



Season of the Spirit

LWF Communion Prayer
for Pentecost 2020

Week 22 – Twenty-First 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 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, 25 October 2020

Psalmody

Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord,
your salvation according to your promise.
Then I shall have an answer for those who taunt me,
for I trust in your word.
Do not take the word of truth utterly out of my mouth,
for my hope is in your ordinances.

I will keep your law continually,
forever and ever.
I shall walk at liberty,
for I have sought your precepts.
I will also speak of your decrees before kings,
and shall not be put to shame;
I find my delight in your commandments,
because I love them.
I revere your commandments, which I love,
and I will meditate on your statutes.

– *Psalm 119:41-48*

Word

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed; nor did we seek

praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

Meditation

This week ends with the commemoration of Reformation Day, on 31 October. As a communion of Lutheran churches, it is good to celebrate the history of our shared tradition. It is also good to remember that ours is a living tradition. Like our baptism, God's Spirit renews our confessions, enlivens our worship, and calls us anew to service and public witness. God's Word gives birth to new life, new hope, and new trust each morning. Like a child growing in us, the Lutheran tradition is an active, living faith. When we ask new questions to new circumstances, we hear a new word of grace.

Reformation is ongoing. The Spirit's work of renewal, reformation and transformation continues today. Sometimes we see that work result in large, historical breakthroughs, like the Reformation led by Luther. But most of the time it is a steady, daily turning that recreates us over time. In the letter to the Thessalonians, Paul points us to this steady, nurturing reality of God's work. He describes it as gentle.

Sometimes it is difficult to find gentleness today. Gentleness does not catch the attention of news outlets. Gentleness does not tend to cause the kinds of instantaneous change that we demand – though sometimes it does. But gentleness nurtures new life to grow and bear new fruit over time. Gentleness is all around us. Like a river that has gently flowed over millennia, and managed to carve a new path through rock, and polishing the rough edges. Gentleness of a parent nurturing her child first with milk, then solid foods over time. The gentleness of friendships that share God's love with people of other social classes, ethnicities, faiths or races – even changing enemies into friends, foes into allies. Tending exploited lands for several seasons until life returns to the soil, fields and forests. Often, this quiet, gentle change, like a river, leads to the most profound and sustained transformation.

Reformation has happened in great movement and moments of revolutionary change, and may it continue! But our reformation also happens gently. As the waters of our baptism wash over us each day, polishing, reforming, transforming. How does God's living Word gently open the eyes of your heart? How does it nurture new life and free you to live out our call to reform and transform our world today? Let us pray.

Prayer

Steadfast God,

As we meditate on your life-giving Word,
help us to find hope in your teaching,
delight in your commands,
courage in your Truth,
and liberty in your Way.

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, 26 October 2020

Psalmody

Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord,
your salvation according to your promise.
Then I shall have an answer for those who taunt me,
for I trust in your word.
Do not take the word of truth utterly out of my mouth,
for my hope is in your ordinances.

I will keep your law continually,
forever and ever.
I shall walk at liberty,
for I have sought your precepts.
I will also speak of your decrees before kings,
and shall not be put to shame;
I find my delight in your commandments,
because I love them.
I revere your commandments, which I love,
and I will meditate on your statutes.

– *Psalm 119:41-48*

Word

James 2:8-13

You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. For the one who said, “You shall not commit adultery,” also said, “You shall not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

Prayer

Steadfast God,

As we meditate on your life-giving Word,
help us to find hope in your teaching,
delight in your commands,
courage in your Truth,
and liberty in your Way.

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, 27 October 2020

Psalmody

Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord,
your salvation according to your promise.
Then I shall have an answer for those who taunt me,
for I trust in your word.
Do not take the word of truth utterly out of my mouth,
for my hope is in your ordinances.

I will keep your law continually,
forever and ever.
I shall walk at liberty,
for I have sought your precepts.
I will also speak of your decrees before kings,
and shall not be put to shame;
I find my delight in your commandments,
because I love them.
I revere your commandments, which I love,
and I will meditate on your statutes.

– *Psalm 119:41-48*

Word

Exodus 34:29-35

Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; but whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

Prayer

Steadfast God,

As we meditate on your life-giving Word,
help us to find hope in your teaching,
delight in your commands,
courage in your Truth,
and liberty in your Way.
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, 28 October 2020

Psalmody

Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord,
your salvation according to your promise.
Then I shall have an answer for those who taunt me,
for I trust in your word.
Do not take the word of truth utterly out of my mouth,
for my hope is in your ordinances.

I will keep your law continually,
forever and ever.
I shall walk at liberty,
for I have sought your precepts.
I will also speak of your decrees before kings,
and shall not be put to shame;
I find my delight in your commandments,
because I love them.
I revere your commandments, which I love,
and I will meditate on your statutes.

– *Psalm 119:41-48*

Word

Matthew 19:16-22

Then someone came to him and said, “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” And he said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.” He said to him, “Which ones?” And Jesus said, “You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; Honor your father and mother; also, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” The young man said to him, “I have kept all these; what do I still lack?” Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” When the young man heard this word, he went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

Prayer

Steadfast God,

As we meditate on your life-giving Word,
help us to find hope in your teaching,
delight in your commands,
courage in your Truth,
and liberty in your Way.

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, 29 October 2020

Psalmody

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,
those he redeemed from trouble
and gathered in from the lands,
from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.

Some wandered in desert wastes,
finding no way to an inhabited town;
hungry and thirsty,
their soul fainted within them.

Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress;
he led them by a straight way,
until they reached an inhabited town.

– *Psalm 107:1-7*

Word

Joshua 1:1-9

After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying, "My servant Moses is dead. Now proceed to cross the Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the Israelites. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, as I promised to Moses. From the wilderness and the Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, to the Great Sea in the west shall be your territory. No one shall be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous; for you shall put this people in possession of the land that I swore to their ancestors to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to act in accordance with all the law that my servant Moses commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may be successful wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful. I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Prayer

God of hope and restoration,

Your Spirit revives the face of the Earth,
revives deserts with streams of water,
secures food for the hungry,
shelter for the displaced,
and renews the land to bear fruit.
Inspire us to sustain your justice
and proclaim your peace.
Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Thanks be to God.

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

Amen.

Friday, 30 October 2020

Psalmody

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,
those he redeemed from trouble
and gathered in from the lands,
from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.

Some wandered in desert wastes,
finding no way to an inhabited town;
hungry and thirsty,
their soul fainted within them.

Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress;
he led them by a straight way,
until they reached an inhabited town.

– *Psalm 107:1-7*

Word

2 Peter 2:1-3

But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive opinions. They will even deny the Master who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. Even so, many will follow their licentious ways, and because of these teachers the way of truth will be maligned. And in their greed they will exploit you with deceptive words. Their condemnation, pronounced against them long ago, has not been idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

Prayer

God of hope and restoration,

Your Spirit revives the face of the Earth,
revives deserts with streams of water,
secures food for the hungry,
shelter for the displaced,
and renews the land to bear fruit.

Inspire us to sustain your justice
and proclaim your peace.

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, 31 October 2020

Psalmody

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;!
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,
those he redeemed from trouble
and gathered in from the lands,
from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.

Some wandered in desert wastes,
finding no way to an inhabited town;
hungry and thirsty,
their soul fainted within them.

Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress;
he led them by a straight way,
until they reached an inhabited town.
– *Psalm 107:1-7*

Word

Psalm 107:33-37

He turns rivers into a desert,
springs of water into thirsty ground,
a fruitful land into a salty waste,
because of the wickedness of its inhabitants.
He turns a desert into pools of water,
a parched land into springs of water.
And there he lets the hungry live,
and they establish a town to live in;
they sow fields, and plant vineyards,
and get a fruitful yield.

Prayer

God of hope and restoration,

Your Spirit revives the face of the Earth,
revives deserts with streams of water,
secures food for the hungry,
shelter for the displaced,
and renews the land to bear fruit.

Inspire us to sustain your justice
and proclaim your peace.

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.