**PENTECOST 8- JULY 18, 2021**

**ZION LUTHERAN, PHILIPSBURG, ST. PETERS LINWOOD**

Welcome to worship on this 8th Sunday of Pentecost, July 17, 2021. Humid weather is here and lots of rain. Friday began stage 3 of the province’s pandemic protocols, a few days earlier than planned. Please continue to stay safe and healthy. Council will meet on August 10 to discuss Zion’s return to worship plans.

We remember in our prayers this morning the family of Mary Ann Wasilka. Mary Ann was the daughter of the Rev. Ernest and Virginia Felker. She passed away on July 10 at Freeport after a courageous struggle with cancer. Her funeral was held yesterday at Kitchener Funeral Home, on Saturday July 17. Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May Mary Ann rest in peace. Amen.

We will be celebrating Holy Communion today. I invite you to take some time to prepare your table with wine or juice and bread or a cracker if you wish to partake in communion.

I will be on holidays from July 20-August 3. Pastor Tanya Varner will be providing emergency pastoral care. Please contact her at Trinity Lutheran Church at 519 662 1810 or call her cell phone (number is in the email for this week).

Coffee hour takes place at 11 today, please feel free to join us. A gentle reminder that while our physical building is still closed, there are monthly expenses that need to be paid. If you have not sent in a donation recently, please consider doing so. Thank you to all who continue to support and keep Zion in your prayers in these continuing times of pandemic.

**LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** - written by Sherri Wilker

We are walking hand in hand on this safe and bountiful land which is part of the Grand River watershed, traditional territory of the Anishinabewaki, Mississaugas, and Neutral peoples, fellow sojourners. We give thanks to the Creator for this great gift and recognize our responsibility as treaty people to care for the land and waters that nourish us and give us strength. We also acknowledge that it is our duty to do more to learn about the rich history of this land to better understand our roles as residents, neighbours, caretakers and sojourners.

**GATHERING**

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS (ELW p. 94)**

Blessed be the holy Trinity,☩ one God,

the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy. **Amen.**

Drawn to Christ and seeking God’s abundance,

let us confess our sin. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

God, our provider,

**help us. It is hard to believe there is enough to share.**

**We question your ways when they differ from the ways** **of the world in which we live.** **We turn to our own understanding** **rather than trusting in you.**

**We take offense at your teachings and your ways.** **Turn us again to you.** **Where else can we turn?** **Share with us the words of eternal life** **and feed us for life in the world.** **Amen.**

Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished.

By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough.

Through Jesus, ☩ the bread of life, you are shown God’s mercy:

you are forgiven and loved into abundant life. **Amen.**

**GREETING (ELW p. 98)**

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 (ELW p. 102)**

Let us pray.

O God, powerful and compassionate, you shepherd your people, faithfully feeding and protecting us. Heal each of us, and make us a whole people, that we may embody the justice and peace of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG*The Church's One Foundation* (ELW 654)**

1 The church's one foundation  
is Jesus Christ, her Lord;  
she is his new creation  
by water and the word.  
From heav'n he came and sought her  
to be his holy bride;  
with his own blood he bought her,  
and for her life he died.

2 Elect from ev'ry nation,  
yet one o'er all the earth,  
her charter of salvation  
one Lord, one faith, one birth:  
one holy name she blesses,  
partakes one holy food,  
and to one hope she presses,  
with ev'ry grace endued.

3 Though with a scornful wonder  
this world sees her oppressed,  
by schisms rent asunder,  
by heresies distressed,  
yet saints their watch are keeping;  
their cry goes up: "How long?"  
And soon the night of weeping  
shall be the morn of song.  
  
4 Through toil and tribulation  
and tumult of her war,  
she waits the consummation  
of peace forevermore;  
till with the vision glorious  
her longing eyes are blest,  
and the great church victorious  
shall be the church at rest.

**WORD**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**FIRST READING: Jeremiah 23:1-6**

A reading from Jeremiah.

1Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the Lord. 2Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the Lord. 3Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. 4I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the Lord.  
 5The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 6In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: “The Lord is our righteousness.”

The word of the Lord.

**PSALM: Psalm 23**

1The Lord| is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.  
 2The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.  
 3You restore my soul, O Lord, and guide me along right pathways for your name’s sake.  
 4Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;  
  for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.   
 5You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
  you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.  
 6Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
  and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

**GOSPEL: Mark 6:30-34, 53-56**

The holy gospel according to Mark.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

30The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. 31He said to them, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. 32And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. 33Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. 34As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.  
  
  53When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. 54When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, 55and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. 56And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON (ELW p. 103)**

As I read the gospel for this week, I admit to feeling a bit perplexed. You see, the readings in the gospel of Mark this week this week fall in between two of the greatest miracles of Jesus; the feeding of the 5000 and Jesus walking on water. At first glance, the passages seemed unimportant and trivial, more transitional than anything else, simply words that were used to frame the work of Jesus.

But as I studied and reread the passages, I began to wonder if the words and movements of Jesus and the disciples had a distinct purpose. What could these passages teach us about Jesus? What could they teach us about the kingdom of God?

As we read the gospel, one can tell that the word and witness of Jesus Christ was becoming more and more sought after. The news would have travelled throughout the countryside, villages and cities of this man and his radical way of living and loving. More and more people would have heard about his preaching, the healings, and the miracles. His mission was rapidly growing, and the disciples played a significant role in this mission, for they were listening and learning in order to continue his mission in the world when Jesus would no longer be physically with them.

People were so excited to see Jesus that they were running from place to place to catch a glimpse of him, to touch his clothing, to see if he was real. They ran faster than the boats could move across the water; that was the passion and sense of hope the people were feeling. They wanted to see Jesus because he actually “saw” them. He looked beyond their social status, beyond their employment, beyond their culture to see them for who they were….beloved children of God.

As the crowds grew bigger, Jesus grew in compassion for them, for they were sheep without a shepherd. Their political leaders cared only about power and greed, not the well-being of their families. Jesus was a different kind of leader under a different perception of power. Jesus led out of compassion and love, justice, and equality.

The compassion that Jesus offered is shown in many ways in our reading today. The first was leading the disciples to a place of rest after they had returned from their travels. They would have been exhausted after sharing the good news of Jesus Christ; after teaching and healing so many. They would have heard the news of John’s beheading and may have been grieving his grizzly death. Jesus knew they were tired, he knew the importance of taking time away, of going to a quiet place to rest and rejuvenate.

I alluded to this in my pastor’s message in the summer issue of the Messenger. We all need rest and silence. We all have a need a time to pause, to pray, to meditate, and to reflect. Our world is a busy and chaotic place. There is always so much to do and so little time to get it all done. Even during this 16-month pandemic, time has not slowed down; if anything, time seems to have gone by more quickly! Often it feels like we are being pulled in many different directions at once. There is the need to climb the corporate ladder, to keep up with the Jones’, the need to have the newest car, the biggest house, the greatest gadget, the list goes on and on. Consumerism, greed, entitlement, and individuality take precedence over the need for rest and rejuvenation in our lives. So often, we confuse our wants with our needs.

In calling out our need to rest, in our need to go to that deserted place, Jesus asks us to have compassion for ourselves. But how often do we really rest? How often do we have compassion for ourselves? How often do we give ourselves a break to do nothing, to enjoy the little things around us, the important things around us, to notice that many of us have all that we truly need within our grasp. Claudio Carvelhaes suggests that in going to a place of rest (or the desert as he calls it),

we can have a sense of ourselves again. No noise besides our noise and the wind, no presence besides our presence and the ghosts…..In the desert, there is no peace if our heart has no peace. There is only fear in the desert if our hearts live in fear. In the desert, we must control our minds, not for the sake of controlling it but rather, to be able to free ourselves from the grips of anxiety, fear, and endless movement. In the desert, we hear the words we speak, we hear the silence we produce, we attend to the movements of our body.[[1]](#footnote-1)

We need rest in our lives, but what other needs might we have? What do you need to be happy and content? What do you need to live an abundant life? Yes, there are the physical needs of food, shelter, clothing, but is there more? Perhaps it is a sense of purpose, a sense of community, a sense of meeting people where they are at, a sense of loving our neighbour just as we have been loved. Or perhaps it is a sense of justice in being a voice in our communities and the world. This is the kingdom of God in our midst.

Now can we go one step further! How can the church help folks to live out an abundant life? How can we empower our youth? How can we grow in compassion for one another? How can we act with justice? How can we share the peace and radical love of Jesus Christ in a secularized and consumeristic world? How can the church offer rest and healing to a weary world? I guess my question is where is the church amidst the kingdom of God? So many questions that are difficult to answer….

Jesus offered compassion and love to all who came to him. He understood their suffering. He understood their pain. God’s presence was revealed in the compassion that Jesus shared with those who were hungry, those who were afraid, those who needed healing and for all who needed rest. This continues today. May we lean into that compassion, may we listen for the voice of Jesus in our hearts and in our minds, may we share it with all around us giving thanks to the God who makes it all possible. Amen.

**HYMN OF THE DAY*I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say (KINGSFOLD)* (ELW 611)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4JEoBrtHM90>

1 I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
"Come unto me and rest;  
lay down, O weary one, lay down  
your head upon my breast."  
I came to Jesus as I was,  
so weary, worn, and sad;  
I found in him a resting-place,  
and he has made me glad.  
  
2 I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
"Behold, I freely give  
the living water, thirsty one;  
stoop down and drink and live."  
I came to Jesus, and I drank  
of that life-giving stream;  
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,  
and now I live in him.  
  
3 I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
"I am this dark world's light;  
look unto me, your morn shall rise,  
and all your day be bright."  
I looked to Jesus, and I found  
in him my star, my sun;  
and in that light of life I'll walk  
till trav'ling days are done.

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation. *A brief silence.*

Tend your church, O God. Encourage bishops, pastors, and deacons in their proclamation of the gospel. Raise up new leaders and encourage those pursuing a call to ministry. Embolden all the baptized to embody your love and justice. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Restore your creation, O God. Sustain croplands and pastures and safeguard all farm animals and livestock. Preserve lakes, rivers, and streams that offer refreshment. Revive lands recovering from natural disasters and protect coastlands threatened by rising oceans. We remember our Western provinces as they continue to deal with wild fires. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Reconcile the nations, O God. Break down the dividing walls that make us strangers to one another and unite us as one human family. Equip leaders to deal wisely with conflict and guide diplomats who seek peaceful solutions. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Heal your people, O God. Look with compassion on immigrants, exiles, and all who are afraid or feel lost. Give rest to those who are weary, comfort to those who are grieving, and recovery to those who are ill or injured. We remember this morning Eddy, Elaine, Lynette, Barb, Sarah, Alea, Bonnie, Mary, Tilly, Robert, Helen, Vivian, Katie, Esther, Rhonda, Deb, Nicole, the family of Mary Ann Wasilka, the lives and memory of the buried children at residential school sites across Canada, and those we name in the silence of our hearts. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Nourish this congregation, O God. Prepare a table where we receive food for our hungering spirits. Renew our commitment to provide for one another and revitalize our ministries of feeding and nurturing hungry neighbors. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You lead us home, O God. We give thanks for all who have died, now citizens with the saints *especially* Mary Ann. As you have received them into your heavenly home, so welcome all of us to dwell in your house forever. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**PEACE (ELW p. 106)**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**MEAL**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

**DIALOGUE (ELW p. 107)**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

 Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

 Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**PREFACE**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave,

and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 108)**

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

**THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE (ELW p. 108)**

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,

we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,

and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,

the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;

to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,

be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

**LORD’S PRAYER (ELW p. 112)**

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.**

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION (ELW p. 112)**

Christ has set the table with more than enough for all. Come!

**COMMUNION (ELW p. 112)**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (ELW p. 114)**

Jesus, Bread of life,

we have received from your table

more than we could ever ask.

As you have nourished us in this meal,

now strengthen us to love the world with your own life.

In your name we pray. **Amen.**

**SENDING**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**BLESSING (ELW p. 114)**

The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us,

☩ be upon you now and forever. **Amen.**

**DISMISSAL (ELW p. 115)**

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

**SENDING SONG*Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us (BRADBURY)* (ELW 789)**

1 Savior, like a shepherd lead us;  
much we need your tender care.  
In your pleasant pastures feed us,  
for our use your fold prepare.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
you have bought us; we are yours.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
you have bought us; we are yours.  
  
2 We are yours; in love befriend us,  
be the guardian of our way;  
keep your flock, from sin defend us,  
seek us when we go astray.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
hear us children when we pray.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
hear us children when we pray.  
  
3 You have promised to receive us,  
poor and sinful though we be;  
you have mercy to relieve us,  
grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
early let us turn to you.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
early let us turn to you.  
  
4 Early let us seek your favor,  
early let us do your will;  
blessed Lord and only Savior,  
with your love our spirits fill.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
you have loved us, love us still.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
you have loved us, love us still.

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1. Claudio Carvalhaes, Commentary on Mark 6:30-34, 53-56 in *Working Preacher,* July 22, 2018, accessed July 15, 2021, <https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revised-common-lectionary/ordinary-16-2/commentary-on-mark-630-34-53-56-4>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)