



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

OF SOUTH BURNABY, BC

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA

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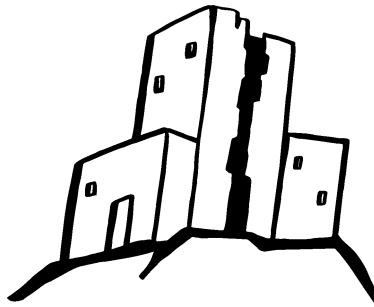
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Third Sunday after Pentecost

June 9, 2024

WOV Holy Communion, Setting Five: Bread of Life

A house divided against itself cannot stand. Jesus makes this observation in light of charges that he is possessed. He is possessed, not by a demon, but by the Holy Spirit. We who have received the Holy Spirit through baptism have been joined to Christ's death and resurrection and knit together in the body of Christ. Those with whom we sing and pray this day are Jesus' family. With them we go forth in peace to do the will of God.

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 hən̓q̓əmiñəm̓ (Musqueam) and Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) speaking peoples.

GATHERING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather in the name of our Lord, to whom we call from the depths of our despair, and who considers the voice of our supplication. For our God doesn't count our sin against us, but treats us with forgiveness and grace, placing hope in our souls and gratitude in our hearts. So we wait for the Lord, where we find mercy, plenteous redemption, and an eternal love and peace that surpasses all understanding. Let us worship our God with all that we are, through Jesus our brother and Saviour. **Amen. Thanks be to God.**

GATHERING HYMN: The Church's One Foundation (#654)

GREETING

The welcoming grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the uniting love of God, and the reconciling 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

Holy God of all that was, is, and is to come, you call out to us and gather us together as your diverse people in mission. Strengthen us as we watch for your presence in our lives, that we might trust in the promises of resurrection and new life that forgives, lifts us up, and joins us as the one body of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Genesis 3:8-15

A reading from Genesis.

Immediately after Adam and Eve eat the forbidden fruit, they hide from God. Neither takes responsibility for their sin, instead blaming each other, the snake, and even God. The curse on the snake was understood as a messianic prophecy by the early church, who associated Eve's "offspring" with Christ.

⁸[Adam and Eve] heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.⁹But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?"¹⁰He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself."¹¹He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"¹²The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate."¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate."¹⁴The LORD God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
cursed are you among all animals
and among all wild creatures;
upon your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.

¹⁵I will put enmity between you and the woman,

and between your offspring and hers;
he will strike your head,
and you will strike his heel.”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 130

¹Out of the depths have I called to you, O LORD; LORD, hear my voice;
let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.

²**If you, LORD, were to note what is done amiss,
O Lord, who could stand?**

³For there is forgiveness with you;
therefore you shall be feared.

⁴**I wait for the LORD; my soul waits for him;
in his word is my hope.**

⁵My soul waits for the LORD, more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.

⁶**O Israel, wait for the LORD,
for with the LORD there is mercy;**

⁷with him there is plenteous redemption,
and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

Life in the present is transitory and cannot compare with the eternal home God has prepared for us. So we do not despair no matter what life might bring because we know that as God raised Jesus from the dead, God promises to bring us into eternal life.

¹³Just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—“I believed, and so I spoke”—we also believe, and so we speak, ¹⁴because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. ¹⁵Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

¹⁶So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, ¹⁸because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

^{5:1}For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (WOV p. 31)

GOSPEL: Mark 3:20-35

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In response to charges that he is possessed, Jesus wonders aloud how anyone who is demon-possessed can cast out demons. Those who do the will of God are possessed by the Holy Spirit, siblings of Christ.

[Jesus went home;] ²⁰and the crowd came together again, so that [Jesus and the disciples] could not even eat. ²¹When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, “He has gone out of his mind.” ²²And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, “He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons.” ²³And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. ²⁷But no one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

²⁸“Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; ²⁹but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin” —³⁰for they had said, “He has an unclean spirit.”

³¹Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. ³²A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you.” ³³And he replied, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” ³⁴And looking at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Your Word, O God, is our hope. By the power of your Spirit may your voice ring in our hearts as we are attentive to your call and your wisdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Any of you have a sibling that shares the same gender as you and is just a year older so you’re often mistaken for them by other people? And if not mistaken for them, compared to them? And if not compared to them, asked pretty consistently what it’s like to have a sibling that shares the same gender and is just a year older? Anyone have one of those?

Well, I do. Believe me. Do I ever.

Many of you know I have an older brother. I have two older sisters too, but I’m not going to be talking about them today. There’s just something about brothers. It’s... I don’t know... hit and miss. I mean very often you’ll see sisters getting along. They’ll be each other’s best friend, maid of honour, or even godparent to their kids and they have no problem hanging out together. But brothers? Sometimes you get that, but also sometimes you don’t.

But with my brother and me? Well, let’s just say we’re a bit of column A and a bit of column B. I wasn’t kidding about me being mistaken for him a lot though, which is a bit baffling to me as I don’t think we look alike at all. I’m way better looking. But I guess to the untrained eye, we could look similar, in that we are both dark haired Asian males with 2 arms and 2 legs. Other than that, we couldn’t be more different.

We weren’t rivals or anything, not really at least, but we were very different in who we are, how we carry ourselves, and in our interests, talents, and skills. I thought this was apparent throughout our school years among our peers, and they should have been able to tell us apart. I mean, one of us is the

smart one, and one is the funny one. One is popular with the guys, and one is with the ladies. One is good at sports, and one is good in the arts. One is well liked by the parents and teachers for being really responsible, and one is liked by his peers for being so darned cool. And then... there was my brother. Actually now that I think about it, maybe we did rival a bit.

Seriously though, having a brother just a year older wasn't very easy for me. Because we were so close in age, my parents, aunts and uncles, and all of their friends pretty much expected me to be like my brother at the same time that he was him. And if I'm being honest, I'll admit that he was better than me in a number of things so I couldn't ever live up to that expectation. In a way I lived in his shadow a bit, so I guess maybe subconsciously I *tried* to be different from him. Then maybe I wouldn't have to be second to him anymore, but I could just be first to myself.

But I remember the day that this pseudo-rivalry came to somewhat of an end. Throughout high school and beyond (actually to this day), I would put his taste in music down, because back in those days, music was everything. Listening to the wrong kind of stuff was like a death sentence. And so I totally won in this category, as he was into the more soft rock type stuff that you'd hear on the oldies stations, while I stayed current with the latest trends and what all the popular kids were into. One day I came home and he had friends over hanging out in my room (which was a normal thing because my room had video games and stuff). They had some music on and just instinctively in disgust I said, "what is this crap?" and my brother calmly responded with, "it's *your* Space Jam CD". He was right. It indeed was my Space Jam CD, I recognized the song as one of the slower tracks on the album, and boy was there yolk on my face. It was then that I realised that I was putting him down just for the sake of putting him down. I wanted to be so different from him that I would scoff at anything he did without even thinking, I was just being antagonistic for no real good reason. I was causing the rivalry. I was the one who was dividing us up.

And Jesus tells us today that a house divided will fall.

Thankfully, our house didn't fall, not that I know of anyway, we moved out of it a long time ago. But what Jesus was saying makes sense, it's hard for a house that is divided to continue to stand both literally and metaphorically. It isn't easy for a family to stay close knit when they put each other down for no good reason. It's difficult for a group on a mission to get anything done when they can't agree on how to do it, who to do what, and what even needs to be done in the first place.

And so I think about the world we live in now. I think about the political climate that we find ourselves in here in Canada and abroad, how we are identified by who we vote for, who we protest against, and who we'll accept being corrupt and who we won't. I think about the arguments and division we see in our communities, our families, and even in our churches. Now, I should say that I'm not alluding to our congregational meeting we're having this afternoon, I mean usually we're a pretty easy going bunch. But I'm talking about the world in general. It just seems so... divisive now.

You know what I mean, don't you? It's hard not to see it almost everywhere we look. It seems like everyone wants to stand firm on their position of whatever opinion or argument, and there is no room for compromise. It's like everything needs to be polar opposites and if you're on one side then you have no place whatsoever on the other. It's like no one wants to take responsibility for anything but instead make assumptions and point fingers at the other as the one who is in the wrong.

The other that doesn't fit in the paradigm. The other that doesn't cheer for the right causes. The other that, just with who they are and what they believe in, continue to divide us apart.

But does that actually make sense?

Well instinctively, we'd say that it sure does, because again we're always right in our minds. But if we were to take a step back and objectively look at the situation, does it make sense? Or is that awful music that is playing actually our Space Jam CD?

So we are divided. Not just because of them, but also because of us. Our collective closed-mindedness has set us on a path of separation. Our need to blame others and relinquish responsibility for our actions has segregated us from each other. Our inexplicable desire to put others down for the sake of putting them down is forcing us to spiral down this endless loop of divisiveness. It's like we're destined to fall, destined to be apart, destined to sin. I mean, just look at Adam and Eve.

But.

The good news for Adam and Eve and us is that in our sin we are given a Saviour. In our isolation from each other, we are invited and welcomed back into community as one body. In our fallenness, God picks us back up, forgives and redeems us, and shows us how we have always been connected to God and all the saints of all time.

So we who have eyes to see, see. We who have ears to hear, hear. We who are open in our hearts, let us accept this invitation and welcome, let us embrace this forgiveness and redemption, let us have faith in this Saviour who saves us and brings us back into life.

This doesn't mean that the divisions between us will end. This doesn't mean that we'll always get along and agree on everything. This doesn't mean that we will no longer put others down or be put down by others. But it does mean that there is forgiveness for our separation. There is love in the midst of hate. There is unity in the Spirit.

So as we strive for this connection with each other, there will be failures. We will never be perfect. But it isn't up to our accomplishments, relationships, or ability or apparently lack thereof to do everything right all the time that God loves us and saves us, but it is up to God. And God chooses to call us, join us together as the diverse body of Christ, and save us all anyway.

As we continue on in this season after Pentecost, may we be reminded how we are connected in spite of our division, and rely on the faith and strength of Jesus Christ our Lord to unite us as the house of God, with him as the cornerstone. Thanks be to God. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY: Rise, Shine, You People! (#665)

CREED (WOV p. 18)

Together with all that comprise to be the house of God, 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

Called and led into unity with God and each other, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Each petition will end with, "God, in your gracious mercy," and you all may respond with **hear our prayer**. God, in your gracious mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, we cry to you out of the depths of our despair and sin, and your ears are attentive to our supplication and prayers, for you save us from our guilt and shame, and welcome us into your kingdom. Expand our view of the world that we might be able to truly welcome all people, that our inclusiveness be felt throughout the nations. We remember in prayer our neighbouring faith communities; those who use this building for worship, work, and play; our ecumenical and full communion partners: the Anglican Church of Canada and the Moravian Church in Canada; and our bishops, rostered ministers, congregations, and ministries of the ELCIC. In particular, we pray for Chetwynd Shared Ministry in Chetwynd and all the pastors and leaders that help minister there; and Christ Lutheran Church in Chilliwack and their pastor Dean Andersen. God, in your gracious mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, you watch over us with a gracious justice that allows us to live among and interact with all that you have created. Empower us in our stewardship of this planet that you have entrusted to us and may it flourish in its beauty and resourcefulness. God, in your gracious mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, in you there is an expansive forgiveness, for you do not hold our transgressions against us but you show us a better way to live. May the sins of our nation's past assist us in our healing into the future, and may our nation's leaders stay committed to the process of truth and reconciliation among all peoples. We pray for the continued support of those that we've sponsored to come into our country: Abraham Barhane; and Solyana Amanuel; as well as for those that have not yet arrived: Maekele Kiflu, Selam Haile, and their children; and Filimon Abraha. God, in your gracious mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, our souls wait for you as your word acts as our hope for community and healing. Be with all who mourn, who feel lonely, and who are sick, and restore us all into your wholeness and holiness. Especially we pray for Ron, Tess, and Mineko; Bryan and Chona; Beulah; Kathy and Raj; Bev and family; Ellwood; John and Betty; Sukhwant; Kristen; Laura; Kandie; Thomas; Will; Chris; Larry; Walter; Piet; Hwee Yang; Ephraim; and all those we name aloud or quietly in our hearts at this time ...

God, in your gracious mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, in you there is steadfast love and plenteous redemption, as you gather us together in your name with all the saints for all eternity. Remind us of the unity we share in your love, that regardless of background or upbringing, we all might know the welcome we have as your children into your kingdom full of love, grace, and peace. God, in your gracious mercy, **hear our prayer**.

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in the unity shared with us by the grace of 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 and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O God, through Jesus Christ our Lord; who continually reveals to us all the reconciliation found in your grace, that we might be joined 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

O Lord, we cry to you out of the depths, and you hear us and are attentive to the voice of our prayers. For you do not hold our sinfulness against us, but you forgive with an unbounded grace and mercy, joining us together as a community in your kingdom, speaking to us hope and steadfast love. Then in the fullness of time, you send to us your Son, Jesus, to live among us as one of us, leading us into the full communion of your Spirit with all the saints of all time.

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

Then after they ate it, he took the cup, gave thanks, and passed it around the table for them 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 in this bread and cup that we are reminded that we are united together in grace and mercy, together proclaiming this basis of our faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

So it is to you, O God, that all honour and glory belong, for all that you have done and continue to do through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, as one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER (WOV p. 25)

United as one by the 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

Taste and see the unity found in Christ.

Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION

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

Let Steams of Living Justice (#710)

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Holy God, again you have fed us with your nourishing Word and liberating truth, that we might live freely to worship, serve, and be your people in the world. Strengthen us as we go from here, that your love might be faithfully reflected in all that we say and do, through Jesus Christ, by the power of your Spirit. **Amen.**

BLESSING

May the Creator God who seeks and finds us,
the Christ God who calls and claims us,
and our Companion God who renews us day by day,
bless us, sustain us, and unite us, now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN: Christ, Be Our Light (#715)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, united as one in Christ.

Thanks be to God.