



Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church- ELCA

"Encouraging faith and proclaiming God's love by Gathering, Growing and Giving"

8th Sunday after Pentecost *Service of the Word for online worship*

July 26, 2020

NOTE: Bold text indicates worshipers' response

GATHERING

WELCOME and MUTUAL MINISTRY

* **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS** We have the unwavering love of God, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. **Amen.** Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin. *Silence is kept for reflection.* God who knows everything about us, **we confess that our words, deeds, and attitudes towards others are NOT always a reflection of your love. We confess we place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts, failing to believe that you provide enough for all. We do not always care for all you have created. We have feared difference and have not always welcome others as you have welcomed us. By your grace, forgive us; through your love, renew us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.** Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through **+** Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint **Amen.**

P: The grace of the 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 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.**

GROWING

PSALM 119:129-136 (Please respond by reading the bold text)

¹²⁹Your decrees are wonderful; therefore, I obey them with all my heart.

¹³⁰**When your word is opened | it gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.**

¹³¹I open my mouth and pant because I long for your commandments.

¹³²**Turn to me and be gracious to me, as you always do to those who love your name. R**

¹³³Order my footsteps in your word; let no iniquity have dominion | over me.

¹³⁴**Rescue me from those who oppress me, and I will keep your commandments.**

¹³⁵Let your face shine upon your servant and teach me your statutes.

¹³⁶**My eyes shed streams of tears, because people do not keep your teaching.**

The words of our next Bible reading celebrate the depth of God's actions for us. Through Christ's death for us and the activity of the Spirit praying for us, we are fused to God's love poured out in Jesus Christ. Nothing, not even death itself, is able to separate us from such incredible divine love.

A reading from the Apostle Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 8.

²⁶The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered." (Psalm 44:22)

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else.

The word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Throughout Matthew's gospel, Jesus and his disciples proclaim the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near!" Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people's lives.

The Gospel according to Matthew the 13th chapter, **All: Glory to you O Lord.**

³¹[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

³³He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

⁴⁴³¹[*Jesus to his disciples*] The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹"Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." ⁵²And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**

THE APOSTLES' CREED (*professed together*)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell.* On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen**

*Or, He descended to the dead.

OFFERTORY PRAYER Generous God, **thank you for all you have given to us, and for teaching us how to joyously give back in life. Bless the offering we give to you. Bless the financial offering we give, so that your work will to be done. Bless also what we give of our time and talents. Amen**

NOTE: Remember that you can provide financial offerings 1) via mail, 2) go our website (www.sothem.org) go to GIVE tab and use a secured site to give electronically, 3) receive an enrollment form to complete for Simply Giving or 4) set up a payment via your bank)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION (P: Hear us O God... **All: Your mercy is great...**)

LORD'S PRAYERS

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, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING 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. **Amen.**

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DISMISSAL Go in peace. Christ is with you. **Thanks be to God.**

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SCHEDULE /ANNOUNCEMENTS

Monday	6:30pm	Church Council Meeting in the sanctuary
Tuesday	4-6pm	Food Pantry
Wednesday	2pm	LIVE with God on Facebook (short worship)
Friday	10am-12pm	Food Pantry
Sunday	10am	Live and in-person worship with communion (posted later in the day at www.sothem.org)

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy



1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy, like the wide - ness of the sea;
2 There is wel - come for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;
3 For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;
4 'Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice which is more than lib - er - ty.
there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing in his blood.
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.
great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in heav'n.
There is grace e - nough for thou - sands of new worlds as great as this;
But we make this love too nar - row by false lim - its of our own;
Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,



There is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
there is room for fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.
and we mag - ni - fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.
and our lives will be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814-1863, alt.
Music: LORD, REVIVE US, North American, 19th cent.

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WORSHIP TEAM MEMBERS FOR TODAY 7/26/20

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WORSHIP NOTE for “Parables on the Kingdom of Heaven” [Mt. 13:31-33; 44-52]

We hear Jesus sharing a series of **parables** about *the kingdom of heaven*, offering us multiple ways to imagine

- how the kingdom of heaven impacts our lives
- how much we will value its worth
- what happens when the kingdom comes in its completeness when Jesus returns and ushers in eternity
- and how our ‘treasures’ may contain old and new things

Let’s dig into this grouping of kingdom of heaven parables to consider how they apply to our individual and congregational lives.

The first 2 parables (*mustard seed and yeast in flour*) describe how in God’s kingdom abundance/growth can come from small things.

- Can you think of a time when you received or shared a small act of kindness that made a bigger impact than you expected in your or someone else’s life? Or maybe it was a small change you made in your life that made a big impact, if so share?
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- What would be a small change we could make to our worship, Sunday School, Confirmation class, adult Bible study, or ways we serve our neighbors...that could have a positive impact?
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The next two parables (*hidden treasure found, search/find of pearl*) explain how being in and adding to the kingdom of heaven is something to be greatly valued (*in the parable, the people sell all they have to possess the treasure/pearl*)

- Name a couple of possessions/relationships/talents you have that you greatly value in life. Add what you would be willing to give up/pay in order to keep these?
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As baptized Christians, we have the promise of eternal life with God. We are brothers/sisters with Jesus Christ and all believers. We have the Holy Spirit within us to guide, inspire and comfort us. We have the assurance that NOTHING (not even death) can separate us from the love of God. How much DO YOU value this? And what would help you understand and value this more?

As a ‘body of Christ’, our congregation exists to *encourage faith and to proclaim God’s love by ways we gather, grow and give*. What are ‘old’ traditions/practices that we have do you treasure? What ‘new’ traditions/practices do you value? If you are not sure what is an old/new practice/tradition, then share something we do as a congregation that you value...think is worth keeping.
