



Season of Creation

LWF Communion Prayer for Pentecost 2020

Week 17 – Sixteenth 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, 20 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 16:2-16

The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

Then the Lord said to Moses, “I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days.” So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, “In the evening you shall know that it was the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your complaining against the Lord. For what are we, that you complain against us?” And Moses said, “When the Lord gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the Lord has heard the complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the Lord.”

Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, ‘Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining.’” And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. The Lord spoke to Moses and said, “I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God.’”

In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilder-

ness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat. This is what the Lord has commanded: ‘Gather as much of it as each of you needs, an omer to a person according to the number of persons, all providing for those in their own tents.’”

Meditation

What was manna? It is an interesting question because the Hebrew word for manna is “man-hu”, which literally means, “What is it?” Exodus describes it as bread. This “bread” was likely the starchy scale that a winged insect leaves on Tamarisk trees. When the insects drink water or sap from the trees, they secrete this sugary solution in drops called honeydew. In the dry air and warm sun of the desert, the dew dries white and hard, leaving a resin or gum that is a string of carbohydrates. Manna is nutrient rich. During the Exodus, it was enough to keep the Israelites from starving. Today, the delicacy is still harvested in some areas of the Levant. But knowing this natural description of what manna is does not fully answer the question of what it was. Manna was a gift from God.

To provide this gift, all creation --the insects, the trees and grasses, the air, sun and Earth – partnered to care for God’s people and sustain path to liberation. Through the symbiotic cycles of the flora, fauna and climate of the Sinai desert, God provided the gift of daily bread. If they took only what they needed for today, there would be enough to go around. But if they took more than their share the sugars would soon rot, causing waste and ruin.

The same sin of over-consumption is one of the root causes of injustice that we face in our time of ecological crisis. Societies in the global north have taken more than their share of the Earth’s bounty. As a result, human and more-than-human creatures suffer beginning with the most vulnerable and those who contribute the least to the climate emergency. God’s wisdom is clear. Take only what you need. Yet humans find it difficult to abide by this Sabbath principle. Staying within the boundaries of “enough” and leaving the rest for co-creatures or the Earth’s restoration and renewal requires trust. This is where faith plays a role in our liberation.

Luther wrote, “Faith is a living, bold trust in God’s grace, so certain of God’s gift that it would risk death a thousand times trusting in it. Such confidence and knowledge of God’s grace makes you happy, joyful and bold in your relationship to God and all creatures.” Trust in God’s gift transforms our relationship to other creatures. Trust in God’s providence frees us from greed to pursue bold new pathways to safeguard and sustain sources of daily bread.

And where does this trust come from? Luther goes on to write, “The Holy Spirit makes this happen through faith. Because of it, you freely, willingly and joyfully do good to everyone, serve everyone, suffer all kinds of things, love and praise the God who has shown you such grace.” As we call for a “Jubilee for the Earth” this Season of Creation, the Exodus story helps us remember that pilgrimage into uncertain futures calls for trust in God’s providence. Trust in God’s gift frees us to practice this loving ethic of “enough,” so that the Earth can care for generations to come. Trust at the heart of the Sabbath commands. Trust is at the heart of Christ’s prayer, “give us today our daily bread.”

Prayer

God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this Earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the Earth. Creative Spirit, enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

(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, 21 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 16:1-16

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon[a] of the church at Cenchreae, so that you may welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well. Greet Prisca and Aquila, who work with me in Christ Jesus, and who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert in Asia for Christ. Greet Mary, who has worked very hard among you. Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was. Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. Greet my relative Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; and greet his mother—a mother to me also. Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers and sisters who are with them. Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Prayer

God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this Earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the Earth. Creative Spirit, enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

(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.

Tuesday, 22 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.

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the earth is full of your creatures.

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they gather it up;
when you open your hand,
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they are terrified;
when you take away their breath,
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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

Genesis 28:10-17

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder[b] set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood beside him[c] and said, “I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!” And he was afraid, and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

Prayer

God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this Earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the Earth. Creative Spirit, enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

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(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Amen.

Wednesday, 23 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,
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when you open your hand,
they are satisfied with good things.

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they are terrified;
when you take away their breath,
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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

Matthew 18:1-5

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

Prayer

God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this Earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the Earth. Creative Spirit, enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

(from the 2020 Season of Creation Celebration Guide)

Our Father in heaven ...

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Thanks be to God.

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(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Amen.

Thursday, 24 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

Ezekiel 12:17-28

The word of the Lord came to me: Mortal, eat your bread with quaking, and drink your water with trembling and with fearfulness; and say to the people of the land, Thus says the Lord God concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the land of Israel: They shall eat their bread with fearfulness, and drink their water in dismay, because their land shall be stripped of all it contains, on account of the violence of all those who live in it. The inhabited cities shall be laid waste, and the land shall become a desolation; and you shall know that I am the Lord.

Prayer

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. Creative Spirit, enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

(from the 2020 Season of Creation Celebration Guide)

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Amen.

Friday, 25 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.
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rejoicing always in his presence,
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and delighting in humankind.

-Proverbs 8

Word

Acts 13:32-41

And we bring you the good news that what God promised to our ancestors he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm,

‘You are my Son;
today I have begotten you.’

As to his raising him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way,

‘I will give you the holy promises made to David.’

Therefore he has also said in another psalm,

‘You will not let your Holy One experience corruption.’

For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, died, was laid beside his ancestors, and experienced corruption; but he whom God raised up experienced no corruption. Let it be known to you therefore, my brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you; by this Jesus [everyone who believes is set free from all those sins from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses. Beware, therefore, that what the prophets said does not happen to you:

‘Look, you scoffers!

Be amazed and perish,

for in your days I am doing a work,

a work that you will never believe, even if someone tells you.’”

Prayer

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. Creative Spirit, enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

(from the 2020 Season of Creation Celebration Guide)

Our Father in heaven ...

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(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Amen.

Saturday, 26 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
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so the waters would not overstep his command,
and when he marked out the foundations of the earth.

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rejoicing in his whole world
and delighting in humankind.

– *Proverbs 8*

Word

Mark 11:27-33

Again they came to Jerusalem. As he was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to him and said, “By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?” Jesus said to them, “I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin? Answer me.” They argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ But shall we say, ‘Of human origin?’”—they were afraid of the crowd, for all regarded John as truly a prophet. So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And Jesus said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.”

Prayer

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. Creative Spirit, enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

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Amen.