



Season of Creation

LWF Communion Prayer for Pentecost 2020

Week 15 – Fourteenth Week after Pentecost



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

A Communion
of Churches



SEASON OF
CREATION

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. Though it is called ordinary the season of Pentecost is 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. 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.

Within this green time, [the weeks from 1 September-4 October mark the Season of Creation](#). This is a season to give thanks for all creation, and the Holy Spirit who renews the face of the earth, and our human vocation to till and keep the garden in a just sustainable peace.

During the Season of Creation, [the LWF joins our ecumenical family in preparing the 2020 Celebration Guide, which includes the ecumenical liturgy that shapes our prayers during these five weeks](#). The 2020 theme, ***Jubilee for the Earth***, invites you to consider the integral relationship between rest for the earth and ecological, economic, social and political ways of living. This particular year, the need for just and sustainable systems has been revealed by the far-reaching effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

We offer this resource to our global Lutheran communion, as a way to be in the solidarity of prayer during this Season of Creation. 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 these weeks include meditations on themes related to the Season of Creation.

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 and Revised Common Lectionary Prayers, Augsburg Fortress, 2002. All scriptural texts are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). The daily lectionary of the Revised Common Lectionary is followed.

Sunday, 6 September 2020

Psalmody

God made the moon to mark the seasons,
and the sun knows when to go down.

You bring darkness, it becomes night,
and all the beasts of the forest prowl.

The lions roar for their prey
and seek their food from God.

The sun rises, and they steal away;
they return and lie down in their dens.

Then people go out to their work,
to their labor until evening.

How many are your works, Lord!
In wisdom you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

All creatures look to you
to give them their food at the proper time.

When you give it to them,
they gather it up;

when you open your hand,
they are satisfied with good things.

When you hide your face,
they are terrified;

when you take away their breath,
they die and return to the dust.

When you send your Spirit,
they are created,
and you renew the face of the ground.

May the glory of the Lord endure forever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works
– *Psalm 104*

Word

Romans 13:8-14

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not covet,” and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here.

Meditation

During the Season of Creation, the Christian family is united in a liturgical time of prayer and action to care for creation. Data confirms that if we do not change our economies and lifestyles of consumption, the effects of climate change will cause planetary systems to fail, economies and food systems to break down, leading to more loss and damages, greater climate migration and increased conflict over resources, beginning with the most vulnerable. If we want to avoid that disruption of society, then we need to care for the integrity of creation. Many of us ask, why do the facts not motivate more people to change their behavior. Part of the reason can be explained by the grammar of the law.

The grammar of the law is transactional and conditional: “if...then...”. If you do this properly, then I will love you. The conditional nature of the law creates anxiety that you will fall short. In the case of climate change, it can create eco-anxiety. The law can paralyze us with fear. But the gospel liberates us with the grammar: “because...therefore...”. Because God loves you unconditionally, therefore you are free to love in whatever way gives life. Grace changes everything. In the Romans passage, Paul says, “because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed...therefore love is the fulfilment of the law.” Wake up from your anxiety! Because God loves you, you are free to love your neighbor. Once a lawyer, well trained in legal grammar, challenged Jesus on this point by asking him, “who is my neighbor?” Many people still raise the challenge, how does the gospel relate to my relationship to creation? The answer lies in our response to the question, “who is my neighbor?”

We have learned many lessons during the COVID-19 pandemic. Perhaps the most universal experience has been related to social distancing. We have seen how prolonged distancing from human beings can diminish our emotional well-being and create acute crises in mental health. But what about our physical distance from non-human beings? Physical distancing from the non-human members of the Earth community also diminishes our physical and mental well-being, and is the root of all sorts of economic, political, social and ecological disintegration. Human beings have been socially distancing from the non-human members of society for far too long. Do we even consider non-human creation as part of our society? Are not the animals, plants, rivers and mountains our neighbors? Are we not freed from economic gain and consumption to love these non-human neighbors as ourselves?

We are motivated to do our part to abate the COVID-19 pandemic so that we can restore the social disruption, with a renewed appreciation of being able to love our neighbours through normal daily social interactions and in worship. But do we yearn to restore right relationships with our non-human neighbours? This Season of Creation, the theme of Jubilee is an invitation to contemplate the integral ecology of relationships that are necessary to sustain life on our planet. Reforming our economic, political, and social systems in just ways that allow the Earth to rest requires courage and the freedom for moral imagination. Our ecological turning begins by seeing creation as part of our society, that is diminished by exclusion and distancing. We hope that this season of prayer and action will motivate us to nurture a spirituality of Earth-keeping, where the gospel frees us to love our non-human neighbor as ourselves. When we wake up to this good news, our salvation will be nearer now than when we first believed.

Prayer

We praise you God, for the Earth that sustains life. Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons, renewal and growth, open your hand to give all creatures our food in the proper time. Amen.

(from the 2020 Season of Creation Celebration Guide)

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

May God who established the dance of creation,
Who marveled at the lilies of the field,
Who transforms chaos to order,
Lead us to transform our lives and the Church
To reflect God's glory in creation.

(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Amen.

Monday, 7 September 2020

Psalmody

God made the moon to mark the seasons,
and the sun knows when to go down.

You bring darkness, it becomes night,
and all the beasts of the forest prowl.

The lions roar for their prey
and seek their food from God.

The sun rises, and they steal away;
they return and lie down in their dens.

Then people go out to their work,
to their labor until evening.

How many are your works, Lord!
In wisdom you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

All creatures look to you
to give them their food at the proper time.

When you give it to them,
they gather it up;

when you open your hand,
they are satisfied with good things.

When you hide your face,
they are terrified;

when you take away their breath,
they die and return to the dust.

When you send your Spirit,
they are created,
and you renew the face of the ground.

May the glory of the Lord endure forever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works
– *Psalm 104*

Word

Psalm 119:65-72

Do good to your servant
according to your word, Lord.

Teach me knowledge and good judgment,
for I trust your commands.

Before I was afflicted I went astray,
but now I obey your word.

You are good, and what you do is good;
teach me your decrees.

Though the arrogant have smeared me with lies,
I keep your precepts with all my heart.

Their hearts are callous and unfeeling,
but I delight in your law.

It was good for me to be afflicted
so that I might learn your decrees.

The law from your mouth is more precious to me
than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.

Prayer

We praise you God, for the Earth that sustains life. Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons, renewal and growth, open your hand to give all creatures our food in the proper time. Amen.

(from the 2020 Season of Creation Celebration Guide)

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

May God who established the dance of creation,
Who marveled at the lilies of the field,
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(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Amen.

Tuesday, 8 September 2020

Psalmody

God made the moon to mark the seasons,
and the sun knows when to go down.
You bring darkness, it becomes night,
and all the beasts of the forest prowl.

The lions roar for their prey
and seek their food from God.

The sun rises, and they steal away;
they return and lie down in their dens.

Then people go out to their work,
to their labor until evening.

How many are your works, Lord!
In wisdom you made them all;
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All creatures look to you
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May the glory of the Lord endure forever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works

– *Psalms 104*

Word

Exodus 12:29-42

During the night Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, “Up! Leave my people, you and the Israelites! Go, worship the Lord as you have requested. Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. And also bless me.” The Egyptians urged the people to hurry and leave the country. “For otherwise,” they said, “we will all die!” So the people took their dough before the yeast was added, and carried it on their shoulders in kneading troughs wrapped in clothing. The Israelites did as Moses instructed and asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and for clothing. The Lord had made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for; so they plundered the Egyptians. The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Sukkoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. Many other people went up with them, and also large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds. With the dough the Israelites had brought from Egypt, they baked loaves of unleavened bread. The dough was without yeast because they had been driven out of Egypt and did not have time to prepare food for themselves. Now the length of time the Israelite people lived in Egypt was 430 years. At the end of the 430 years, to the very day, all the Lord’s divisions left Egypt. Because the Lord kept vigil that night to bring them out of Egypt, on this night all the Israelites are to keep vigil to honor the Lord for the generations to come.

Prayer

We praise you God, for the Earth that sustains life. Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons, renewal and growth, open your hand to give all creatures our food in the proper time. Amen.

(from the 2020 Season of Creation Celebration Guide)

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

May God who established the dance of creation,
Who marveled at the lilies of the field,
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(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Amen.

Wednesday, 9 September 2020

Psalmody

God made the moon to mark the seasons,
and the sun knows when to go down.

You bring darkness, it becomes night,
and all the beasts of the forest prowl.

The lions roar for their prey
and seek their food from God.

The sun rises, and they steal away;
they return and lie down in their dens.

Then people go out to their work,
to their labor until evening.

How many are your works, Lord!
In wisdom you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

All creatures look to you
to give them their food at the proper time.

When you give it to them,
they gather it up;

when you open your hand,
they are satisfied with good things.

When you hide your face,
they are terrified;

when you take away their breath,
they die and return to the dust.

When you send your Spirit,
they are created,
and you renew the face of the ground.

May the glory of the Lord endure forever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works
– *Psalm 104*

Word

Exodus 13:1-10

Then Moses said to the people, “Commemorate this day, the day you came out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery, because the Lord brought you out of it with a mighty hand. Eat nothing containing yeast. Today, in the month of Aviv, you are leaving. When the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites and Jebusites—the land he swore to your ancestors to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey—you are to observe this ceremony in this month: For seven days eat bread made without yeast and on the seventh day hold a festival to the Lord. Eat unleavened bread during those seven days; nothing with yeast in it is to be seen among you, nor shall any yeast be seen anywhere within your borders. On that day tell your son, ‘I do this because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt.’ This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that this law of the Lord is to be on your lips. For the Lord brought you out of Egypt with his mighty hand. You must keep this ordinance at the appointed time year after year.

Prayer

We praise you God, for the Earth that sustains life. Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons, renewal and growth, open your hand to give all creatures our food in the proper time. Amen.

(from the 2020 Season of Creation Celebration Guide)

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

May God who established the dance of creation,
Who marveled at the lilies of the field,
Who transforms chaos to order,
Lead us to transform our lives and the Church
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(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Amen.

Thursday, 10 September 2020

Psalmody

Does not wisdom call out?
Does not understanding raise her voice?

“The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works,
before his deeds of old;

I was formed long ages ago,
at the very beginning, when the world came to be.

When there were no watery depths, I was given birth,
when there were no springs overflowing with water;

before the mountains were settled in place,
before the hills, I was given birth,

before he made the world or its fields
or any of the dust of the earth.

I was there when he set the heavens in place,
when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep,

when he established the clouds above
and fixed securely the fountains of the deep,

when he gave the sea its boundary
so the waters would not overstep his command,
and when he marked out the foundations of the earth.

Then I was constantly at his side.
I was filled with delight day after day,
rejoicing always in his presence,

rejoicing in his whole world
and delighting in humankind.
– *Proverbs 8*

Word

1 John 3:11-16

For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

Prayer

Turn us from fear and mistrust, and free us to imagine a life reconciled to the Earth and all creatures, through the Good News of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.
(from the 2020 Season of Creation Celebration Guide)

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

May God who established the dance of creation,
Who marveled at the lilies of the field,
Who transforms chaos to order,
Lead us to transform our lives and the Church
To reflect God's glory in creation.
(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Amen.

Friday, 11 September 2020

Psalmody

Does not wisdom call out?

Does not understanding raise her voice?

“The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works,
before his deeds of old;

I was formed long ages ago,
at the very beginning, when the world came to be.

When there were no watery depths, I was given birth,
when there were no springs overflowing with water;

before the mountains were settled in place,
before the hills, I was given birth,

before he made the world or its fields
or any of the dust of the earth.

I was there when he set the heavens in place,
when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep,

when he established the clouds above
and fixed securely the fountains of the deep,

when he gave the sea its boundary
so the waters would not overstep his command,
and when he marked out the foundations of the earth.

Then I was constantly at his side.

I was filled with delight day after day,
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and delighting in humankind.
– *Proverbs 8*

Word

Genesis 41:53-42:17

The seven years of abundance in Egypt came to an end, and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said. There was famine in all the other lands, but in the whole land of Egypt there was food. When all Egypt began to feel the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Then Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph and do what he tells you.” When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe throughout Egypt. And all the world came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe everywhere.

Prayer

Turn us from fear and mistrust, and free us to imagine a life reconciled to the Earth and all creatures, through the Good News of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.
(from the 2020 Season of Creation Celebration Guide)

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

May God who established the dance of creation,
Who marveled at the lilies of the field,
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Lead us to transform our lives and the Church
To reflect God’s glory in creation.

(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Amen.

Saturday, 12 September 2020

Psalmody

Does not wisdom call out?

Does not understanding raise her voice?

“The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works,
before his deeds of old;

I was formed long ages ago,
at the very beginning, when the world came to be.

When there were no watery depths, I was given birth,
when there were no springs overflowing with water;

before the mountains were settled in place,
before the hills, I was given birth,

before he made the world or its fields
or any of the dust of the earth.

I was there when he set the heavens in place,
when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep,

when he established the clouds above
and fixed securely the fountains of the deep,

when he gave the sea its boundary
so the waters would not overstep his command,

and when he marked out the foundations of the earth.
Then I was constantly at his side.

I was filled with delight day after day,
rejoicing always in his presence,
rejoicing in his whole world
and delighting in humankind.

– *Proverbs 8*

Word

Matthew 6:7-15

And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.’

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Prayer

Turn us from fear and mistrust, and free us to imagine a life reconciled to the Earth and all creatures, through the Good News of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.
(from the 2020 Season of Creation Celebration Guide)

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

May God who established the dance of creation,

Who marveled at the lilies of the field,

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Lead us to transform our lives and the Church

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Amen.