



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

OF SOUTH BURNABY, BC

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA

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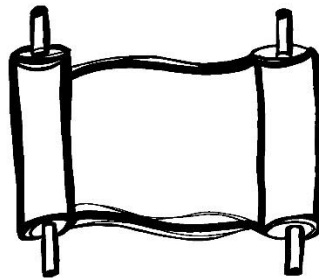
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Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

July 13, 2025

ACS Holy Communion, Setting 12

To love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind is to reflect God's mercy in responding to one's neighbor. That mercy found its most profound expression in the "gospel that has come to you"—namely the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That gospel mercy comes to us again today: at the font, at the table, and from the pulpit. It is very near to you.

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 those who are here worshipping in-person and 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.

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

GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather this day in worship, with our souls lifted up to the Lord, in whom we put our trust, by whom we are not put to shame. For the Lord's ways are shown to us, the Lord's paths of truth and salvation are taught to us, as we are given everlasting compassion and steadfast love through the gracious and upright forgiveness that welcomes us all into God's kingdom. And so in our faithfulness and obedience, we together bow down before our God to sing, praise, and live in neighbourly community, through Jesus our Lord. **Amen. Thanks be to God.**

GATHERING SONG: Spirit, Open My Heart (ACS #1043)

GREETING

The steadfast grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the just love of God, and the faithful communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

SONG OF PRAISE (ACS p. 31)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Give your church, O God the grace to serve you with courage, to be a neighbour with compassion, and to act as witnesses to your steadfast love through our testimony and action, that your mercy might be seen and felt in all the world, by the power of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and friend. **Amen.**

WORD

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 30:9-14

A reading from Deuteronomy.

Moses calls the people who are about to enter the promised land to renew the covenant God made with their ancestors. Through this covenant God gives life and asks for obedience. God's commandment is neither burdensome nor too far off, but dwells in the people's hearts.

⁹ The LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all your undertakings, in the fruit of your body, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your soil. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, just as he delighted in prospering your ancestors, ¹⁰ when you obey the LORD your God by observing his commandments and decrees that are written in this book of the law, because you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

¹¹ "Surely, this commandment that I am commanding you today is not too hard for you, nor is it too far away. ¹² It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?' ¹³ Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross to the other side of the sea for us and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?' ¹⁴ No, the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 25:1-10

¹ To you, O LORD,
I lift up my soul.

- ² **My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**
- ³ Let none who look to you be put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.
- ⁴ **Show me your ways, O LORD,
and teach me your paths.**
- ⁵ Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.
- ⁶ **Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.**
- ⁷ Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.
- ⁸ **You are gracious and upright, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**
- ⁹ You lead the lowly in justice
and teach the lowly your way.
- ¹⁰ **All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness
to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.**

SECOND READING: Colossians 1:1-14

A reading from Colossians.

The letter to the Colossians was written to warn its readers of various false teachings. The first part of the letter is an expression of thanks for the faith, hope, and love that mark this community, including a prayer for strength and courage.

- ¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,
² To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father.
- ³ In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, ⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel ⁶ that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. ⁷ This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, ⁸ and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.
- ⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. ¹¹ May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, so that you may have all endurance and patience, joyfully ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³ He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ACS p. 33)

GOSPEL: Luke 10:25-37

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus is challenged to explain what is involved in obeying the greatest commandment. He tells a parable rich in surprises: those expected to show pity display hard hearts while the lowly give and receive unexpected and lavish mercy.

²⁵ An expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ²⁶ He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” ²⁷ He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself.” ²⁸ And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

²⁹ But wanting to vindicate himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” ³⁰ Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and took off, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan while traveling came upon him, and when he saw him he was moved with compassion. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, treating them with oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him, and when I come back I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” ³⁷ He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

By your Spirit, O God, may our eyes be opened to your justice, our ears be opened to your promises, and our hearts be opened to your love, through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

So I have a confession, I very impulsively did a thing the other day that I’m not exactly proud of. I am embarrassed and almost ashamed to inform you all that I went and watched the new Superman movie this past Thursday on its opening weekend.

I know, it doesn’t sound like a big deal, until you realise like my son did that Superman is a DC property. And maybe then you’ll react like he did in saying, “Don’t we only watch Marvel movies?” And he’s not wrong, I usually only go to the theatres, especially on opening weekend to watch MCU movies and saved all the other comic book movies for streaming if I even bothered with them at all.

But the reason I went to watch this one is... well, it’s Superman. Probably the best known super hero ever created. And while the last like 5 or 6 titles that featured Superman have been awful at best, I guess I just wanted to see what direction this new movie would take this beloved character. Aaaaand... it wasn’t that good.

I mean, this is Superman we're talking about. He's supposed to be super. He's supposed to be the most overpowered hero we have. He's supposed to be able to beat anyone and do anything. And if he can't? They would just create a new power for him so he can. And not only does he somehow have every useful power ever conceived of, he's also the most moral, righteous, and upstanding character to ever grace the pages of a comic book. He was supposed to be the inspiration for us to be better. He is supposed to be the motivation all the other characters to do better. And he's supposed to be the epitome of truth, justice, and what used to be the American way.

But how they portrayed Superman in this movie? Well, I think they tried to make him too relatable. Well, as relatable as an overpowered meta human from another planet can be, at least. Sure, they highlighted his struggles, his worries, and his loves, his very human traits which were always present in the comics, but it's just that... I've never seen any Superman iteration get beat up as badly or as often as this one has.

I get it though, I guess. Like I said, Superman as a character has always been almost *too* strong, like to the point that they actually have to say he's holding back when he's running faster than a speeding bullet or leaping over tall buildings. So it's like this movie puts limits on his limitless potential perhaps in an attempt to make him more attainable, accessible, and more human in terms of flaws and general beat-up-ability.

Because that is sometimes a thing, right? I mean Superman being motivating and inspirational is cool and all, but once he is so super that it's overwhelming and intimidating, then we might just lose interest. We might feel down about ourselves because we can't even compare. We might not even want to try when we know we can't be anywhere near as good.

At least, I know I feel this way when I see and hear what my colleagues are capable of, or when I see the accomplishments of my peers, or even when I compare myself with those who I aspire to be like, then I might shrink away as I don't feel like I can ever be good enough, strong enough, or faithful enough to do all the good that they can do. Maybe you know what I mean and feel the same way when you look at your heroes, those you admire and look up to, those role models that model for you the role you can have in community, society, and the world.

Or maybe you feel that way every time you hear or read this Good Samaritan story that we get in today's gospel lesson. Talk about inaccessible and intimidating. This guy did what no one expected him to. He went up against all odds and broke every mold that he would have been put in. It is almost overwhelming how much he dominates in the "being helpful" department.

And just to highlight how helpful he actually is, maybe we need a bit of context around this story. We're told that this incident happened on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, which might not sound so bad but it actually was. Serving as a sort of a more direct shortcut between the two cities, this road was steep, rocky, and treacherous. And to make matters worse, it was littered with thieves and bandits constantly on the hunt for their next mark and victim. And because of all these reasons to not travel on this road, no one really did... unless they had to. Not just if they were in a hurry and needed the shortcut or they were actually a thief or a bandit themselves, but people would take this route if they didn't want their travels to be too well known perhaps in hopes that their clandestine activities be kept on the down low.

So this is where we find the victim of this parable. It wouldn't have surprised anyone to hear that he was jumped, robbed, and left for dead. In fact, it would have been more surprising if he weren't. But him even being on this road meant that he probably wasn't exactly an upstanding citizen himself. And the same goes for those religious leaders who didn't help him as well. Ironically enough, this would give them *more* reason to *not* help the man. Not only would it be ritualistically unclean for them to do so, but it would probably also implicate them and their shady travels on this shady road.

But that's just it. As many reasons that the two religious leaders had to not help, this Samaritan had more. He could have walked away and no one would think anything of it. In fact, his peers would have probably encouraged it.

But he didn't. He stopped. He helped. He risked his safety, his reputation, and probably his life to show mercy.

And my goodness that level of good is intimidating.

I don't know if I could do what he did if I were in that same position. I don't know if I could stand up to what he had to face. I don't know if I could be as good as this outsider, this foreigner, this super man.

But if I learned anything from that not-that-great movie version of Superman, is that even superheroes could get scared. Maybe they get beat up as well. And as perfect as the Samaritan seemed, he probably compared himself to others and maybe even felt intimidated. As good of an example as he is for us, he would have very much had his own flaws, fears, and failures. Even though he is a fictional character in this parable, he is still very human. And that doesn't stop him.

And it shouldn't stop us.

See the beauty of this parable wasn't at all in the Samaritan's past upbringing or accolades or accomplishments. It wasn't about the respect he had from those around him. It wasn't about what set him apart to be better than anyone else. But this parable is about how we don't have to be all that in order to do all that. We don't have to have super-hero levels of strength and power to matter and mean something in the world. We don't have to know all the answers and have it all together to be a neighbour and a good person. Instead, God sees us as we are, knows us for who we are, and loves and calls us anyway, flaws and shortcomings and all. And God empowers us not to be perfect, but to accept the mercy that we've been shown and reflect out onto all people.

So may we, like the Samaritan in the story, also see others. May we know their hurts and pains that we may or may not share with them. And may we find the strength in us to not save or fix, but to believe that we are called, see that we are forgiven, and know that we have been invited and welcomed into a community where we can love and be loved, and recognise how we can be a neighbour to all by compassionately serving and helping and acting out of mercy.

My friends, this is the kingdom of God. This is the church to which we all belong. This is the body of Christ that we are intimately a part of: open and inspirational, accepting and accessible, and empowering us how to live, to be, and to love.

In this season after Pentecost, may we see the role that we play in the world and in this body of Christ, that we might be empowered to live in our calling, love in our salvation, and show mercy by the promises that we've been given. Thanks be to God. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY: My Life Flows On in Endless Song (#763)

CREED

Together with all those filled with God's mercy, let us confess the Christian faith using 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

Called to be neighbour to our neighbours, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Each petition will end with “in your loving mercy, O Lord,” and you are invited to respond with **hear our prayer**. In your loving mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer**.

O God, we put our trust in you and you do not put us to shame. You know our hurts and brokenness and you offer us your grace and healing. May we follow the examples you give us and reflect this grace upon all who are in need, through the strength of Jesus our Lord. In your loving mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer**.

O God, you show us your ways and teach us your paths, and you bring us together as a people in ministry. Guide us, your church, to serve you and all your people with love and joy. We pray especially for our neighbouring faith communities; those that 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 our global mission companion, the Evangelical Lutheran Church – Peru and their president Ofelia Davila; as well as for their other partner synods: Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod and their bishop Mike Reinhardt; and LaCrosse Area Synod in Wisconsin and their bishop Felix Malpica. And we also give special thanks for the election of our new national bishop _____. May his/her ministry in our church and country be fruitful and inspiring. In your loving mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer**.

O God, lead us in your truth and teach us, for you have entrusted to us your whole creation that is so full of wonder and beauty. Strengthen us in our stewardship, that this planet may be restored and continue to house life for generations. In your loving mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer**.

O God, you forgive our sin and transgressions, and you are gracious and upright. May these traits be reflected in our world leaders and politicians, that all people may be judged and treated fairly. We pray especially for the continued support of those that we’ve sponsored to come into our country: Abraham Barhane; Solyana Amanuel; and Filimon Abraha; as well as for those who have not yet arrived: Maekele Kiflu, Selam Haile, and their children; and Meri Gabramikael. In your loving mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O God, you regard us with your steadfast love and goodness, and you bring healing to us who call upon you. Remember all who are sick, who feel lonely, or who are downcast, and restore us to wholeness and bring us into your peace. We pray especially for Bryan and Chona; Ron, Tess, and Mineko; Beulah; Joe; Janet; Olaf; Bev and family; John and Betty; Sukhwant; Pastor Kristen; Laura; Kandie; Thomas; Will; Chris; Larry; Walter; Piet; Hwee Yang; Ephraim; Kelly; Mardi; and all those we name aloud or quietly in our hearts at this time...
In your loving mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God, you lead us to your justice and you teach us your ways. Remind us of the faithful lives of all your saints, that we might look to them as examples of love and service as they continue to live with you and in our hearts as the one body of Christ. In your loving mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

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, O God, through our Saviour Jesus Christ, who strengthens us in your ways of steadfast love and faithfulness, joining us with all the choirs of angels, the hosts of heaven, and the whole church on earth in praising you and this unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ACS p. 36)

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

To you, O Lord, we lift up our souls. We put our trust in you for you do not put us to shame or let our enemies triumph over us. In your great compassion and love, you send to us your Son, Jesus, to teach us your ways of love and lead us on your paths of righteousness, filling us with your truth and welcoming us into salvation.

For on the night that he was betrayed, your Son Jesus sat with his friends for a meal, where he took the bread, gave thanks, broke and shared it with them saying, "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 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 through this bread and cup that we remember your steadfast love and goodness, even as we together declare the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

You are gracious and upright, O Lord, and you lead us into your justice and peace. Your steadfast love and faithfulness walk us down the paths of your covenant, and we testify to your grace and mercy through our praise to you, your Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, as you live together as one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER (ACS p. 39)

United as neighbours 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

Taste and see God's mercy and steadfast love.

Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMNS: Lamb of God (ACS p. 40)

 If You But Trust in God to Guide You (#769)

 Precious Lord, Take My Hand (#773)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy God, you have again fed us with this bread and cup, elements of your grace and mercy. Strengthen us in our service and ministry, that your love might be reflected out onto the world in all that we say and do, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

May the God our Shepherd bless you and show you mercy,
the Son of boundless grace shine in and through your lives,

and the Spirit of surprising and steadfast love and faithfulness look upon you with favour and give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING SONG: What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine (#774)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, let the light of God's compassion shine through you.

Thanks be to God.

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