



# Season of the Spirit

LWF Communion Prayer  
for Pentecost 2020



THE  
LUTHERAN  
WORLD  
FEDERATION

A Communion  
of Churches

Week 21 – Twentieth Week after Pentecost

# 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 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, 18 October 2020

## Psalmody

O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.

For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.

For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts.

Worship the LORD in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth.

– *Psalm 96:1-9*

## Word

### **Matthew 22:15-22**

Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

## Meditation

An early church order called the *Didache*, written sometime near the end of the first century (though dating varies), begins, “There are two ways, one of life and one of death; but a great difference exists between the two ways. The way of life, then, is this: First, you shall love God who made you; second, your neighbour as yourself...” (Chapter 1). The opening line echoes Psalm 1 which is the assigned psalm for the second half of this week. Further on in the *Didache*, there is a chapter dealing with teachers, apostles, and prophets. If a prophet comes to teach and preach but asks for money, that one is a false prophet. The words are clear: there are two ways. The contrast is stark. There can be no comparison or point of contact between the two ways.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus invites us into a gospel dynamic that has no comparison to anything that this world produces. This dynamic, as we have seen throughout the reading from Matthew, is one of surprises. The person who finds a treasure in the field, and sells everything they possess to buy that field, is a person living in the surprise, the joy of God’s liberating grace. There is no calculation, no quid pro quo. What belongs to the world is the world’s but what belongs to God traces for us a new way, outlines for us God’s truth, reveals to us God’s own life in the midst of this world.

In the midst of this world, God traces a gospel path, a way of reconciliation, of life abundant. This way confronts and challenges those who present false interpretations, conspiracy theories, who present ideas in the guise of flattery but are secretly pursuing agendas that are self-serving. But Jesus continually calls us into another way, God’s way, discerning God’s presence, recognizing God’s gifts wherever they may appear in our lives, in our communities, in our neighbors. With this discernment and recognition of God’s gifts comes another movement: giving them back to God. What is this? It is trusting, welcoming, rejoicing and, with God, constructing something beautiful, just, true, joyful, peaceable together, as communities of faith and with our neighbors.

Throughout this week we pray that God keep us on this way of new creation that God is actively accomplishing, reclaiming the world to God’s self. Often, this way is hidden like the treasure in the field but God has already given us everything in faith, everything we need to pursue the journey and with God build a trustworthy world.

# Prayer

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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, 19 October 2020

## Psalmody

O sing to the LORD a new song,  
for he has done marvelous things.  
His right hand and his holy arm  
have gotten him victory.  
The LORD has made known his victory;  
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.  
He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness  
to the house of Israel.  
All the ends of the earth have seen  
the victory of our God.

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;  
break forth into joyous song and sing praises.  
Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,  
with the lyre and the sound of melody.  
With trumpets and the sound of the horn  
make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD.

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
the world and those who live in it.  
Let the floods clap their hands;  
let the hills sing together for joy  
at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming  
to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world with righteousness,  
and the peoples with equity.

– *Psalm 98*

## Word

### **Daniel 3:16-18**

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to present a defense to you in this matter. If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him deliver us. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods and we will not worship the golden statue that you have set up.”

## Prayer

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts that with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, we can say: we will not serve other gods. Strengthen us so that we may always give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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, 20 October 2020

## Psalmody

O sing to the LORD a new song,  
for he has done marvelous things.  
His right hand and his holy arm  
have gotten him victory.  
The LORD has made known his victory;  
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.  
He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness  
to the house of Israel.  
All the ends of the earth have seen  
the victory of our God.

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;  
break forth into joyous song and sing praises.  
Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,  
with the lyre and the sound of melody.  
With trumpets and the sound of the horn  
make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD.

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
the world and those who live in it.  
Let the floods clap their hands;  
let the hills sing together for joy  
at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming  
to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world with righteousness,  
and the peoples with equity.

– *Psalm 98*

## Word

### Daniel 3:19-30

Then Nebuchadnezzar was so filled with rage against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face was distorted. He ordered the furnace heated up seven times more than was customary, and ordered some of the strongest guards in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and to throw them into the furnace of blazing fire. So the men were bound, still wearing their tunics, their trousers, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire. Because the king's command was urgent and the furnace was so overheated, the raging flames killed the men who lifted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. But the three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down, bound, into the furnace of blazing fire.

Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up quickly. He said to his counselors, "Was it not three men that we threw bound into the fire?" They answered the king, "True, O king." He replied, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the middle of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the fourth has the appearance of a god." Nebuchadnezzar then approached the door of the furnace of blazing fire and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men; the hair of their heads was not singed, their tunics were not harmed, and not even the smell of fire came from them. Nebuchadnezzar said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who trusted in him. They disobeyed the king's command and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that utters blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins; for there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way." Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

## Prayer

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts that with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, we can say: we will not serve other gods. Strengthen us so that we may always give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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, 21 October 2020

## Psalmody

O sing to the LORD a new song,  
for he has done marvelous things.  
His right hand and his holy arm  
have gotten him victory.  
The LORD has made known his victory;  
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.  
He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness  
to the house of Israel.  
All the ends of the earth have seen  
the victory of our God.

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;  
break forth into joyous song and sing praises.  
Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,  
with the lyre and the sound of melody.  
With trumpets and the sound of the horn  
make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD.

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
the world and those who live in it.  
Let the floods clap their hands;  
let the hills sing together for joy  
at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming  
to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world with righteousness,  
and the peoples with equity.

– *Psalm 98*

## Word

### **Matthew 17:22-27**

As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised.” And they were greatly distressed.

When they reached Capernaum, the collectors of the temple tax came to Peter and said, “Does your teacher not pay the temple tax?” He said, “Yes, he does.” And when he came home, Jesus spoke of it first, asking, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tribute? From their children or from others?” When Peter said, “From others,” Jesus said to him, “Then the children are free. However, so that we do not give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook; take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a coin; take that and give it to them for you and me.”

## Prayer

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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, 22 October 2020

## Psalmody

Happy are those  
who do not follow the advice of the wicked,  
or take the path that sinners tread,  
or sit in the seat of scoffers;  
but their delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and on his law they meditate day and night.

They are like trees  
planted by streams of water,  
which yield their fruit in its season,  
and their leaves do not wither.  
In all that they do, they prosper.

The wicked are not so,  
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.  
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;  
for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.

– *Psalm 1*

## Word

### Titus 1:7-9

For a bishop, as God's steward, must be blameless; he must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or addicted to wine or violent or greedy for gain; but he must be hospitable, a lover of goodness, prudent, upright, devout, and self-controlled. He must have a firm grasp of the word that is trustworthy in accordance with the teaching, so that he may be able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it.

## Prayer

O Lord God, you are the holy lawgiver, you are the salvation of your people. By your Spirit renew us in your covenant of love, and train us to care tenderly for all our neighbors, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

***Thanks be to God.***

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

***Amen.***

# Friday, 23 October 2020

## Psalmody

Happy are those  
who do not follow the advice of the wicked,  
or take the path that sinners tread,  
or sit in the seat of scoffers;  
but their delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and on his law they meditate day and night.

They are like trees  
planted by streams of water,  
which yield their fruit in its season,  
and their leaves do not wither.  
In all that they do, they prosper.

The wicked are not so,  
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.  
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;  
for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.

– *Psalm 1*

# Word

## Deuteronomy 10:1-5

At that time the LORD said to me, “Carve out two tablets of stone like the former ones, and come up to me on the mountain, and make an ark of wood. I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets, which you smashed, and you shall put them in the ark.” So I made an ark of acacia wood, cut two tablets of stone like the former ones, and went up the mountain with the two tablets in my hand. Then he wrote on the tablets the same words as before, the ten commandments that the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain out of the fire on the day of the assembly; and the LORD gave them to me. So I turned and came down from the mountain, and put the tablets in the ark that I had made; and there they are, as the LORD commanded me.

# Prayer

O Lord God, you are the holy lawgiver, you are the salvation of your people. By your Spirit renew us in your covenant of love, and train us to care tenderly for all our neighbors, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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.***

# Saturday, 24 October 2020

## Psalmody

Happy are those  
    who do not follow the advice of the wicked,  
or take the path that sinners tread,  
    or sit in the seat of scoffers;  
but their delight is in the law of the Lord,  
    and on his law they meditate day and night.

They are like trees  
    planted by streams of water,  
which yield their fruit in its season,  
    and their leaves do not wither.  
In all that they do, they prosper.

The wicked are not so,  
    but are like chaff that the wind drives away.  
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
    nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;  
for the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,  
    but the way of the wicked will perish.

– *Psalm 1*

## Word

### John 5:39-47

Jesus said, “You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf. Yet you refuse to come to me to have life. I do not accept glory from human beings. But I know that you do not have the love of God in you. I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not accept me; if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God? Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope. If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?”

## Prayer

O God, you have shown us the way, the truth, and the life in your son Jesus Christ. You have placed a new law in our hearts. By your Spirit renew us and sustains on that way, in that truth, and in your life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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.***