

Grace Lutheran Church

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Pastor Ken Scheck II
Ms. Cindy Olson, Minister of Music
August 29, 2021

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 29, 2021

Pentecost is a season for growing represented by the color green. We celebrate the founding of the church and the fruits of the Spirit.

WELCOME TO WORSHIP! Today many people outright ignore the law and teachings of God. Christians are called to listen carefully to what God is saying about caring for those who are in need. Jesus in fact, calls us Christians to follow with a faithful heart sharing God's words and ways.

Welcome/Announcements

Holy Silence is observed as we enter to worship.

Gathering Music

Greeting

Please rise in body or spirit. The pastor and the assembly greet each other.

- P** The love of God, made known in Christ Jesus our Lord and poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C** **And also with you.**

- A** Come, let us celebrate, let us rejoice, let us give God the glory!
- C** **For the Lord our God reigns, Alleluia!**

- P** All nations come and worship you, Holy God.
- C** **Holy, holy, holy God, you are the beginning, the present and all that is to come.**

- A** All colors and races give hearty praise!
- C** **Let us share your love with all. Amen**

Prayer of the Day

- Ⓐ Let us pray.... O God our strength, without you we are weak and wayward creatures.
- ☞ **Protect us from all dangers that attack us from the outside, and cleanse us from all evil that arises from within ourselves, that we may be preserved through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Please be seated.

First Reading**Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9**

- Ⓛ A reading from **Deuteronomy**.

The Israelites believed the law was a divine gift that provided guidelines for living out the covenant. Moses commands the people to obey the law and to neither add to nor subtract from it. The Israelites are also to teach the law to their children and their children's children.

¹So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. ²You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the LORD your God with which I am charging you.

⁶You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!" ⁷For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is whenever we call to him? ⁸And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today?

⁹But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children.

- Ⓛ The Word of the Lord.
- ☞ **Thanks be to God.**

The psalm is spoken. The leader will read the light text. The assembly will read the bold.

Psalm 15

¹LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle?

Who may abide upon your holy hill?

**²Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,
who speak the truth from their heart;**

³they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

**⁴In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear the LORD.
They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.**

⁵They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes against the innocent.
Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

☒ A reading from **James**.

The letter of James was intended to provide first-century Christians with instruction in godly behavior. Here Christians are encouraged to listen carefully and to act on what they hear, especially by caring for those least able to care for themselves.

¹⁷Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

¹⁹You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. ²¹Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

²²But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. ²³For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; ²⁴for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. ²⁵But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

²⁶If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

☒ The Word of the Lord.

☑ **Thanks be to God.**

Arise in body or spirit. All speak the Gospel Acclamation in unison.

Gospel Acclamation *Spoken*

Alleluia!

Alleluia. Alleluia. God gave us birth by the word of truth so that we would become a kind of first fruits of creation. Alleluia.

Mark's gospel depicts Jesus as challenging traditional ways in which religious people determine what is pure or impure. For Jesus, the observance of religious practices cannot become a substitute for godly words or deeds that spring from a faithful heart.

☞ The Holy Gospel, according to **Mark**.

☛ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around [Jesus], ²they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. ³(For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; ⁴and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) ⁵So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?” ⁶He said to them, “Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

‘This people honors me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
⁷in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.’

⁸You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

¹⁴Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.”

²¹For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, ²²adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. ²³All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

☞ The Gospel of the Lord.

☛ **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Children's Time

Message

Silence for reflection

Hymn of Day

O Master, Let Me Walk with You

ELW 818

Prayers of Intercession

*We pray the prayer response after each petition. You will hear, **Hear us, O God.** The assembly prays, **Your mercy is great.***

- Ⓐ Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence

- Ⓐ We pray for the church, that it is a safe haven for all who seek your presence. Fill it with pastors, deacons, and leaders who echo your expansive and generous welcome. We especially ask you to be with our ministry partners *Bishops Elizabeth and Craig, Assistants David and Roseanne, our synod companion Faith Lutheran Church and St. Luke Lutheran Church, Grand Rapids, Woodbury United Brethren, Lake Odessa, Woodgrove Brethren Christian Parish, Coats Grove, Minister of Music Cindy and Pastor Ken.* Hear us, O God.

- ☑ **Your mercy is great.**

- Ⓐ We pray for the whole of creation, that plants and animals have the habitat and resources to thrive and flourish. Inspire us to protect threatened habitats and ensure a sustainable future for generations to come. Hear us, O God.

- ☑ **Your mercy is great.**

- Ⓐ We pray for individuals in positions of authority. Raise up wise and discerning leaders in federal, state, and local governments and guide them to seek the benefit of every person. Protect the lives of those who serve in the military, including *Parker Stancil (Freedlunds), Cody and Myrina Crawford (Clements), Austin and Aaron Endsley, Alexis and Carlos Garcia (Burdicks), Brady and Cynthia Rudesill (Hansen), Joel Taggart (Varkulas), Kayla and Lance Champaco (Pohls), and Julia Ehredt (Schrieners, Halsteads).* Hear us, O God.

- ☑ **Your mercy is great.**

- Ⓐ We pray for all who are in need. Support and encourage those who are unemployed, underemployed, or experiencing poverty. Bring food, shelter, clothes, and stability for daily life. We especially name before you *Doris Allerdig, Vickey Argo, Chris Bush, Cherie Clements, Joyce Daugherty, Pat Wales Depew, Ray Depew, Mike Fruth, Megan Germain, Karl Golnek, Lisa Golnek, Larry Hansen, Mike Hoppe, Bill Melcher, Darlene Olson, Hope Palmer, Jane Secor, Mike Shoemaker, The Michael Stifler Family, Tim Sullivan, Russ Trongo, George Ulrich Jr., Kristi Winick, and Eve Wright.* Hear us, O God.

- ☑ **Your mercy is great.**

- Ⓐ We pray for this congregation, especially those beginning a new school year. Empower teachers and school administrators. Guide students in their learning and development. Accompany parents, foster parents, and caregivers who provide encouragement and love.

(You may share your prayers at this time)

Here other intercessions may be offered.

- Ⓐ We give thanks for the faithful departed who showed us how to honor God with our heart. Inspire us by their example and renew our faith, trusting that we will be united with them in glory. Hear us, O God.
- ☞ **Your mercy is great.**
- Ⓟ Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- ☞ **Amen.**

Arise in body or spirit. The pastor and the assembly greet each other giving a sign of Christ's peace.

Sharing the Peace

- Ⓟ The peace of Christ be with you always.
- ☞ **And also with you.**
(We share the peace of the risen Lord with one another.)

After a sign of Christ's peace is given the prayer is prayed, as the assembly continues to stand.

Offering Prayer

- Ⓐ Let us pray . . . Blessed are you, O God, for the greening earth given for all, for the talents we are given to share, and for the blessing of your presence.
- ☞ **Transform us to be the body of Christ, that our lives may reflect your generosity, through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen**

Great Thanksgiving

℟ 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.**

℟ 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 the 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 forever.

☩ **Amen.**

℟ 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. For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim that Jesus is among us.

☩ **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

℟ Gathered by the Holy Spirit, let us pray how Jesus first taught:

☩ **Our Father in heaven, holy be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

℟ Taste and see that the Lord is good.

☩ **Thanks be to God.**

We Partake of the Body and Blood of Christ

Please be seated. You are invited to come forward to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. At this time, we only offer the pouring chalice and prefilled grape juice cups. There is a gluten-free option for the bread. Please let the pastor know.

Please remain seated.

Prayer after Communion

A Let us pray . . . O God, in this holy communion you have welcomed us into your presence, nourished us with words of mercy and fed us at your table.

G **Amid the cares of this life, strengthen us to love you with all our heart, serve our neighbors with a willing spirit, and honor the earth you have made; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Mission Minutes

After the Mission Minutes are shared, we arise in body or spirit, as the pastor shares the blessing.

Blessing

P Live your lives in Christ, rooted and built up in God, and abound in thanksgiving. The blessing of the holy Trinity, † one God, be upon you and remain with you forever.

G **Amen.**

Sending Hymn

What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine

ELW 774

Dismissal

A Go in peace. Christ is sending you.

G **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Hearts in Need

In today's gospel, the Pharisees ask Jesus why his disciples do not wash their hands prior to eating. This question might sound strange to those of us accustomed to antibacterial soap! The question, though, is not one of hygiene, but of religious practice. As Jesus points out in his response, practices around handwashing are more about ritual and tradition than they are about cleanliness. Make no mistake: the traditions and rituals that developed over generations were derived from and were attempts to follow the laws God had given the Jewish people in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. But by quoting the prophet Isaiah (Mark 7:6-8), Jesus bluntly tells the Pharisees that if their hearts remain far from God, then all the handwashing and tradition-following in the world is worthless.

It isn't wrong to practice ritual and tradition. In fact, it is good and right to seek to obey God's word, such as the directives we find in the Ten Commandments. But thinking we can be true to God's will through our own willpower will never succeed because, as Jesus tells us, going through the motions of ritual will not cleanse our hearts from sin. We cannot fix our own hearts. We cannot stop sinning of our own accord. Only God makes it possible for us to obey God's will. Jesus' message to the Pharisees is his message to us: our hearts are unclean and in need of his grace and forgiveness. The good news is that he comes to do exactly that. In the waters of baptism, in the words of absolution, in the bread and wine become body and blood, your heart is made clean and brought back to God. You, beloved child of God, are free and undefiled.

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Stewardship Information

Attendance: 46 Views: 54 Weekly Giving: 2,016.00 Budget Amount: \$4,163.28

We need your plastic shopping bags! Grace is beginning a new ministry for the homeless. We are collecting shopping bags and a group is weaving them into mats. Please place your clean plastic shopping bags into a box marked shopping bags in the coat closet near the entrance and the office. Thanks for your ministry to those who can use these mats.

“Books for Kids” is a program that allows a book to be purchased for a student each month. Your \$20.00 donation will allow one student to receive a book each month. You may give cash or write a check (**payable to Grace Lutheran**). You may place your gift in a pew envelope and mark the outside of the envelope **“Books for Kids”**. We'll let you know how we did in the November GraceGram.

Church School resumes the Sunday after Labor Day. During the 10:45 worship service, after the Children's Time, children are invited to go and hear a bible story. They will return before communion. If you are interested in teaching this year, please contact Eve Wright at 269.367.4139.

Adult Forum continues to gather in the Gathering Area and will continue its study on the book of **Genesis** at 9:30 am. Hope to see you there!

Seeking readers, fellowship providers (make coffee and lemonade for our fellowship time), ushers, greeters and Assisting Ministers.

Mask wearing. The Worship Committee is asking you to wear your mask during singing. You are welcome to wear your mask at all times if it makes you more comfortable. *Thank you for your flexibility, as we keep needing to adjust to the virus changing.*

Grace is seeking a Parish Administrator, if you have any people that might be interested in this ministry opportunity, please call the church office.



The 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering will be held July 24-28, 2022, in Minneapolis. If you are interested in going, please let Jamie Heise or Pastor Ken know by September 12, 2021.

Join Thrivent for a Hunter's Kickoff Campfire on September 8, 2021, from 5 to 9pm at OpenRoad (128 S. Main St, Wayland). Meal tickets are \$12 per BBQ plate (drinks separate). All proceeds will benefit **"Warriors Set Free"**, an organization that equips Veterans to grow in their faith, heal from the past, and win life's battles. Meal tickets can be purchased in advance by contacting Sarah Maass (Phone 269-225-1028; sarah.maass@thrivent.com; text 269-225-6605) or at the door while supplies last. Event sponsored by Philip L Maass, CFP®, CLU®, FIC, Thrivent Financial Consultant.

8:00 am

Assisting Minister – Chris Bush

Lector – Dave Neeb

Cantor – Cindy Olson

Musician – Cindy Olson

Pastor – Ken Scheck

10:45 am

Assisting Minister – Mark Anton

Lector – Sandy Mosteller

Cantor – Cindy Olson

Musician – Cindy Olson

Pastor – Ken Scheck