



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA

7283 Nelson Avenue, Burnaby, BC V5J 4C2

Phone / fax: 604-433-1515

Website: www.graceburnaby.com

Email: office@graceburnaby.com

pastor@graceburnaby.com

Follow us on Twitter! @GraceLutBurnaby



Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

June 27, 2021

ELW Holy Communion, Setting Eight

A woman finds healing by touching Jesus' cloak, and a girl is restored to life when he takes her by the hand. In both cases a boundary is crossed: in Jesus' time the hemorrhaging woman was considered ritually unclean, polluting others by her touch, and anyone who touched a corpse also became unclean. In Mark's gospel Jesus breaks down barriers, from his first meal at a tax collector's house to his last breath on the cross as the temple curtain is torn in two. We dare to touch Jesus in our "uncleanness" and to live as a community that defines no one as an outsider.

A warm welcome to those who are here worshipping on-line with us today! Here at Grace Lutheran we believe God is active in your life. Even you being here now is testament of God's calling and leading in your heart, which you have faithfully heeded. So we welcome you, and pray that today you will be nurtured and that the gifts that God has graciously given you will be stirred for the sake of God's mission in the world.

GATHERING

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

In our gathering while still apart, we recognize God's presence with us, around us, and through us, bringing us peace and joy and healing which can be made evident in the waters of baptism.

By itself, the water is just water. But when looked at through a Christian perspective, we see that it is much more than that. The water is our source of life. It is where we find balance for all things. It strengthens us, rejuvenates us, and heals us. So it is appropriate that this water be a symbol of God's love for us. It is good that it reminds us of God's welcome, just by its natural properties. It is right for us to give God thanks for this gift.

So those of you with water in front of you, dip your fingers into it. Interact with the water and all that it is. Sense it with the gifts that God has given you and be reminded that we are known, we are restored, and we are loved. And when you are ready, you may use the water to mark your foreheads with a sign of the cross as we are all collectively blessed by the God of grace forever.

Amen. Thanks be to God.

GATHERING SONG: I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say (#611)

GREETING

The healing grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the restorative love of God, and the uniting fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE (p. 184)

CANTICLE OF PRAISE (p. 185)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of steadfast love, you sent to us Jesus to be a witness to your unending grace and overarching healing. Help us to trust in the abundance of your love that we might share in your compassion and generosity wherever we may go, through Jesus Christ by the power of the Spirit. **Amen.**

WORD

FIRST READING: Lamentations 3:22-33

A reading from Lamentations.

The book of Lamentations is one of our most important sources of information about the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 587 BCE. Though the people admit that God's judgment was just, today's reading declares a fervent trust that God will not leave them forever.

²²The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;

²³they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.

²⁴"The LORD is my portion," says my soul,

“therefore I will hope in him.”

²⁵The LORD is good to those who wait for him,
to the soul that seeks him.

²⁶It is good that one should wait quietly
for the salvation of the LORD.

²⁷It is good for one to bear
the yoke in youth,

²⁸to sit alone in silence
when the Lord has imposed it,

²⁹to put one’s mouth to the dust
(there may yet be hope),

³⁰to give one’s cheek to the smiter,
and be filled with insults.

³¹For the Lord will not
reject forever.

³²Although he causes grief, he will have compassion
according to the abundance of his steadfast love;

³³for he does not willingly afflict
or grieve anyone.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 30

¹I will exalt you, O LORD, because you have lifted me up
and have not let my enemies triumph over me.

²**O LORD my God, I cried out to you,
and you restored me to health.**

³You brought me up, O LORD, from the dead;
you restored my life as I was going down to the grave.

⁴**Sing praise to the LORD, all you faithful;
give thanks in holy remembrance.**

⁵God’s wrath is short; God’s favor lasts a lifetime.
Weeping spends the night, but joy comes in the morning.

⁶**While I felt secure, I said,
“I shall never be disturbed.**

⁷You, LORD, with your favor, made me as strong as the mountains.”
Then you hid your face, and I was filled with fear.

⁸**I cried to you, O LORD;
I pleaded with my Lord, saying,**

⁹“What profit is there in my blood, if I go down to the pit?
Will the dust praise you or declare your faithfulness?

¹⁰**Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me;
O LORD, be my helper.”**

¹¹You have turned my wailing into dancing;
you have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.

¹²**Therefore my heart sings to you without ceasing;
O LORD my God, I will give you thanks forever.**

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 8:7-15

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

Paul encourages the Corinthians to honor their commitment to participate in the collection his churches are organizing for the Christians in Jerusalem. He presents Jesus as an example of selfless stewardship and reminds them that Christians have received abundantly so that they can share abundantly.

⁷Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you—so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking.

⁸I do not say this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others. ⁹For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.

¹⁰And in this matter I am giving my advice: it is appropriate for you who began last year not only to do something but even to desire to do something—¹¹now finish doing it, so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to your means. ¹²For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have. ¹³I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between ¹⁴your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. ¹⁵As it is written, “The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little.”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (p. 188)

GOSPEL: Mark 5:21-43

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jairus, a respected leader, begs Jesus to heal his daughter. A woman with a hemorrhage was considered ritually unclean and treated as an outcast. Both Jairus and the unnamed woman come to Jesus in faith, believing in his power to heal and bring life out of death.

²¹When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him; and he was by the sea. ²²Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet ²³and begged him repeatedly, “My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live.” ²⁴So he went with him.

And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. ²⁵Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. ²⁶She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. ²⁷She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, ²⁸for she said, “If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well.” ²⁹Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. ³⁰Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, “Who touched my clothes?” ³¹And his disciples said to him, “You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, ‘Who touched me?’ ” ³²He looked all around to see who had done it. ³³But the woman,

knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. ³⁴He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

³⁵While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?" ³⁶But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." ³⁷He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. ³⁸When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹When he had entered, he said to them, "Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping." ⁴⁰And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. ⁴¹He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha cum," which means, "Little girl, get up!" ⁴²And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. ⁴³He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Holy God, your Word has the power to heal, restore, and save. Open our hearts to your Spirit, and may we accept the truth of your unending love, through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

So it looks like we're nearing the end of the pandemic *fingers crossed (I hope I don't jinx it). And I'm pretty sure that I speak for us all in saying that the end couldn't come soon enough. Regardless of how you feel about staying at home and having a mysterious new contagious virus as an excuse not to talk to anyone, a lot that has happened over the past 15 and a half months that affected us beyond this pandemic. Not a lot happened in terms of Marvel movies, mind you, no we still have to wait for a couple weeks to get the first full feature in two years, but other things have happened here in Canada and around the world.

I mean things around politics both church and state, racial tensions which could even relate to politics in some instances, and of course, there was this pandemic that changed us so much, most apparent in the difference of opinion of how we should or shouldn't be dealing with it all. Or at least, how the government should... so basically, politics. People have been so divided left versus right and dare I say that a lot of the extremists don't even know what they're fighting over any more, they just know that they don't like the other side. Tempers have been flaring over what the truth really is, and neither side can even budge just a little to make room for graciousness. Emotions get heated to the point where no one is making rational sense anymore but everyone is just grasping at straws trying to prove their own point as right, no matter how ridiculous it actually sounds.

And as I've said many many times over the past 15 and a half months, I'm tired of it. Sick, even (not the cough cough kind of sick, thank goodness). But all of this tension, this divide, this great chasm between us all has been seemingly enough to drown out all hope, swallow up all joy, and suck whatever life we had left out of us.

Am I being dramatic? Maybe. But I am just fed up with all the fighting.

Can we ever get past this? Can we ever learn to get along? Can we ever heal?
If I'm being honest, the future, even after pandemic, is looking bleak.

And this pandemic will hopefully be less than 2 years long. It took just 2 years for things to fall apart. It took just 2 years for us to be so unglued. It took just 2 years of this virus for us to be so divided that anything else is already unrecognisable.

Could you imagine 12 years? That's how long the hemorrhaging woman has been hemorrhaging. That's how long she's been apart from society, labelled as "unclean", and disallowed from having any kind of normal life whatsoever. Twelve years of isolation, exclusion, and depression. Twelve years of being told by doctor after doctor, specialist after specialist, basically anyone after anyone, that there is nothing that can be done and that there is no longer any hope.

Yet, she continued with hope. She had faith. She believed that healing was within her reach and she continued to do whatever it took to get there. Even if it meant pressing up against a crowd despite her ritualistic uncleanliness just to be able to touch the cloak of a fabled miracle worker with the chance that she'll be stoned to death if she were to be caught.

And it worked.

She was healed. She was brought back into wholeness. She was able to live again with her community in peace.

But that isn't the only story of healing that we get out of today's gospel lesson. Let's not forget about this Jairus guy's daughter, who was so sick that she actually died before Jesus could even get there. But when he does, it's found that she is just sleeping and fully healed and well.

Two people sick, one for 12 years and the other just 12 years old. Two people touched by Jesus. Two people healed, restored, and brought into wholeness.

That's not fair, is it?

As we all know, there have been many many people, both whom we love and those we only have heard about, who have died during this pandemic, either from the coronavirus or otherwise. There have been many many people who leaned on Jesus and had communities praying for them but to no avail. There have been many many people who have been left sick, passed away, and unhealed.

Or have they?

As we look at these stories and feel slighted by the unfairness of it all, as in why them and not us, it's important that we not confuse healing with curing. See, those who suffered and died through the pandemic and beyond weren't cured yes, but they were healed. Their disease or whatever affliction got the best of their bodies, but their souls were saved. While they are no longer physically with us, they continue to make us whole through their presence in our minds and hearts always.

And that is healing. Both for them and for us. Being reminded and knowing that God holds us, welcomes us into God's eternal kingdom of meaning and purpose, and joins us together with all the saints as the one body of Christ is healing. And we all need that kind of healing in our lives, sick or not.

Earlier this week, some news dropped of even more unmarked graves of Indigenous people found at the sites of old residential schools, this time it is around 751 bodies. 751. It is so hard to believe how anyone in good conscience can partake in such atrocities. It is so tough to hear and read about this pain and suffering caused by our country. It is nearly impossible to face the systemic racism that has run so deep in who we are as a nation that we just find it easier and more convenient to turn a blind eye to the multitude of families who have lost everything because of the greed of a few.

How do we heal from this? How can we move forward? How can we be God's hands and feet in this situation?

To be honest, I don't know exactly. But I do know that it starts with an apology. And an apology starts with an admission that this was wrong. I was very sorry and angered and actually embarrassed to hear of a Catholic priest in Mississauga who, in his sermon, said that while the deaths of all these Indigenous people was tragic, that we shouldn't forget the good that the residential school system did. Really, bro? You think that tearing families apart, denying a culture the right to live, and intending to erase a whole people group off the face of the earth just so you can clear your conscience of stealing their land is good? I can't even.

It is this kind of attitude that keeps us divided. It's kind of selfishness that crushes hope for a decent future. It's this kind of self-righteous bigotry and closed-mindedness that prevents any kind of healing and reconciliation from happening.

You know, I don't have the definitive answers. I don't have a magical road map that tells us step by step how we can get to this healing. But I do know that it will have to involve grace. Not Grace as in this congregation per se, but the grace that has been given to us by God, revealed to us and reminding us of how precious life is, how important community is, and how valuable each and every one of us are. Male or female; adult or child; black, indigenous, person of colour or not; because God has made us worthy by God's own steadfast love and forgiveness.

And when we hold on to and lift up that truth of our intrinsic value and worth, we might catch a glimpse as to why God has declared us as beloved. And maybe then we can learn to work together in spite of difference, we can learn to see and respect other perspectives other than our own, we can learn to regard one another with a mutual equality where we fight not for power and wealth but for the good of all humankind.

It won't be an easy road, but the good news is that we won't travel this road alone. But God is with us, showing us the way of love and community, paving the path with grace and forgiveness, and encouraging us with a merciful and healing salvation offered to us all.

So we might not get there tomorrow, but I look forward to the day that we do. We might not be able to all get along across the political spectrum and other ways that divide us by our differences, but I believe that we will learn the meaning of peace and mutual justice. We might

not be cured of all that ails us, but, in spite of it all, I do have hope that there is a healing of the heart, mind, and soul, found in the unending and eternal grace of God.

In this season after Pentecost as we near the end of this divisive pandemic, let us put down our weapons, tear down our walls, bring down our attitudes of superiority and supremacy and learn to love with God's grace and mercy that brings us all into healing. Thanks be to God. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY: Healer of Our Every Ill (#612)

CREED

With church made whole by God's grace, let us confess the Christian faith with the Apostle's Creed:

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Brought into healing and wholeness by God's grace, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Each petition will end with "Lord, by your redeeming mercy," and you may respond with hear our prayer. Lord, by your redeeming mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, you lift us up and protect us from trouble. In response, may your generosity and compassion flow through us and our communities, that all might see the vastness of your love. Lord, by your redeeming mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, you restore us as we cry out to you and you save us from the finality of death, showing us eternal love and joy in your name. Let this be our proclamation to the world through our work and service for all. We remember in prayer our neighbouring faith communities; our partner Anglican Church of Canada; our bishop Greg, assistant to the bishop Kathy, and national bishop Susan; and our companion congregations of the BC Synod. In particular, we pray for Good Shepherd Lutheran in Coquitlam and their pastor Eric Krushel; Trinity Lutheran Church in North Delta and their pastor Jennifer Wilson; and Elina Singh as she serves her internship in both of those congregations. Lord, by your redeeming mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, your favour lasts a lifetime and your faithfulness is revealed throughout all of creation. May our praises to you be reflected in how we care for this planet that you've entrusted to us to live in, that the Earth be properly cared for and tended to for all time. Lord, by your redeeming mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, we are secure in your presence as we are made to be strong as mountains. In you, nothing disturbs us. Allow all citizens of the world feel this security, even when the country they live in is not, and bring them to a place where they can be safe and enjoy a quality of life. We pray especially for those we have sponsored to come to our country: Solyana Amanuel; and Maekele Kiflu, Selam Haile, and their children; that your love and strength shine through them as they wait for the process to take place. Lord, by your redeeming mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, you hear us and have mercy on us, for you are our rock and our help. Be especially with all who are sick, who mourn, or who feel lonely, and make apparent your healing and wholeness to all. In particular we pray for Marie; Paula; Diana; Beulah; Ron, Tess, and Mineko; Bev and family; Laura; Kandie; Thomas; Cindy; Linda; Charlotte; William; those who have contracted or been affected by COVID-19; and all whom we name aloud or quietly in our hearts at this time...

Lord, by your redeeming mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, our hearts sing to you without ceasing and we give you thanks forever, as you welcome us to live with you and all the saints for eternity. Remind us of our role you have given us for this life, that we might confidently live in your joy and peace, now and forever. Lord, by your redeeming mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in the healing grace of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERATORY HYMN: Here Is Bread (#483)

OFFERING PRAYER

O God, we believe that you provide for us through your abundant grace, meeting our needs of healing and wholeness. May this food that we have before us be blessed as it reminds us of your unending providence and love, through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

MEAL

DIALOGUE

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.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, that we should at all times and places give thanks and praise to you, O God, through your Son Jesus Christ, whose power flows through us and our communities, bringing us to heal and reconcile with each other, that we, with the choirs of angels, the hosts of heaven and the church on earth, may praise your name with this unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (p. 190)

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

O Lord, we exalt your name for all that you have done and continue to do. You lift us up over all that ail us and you restore us into wholeness. You redeem us from the grip of death and you reveal to us your unending favour. You secure us in your love and strengthen us with your grace and mercy as you send to us your Son Jesus, who lives among us to teach us of your truth and healing.

For on that night that he was betrayed, Jesus sat with his friends for a meal, took some bread, gave thanks, broke and shared it as he said, “take and eat, this is my body broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

Then after they ate, he took the common cup, and still with thanksgiving in his heart he gave it to all to drink from 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.”

It is with this food that our wailing is turned into dancing, even as we contemplate this mystery of our faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

So our hearts sing to you without ceasing, O God, and all thanks and honour belong to you forever as you live and reign through your Son Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD’S PRAYER

Brought up into wholeness by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Take, eat, know that God heals and restores you.
Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN: Lamb of God (p. 191)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy God, just as we are fed by this food, so are we nourished by your truth and love. May we find the healing and restoration in your name, that as we move ever closer to the end of this pandemic, we might continue to see you and your grace in and through our lives, by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

May God our guardian protect you,
Christ the healer restore you,
and the Spirit of wholeness sustain you, now and forever.
Amen.

SENDING SONG: There's a Wideness in God's Mercy (#588)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, healed by God's grace.
Thanks be to God.