



Season of the Spirit

LWF Communion Prayer
for Pentecost 2020

Week 5 – Fourth Week after Pentecost



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

A Communion
of Churches

Introduction

Welcome to ordinary time! The liturgical season of Pentecost is called “ordinary” because the weeks are ordered, or numbered. Some of our churches order these weeks according to the Sundays after Pentecost, some after Trinity Sunday, and others, until the start of Advent, and a new liturgical year. This season is replete with stories of the early church, and the ways in which the Holy Spirit calls, enlightens and equips the Church to participate in the ministry of reconciliation begun in Jesus Christ. Though it is called ordinary, the season of Pentecost is rather extraordinary!

Pentecost is a Season of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit descends upon the disciples like tongues of fire, giving the ability to be understood in diverse languages. In a great reversal of the Tower of Babel story (Genesis 11) the story of Pentecost reminds us that the Holy Spirit equips illuminates a diversity of gifts. As a priesthood of all believers, each of us is uniquely gifted to live out our baptismal vocation. During this season, there are also a diversity of church festivals, such as Trinity Sunday, Holy Cross Day, All Saints and All Souls, and the Reign of Christ. The Pentecost season also leads into the 16 Days of Action against Gender Based Violence, where we profess the image of God and the breath of the Spirit in each human being.

Pentecost is a green time. The prominent liturgical color of this season is green, which signifies growth in many cultures. In some parts of the globe this is the growing season. But regardless of what hemisphere in which we live, Pentecost is a season to focus on the work of the Spirit who nurtures our gifts to bear fruit. In these weeks we mark the Season of Creation (1 September – 4 October). This is a time to give thanks for all creation, and the Holy Spirit who renews the face of the earth, and our vocation to till and keep this garden in a sustainable and just peace.

The ongoing experience of a global pandemic reminds us of our common nature, and the vulnerabilities and limits of being a creature. May Pentecost be for us a hopeful season to remember the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We offer this resource to our global Lutheran communion, as a way to be in the solidarity of prayer during this Season of the Spirit. Daily prayer follows a simple order: psalmody and prayer. Prayers can be adapted for use in your practice of prayer: singing songs, adding your prayers, or any liturgical acts that are meaningful in your context. In addition to the texts, which follow the Revised Common Lectionary, you will notice that each week contains a meditation on the Sunday text.

We commend these prayers to your use, whether alone in your home, as a family, or as your community is able to gather at a distance. As you pray in solidarity with the

communion across the globe, and the communion of saints in all times and places, be encouraged by the counsel that Luther offers in his letter, A Simple Way to Pray:

“Never think that you are kneeling or standing alone, rather think that the whole of the Church...are standing there beside you and you are standing among them in a common, united petition which God cannot disdain. There we find God the Creator, God the Redeemer, God the Holy Spirit, that is, God who daily sanctifies us.”

And throughout this green time, may the Spirit of God bring forth new growth in you.

Prayers are from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Augsburg Fortress, 2006. All scriptural texts are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). The daily lectionary of the Revised Common Lectionary is followed.

Sunday, 28 June 2020

Psalmody

Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.

For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth.

He subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet.

He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves. Selah

God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.

For God is the king of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm.

God is king over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.

The princes of the peoples gather as the people of the God of Abraham.

For the shields of the earth belong to God; he is highly exalted.

– Psalm 47

Word

Matthew 10:40-42

Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.

Meditation

The Gospel according to Matthew contains five sections or “discourses”. Chapter 10 is part of the second discourse. It is sometimes called the Missionary Discourse because Jesus sends the disciples out to participate in the ministry of proclaiming, healing and serving. Verses 40-42 highlight the importance of hospitality in that ministry.

In many of our cultures hospitality is a fundamental social value. When a visitor arrives, we follow elaborate greeting rituals, offer a drink, a meal and prepare a place to rest. Cultivating a spirituality of hospitality is an important part of the Christian life.

Across the LWF, we find myriad examples of this ministry of hospitality. We create safe spaces to care for the vulnerable in homes. We strive for radical inclusivity in congregations. We welcome the stranger and people on the move in diaconal ministries and humanitarian responses. Serving our neighbor in a time of need is faithful and just. This perspective recalls Matthew 25 where Jesus says when you serve the least, you serve me.

But in Matthew 10 Jesus teaches his disciples to think of ministry from the perspective of the one being hosted. Christ invites us to experience the holiness of hospitality in a new way.

I served as a hospital chaplain in a pediatric oncology and emergency department. I would approach the room of a child and family with a prayer of thanksgiving for being able to minister to Christ in this moment. When there were no words to honor the depth of grief or pain, I would remember Christ’s teaching that giving a cold cup of water can be a silent sign-act that communicates God’s gracious presence. And it normally did.

But I quickly learned the inbreaking of God’s Spirit was not because I was being kind. On the contrary, loving kindness was possible because the patient had graciously welcomed me into that vulnerable space. When we empty our need to be the host, and graciously receive the hospitality of the vulnerable on their terms, a profound experience of grace awaits. When we minister with a spirituality of reception, we find that we are entertaining angels.

Whether in a refugee camp, a shelter for the homeless, a hospital room or a new home where we do not know the culture or language, being receptive allows the holiness of hospitality to flow. In being willing to be received, we make room to receive the one who sent us.

This is eucharistic hospitality. We set the table to share wine and bread. Then we quickly realize that we are the ones invited to receive the gift of Love from the Giver of Life. Hospitality is an invitation to holiness. As you go out to minister, may your service, your friendships, your artistic expressions, and your relationships become holy places for giving and receiving to share in our reward - a joyous communion of Love.

Prayer

God, the giver of life, as you send us out to bear witness to your ministry of reconciliation, open our hearts to receive you in our midst. Stir up your Spirit to open our eyes to your loving presence, in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Monday, 29 June 2020

Psalmody

Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.

For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth.

He subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet.

He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves. Selah

God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.

For God is the king of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm.

God is king over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.

The princes of the peoples gather as the people of the God of Abraham.

For the shields of the earth belong to God; he is highly exalted.

– Psalm 47

Word

Genesis 22:15-18

The angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, “By myself I have sworn, says the LORD: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.”

Prayer

God, the giver of life, as you send us out to bear witness to your ministry of reconciliation, open our hearts to receive you in our midst. Stir up your Spirit to open our eyes to your loving presence, in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Tuesday, 30 June 2020

Psalmody

Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.

For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth.

He subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet.

He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves. Selah

God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.

For God is the king of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm.

God is king over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.

The princes of the peoples gather as the people of the God of Abraham.

For the shields of the earth belong to God; he is highly exalted.

– Psalm 47

Word

1 John 4:1-6

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. And this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming; and now it is already in the world. Little children, you are from God, and have conquered them; for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore what they say is from the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us, and whoever is not from God does not listen to us. From this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Prayer

God, the giver of life, as you send us out to bear witness to your ministry of reconciliation, open our hearts to receive you in our midst. Stir up your Spirit to open our eyes to your loving presence, in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Wednesday, 1 July 2020

Psalmody

Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.

For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth.

He subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet.

He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves. Selah

God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.

For God is the king of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm.

God is king over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.

The princes of the peoples gather as the people of the God of Abraham.

For the shields of the earth belong to God; he is highly exalted.

– Psalm 47

Word

Isaiah 51:1-3

Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness,
you that seek the LORD.

Look to the rock from which you were hewn,
and to the quarry from which you were dug.

Look to Abraham your father
and to Sarah who bore you;
for he was but one when I called him,
but I blessed him and made him many.

For the LORD will comfort Zion;
he will comfort all her waste places,
and will make her wilderness like Eden,
her desert like the garden of the LORD;
joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and the voice of song.

Prayer

God, the giver of life, as you send us out to bear witness to your ministry of reconciliation, open our hearts to receive you in our midst. Stir up your Spirit to open our eyes to your loving presence, in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Thursday, 2 July 2020

Psalmody

Hear, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; forget your people and your father's house,

and the king will desire your beauty. Since he is your lord, bow to him;

the people of Tyre will seek your favor with gifts, the richest of the people

with all kinds of wealth. The princess is decked in her chamber with gold-woven robes;

in many-colored robes she is led to the king; behind her the virgins, her companions, follow.

With joy and gladness they are led along as they enter the palace of the king.

In the place of ancestors you, O king, shall have sons; you will make them princes in all the earth.

I will cause your name to be celebrated in all generations; therefore the peoples will praise you forever and ever.

– Psalm 45:10-17

Word

Genesis 25:19-27

These are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, sister of Laban the Aramean. Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. The children struggled together within her; and she said, "If it is to be this way, why do I live?" So she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said to her,

"Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples born of you shall be divided;
the one shall be stronger than the other,
the elder shall serve the younger."

When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau. Afterward his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them. When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents.

Prayer

Almighty Creator: we praise you for your creative and life sustaining love. Nurture in us the gift of faith, that we may trust in your way, and be renewed daily in the love of the Holy Trinity, one God, now and forever.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Friday, 3 July 2020

Psalmody

Hear, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; forget your people and your father's house,

and the king will desire your beauty. Since he is your lord, bow to him;

the people of Tyre will seek your favor with gifts, the richest of the people
with all kinds of wealth. The princess is decked in her chamber with gold-woven robes;

in many-colored robes she is led to the king; behind her the virgins, her companions, follow.

With joy and gladness they are led along as they enter the palace of the king.

In the place of ancestors you, O king, shall have sons; you will make them princes in all the earth.

I will cause your name to be celebrated in all generations; therefore the peoples will praise you forever and ever.

– Psalm 45:10-17

Word

Romans 7:7-20

What then should we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet, if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." But sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law sin lies dead. I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died, and the very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. For sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good.

Did what is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, working death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am of the flesh, sold into slavery under sin. I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

Prayer

Almighty Creator: we praise you for your creative and life sustaining love. Nurture in us the gift of faith, that we may trust in your way, and be renewed daily in the love of the Holy Trinity, one God, now and forever.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Saturday, 4 July 2020

Psalmody

Hear, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; forget your people and your father's house,

and the king will desire your beauty. Since he is your lord, bow to him;

the people of Tyre will seek your favor with gifts, the richest of the people

with all kinds of wealth. The princess is decked in her chamber with gold-woven robes;

in many-colored robes she is led to the king; behind her the virgins, her companions, follow.

With joy and gladness they are led along as they enter the palace of the king.

In the place of ancestors you, O king, shall have sons; you will make them princes in all the earth.

I will cause your name to be celebrated in all generations; therefore the peoples will praise you forever and ever.

– Psalm 45:10-17

Word

Luke 10:21-24

At that same hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

Then turning to the disciples, Jesus said to them privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it."

Prayer

Almighty Creator: we praise you for your creative and life sustaining love. Nurture in us the gift of faith, that we may trust in your way, and be renewed daily in the love of the Holy Trinity, one God, now and forever.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.