



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA

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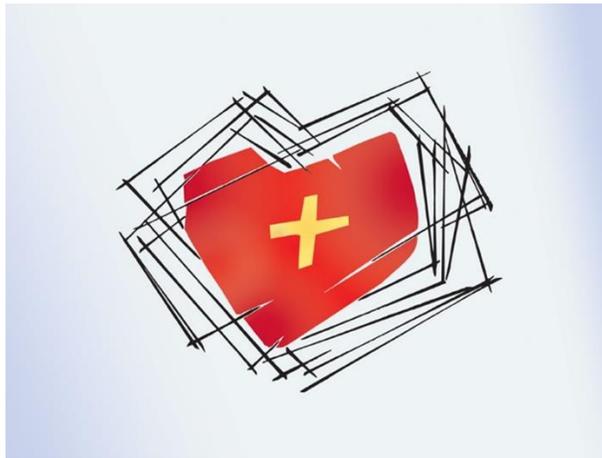
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Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 29, 2021

ELW Holy Communion, Setting Eight

Jesus protests against human customs being given the weight of divine law, while the essence of God's law is ignored. True uncleanness comes not from external things, but from the intentions of the human heart. Last week Jesus told us "the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (John 6:63). Now James says God has given us birth by the word of truth. We who were washed in the word when we were born in the font return to it every Sunday to ask God to create in us clean hearts.

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

We gather again, in spite of difference in opinion, viewpoints, and even physical location, to worship and praise the one true God, the one who gives us life.

And in our gathering, we give thanks for the gift of baptism. This gift of unity with and in the Spirit of God, this gift of connection with all the saints, this gift of community with all life in spite of all that stands in our way. So those of you with water in front of you, you may dip your fingers into it. See the sights, hear the sounds, and feel the water embrace your fingers, hold onto your skin, and envelope you as God's love does.

Then when you are ready and are willing, use the water to mark your forehead with the sign of the cross. For you bear the mark of the cross of Christ forever.

Amen. Thanks be to God.

GATHERING SONG: Gather Us In (#532)

GREETING

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

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, in Jesus Christ you have shown us the truth of your grace and mercy. Give us sincere hearts that we may serve you with joy, obey you with love, and manifest your wisdom in the world, through the love of Jesus, by the power of the Spirit. **Amen.**

WORD

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.

PSALM: Psalm 15

¹LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle?
Who may abide upon your holy hill?

²**Those 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 neighbour.

⁴**In 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.

SECOND READING: James 1:17-27

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.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (p. 188)

GOSPEL: Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

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.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: All Are Welcome (#641)

CREED

With all of God's welcomed, 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

Led into faith and truth, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Each petition will end with, "by your gracious mercy, O God," and you may respond with **hear our prayer**. By your gracious mercy, O God, **hear our prayer**.

Lord, we stand in awe of your presence where you welcome us to worship. You call us by name and reveal to us your truth. May our lives reflect your grace upon the world, that all might know and feel the welcome into your holy tabernacle. By your gracious mercy, O God, **hear our prayer**.

Lord, your love encourages us to do what is right and proclaim your truth. Strengthen us also that our ministry be pure and effective. Especially we pray for 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 churches of the BC Synod. In particular, we pray for Christ the King Lutheran Church in Surrey and their pastor Lori-Anne Boutin-Crawford; and all the churches that are planning to reopen for in-person worship in the near future. By your gracious mercy, O God, **hear our prayer**.

Lord, in your righteousness you have created a planet for us in which we can live and be in community with each other and all that you have made. May our care and stewardship of all that you have entrusted to us result in a faithful representation of your love and providence. By your gracious mercy, O God, **hear our prayer**.

Lord, you reject the wicked and honour those who fear you. Be with all the world leaders and politicians and grant them wisdom and discernment in their governing of your lands. We pray especially for the areas of the world facing turmoil and those who are fleeing for their lives, that all might find the safety and hope that will bring them peace. Also we pray for those that our congregation has sponsored to come to our country: Solyana Amanuel; and Maekelle Kiflu, Selam Haile, and their children; that their journey be swift and safe. By your gracious mercy, O God, **hear our prayer**.

Lord, your very Word grants us health and strength, and we rely on you to be healed back into wholeness. Be with those who are sick, who mourn, or who feel lonely, that your love might shine through us all. Especially we pray for Marie; Beulah; Diana; Ron, Tess, and Mineko; Bev and family; Paula; Laura; Kandie; Thomas; Cindy; Linda; Charlotte; William; those who have been affected by COVID-19; and all those we name aloud or quietly in our hearts at this time... By your gracious mercy, O God, **hear our prayer**.

Lord, by your mercy you have united us with you and all your saints in your eternal kingdom, that shall never be overthrown. May the lives of those that we've loved and lost remain with us in our hearts, that we might glean the wisdom and faith that you have granted throughout the ages. By your gracious mercy, O God, **hear our prayer**.

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

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING PRAYER

O God, all good things come from your graciousness and love. May these gifts be reminded to us through this food we have before us as we are filled with the hope we have in your promises and truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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 in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Saviour Jesus Christ;
who welcomes us into your fold and reminds us that we are your children,
that we might join with the choirs of angels,
the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
in praising your name with this unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (p. 190)

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

O Lord, from even before we were born, you have welcomed us into dwell in your tabernacle and abide upon your holy hill. You have redeemed us from our sin and recreated us as blameless in your sight, empowering us to do what is right and proclaim your truth from our hearts. This was made possible by the gift of your Son Jesus, whom you sent to us to be one of us to teach us your ways of honour and grace.

For on the night that he was betrayed, your Son Jesus sat with his friends for a meal, where he took some bread, thanked you for it, broke and shared it and 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 cup, gave thanks and shared that 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 by this food before us that we are reminded of the inclusion into God's kingdom and everlasting family, made possible through this mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

O Lord, in your name we are sustained by love and grace and we know the fullness of your inclusive welcome, freeing us from the guilt and shame of the world and joining us with all the saints of all times and places as your people, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Welcomed into God's grace 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 and eat, all are welcomed by God.

Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMNS: Lamb of God (p. 191)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

O Lord, again you have fed us with your grace and nourished us with your Word. May we be strengthened by your eternal and steadfast love, that we might live in the hope of your promises of welcome and inclusion forever, through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

SENDINGS

BLESSING

The blessing of God our Sovereign be with you,
the love of God our Saviour fill you with joy,
and the power of God the Spirit sustain you and lift you up, now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG: Blest Be the Tie That Binds (#656)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, lovingly serve God and neighbour.

Thanks be to God.

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