



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

OF SOUTH BURNABY, BC

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA

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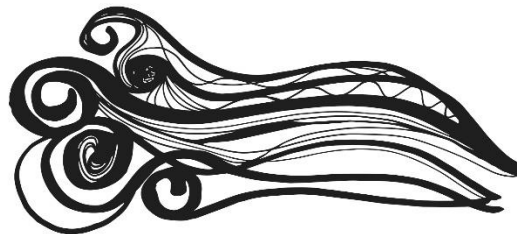
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Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

June 23, 2024

WOV Holy Communion, Setting Five: Bread of Life

Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation! Now we are in the storm, the boat almost swamped; but Jesus is here now, and when we call him, he will calm the storm. Even the wind and waves listen to him as they would to their creator. We also listen to him and are called to believe in the power of God's word in him, a power greater than all that we fear.

We at Grace Lutheran Church strive to reflect and proclaim the love of God shown to us by Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit by providing an inclusive and supportive environment through loving care and community service.

A warm welcome to all who are worshipping with us in person or online! We appreciate your contribution to the community today: with your voice, your presence, and just the blessing that you are. May you be nurtured by God's Word, empowered by the love of Christ, and stirred by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in this service this day, for the sake of God's mission in the world.

Grace Lutheran Church worships, prays, and serves on the traditional and unceded lands and territories of the hən̓q̓əmi̓n̓əm̓ (Musqueam) and Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) speaking peoples.

GATHERING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather in worship and thanksgiving to the Lord, who is eternally good and whose mercy endures forever. Let us proclaim to the nations our redemption and salvation, as we have been gathered from out of the lands and joined together as one community and kingdom under God. The power of God is great, and our Lord delivers us from trouble and distress, granting us a peace that whispers the storms and quiets the waves. So we give thanks to God for the wonders that God has done for us and all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen. Thanks be to God.**

GATHERING HYMN: Be Thou My Vision (#793)

GREETING

The calming grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the peace-giving love of God, and the encouraging fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

HYMN OF PRAISE: Glory to God (WOV p. 29)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord our God, in your grace and mercy, you bring us through the despairing and desperate situations of life. The storms are quieted by the whisper of your voice and the waves are stilled by your might and authority. May our trust and faith be increased, that we might confidently face life and all its obstacles joined with you and all the saints, through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Messiah. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Job 38:1-11

A reading from Job.

At the end of the book of Job, after Job and his companions have argued about the cause of the great suffering Job endures, God finally speaks. These verses begin that speech, which is a grand vision of creation, describing God's ordering of the cosmos and inviting Job to marvel at its beauty.

¹The LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind:

²"Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?

³Gird up your loins like a man,

I will question you, and you shall declare to me.

⁴"Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell me, if you have understanding.

⁵Who determined its measurements—surely you know!

Or who stretched the line upon it?

⁶On what were its bases sunk,

or who laid its cornerstone

⁷when the morning stars sang together

and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?

⁸"Or who shut in the sea with doors

when it burst out from the womb?—

⁹when I made the clouds its garment,

and thick darkness its swaddling band,

¹⁰and prescribed bounds for it,
and set bars and doors,
¹¹and said, 'Thus far shall you come, and no farther,
and here shall your proud waves be stopped?'"

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 107:1-3, 23-32

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
and his mercy endures forever.
²**Let all those whom the LORD has redeemed proclaim
that he redeemed them from the hand of the foe.**
³He gathered them out of the lands;
from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.
²³**Some went down to the sea in ships
and plied their trade in deep waters;**
²⁴they beheld the works of the LORD
and his wonders in the deep.
²⁵**Then he spoke, and a stormy wind arose,
which tossed high the waves of the sea.**
²⁶They mounted up to the heavens and fell back to the depths;
their hearts melted because of their peril.
²⁷**They reeled and staggered like drunkards
and were at their wits' end.**
²⁸Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.
²⁹**He stilled the storm to a whisper
and quieted the waves of the sea.**
³⁰Then were they glad because of the calm,
and he brought them to the harbor they were bound for.
³¹**Let them give thanks to the LORD for his mercy
and the wonders he does for his children.**
³²Let them exalt him in the congregation of the people
and praise him in the council of the elders.

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

Paul and his fellow workers experience great hardships and even rejection while carrying out their missionary work. Nevertheless, Paul continuously proclaims that God has not rejected us but is graciously working for our salvation.

¹As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ²For he says,

"At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you."

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! ³We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships,

calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, ⁷truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

¹¹We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. ¹²There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. ¹³In return—I speak as to children—open wide your hearts also.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (WOV p. 31)

GOSPEL: Mark 4:35-41

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus' calming of the storm on the sea reveals his power over evil, since the sea represents evil and chaos. The boat on the sea is a symbol of the church and invites us to trust God amid life's turbulence.

³⁵When evening had come, [Jesus said to the disciples,] "Let us go across to the other side."

³⁶And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. ³⁷A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. ³⁸But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" ³⁹He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. ⁴⁰He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" ⁴¹And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Holy God, we know that compared to you, our knowledge is foolishness. Draw us to your presence and drown us in your love and grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

So as you all know, this weekend was Convention weekend for our Synod, and it was to be a special one for us for a number of reasons. Not only was it the first one with our relatively new bishop who was elected at our last Convention just under 3 years ago; not only are we the only Synod of the ELCIC meeting this year *not* electing a new bishop; and not only was it the first one with the recently set lower term limits for members of the Synod Council resulting in a possible 100% turnover in the council; but this is also the first time that we've met in person since like, 2 Conventions ago.

I know, that doesn't sound that bad, but since our Conventions are on a 3-year cycle, that means we haven't had an in-person Convention in 6 years. Sounds like a long time now, doesn't it?

So this was a special one. While it was good to meet in person, in fact it was honestly better than I had anticipated, we were still in the midst of a lot of transition. It was familiar, but also unfamiliar. Comfortable, but also a bit uncomfortable. Encouraging, but also kind of scary.

Did I mention that we're also looking ahead to elect a new National Bishop next year at the National Convention? So by the end of next year, our BC Synod bishop, who again was just elected at our 2021 Synod Convention, will be the 2nd most experienced bishop out of the 6 ELCIC bishops. That means that by the end of next year, we will have 4 brand new bishops out of the possible 6. That's a lot of new leadership. That's a lot of transition. That's a lot of... maybe... fear.

Fear of the uncertain future. Fear of what we don't yet know or have seen. Fear of change.

Sure, it might seem that the change on the National and other Synodical levels won't affect us, but we can't deny that there are changes all around us. Change in our political climate, our environmental climate, and in the demographic and ethos of the city that we reside in. There is change in how matters of faith are regarded and the role that it plays in one's life. There is change on what we feel is an acceptable way of spending a Sunday morning. So it's there in all areas of life.

However, all things considered, we've been pretty fortunate here at Grace in that we aren't facing debilitating financial hardship or under threat of closing our doors, and we have a pastor that doesn't seem to be going anywhere. But still change is upon us. I mean, just look at us. Even though we aren't really in danger of going broke, we still aren't as numerous as we once were. Even though we keep somewhat busy with our own things, we don't seem to offer the same kinds of programs and engagement with the community as we once did. And even though sure, our pastor doesn't seem to be going anywhere, we have to admit that his sermons aren't as funny and lighthearted as they used to be, and he certainly isn't getting any younger. Still pretty good looking though.

So there is still this change that is kind of forced upon us. Maybe it's a bit subtle but we really aren't who we were before. Even if we don't always see it or admit to it, there is a peculiar fear among us that, under the guise of being realistic, might hold us back from trying new things, exploring experiments, or being open to change.

And I wonder if this fear is the actual fear that the disciples had in today's gospel reading. Sure, at first glance it seems obvious that the fear came from the raging wind and waves that threatened to literally kill them, but I wonder if it goes deeper than that. I know, you might think that there's no need to dig deeper than a threatening storm as a source of fear, but still, I wonder.

I mean, these are seasoned fishermen, who probably spent a lot of their lives on the water. Maybe even a "learned to row before they learned to walk," type thing. I would think that being in a boat would actually be their comfort zone, what they're familiar with, their safe and happy place. So would a little wind and some waves really shake them up the way that it sounds like they're shaken up? Well, it's a possibility I guess, but looking at the story a bit closer than I ever have before, I noticed something.

We're familiar with the story, Jesus tells the disciples to get on some boats and head to the other side of the water and a storm hit while he slept at the back of the boat. But notice how the disciples wake Jesus up. They weren't like, "Jesus wake up, we're about to die!" or "Jesus, here take a bucket and help us bail water so we don't die!" or "Jesus, how tired must you be that you aren't already awake because we're about to die?"

No, their impending death doesn't seem to be the focus of their fear. See, in their world, the danger of the seas come and go. In that climate, from what I've read, these flash storms aren't unusual. Really for a bunch of fishermen who we'd think would be well versed with how to navigate troubled waters, this

should have been a walk in the park for them. So I don't think they were afraid of the storm. I don't even think they were really afraid of capsizing or the possibility of drowning, that just comes with the territory.

See, I think the focus of their fear is seen in how they woke Jesus up. They ask him, "Teacher, don't you care?"

It sounds to me like they were afraid not that they might die, but that Jesus didn't care if they did or not. Like Jesus abandoned them in their time of need. Like Jesus allowed hardship on them for the sake of a nap.

Isn't that sometimes our fear as well? I mean, we know that things change all the time, so why do we resist it so much? Why do we look at how we are now and lament that we aren't how we were? Why does it seem like we do everything in our power to keep things the way that they've always been or at least look like it?

Are we afraid that in the change, we might lose ourselves? Lose our identity? Perhaps even lose Jesus?

But just as the disciples soon found out, that just isn't possible. Even when Jesus seems absent and asleep, he remains with us. Even when our lives are rocked to their core, Jesus remains steady. Even when our fears and insecurities bubble up to the surface and we begin to question what we know and believe and even our faith, Jesus stands up and blesses us with peace.

Peace that quells our fear. Peace that puts aside our questions and doubts and strengthens our faith. Peace that sparks in us hope.

At the Synod Convention, the highlight for me was the sharing that our youth delegation to the Lutheran World Federation Assembly last year gave. They spoke of the hope that we as a global church share. Hope in who we are, hope in whose we are, and hope as one body joined by one Spirit. That while we look at how different things are now compared to before, that we can still be united in God's kingdom.

This doesn't mean that the transitions and changes that we go through in our National Church, Synod, congregation, or even our personal lives aren't uncomfortable at all, but it does mean that they can be bearable and even good. For even in those times of little faith, God remains strong. In those times of fear and doubt, God still controls the winds and seas that beat and batter our lives and worldviews. In those times when it seems like God doesn't care and is just asleep at the wheel, God is present, with us and among us, reminding us of our connection, community, and peace.

So whatever life's troubles might come, whatever storms rock our boats, whatever surprising or perhaps unwanted changes and transitions happen, we can lean on the resilient strength, the identifying love, and the faith-producing peace of God who carries us with arms of grace and blessing.

As we continue through this season after Pentecost, a season of growth, change, and formation, may we rely on God's wisdom and might to reveal to us the love in spite of fear, the truth in spite of doubt, and the peace that surpasses all comprehension and understanding. Thanks be to God. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY: Day by Day (#790)

CREED (WOV p. 18)

Together with all those granted the peace of the Spirit, 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, 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

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Empowered by the Spirit of Christ, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Each petition will end with, "in your calming mercy, O Lord," and you are all invited to respond with **hear our prayer**. In your calming mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer**.

God of might, you overpower our fears and fill us with your love and promises, giving us a reason to offer you our thanksgiving and praise. Remind us always of your faithfulness, that we might rely on your Spirit to guide us through our future of ministry and service. We lift up in prayer our neighbouring faith communities; those who use this building for worship, work, and play; our partners Anglican Church of Canada and Moravian Church in Canada; and our bishops, rostered ministers, congregations, and ministries of the ELCIC. In particular we pray for Faith Lutheran Church in Kelowna and their pastor Brian Krushel; and for Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in North Vancouver and their pastor Vida Jaugelis (yow-GEH-luhs) In your calming mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer**.

God of wonder, this planet that you have created is full of wonder and beauty. Strengthen us in our care for this world, that it might continue to flourish and house life. We pray for those who live in areas of harsh weather and natural disasters, that you quell their fears and help them to find safety. In your calming mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer**.

God of justice, you have made your children to be diverse and colourful, giving us all a multitude of ways to see life and love. Grant to us strength to stand up for all life, that even our differences will not stand in the way of our community and care. We pray for the continued support of those that we've sponsored to come into this country: Abraham Barhane; and Solyana Amanuel; as well as those that have not yet arrived: Maekele Kiflu, Selam Haile, and their children; and Filimon Abraha. In your calming mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer**.

God of compassion, you have surrounded us with family and community, to which we can turn in our times of need. Strengthen our ministry to each other that all, especially the sick, the lonely, and the downcast, might know of your unending love and care. Especially we pray for

Beulah; Kathy and Raj; Ron, Tess, and Mineko; Bryan and Chona; Bev and family; Ellwood; John and Betty; Sukhwant; Kristen; Laura; Kandie; Thomas; Will; Chris; Larry; Walter; Piet; Hwee Yang; Ephraim; Georgina; Tom; and all whom we name aloud or quietly in our hearts at this time...

In your calming mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer.**

God of eternal reign, you welcome us into your kingdom that spans throughout time and space, joining us with you and all the saints in light. Remind us of their lives of faithfulness, that they may be examples for us to follow in our service and ministry. In your calming mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your overpowering peace and protection found in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE (WOV p. 20)

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

DIALOGUE (WOV p. 36)

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 our Saviour Jesus Christ, who calms us with your love and strengthens us with your peace, allowing us to join with all the choirs of angels, the hosts of heaven, and the whole church on earth in praising your name with this unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (WOV p. 36)

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Holy and almighty God, your name rings throughout the earth as a source of love and grace. For you have shown us power throughout creation, might through your healing and protection, and blessing through the abundance of mercy and redemption offered to us all, reminding us of all the wondrous deeds you have done and continue to do. And at the acceptable time, you send to us Jesus, your Son, to seek and save the lost.

For on that night that he was betrayed, your son Jesus sat with his disciples for a meal, where he took the bread, gave thanks, broke, and shared it saying, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

And then after they ate, he took the cup, gave thanks, and shared it with them 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 it is with this bread and cup that we are shown that we are brought into life, peace, and joy, even as we declare the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Blessed are you, O God for you protect us by your power, you guide us by your might, and you care for us by your love. Empower us with this food, that we might live as your servants throughout the world through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER (WOV p. 25)

Gathered in God's peace, 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

Taste and see the peace and care of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMNS: Lamb of God (WOV p. 39)

When Peace like A River (#785)

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

We are grateful, O God, that you call us and empower us to serve you through the Holy Spirit, who fills us with genuine love. Be with us as we go from here, looking for and recognizing the peace that you so graciously give, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

May the power of Creator God bless you and uphold you, the peace of God the Christ rest upon you and look upon you with favour, and the providence of our companion God defend you and lead you into joy and confidence, now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN: Lord of All Hopefulness (#765)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, trust that the Lord is with you.

Thanks be to God.

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