

Worship in the Home

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

July 19, 2020



In this time of world-wide crisis, congregations throughout this church are not able to gather for worship as the body of Christ. While we cannot be together in person, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer.

Prelude

Announcements

Invocation

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn: *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* ELW #807



1 Come, thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
2 Here I raise my Eb - en - e - zer: "Hith-er by thy help I've come";
3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be;



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.
and I hope, by thy good plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home.
let that grace now like a fet - ter bind my wan-d'ring heart to thee.



While the hope of end-less glo - ry fills my heart with joy and love,
Je - sus sought me when a strang - er, wan-d'ring from the fold of God;
Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.



teach me ev - er to a - dore thee; may I still thy good-ness prove.
he, to res - cue me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.
Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray...Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 44:6-8

Semi-Continuous Old Testament Reading: Genesis 28:10-19a

Psalm: 86:11-17

¹¹Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

¹²**I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and glorify your name forevermore.**

¹³For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the pit of death.

¹⁴**The arrogant rise up against me, O God, and a band of violent people seeks my life; they have not set you before their eyes.**

¹⁵But you, O Lord, are gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.

¹⁶**Turn to me and have mercy on me; give your strength to your servant, and save the child of your handmaid.**

¹⁷Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame; because you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

Second Reading: Romans 8:12-25

Gospel: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

²⁴Jesus put before the crowd another parable: “The dominion of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ ²⁸He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ ²⁹But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ ”

³⁶Then Jesus left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” ³⁷Jesus answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son-of-Man; ³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of God’s dominion; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son-of-Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his dominion all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the dominion of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

Homily

Reflection

We certainly know groaning right now. Indeed, in this difficult time, the whole creation seems to be groaning. And, amid signs of awful division between people in our land, we are tempted to try to weed the field ourselves, to try tear out and eliminate whoever we think is a “weed.” But the parable warns us that we would be torn apart ourselves; we all are both wheat and weed. Rather, as Isaiah says, only God is the judge, and we are to be witnesses to God’s patience and mercy. Furthermore, Paul invites us to hope. Our groaning prayer is the very Spirit of God in us, forming us to trust God as a dear father, bearing witness in us that because of Christ we are children of God. We groan for the world together with Jesus in the garden and on the cross. Then, in his resurrection, Christ makes us to be pure wheat. In God’s great harvest we can be made into bread for our neighbor.

Hymn of the Day:

How Firm a Foundation

ELW #796



1 How firm a foun - da - tion, O saints of the Lord,
2 "Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dis - mayed,
3 "When through fi - ery tri - als your path - way shall lie,
4 "Through - out all their life - time my peo - ple shall prove



is laid for your faith in his ex - cel - lent word!
for I am your God and will still give you aid;
my grace, all - suf - fi - cient, shall be your sup - ply.
my sov - 'reign, e - ter - nal, un - change - a - ble love;



What more can he say than to you he has said
I'll strength - en you, help you, and cause you to stand,
The flames shall not hurt you; I on - ly de - sign
and then, when gray hairs shall their tem - ples a - dorn,



who un - to the Sav - ior for ref - uge have fled?
up - held by my righ - teous, om - nip - o - tent hand."
your dross to con - sume and your gold to re - fine."
like lambs they shall still in my bo - som be borne."

Prayers of Intercession

Confident of God's care for us in the midst of the world's sufferings, we join together in the power of the Spirit to pray for the church, the earth, the world, and all who are in need.

God of the church, we praise you for sowing the good seed of the gospel throughout the world, and we mourn that at this time many Christians cannot assemble to nurture one another for growth in the faith. Tend your people; support bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders; give us strength through your word. Lead seminaries to plan appropriately for the fall semester. O God, teach us your way: **you are full of compassion.**

God of the earth, we praise you for a wondrous creation, and we mourn that many lands and seas are groaning for rebirth. Nurture our green spaces and national parks; send rain where there is drought; protect engendered animals from poachers. Show us how to care for your earth and its creatures. O God, teach us your way: **you are full of compassion.**

God of the nations, we praise you for the good that has been given us in this country, and we mourn that many people here are poor and dispossessed, that we have allowed racism to distort our society, that violence breaks out in our land. Lead us to form communities in which all people are equal and where disputes are settled without violence. Save us from preserving a past that has been harmful to many. Bring an end to warfare around the world, and mend the torn fabric of humankind with your truth and mercy. O God, teach us your way: **you are full of compassion.**

God of humankind, we praise you for wherever health and happiness prevail, and we mourn that many people suffer. Each day thousands more contract the virus; renters are facing eviction; medical workers are exhausted; some of the sick have no access to health care; countless people are broken by sorrows. Open our hearts to your children who suffer in any way, and show us how to serve them. O God, teach us your way: **you are full of compassion.**

God of the seasons, we praise you for summertime, and we mourn that this year many hopes and expectations are denied. Give relief to those who suffer from the heat. Protect travelers from infection. Guard our children. Give rest to those with no vacation time, hope to those who are unemployed, and patience to all who must endure this difficult time. O God, teach us your way: **you are full of compassion.**

God, you are Abba, our loving Father. You are our Sovereign of our lives, our Redeemer, the Rock on which we build. Hear us as we offer the petitions of our hearts. O God, teach us your way: **you are full of compassion.**

God of eternity, we praise you for all who have died in the faith, especially this week the apostles Mary Magdalene and James. We mourn our own beloved dead. At the end, bring us all into the shining light of your presence. O God, teach us your way: **you are full of compassion.**

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray...

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Benediction

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless us now and forever. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn:

Lead On, O King Eternal!

ELW #805



- 1 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal! The day of march has come;
- 2 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal, till sin's fierce war shall cease,
- 3 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal: we fol - low, not with fears,



hence-forth in fields of con - quest your tents will be our home.
and ho - li - ness shall whis - per the sweet a - men of peace;
for glad-ness breaks like morn - ing wher - e'er your face ap - pears.



Through days of prep - a - ra - tion your grace has made us strong;
for not with swords loud clash - ing, nor roll of stir-ring drums,
Your cross is lift - ed o'er us; we jour - ney in its light;



and now, O King e - ter - nal, we lift our bat - tle song.
but deeds of love and mer - cy the heav'n - ly king - dom comes.
the crown a - waits the con - quest; lead on, O God of might!

Join Us on Zoom for Fellowship: ID 596-621-1441 Passcode 8675309

Staff Support Committee is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, July 28th at 9:30 a.m.
via Zoom.

Committee Chairs: Remember to get meeting dates and times to Lori via email (stmatthewluth@aol.com) so they can be on the weekly schedule.

Weekly Bulletins and Messengers are available on the website (stmatthewlc.com) for viewing or printing.

Prayers are needed for our homebound: Shirley Acker, Verna Blough, Fred Brandenburg, Jim Calvert, Clyde Claycomb, Betty Helsel, Doris Henderson, Gene Henry, Jere Hess, Gerald Hoover, John Klepser, Ginny Sell, Dan Sinal, Don Smith, Nancy Uber, Joy Williams.

Prayer Concerns: Carl & Dawn Alexy, John Aljets, Jeff Allen, Pastor Denise Arpino, Randy Barrett, Elaine Buchart, Mark Calvert, DJ Freedman, Dwight Ciccotelli, Greg Comer, Brian Fleck, Jim Freyer, Shari Gilbert, Ryan Guyer, Dan Hershberger, Stephen Hinish, Marilyn Horton, Amber Itle, Connie Kensinger, Dan Kensinger, Janet Kreider, Darren Kreutzer, Donna Lovell, Kristen Malloy, Matt McCready, Pstr. Jerry McCuller, Ryder McDermitt, Betty McDowell, Scott McFarland, Aunt Mica, Deb Peters, Alana Rhodes, John Russell, Paul Ruth, Dan Sinal, Barbara Smith, Luther Steele, Jim Stoudnour, Cindy Thomas, Trenton, Carol Weyandt, Pete Williams, Robert Winston, Jody Zelanko, and for our **Missionaries: Rev. Lesley Hand, On Eagle's Wings, Elizabeth Hendrickson.**

Those Serving Overseas: Kyle Guyer & Colin Guyer – Middle East

July Worship Schedule

Sunday: 9:30 AM Worship on Facebook, 10:15ish Fellowship on Zoom

Monday & Friday: Hymn Devotions at 9AM

Tuesday & Thursday: Morning Prayer 9AM & Night Prayer at 9PM

Wednesday: Holden Evening Prayer at 8PM

Greetings from ALSM!

These times are unprecedented in our world. Never did any of us think we would be faced with dealing with a virus of unknown origin. Frightening times for all of us. I hope all of you to continue to follow precautions that are indicated by the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

As you can imagine, Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries (ALSM) is experiencing challenges we never thought we would face. While the counties in which our three senior communities are located have gone “green,” our communities continue to restrict visitors and screen staff who are tirelessly caring for our residents. Several of our senior daily programs are closed, yet our *ALSM at Home* program continues.

Of course, we are safeguarding our staff team members and our residents by providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) so we can continue to respond to regulating body guidelines. The costs of these are one we did not anticipate. We have set up a COVID-19 Fund to assist with extra expenses such as masks and additional cleaning supplies. We expect to spend at least \$100,000 in PPE. We use approximately 2,000 masks a week and 10,000 gloves a week. If we have an active Covid-19 case, we will need the added PPE of shoe covers, N-95 masks, and shoe covers. We have received a supply of face shields from Saint Francis University, so we have not had to purchase those items yet.

ALSM is fortunate to have the dedicated staff who are committed to our mission “to serve people with love, compassion, and mercy.”

I invite you to please consider a donation of \$10, \$25, \$50, or \$100 so that we can purchase the equipment we need to keep ALSM safe. We are all in this together and together we can help end the spread of this virus. **St. Matthew will match gifts to ALSM** by members of the congregation through August 31st up to a total of \$1000. Make your ALSM **donation through St. Matthew** by designating "**ALSM PPE**" on your **envelope**. If you already received this communication directly from ALSM and you have made a gift directly to ALSM in response to this letter, please let Lori know the amount of that gift so it can be included in St. Matthew's effort toward the \$1000 match. ***Thank you. Stay safe!***

Sincerely,

Patricia W. Savage, President/CEO

YOUR GIFT MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

- Your \$105 gift purchases 4500 gloves.
- Your \$100 gift purchases 100 masks.
- Your \$25 gift purchases 3 surgical gowns.

PPE PRICING GUIDELINES:

Surgical masks @ \$1.00 each

N-95 masks @ \$4.00 each

A case of shoe covers @ \$25.00 each

Surgical gowns @ \$8.00 each

A case of 1500 gloves @ \$35.00

N95 test kit @ \$90.00 each

Readings for the Week:

Monday Psalm 75. **Tuesday** Galatians 4:21 — 5:1. **Wednesday** (Mary Magdalene, Apostle) John 20:1-2, 11-18. **Thursday** (commemoration of Birgitta of Sweden, renewer of the Church, died 1373) Psalm 119:129-136. **Friday** Acts 7:44-53. **Saturday** (James, Apostle) Mark 10:35-45. **Eighth Sunday after Pentecost** 1 Kings 3:5-12; Psalm 119:26-39; Romans 8:26-39; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52.

Reflection material: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw
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