

## Worship in the Home: Sunday, July 12, 2020

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### Worship in the Home

#### **Sixth Sunday after Pentecost Lectionary 15 July 12, 2020**

*In this time of world-wide crisis, congregations throughout this church are not able to gather for worship as the body of Christ. While you cannot be together in person, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer. We offer this brief resource as an aid for prayer in the home. As with our prayers in the gathered assembly for worship, you are encouraged to prepare or adapt them locally for your context.*

God's word is like the rain that waters the earth and brings forth vegetation. It is also like the sower who scatters seed indiscriminately. Our lives are like seeds sown in the earth. Even from what appears to be little, dormant, or dead, God promises a harvest. At the Lord's table we are fed with the bread of life, that we may bear fruit in the world.

*The Prayer of the Day may be prayed.*

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit **help** us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

*Then the readings for this Sunday may be read, as follows:*

#### **First Reading: Isaiah 55:10-13**

*God's word to Israel's exiles is as sure and effective as never-failing precipitation. Their return to the Holy Land in a new exodus is cheered on by singing mountains and by trees that clap their hands.*

<sup>10</sup>For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, <sup>11</sup>so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. <sup>12</sup>For you shall go out in joy,

and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

<sup>13</sup>Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm: 65:9-13**

<sup>9</sup>You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous; the river of God is <sup>l</sup> full of water.

You prepare the grain, for so you provide <sup>l</sup> for the earth.

<sup>10</sup>You drench the furrows and smooth <sup>l</sup> out the ridges; with heavy rain you soften the ground and <sup>l</sup> bless its increase.

<sup>11</sup>You crown the year <sup>l</sup> with your goodness, and your paths over- <sup>l</sup> flow with plenty.

<sup>12</sup>May the fields of the wilderness be <sup>l</sup> rich for grazing, and the hills be <sup>l</sup> clothed with joy.

<sup>13</sup>May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak them- <sup>l</sup> selves with grain; let them shout for <sup>l</sup> joy and sing.

**Second Reading: Romans 8:1-11**

*There is no condemnation for those who live in Christ. God sent Christ to accomplish what the law was unable to do: condemn sin and free us from its death-dealing ways. The Spirit now empowers proper actions and values in our lives and gives us the promise of resurrected life.*

<sup>1</sup>There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. <sup>3</sup>For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending God's own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, God condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup>so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. <sup>5</sup>For those who **live** according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup>To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. <sup>7</sup>For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, <sup>8</sup>and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

<sup>9</sup>But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. <sup>10</sup>But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup>If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through this Spirit dwelling in you.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Gospel: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

### **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*In Matthew's gospel, both Jesus and his disciples "sow the seed" of God's word by proclaiming the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near." Now, in a memorable parable, Jesus explains why this good news produces different results in those who hear.*

<sup>1</sup>That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. <sup>2</sup>Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. <sup>3</sup>And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup>And in the sowing, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. <sup>5</sup>Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. <sup>6</sup>But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. <sup>7</sup>Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. <sup>8</sup>Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup>Let anyone with ears listen!

<sup>18</sup>Hear then the parable of the sower. <sup>19</sup>When anyone hears the word of the dominion of heaven and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. <sup>20</sup>As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; <sup>21</sup>yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. <sup>22</sup>As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. <sup>23</sup>But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **Reflection**

*Having read these readings, think of this:*

First, simply listen to the parable itself (vss. 1-9): the dominion of God is like someone sowing seed in a very hard place, a place impossible for growing, full of death. Yet, against all expectation, astonishing growth takes place, yielding a great harvest. That image gives us a way to talk about Jesus' death and resurrection and its meaning for us. We live in a hard place and a hard time. And we ourselves are full of death. Jesus shares our death, yet he becomes the source and beginning of the great harvest. Because of him, the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead comes down on us like rain. We and all the earth are being made to live and sing. Then, second, use the explanation (vss. 18-23) to join the parable yourself: by God's mercy, receive the life-giving word as if you were good soil; listen to the word of God, the gospel, and bear a harvest of love for your neighbor. The very trees will clap their hands.

*If you have a hymnal (or using the graphic below), you might now sing or read "Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 516) or "Build Us Up, Lord." (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 670)*

[Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast](#)  
[Build Us Up, Lord](#)

Praying separately in our homes yet united in the Spirit, let us together intercede for all the needs of the world. In response to each bid, you are invited to offer your own prayers, silently or aloud, and to conclude each petition with the words, **"Your mercy is everlasting."**

*A brief silence.*

We pray for our congregation and for all the churches in our neighborhoods.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray for missionaries and for newly planted congregations around the world.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray for those for whom growth in faith is difficult.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray for farms and fields that are devastated by drought.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray for all animals in search of water.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray for everyone who is suffering from the heat.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray for peace throughout the world, especially in the Middle East.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray for the government of our country, state, and county.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray for our society to be purged of racism.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray for the thousands who each day are contracting the coronavirus.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray for those without jobs or [health care](#).

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray for medical workers and researchers.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray for all who are sick.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray for all who are burdened by anxiety.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We pray, each of us, for ourselves.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

We thank God for Nathan Söderblom, whom we commemorate today, for all who were dedicated to ecumenism, and for all who have died in the faith.

*Take time for prayer.*

O God, rain down your mercy on us:

**your mercy is everlasting.**

O merciful God, receive these prayers, and grant us your Spirit of peace and joy, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

*If you have a hymnal (or using the graphic below), you might now sing or read "On What Has Now Been Sown" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 550) or "Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing." (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 545)*

[On What Has Now Been Sown](#)

[Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing](#)

*Then conclude with these prayers:*

Let us pray.

*A brief silence is kept before the prayer.*

Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into the darkness, called forth [beauty](#) from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God,

**we give you thanks and praise.**

By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile,

wisdom for life, O God,

**we give you thanks and praise.**

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God,

**we give you thanks and praise.**

**Send your** Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of the world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. **Amen.**

### **Offering**

Please remember to mail in your offerings so that Grace can continue to serve you.

### **Offering Prayer**

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 and in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song. **Amen.**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed 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.**

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless us now and forever.

**Amen.**

**Devotional Music Links:** For your individual or group devotion, you may choose to listen to the following choral recordings made available through Augsburg Fortress: ["Shine Like the Sun"](#); ["Rise, Shine, You People"](#); ["Sing to God."](#)

### **Readings for the Week:**

**Monday** Psalm 92. **Tuesday** Ephesians 4:17—5:2. **Wednesday** Proverbs 11:23-30. **Thursday** Psalm 86:11-17. **Friday**(commemoration of Bartolomé de Las Casas, missionary to the Indies, died 1566) Hebrews 6:13-20. **Saturday** Matthew 7:15-20. **Seventh Sunday after Pentecost** Isaiah 44:6-8 or Wisdom 12:13, 19; Psalm 86:11-17; Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43.

**Daily Prayer Resources** are available, including simple forms of Morning, Evening, and Night Prayer; Responsive Prayer; and prayers for mealtimes and other occasions.

Reflection material: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw

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***Please keep in your prayers this week:*** Kevin Johnson, Barbara Metzger, Rob Johnson and Steve Lindberg (Streeter Family Friend's & Kin), Noah Klenken (Fred Fixsen's Nephew), Ellsa Sorenson, Cal Curtis & Patty Thompson (Carole Holten's Son-in-Law & Sister), Bill Warner, David Warner, Emily (Ben & Casey's Daughter), Terry Newgard.