

9th Sunday After Pentecost

August 2, 2020



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Welcome! In today's first reading God invites all who are hungry or thirsty to receive food and drink without cost. Jesus feeds the hungry multitude and reveals the abundance of God. As we share the bread of life, we are sent forth to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry.

This is a special bulletin for Grace Lutheran Church. We have closed the Sanctuary to the general public amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. This bulletin is designed to be used at home by anyone who is baptized serving as the Worship Leader. If you use this bulletin for worship, either by itself or alongside our service on YouTube, please fill out the Attendance Record Form on our website: GraceCLW.com

SERVICE OF THE WORD

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Worship Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.

Worship Leader: 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.

Worship Leader: 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.

Congregation: 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.

GATHERING SONG

In Christ Called to Baptize vs. 1 & 3



1 In Christ called to bap - tize, we wit - ness to grace
2 In Christ called to ban - quet, one ta - ble we share,
3 In Christ called to wit - ness, by grace we will preach
4 U - nite us, a - noint us, O Spir - it of love,



and gath - er a peo - ple from each land and race.
a ha - ven of wel - come, a cir - cle of care.
the life - giv - ing gos - pel; God's love we will teach.
for you are with - in us, a - round us, a - bove.



In deep, flow - ing wa - ters, we share in Christ's death,
Al - though we are man - y, we share in one bread.
By grace may our liv - ing give proof to our praise
E - quip us for ser - vice with gifts you be - stow.



then, ris - ing to new life, give thanks with each breath.
One cup of thanks - giv - ing pro - claims Christ, our head.
in cost - ly com - pas - sion re - flect - ing Christ's ways.
In Christ is our call - ing. In Christ may we grow.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947
Music: ST. DENIO, Welsh traditional
Text © 1995 Pilgrim Press

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APOSTOLIC GREETING

Worship Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Congregation: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Worship Leader: Let us pray together the Prayer of the Day.

Congregation: Glorious God, your generosity waters the world with goodness, and you cover creation with abundance. Awaken in us a hunger for the food that satisfies both body and spirit, and with this food fill all the starving world; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 55:1-5

Introduction to the Lesson: *God invites Israel to a great feast at which both food and drink are free. God also promises to make an everlasting covenant with all peoples, with promises that previously had been limited to Israel. As David was a witness to the nations, these nations shall now acknowledge the ways in which God has glorified Israel.*

Reader: 1Ho, everyone who thirsts,

come to the waters;

and you that have no money,

come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk

without money and without price.

2Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,

and your labor for that which does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,

and delight yourselves in rich food.

3Incline your ear, and come to me;

listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant,

my steadfast, sure love for David.

4See, I made him a witness to the peoples,

a leader and commander for the peoples.

5See, you shall call nations that you do not know,

and nations that do not know you shall run to you,

because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel,

for he has glorified you.

After the reading...

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21

The psalm for the day is read responsively.

Reader: ⁸The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

**⁹LORD, you are good to all,
and your compassion is over all your works.**

¹⁴The Lord upholds all those who fall
and lifts up those who are bowed down.

**¹⁵The eyes of all wait upon you, O LORD,
and you give them their food in due season.**

¹⁶You open wide your hand
and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

**¹⁷You are righteous in all your ways
and loving in all your works.**

¹⁸You are near to all who call upon you,
to all who call upon you faithfully.

**¹⁹You fulfill the desire of those who fear you;
you hear their cry and save them.**

²⁰You watch over all those who love you,
but all the wicked you shall destroy.

**²¹My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD;
let all flesh bless God's holy name forever and ever.**

SECOND READING Romans 9:1-5

Introduction to the Lesson: This begins a new section in Paul's letter in which he will deal with the place of Israel in God's saving plan. He opens by highlighting how Israel's heritage and legacy include being God's children, having God's covenants, being given God's law, participating in worship of God, and receiving divine promises.

Reader: [Paul writes:] I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit—2I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.

3For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh. 4They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; 5to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

After the reading...

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 14:13-21

Introduction to the Gospel: *After John the Baptist is murdered, Jesus desires a time of solitude. Still, his compassion for others will not allow him to dismiss those who need him, and he is moved to perform one of his greatest miracles.*

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew in the 14th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Worship Leader: 13Now when Jesus heard [about the beheading of John the Baptist], he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. 14When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. 15When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.” 16Jesus said to them, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.” 17They replied, “We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.” 18And he said, “Bring them here to me.” 19Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. 20And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. 21And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

After the reading...

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

Unreasonable Love

Imagine throwing an impromptu dinner party for thousands of people. Looking out at the huge crowd, would you think, “Yeah, we can do this. It’ll be fun!”? Or would you look in your fridge, cupboards, and freezer and become absolutely certain there was not enough to go around?

It is normal and human to look at the supplies available and make a judgment about whether or not something can be accomplished. It's reasonable, even! But God's kingdom is not reasonable. God's kingdom defies all of our human expectations.

It is not reasonable that the last shall be first. It is not reasonable that God would pour forgiveness on us when we hardly know how to confess. It is not reasonable that the disciples could feed thousands of people with just a few loaves and fishes.

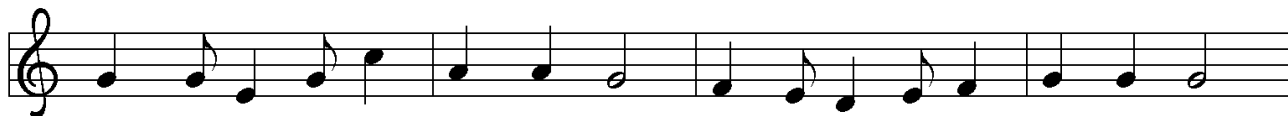
Thanks be to God for the unreasonable, unexpected grace we find in the kingdom! May we brim with gratitude that where we see limits, God knows what is possible. When we stare in shock at the Son of God nailed to the cross, we are sure it's the end of the story, but God knows differently: love and life are unreasonably more abundant than hatred and death.

When we bring whatever "loaves and fishes" we have in our cupboards to God, God blesses them and makes of them enough. At the Lord's table, we find the mystery of Christ's abundant presence in the bread and the wine. At the font, we are joined to the immeasurable, eternal covenant of being God's beloved through the profuse waters of baptism. It's preposterous, really, how lavishly, how unreasonably God loves the world! Let us rejoice in God's unreasonable love and mercy, and join the feast.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ



1 Let us tal - ents and tongues em - ploy, reach - ing out with a shout of joy:
2 Christ is a - ble to make us one, at the ta - ble he sets the tone,
3 Je - sus calls us in, sends us out bear - ing fruit in a world of doubt,



bread is bro - ken, the wine is poured, Christ is spo - ken and seen and heard.
teach - ing peo - ple to live to bless, love in word and in deed ex - press.
gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Im - man - u - el) ev - 'ry - where!

Refrain



Je - sus lives a - gain, earth can breathe a - gain, pass the Word a - round: loaves a - bound!

Text: Fred Kaan, b. 1929

Music: LINSTEAD, Jamaican folk tune; adapt. Doreen Potter, 1925–1980

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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Prayer Leader: You take resources that appear to be meager, bless them, and there is enough. May your church trust that what you bless and ask us to share with the world is abundantly sufficient. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Your bountiful creation offers sustenance and life for all creatures. Protect this abundance for the well-being of all. Reverse the damage we have caused your creation (local needs may be named). Replenish ground water supplies, provide needed rains in places of drought, and protect forests from wildfires. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: You offer yourself to all the nations and peoples of the earth, inviting everyone to abundant life. Bring the prophetic vision to fullness, that all nations will run to you and that nations who do not know you will find their joy in you. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. Hear the anguish of tender hearts who cry to you in suffering and satisfy their deepest needs. Bring wholeness and healing to those who suffer in body, heart, soul, and mind (*especially* Marc Calhoun, Linda Almond, Barbara Haseley, Duke Tieman, Betty Biddle, Cathi Adams, Michael Morales, Wade Buehler, Gloria Holtzclaw, Betty Daege, Dianne William, Rosemarie & George Smith, Gary Neal, Karen Bates, Rev. Lydia Villanueva and family, Don Eunis, Lorraine Reinhard, Bonnie Redler, Kathy Leotta, Brytt Mathis, Joseph Valentin, Rita Burneik, Bobby Schlegel, Hilda Taylor, George Clark, Jill Grote, Larry Timmons, Carl Stone, Neftali Garcia and family, Kelly Sullivan, Susan Gunn, Roy Pruitt, Iris Valentin, Deacon Connie Puls, Joan Keeton, Steve Davis, Rose Marie Piff, Gary Mostrum, Vicki Kennedy, Gail Elder, Valerie Smutko, Jason Meadows, Missy, Penny, & Henry, Lisa and Ty Hauschild, Rob Rodriguez and family, Marcus de Souza Lima, Maria de Nazare & Michele Rios, Ana Agramonte, those suffering from natural disasters (including COVID-19, Hurricane Isaias, and the flooding across the United States), violence, & terror, and the family and friends of the over 140,000 people in the United States & the 500,000 people worldwide who have died from COVID-19 including Anka Pink's grandmother. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: You offer freely the fullness of salvation. Give our congregation (name) such a welcoming heart, that our words and actions may extend your free and abundant hospitality to all whom we encounter. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Prayer Leader: You gather your saints as one, united in the body of Jesus. Bring us with all your saints to the heavenly banquet. We remember with love and thanksgiving the saints we have known, (*especially those in our Memorial Garden pictured here*). Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Worship Leader: Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

OFFERING

*Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at GraceCLW.com (look for the "Donate" button), or by mailing a check to Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Ave. Clearwater FL 33755. Thank you for your continued financial support during these uncertain times. **You can also fill out your attendance form on our website.***

OFFERTORY



Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right
spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take
not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-store to me the joy of
your sal-va-tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir-it.

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923
Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: God of goodness and growth, all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens. Water and word, wine and bread: these are signs of your abundant grace. Nourish us through these gifts, that we might proclaim your steadfast love in our communities & in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song.

Congregation: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Worship Leader: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in the language closest to our hearts.

Congregation: 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.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Worship Leader: 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.

Congregation: Amen.

BLESSING

Worship Leader: Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. God, the creator, † Jesus, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the comforter, bless you and keep you in eternal love.

Congregation: Amen.

SENDING SONG

God Be with You Till We Meet Again



- 1 God be with you till we meet a - gain; by good coun-sels guide, up - hold you,
- 2 God be with you till we meet a - gain; ho - ly wings se - cure - ly hide you,
- 3 God be with you till we meet a - gain; when life's per - ils thick con-found you,



with a shep-herd's care en - fold you;
dai - ly man - na still pro - vide you; God be with you till we meet a - gain.
put un-fail - ing arms a - round you;

Refrain

Till we meet, till we meet, till we meet at Je - sus' feet;

till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet a - gain.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in treble clef. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes with various rests and slurs. The lyrics are written below the notes. The second staff continues the melody and lyrics, ending with a double bar line.

Text: Jeremiah E. Rankin, 1828–1904
Music: GOD BE WITH YOU, William G. Tomer, 1833–1896

DISMISSAL

Worship Leader: Together we have heard God's Word and joined in prayer, we have given and have been forgiven. Now our service of worship has ended, and our service to the world begins! Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

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