embrace us as we struggle to find our common ground. Lift up leaders with powerful and prophetic voices. Free us from stagnant faith. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

L: We pray for the well-being of creation. Protect the air, water, and land from abuse and pollution. Free us from apathy in our care of creation and direct us toward sustainable living. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

L: We pray for the nations. Guide leaders in developing just policies and guide difficult conversations. Free us from patriotism that hinders relationship-building. Lead us to expansive love for our neighbor. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

L: We pray for all in need. For all who are tired, feeling despair, sick, or oppressed. Take their yoke upon you and ease their burdens. Give your consolation and free us from all that keeps us bound. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

L: We pray for this congregation. Bless pastors, deacons, and congregational leaders. Energize children's ministry volunteers, church administrators, and those who maintain our building. Shine in this place that we might notice the ways your love transforms our lives. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

L: We give thanks for those who have died in faith. Welcome them into your eternal rest and comfort us in our grief until we are joined with them in new life. 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**  
**208**

**Red Worship Book pg.**

**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.**

**Hymn           “O Beautiful for Spacious Skies”**

**Red Worship Book #888**

**Dismissal**

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

**Thanks be to God.**

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

“Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double.” Zechariah 9:12

Hope. A strong word in any situation you can find yourself in, whether you're hoping for sunshine, a good report, for your favorite restaurant to open, a clean bill of health and the list can go on and on most certainly. The text for this week in Zechariah 9:9-12 (You may read this in this week's bulletin) is usually used either on Palm Sunday and Easter or Christmas. Yet we hear it this week as we are celebrating the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Rejoice Zechariah says because your King is coming, even though it will not be on a strong and mighty horse, but a humbly on a donkey. Humble in the Hebrew language means, impoverished or socially vulnerable. The king isn't going to be flashy or mighty, but vulnerable. Return they and we are told to our stronghold, our good place "Oh prisoners of HOPE."

A prisoner of hope. How great a place to be, held and locked up in hope with your only crime being that you keep hoping. What does that look like in your life at this time and place?

This year our celebrations and get-togethers, vacations and cancellations may be draining our hope, yet for we the people who live in hope each and every day we continue to hope in all good things and find the blessings. We live in gratitude and thanksgiving for those things that have been given to us and the blessings that we share with one another.

What does living a life believing in God and hoping for peace and honor for all?

What does living a life of hope that we learn to listen and walk beside one another?

What does it mean to continue a life of faith and hope, always hope look like to you?

This week we continue to share our bulletin and sermon in print, on Facebook live, on YouTube, on the radio station in the car, and in person worship for a maximum of 100 people following all safety precautions on July 5<sup>th</sup> 2020 at 9:30 am.

In hope and gratitude we worship differently yet we know in where our hope lies, and we continue locked up in hope and love.

Peace,

Pastor Brenda Wicklund

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