**PENTECOST 2- JUNE 14, 2020**

**Zion Ev. Lutheran Church , Philipsburg**

Welcome to everyone on this 2nd Sunday of Pentecost. You probably have all heard by now that churches can reopen under a 30% capacity. Zion will not be opening in the near future. Council will meet again in July to discuss the issue. For more information please read the articles and letter from Bishop Pryse in your Messenger which was emailed and sent out this week.

Please keep Isabel Seyler and her family in your prayers this week as they mourn the death of her sister Muriel Gernhalder.

Today at 11:00 will be our first GoTo Meeting coffee hour. An email was sent out with instructions on Friday. Please call me if you are having any issues. I hope to see many smiling faces!

Please remember that Zion relies on your continued support each week to meet our monthly expenses. Thank you to all who support and pray for our congregation.

**GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

God of compassion, you have opened the way for us and brought us to yourself. Pour your love into our hearts, that, overflowing with joy, we may freely share the blessings of your realm and faithfully proclaim the good news of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**OPENING HYMN- In Christ Called to Baptize- ELW 575**

**FIRST READING: Exodus 19:2-8a**

A reading from Exodus.

2[The Israelites] had journeyed from Rephidim, entered the wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness; Israel camped there in front of the mountain.3Then Moses went up to God; the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the Israelites: 4You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. 5Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, 6but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites.”  
  7So Moses came, summoned the elders of the people, and set before them all these words that the Lord had commanded him. 8aThe people all answered as one: “Everything that the Lord has spoken we will do.”

The word of the Lord.

**PSALM: Psalm 100**

1Make a joyful noise to the Lord,  all you lands!  
  2Serve the Lord with gladness; come into God’s presence with a song.  
 3Know that the Lord is God, our maker to whom we belong;  
  we are God’s people and the sheep of God’s pasture.   
 4Enter the gates of the Lord with thanksgiving and the  courts with praise;  
  give thanks and bless God’s holy name.  
 5Good indeed is the Lord, whose steadfast love is  everlasting,  
  whose faithfulness endures from  age to age.

**SECOND READING: Romans 5:1-8**

A reading from Romans.

1Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. 3And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.  
  6For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. 8But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

The word of the Lord.

**GOSPEL: Matthew 9:35--10:8 [9-23]**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

35Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. 36When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; 38therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”  
 10:1Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. 2These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; 3Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.  
  5These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, 6but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7As you go, proclaim the good news, ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ 8Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. [9Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, 10no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. 11Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. 12As you enter the house, greet it. 13If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. 14If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. 15Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.  
  16“See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. 17Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; 18and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. 19When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; 20for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. 21Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; 22and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. 23When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”]

The gospel of the Lord.

**SERMON**

Our gospel reading today introduces us to the 12 disciples, the 12 that Jesus called to be apostles, to be “sent out” into the world, to be “labourers into God’s harvest” (9:38), to follow the way and authority of Jesus, as preacher and healer with compassion in a world that was full of pain, helplessness, disease, and suffering. The 12 were a motley crew, there were fishermen, a tax collector who worked for the Romans, a zealot or rebel who was looking to overthrow the Roman government. One was a denier; Thomas was a doubter and Judas…well we know that he was the betrayer. But Jesus sent them out anyhow to do the work that he had started. They were sent out with strict instructions….they could only go to homes of Judeans; no Samaritans or Gentiles could be visited. They were to take nothing with them, no change of clothes, no sandals, no gold, or silver, no staff to ward of robbers. They were to be voluntarily poor so that no one would mistake them for Cynics. And their role was to become even more difficult, Jesus goes on to warn them that they will no doubt encounter persecution and danger, for they are “like sheep in the midst of wolves.” The wolves, (meaning the Jewish leaders) would like nothing better than to see the disciples flogged and beaten because they have chosen to follow Jesus. This would not be an easy life for the disciples to lead, the cost of discipleship was high, there was danger and persecution in being “sent out” into the world.

But Jesus did not send them out blindly, never were they alone in their persecution and danger for the Spirit of God was with them. Jesus reminds the 12 that the Spirit of God would speak through them giving them the words they needed to say, giving them the faith and trust of God to help them endure what they were facing. Our Epistle reading from Romans echoes the words of Jesus giving hope through the trials that happen in our lives knowing that we are justified by grace through our faith in Jesus Christ. Through it all the 12 were loved and never alone.

Like the disciples we are also called to be “sent out” in the world, we too are apostles of Jesus Christ. How does being “sent out” look in the year 2020, especially in these times of pandemic and global unrest? I see folks being “sent out” when there are peaceful, physically distanced, and even silent protests, (many that the media has not been publicizing), where signs are held high saying “Black Lives Matter”, and “I Can’t Breathe.” I see people being “sent out” when we begin to listen to the stories of POC, when we acknowledge the pain and suffering of generational inequality, when we understand that not all lives can matter until black lives matter, brown lives and Indigenous lives matter. When we see oppression through the eyes of those who are being oppressed, when we have compassion and seek to understand that change needs to take place we are doing the work of Jesus Christ in the world. We are being “labourers into the harvest of God.” knowing that God has equipped us to be the change that needs to take place.

I see people being “sent out” in this pandemic when they attended their essential jobs every day even though they were fearful and afraid. I see people being “sent out” when meals are dropped off on family members porches, when folks went long term care homes to say I love you to their parents or grandparents through closed windows. I see people being “sent out” when they continue to gather for church each week from the safety of their homes because it is the loving thing to do for our neighbour. I see people being “sent out” when they pray for folks who live alone, for those who are sick, for those who are feeling the extreme effects of isolation, for folks who just want to return to some kind of normalcy where they can share a coffee together or a meal together.

God is constantly “sending us out” into the world to make a difference in the lives of those around us, whether it is through prayer or deed. When we are “sent out” we are called into the faithful action of the grace of God, we are called into the love and mercy of God, we are called into justice for all in the world, we are called to act with compassion to look into the eyes of those around us knowing that we are all God’s beloved children. And through it all we are loved and never alone.

God sent out the 12 so many years ago, a motley crew of perfectly imperfect human beings to do the work of Jesus that was so desperately needed in a broken and uncertain world. God continues to work through us today, we too are a motley crew of perfectly imperfect human beings so desperately needed in our broken and uncertain world right now. May we continue to work and pray together, may we continue to love one another and learn from and listen to one another. May we continue to be sent out as labourers into the harvest, so that all can be equal and fed with the unconditional love of God. Amen

**HYMN OF THE DAY- WE ARE CALLED- ELW 720** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdj4N8FMYeY>

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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

Holy One, you bring us together and call us your own. Bless theologians, teachers, and preachers who help us grow in faith Guide your church, that we might be a holy people. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy One, the whole earth is yours. Where there is fire, bring cool air and new growth. Where there is flooding, slow the flow of water. Where there is drought, bring rain. Inspire us to care for what you have provided.Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy One, we have created divisions you will not own. In places of conflict, raise up leaders who work to develop lasting peace and reconciliation. Allow for peaceful and productive protests honouring Black Lives Matter. Encourage organizations and individuals who care for all forced to leave their homes. Send us out into the world to work in your name for justice and love for all of your beloved children. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy One, you care for those who are harassed and helpless. Protect and defend those who are abused. Heal those who are sick and injured. Feed all who hunger. Empower all whose voices go unheard and help us respond to the pressing needs of our neighbors. We remember especially this morning, Eddie, Elaine, Ruth, Mary Ann, Susie, David, Donelda, Isabel and her family as they mourn the death of her sister Muriel and those we name in the stillness of our hearts. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy One, you provide a plentiful harvest of gifts and resources. Help us to labour and gather the fruits of this congregation, that we might discover new ways of living within these times. Minister to us in our work and our isolation, that we do not lose heart.Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy One, you bring all people to yourself. We give thanks for the holy people who have gone before us. Sustain us in your mission until the day you bear us up to join the saints in light. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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

**THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD**

Let us pray.

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

**Amen.**

**LORD’S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

**BLESSING**

The God of steadfastness and encouragement

grant you to live in harmony with one another,

in accordance with Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,

so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The God of all grace ☩ bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

**Thanks be to God.**

**SENDING HYMN- Rise Up, O Saints of God- ELW 669**

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