**PENTECOST 6- JULY 4, 2021**

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

Welcome to worship on this 6th Sunday of Pentecost, July 4, 2021. I hope you have all had an opportunity for some time off this week. Summer is beginning to be in full swing, I think the corn is growing before our eyes. Farmers say it is to be knee high by the first of July, much in our area is at least waist high!

Coffee hour takes place at 11 today, please feel free to join us.

**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.

**THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM (ELW p. 97)**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,

the fountain of living water,

the rock who gave us birth,

our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,

we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

*Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.*

We give you thanks, O God,

for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters

and by your Word you created the world,

calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.

Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.

At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons,

making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,

and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.

Shower us with your Spirit,

and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

To you be given honor and praise

through Jesus Christ our Lord

in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever **Amen.**

**GREETING (ELW p. 213)**

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. 215)**

Let us pray.

God of the covenant, in our baptism you call us to proclaim the coming of your kingdom. Give us the courage you gave the apostles, that we may faithfully witness to your love and peace in every circumstance of life, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG*Listen, God Is Calling: Neno lake Mungu* (ELW 513)**

Refrain  
(Listen,)listen, God is calling, through the Word inviting,  
offering forgiveness, comfort and joy.  
(Listen,) listen, God is calling, through the Word inviting,  
offering forgiveness, comfort and joy.  
  
1 (Jesus gave his mandate:)  
share the good news  
(that he came to save us)  
and set us free. Refrain  
  
2 (Let none be forgotten)  
throughout the world.  
(In the triune name of God)  
go and baptize. Refrain  
  
3 (Help us to be faithful,)  
standing steadfast,  
(walking in your precepts,)  
led by your Word. Refrain

**WORD**

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

**FIRST READING: Ezekiel 2:1-5**

A reading from Ezekiel.

1[A voice] said to me: O mortal, stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you.2And when he spoke to me, a spirit entered into me and set me on my feet; and I heard him speaking to me. 3He said to me, Mortal, I am sending you to the people of Israel, to a nation of rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have transgressed against me to this very day. 4The descendants are impudent and stubborn. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, “Thus says the Lord God.” 5Whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house), they shall know that there has been a prophet among them.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

**PSALM: Psalm 123**

1To you I lift up my eyes, to you enthroned in the heavens.  
 2**As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters, and the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,**  
  **so our eyes look to you, O Lord our God, until you show us your mercy.**  
 3Have mercy upon us, O  Lord, have mercy, for we have had more than enough **|** of contempt,  
 4**too much of the scorn of the indolent rich,** **and of the derision of the proud.**

**SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 12:2-10**

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

2I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. 3And I know that such a person—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows—4was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat. 5On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. 6But if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think better of me than what is seen in me or heard from me, 7even considering the exceptional character of the revelations. Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. 8Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, 9but he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.” So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. 10Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL: Mark 6:1-13**

The holy gospel according to Mark.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

1[Jesus] came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him.2On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, “Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! 3Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. 4Then Jesus said to them, “Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house.” 5And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. 6And he was amazed at their unbelief.  
  Then he went about among the villages teaching. 7He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. 8He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; 9but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. 10He said to them, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. 11If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.” 12So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. 13They cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON (ELW p. 217)**

What image comes to your mind when you think of the person of Jesus Christ? For many of us, Jesus is a divine figure of strength and power, grace and mercy, the Messiah. Our gospel reading today portrays a different image of Jesus where he lost his power and became powerless.

Our gospel reading takes place after Jesus engaged in 2 acts of powerful healing and authority. He healed an unnamed woman who suffered from hemorrhaging for more than 10 years. In touching his tunic, the bleeding stopped, and she was immediately healed. That same day Jesus brought Jairus’ daughter back to life. Jesus’ presence was a powerful one; he healed the sick and those with unclean spirits, people travelled from near and far to be in his presence. He shared the good news of God through his preaching and teaching. He brought hope to the hopeless and a promise for a better future. So, when he goes back home, you think he would have been welcomed with open arms…that folks would have been happy to see him, empowered to hear the word and share in his love. One would think that they would be proud of this man whose radical love was changing the world!

But they were not. The townsfolk took offence to his teachings and questioned who Jesus had become. They questioned his identity. They questioned his power, asking one another, "Is this not Jesus the carpenter, son of Mary, the brother of James, Joses, Simon and Judas (not Judas Iscariot!) and his unnamed sisters." In the eyes of the townsfolk, how could he be the Messiah?

The townsfolk lacked trust and faith in God. Now perhaps there was some jealously (remember that perfect imperfectness I mention most every week) and resistance on their part. Perhaps there was fear in their hearts. In accepting Jesus as the Messiah, as being all-powerful they would have had to look deeply at themselves and how they treated one another. Their views of the world would be challenged, and their view of power would be confronted. Remember that many would have been living under the power and rule of Roman oppression, hence the fear and distrust. Jesus felt all that the townsfolk were feeling, and the lack of faith rendered him powerless. He healed a few folks, but the doubt was apparent, and he could do no more.

Jesus could have walked away from the resistance and the fear of the hometown crowd, but that is not how God works. This is where the grace and mercy of a loving God and the power of the Holy Spirit made their entrance, offering hope and love to a people in need. Jesus called the disciples together and sent them out into the countryside. He sent them out two by two to share the good news of the gospel, the good news of the kingdom of God and the love that God had to share. He asked them to take nothing on their journey, no food and no money. They were to rely solely on the folks they met along the way to give them what was needed. If resistance was met or they were unwelcome, they were to simply shake the dust from their feet and move on to the next house or town. Talk about faith and trust!

And that is what the disciples did! They went out and proclaimed God’s love, they cast out unclean spirits and healed the sick, and they did so with courage. They were the hands and feet of Jesus in a weary world, allowing the Holy Spirit to weave her way in, through, and around their lives.

As the church, we are invited and sent out to do the same. We are sent out to share and proclaim the good news of God to a weary and broken world through our own actions of healing and love. Just as God was active in the lives of the 12, God is active in our lives as well. We are invited to partner with God to show mercy and grace to those we meet in the ordinary of our lives. We do this not to earn God’s favour. We do not do this to earn God’s love or to reserve our place in heaven. As a church and as people of faith, we do what we do in response to God’s invitation, in response to the love that God has shown to us. We do it because we are loved, and we want to share that unconditional love with others. In the waters of our baptism, we were named and claimed as beloved children of God. We were chosen to go out with purpose to share God’s love, not to overpower or manipulate, but to simply love as we are loved.

The disciples would have met resistance on their journey and Jesus knew that hence the passage in our reading asking them to shake the dust off their sandals and move on. Perhaps the folks they visited were not ready. Perhaps, they were like the townsfolk of Jesus’ hometown, stuck in their own comparisons, jealousy, and complaints. Throughout the journey of our lives and in our journey of faith, we too will meet resistance. Look at our world today; it seems to be full of resistance at almost every corner. There is resistance to truth, resistance to leadership, resistance to science, resistance to diversity, resistance to equality, resistance to reconciliation, and resistance to change. How many times have you heard over the past 16 months, "I just want things to return to normal?" The old normal was no longer working; we need to reflect on a new normal, whatever that may be! This resistance can weigh us down and lead to doubt, but we too must follow in Jesus’ footsteps and shake the dust of our sandals and keep going. We keep loving, and we keep trusting. We keep the faith and we lean into the courage of God, even when it is hard to do so knowing that God is still working in us, inviting us to be in relationship with God and one another.

An enlivening example was shared throughout our nation on Canada Day this past week. So many joined together to commemorate and mourn the lives lost at residential school sites across Canada. The Indigenous community has known this for years, as their children were taken away and never returned home. We (as settlers) had little knowledge that these schools even existed, let alone the lives that were senselessly lost. Amidst a sea of orange t-shirts, peaceful rallies took place across the country. The winds of the Holy Spirit were blowing through our country offering a mutual coming together that crossed boundaries and borders of culture and resistance. We still have so much more to do. We still have much more to learn and much more listening to do. As children of God, we are equipped to be agents of change in the church and the world through the grace, mercy, and power of Jesus Christ. We are vessels through which God's action and love are continually filling us up so that we may fill the lives of all around us with healing, love, and hope. May we live into this each day of our lives. Amen.

**HYMN OF THE DAY*Spirit of Gentleness* (ELW 396)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rgLsoWxwyU>

Refrain  
Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,  
blow through the wilderness calling and free;  
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,  
stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.  
  
1 You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,  
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;  
and over the eons you called to each thing:  
"Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings." Refrain  
  
2 You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand,  
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;  
and when they were blinded with idols and lies,  
then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes. Refrain  
  
3 You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,  
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;  
and down in the city you called once again,  
when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind. Refrain  
  
4 You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes.  
From the bondage of sorrow all the captives dream dreams;  
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes.  
With bold new decisions your people arise. Refrain

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Let us come before the triune God in prayer. *A brief silence.*

God of all, through the waters of baptism you claim people of all races, ethnicities, and languages as your beloved children. Sustain the baptized and increase their faith, that your gospel may be proclaimed throughout the earth. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

God of the heavens, your creating Spirit animates the universe. We give you thanks for the moon and stars, for the planets and the Milky Way Galaxy, and for all of the mysteries of the cosmos that remain unknown to us. We pray for all affected by the heat in Western Canada, for the lives lost to heat associated illnesses and for the townspeople of Lytton, BC who not only struggled with the highest temperatures in Canada but were also ravaged by fast moving forest fires this week. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of freedom, you have liberated us from sin and death and rescue us from all forms of spiritual, social, and political oppression. Defend us from tyrants in our midst and deliver us from all forms of slavery or corruption. Direct our freedom for works of liberation, reconciliation, and wholeness. As we celebrate Canada Day weekend may we remember who originally lived and tended the land, may we acknowledge the harm and trauma that was done to the Indigenous community. May we listen and learn from the past to journey to a reconciled and brighter future where all live together in harmony and peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of compassion, you became vulnerable in the person of Jesus Christ in solidarity with the disempowered. Strengthen those who feel faint, give courage to those who fear, and bring wholeness to those in need. We remember today Eddy, Elaine, Lynette, Barb, Sarah, Alea, Mary Ann, Bonnie, Mary, Tilly, Robert, Helen, Vivian, Katie, Esther, Rhonda, Deb, Nicole, the lives and memory of the buried children at residential school sites across Canada, and those we name in the silence of our hearts. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of holiness, you send us out into the world to proclaim your love. We pray for our outreach ministries. Equip us as to witness and serve our neighbors trusting that you are beside is our journey. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give you thanks that in every time and place you call forth prophets who move us towards freedom to eternal life with you. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace. **Amen.**

**PEACE (ELW p. 217)**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD (ELW p. 220)**

Let us pray.

Holy God, our Maker, our Healer, our Teacher, your magnificent creation springs forth from your Word. All that has life and breath praises your name. For your Word that sustains the earth, we thank you, O God.

You sent us Jesus, your Word, to renew the world. He healed the sick, fed the hungry,

preached your mercy and called us to faith. For your Word in our Lord Christ, we praise you, O God.

Nourish us with the Spirit of your Word, that we may grow in grace, bearing the fruits of redemption, and sharing your strength and beauty with all the world. For your Word in our lives, we entreat you, O God.

Accept our thanksgiving and receive our prayer, for the sake of your living Word, Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**

**LORD’S PRAYER (ELW p. 221)**

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.**

**SENDING**

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

**BLESSING**

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

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

**SENDING SONG*To Be Your Presence* (ELW 546)**

1 To be your presence is our mission here,  
to show compassion's face and list'ning ear,  
to be your heart of mercy ever near,  
alleluia!  
  
2 To be your presence is our mission bold,  
to feed the poor and shelter homeless cold,  
to be your hands of justice, right uphold,  
alleluia!  
  
3 To be your presence is our mission blest,  
to speak for all the broken and oppressed,  
to be your voice of hope, your love expressed,  
alleluia!  
  
4 We are your heart, O Christ, your hands and voice,  
to serve your people is our call and choice,  
and in this mission we, the church, rejoice,  
alleluia!

**DISMISSAL (ELW p. 222)**

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ

**Thanks be to God.**

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