



# Season of the Spirit

LWF Communion Prayer  
for Pentecost 2020



THE  
LUTHERAN  
WORLD  
FEDERATION

A Communion  
of Churches

**Week 23 – Twenty-Second  
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, 1 November 2020, All Saints Day

## Psalmody

I will bless the Lord at all times;  
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

My soul makes its boast in the Lord;  
let the humble hear and be glad.

O magnify the Lord with me,  
and let us exalt his name together.

I sought the Lord, and he answered me,  
and delivered me from all my fears.

Look to him, and be radiant;  
so your faces shall never be ashamed.

This poor soul cried, and was heard by the Lord,  
and was saved from every trouble.

The angel of the Lord encamps  
around those who fear him, and delivers them.

O taste and see that the Lord is good;  
happy are those who take refuge in him.

O fear the Lord, you his holy ones,  
for those who fear him have no want.

The young lions suffer want and hunger,  
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

The Lord redeems the life of his servants;  
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

– *Psalm 34:1-10, 22*

# Word

## Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

# Meditation

In 2020, the theme for the UN international day of peace was “Shaping Peace Together.” The theme for the Geneva Peace Week on the first week of November is “Rebuilding trust after disruption: Pathways to reset international cooperation.” In a world still plagued by war, conflict, and extremism, the struggle for solidarity to resist forces that separate and incite us to hate remains. When will we truly experience world peace? While we have been preoccupied with public health and economic troubles during this time of pandemic, we recognize the immense toil on our mental health and spiritual well-being. In a recent public webinar reflecting on how faith communities can respond to the digital age – now further intensified, one panelist remarked on her experience, “We were all stressed, we were all suffering, and we were all online.” Finding true inner peace seems distant too.

It is easy to forget that Jesus’ words, “Blessed are the peacemakers” were spoken during a time of deep conflict and frustration among people who were occupied by foreign political powers as well as oppressed by religious and economic forces. Underneath the slogan of ‘peace’ in the public imagination for some Judeans and Galileans was a belief that God would help them to wage war against the Romans. For some in the crowd

listening to Jesus, to establish God's kingdom would inevitably include violent revolution as a means to achieve liberation. Perhaps, the powerful warrior who could crush the enemy or the tactically superior militant politician was the ideal hero. But Jesus turned this upside down when he lifts up the "poor in spirit", "those who mourn", "the meek", "those who hunger and thirst for righteousness", "the merciful", "the pure in heart", "those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake", and "the peacemakers". The Kingdom of God is assigned to those who appear to be the most powerless to make a difference.

Today, in the middle of a pandemic, we might feel worn out as the end of the year approaches. Many are mourning the loss of livelihood or a loved one. Even the most resilient and advocates for putting the world right might have grown weary. In our most vulnerable moment, God comes to us and blesses us. God lifts us up. Yes, Jesus' words of blessing over us empower us to "work for peace' overcoming one disruption after another. As children of God, we are called to the ongoing work of shaping peace together for the good of all who are stressed, suffering, and yearning for justice, peace and reconciliation at home, in their countries, and ultimately in this life and the life to come.

## Prayer

God of unfailing light,  
in your realm of glory  
the poor are blessed,  
the hungry filled,  
and every tear is wiped away.  
Strengthened by this vision,  
may we follow in the way of holiness  
that your Son made known in life and death. 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, 2 November 2020

## Psalmody

Give ear to my words, O LORD;  
give heed to my sighing.  
Listen to the sound of my cry,  
my King and my God,  
for to you I pray.  
O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice;  
in the morning I plead my case to you, and watch.

For you are not a God who delights in wickedness;  
evil will not sojourn with you.  
The boastful will not stand before your eyes;  
you hate all evildoers.  
You destroy those who speak lies;  
the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful.

But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love,  
will enter your house,  
I will bow down toward your holy temple  
in awe of you.  
Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness  
because of my enemies;  
make your way straight before me.

For there is no truth in their mouths;  
their hearts are destruction;  
their throats are open graves;  
they flatter with their tongues.  
Make them bear their guilt, O God;  
let them fall by their own counsels;  
because of their many transgressions cast them out,  
for they have rebelled against you.

But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;  
let them ever sing for joy.  
Spread your protection over them,  
so that those who love your name may exult in you.  
For you bless the righteous, O Lord;  
you cover them with favor as with a shield.

– *Psalm 5:1-12*

## Word

### **1 Thessalonians 2:13-20**

We also constantly give thanks to God for this, that when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word but as what it really is, God's word, which is also at work in you believers. For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you suffered the same things from your own compatriots as they did from the Jews, who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out; they displease God and oppose everyone by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. Thus, they have constantly been filling up the measure of their sins; but God's wrath has overtaken them at last.

As for us, brothers and sisters, when, for a short time, we were made orphans by being separated from you—in person, not in heart—we longed with great eagerness to see you face to face. For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, wanted to again and again—but Satan blocked our way. For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? Yes, you are our glory and joy!

## Prayer

God of the ages,  
your saints who lived in faithful service  
surround your throne  
and offer you praise and worship both night and day.  
May we, your saints on earth,  
join our voices with theirs to proclaim  
your rule of righteousness and peace,  
which comes to us through Jesus Christ  
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, 3 November 2020

## Psalmody

Give ear to my words, O LORD;  
give heed to my sighing.

Listen to the sound of my cry,  
my King and my God,  
for to you I pray.

O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice;  
in the morning I plead my case to you, and watch.

For you are not a God who delights in wickedness;  
evil will not sojourn with you.

The boastful will not stand before your eyes;  
you hate all evildoers.

You destroy those who speak lies;  
the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful.

But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love,  
will enter your house,

I will bow down toward your holy temple  
in awe of you.

Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness  
because of my enemies;  
make your way straight before me.

For there is no truth in their mouths;  
their hearts are destruction;

their throats are open graves;  
they flatter with their tongues.

Make them bear their guilt, O God;  
let them fall by their own counsels;

because of their many transgressions cast them out,  
for they have rebelled against you.

But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;  
let them ever sing for joy.  
Spread your protection over them,  
so that those who love your name may exult in you.  
For you bless the righteous, O LORD;  
you cover them with favor as with a shield.  
– *Psalm 5:1-12*

## Word

### **Acts 13:1-12**

Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the ruler, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia; and from there they sailed to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John also to assist them. When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they met a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, named Bar-Jesus. He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and wanted to hear the word of God. But the magician Elymas (for that is the translation of his name) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith. But Saul, also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? And now listen—the hand of the Lord is against you, and you will be blind for a while, unable to see the sun.” Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he went about groping for someone to lead him by the hand. When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.

## Prayer

God of the ages,  
your saints who lived in faithful service  
surround your throne  
and offer you praise and worship both night and day.  
May we, your saints on earth,  
join our voices with theirs to proclaim  
your rule of righteousness and peace,  
which comes to us through Jesus Christ  
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, 4 November 2020

## Psalmody

Hear a just cause, O Lord; attend to my cry;  
give ear to my prayer from lips free of deceit.  
From you let my vindication come;  
let your eyes see the right.

If you try my heart, if you visit me by night,  
if you test me, you will find no wickedness in me;  
my mouth does not transgress.

As for what others do, by the word of your lips  
I have avoided the ways of the violent.

My steps have held fast to your paths;  
my feet have not slipped.

I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God;  
incline your ear to me, hear my words.

Wondrously show your steadfast love,  
O savior of those who seek refuge  
from their adversaries at your right hand.

Guard me as the apple of the eye;  
hide me in the shadow of your wings,  
from the wicked who despoil me,  
my deadly enemies who surround me.

They close their hearts to pity;  
with their mouths they speak arrogantly.  
They track me down; now they surround me;  
they set their eyes to cast me to the ground.  
They are like a lion eager to tear,  
like a young lion lurking in ambush.

Rise up, O Lord, confront them, overthrow them!

By your sword deliver my life from the wicked,  
from mortals—by your hand, O Lord—

from mortals whose portion in life is in this world.

May their bellies be filled with what you have stored up for them;

may their children have more than enough;

may they leave something over to their little ones.

As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness;

when I awake I shall be satisfied, beholding your likeness.

– *Psalm 17:1-15*

## Word

### **Matthew 15:1-9**

Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands before they eat.”

He answered them, “And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die.’ But you say that whoever tells father or mother, ‘Whatever support you might have had from me is given to God,’ then that person need not honor the father. So, for the sake of your tradition, you make void the word of God. You hypocrites!

Isaiah prophesied rightly about you when he said:

‘This people honors me with their lips,

but their hearts are far from me;

in vain do they worship me,

teaching human precepts as doctrines.’”

## Prayer

God of the ages,  
your saints who lived in faithful service  
surround your throne  
and offer you praise and worship both night and day.  
May we, your saints on earth,  
join our voices with theirs to proclaim  
your rule of righteousness and peace,  
which comes to us through Jesus Christ  
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, 5 November 2020

## Psalmody

Be pleased, O God, to deliver me.

O LORD, make haste to help me!

Let those be put to shame and confusion  
who seek my life.

Let those be turned back and brought to dishonor  
who desire to hurt me.

Let those who say, "Aha, Aha!"  
turn back because of their shame.

Let all who seek you  
rejoice and be glad in you.

Let those who love your salvation  
say evermore, "God is great!"

But I am poor and needy;  
hasten to me, O God!

You are my help and my deliverer;  
O LORD, do not delay!

– *Psalm 70:1-5*

## Word

### **Revelation 8:6-9:12**

Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets made ready to blow them.

The first angel blew his trumpet, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were hurled to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea became blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

The third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell from heaven, blazing like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many died from the water, because it was made bitter.

The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light was darkened; a third of the day was kept from shining, and likewise the night.

Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice as it flew in midheaven, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow!"

And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit; he opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given authority like the authority of scorpions of the earth. They were told not to damage the grass of the earth or any green growth or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They were allowed to torture them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torture was like the torture of a scorpion when it stings someone. And in those days people will seek death but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will flee from them.

In appearance the locusts were like horses equipped for battle. On their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; they had scales like iron breastplates, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. They have tails like scorpions, with stingers, and in their tails is their power to harm people for five months. They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon.

The first woe has passed. There are still two woes to come.

## Prayer

God of our salvation,  
Bless us with your healing presence;  
make us hungry for justice;  
strengthen our faith;  
and increase our love for others,  
especially those we find it most difficult to love. Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.

***Thanks be to God.***

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

***Amen.***

# Friday, 6 November 2020

## Psalmody

Be pleased, O God, to deliver me.

O LORD, make haste to help me!

Let those be put to shame and confusion  
who seek my life.

Let those be turned back and brought to dishonor  
who desire to hurt me.

Let those who say, "Aha, Aha!"  
turn back because of their shame.

Let all who seek you  
rejoice and be glad in you.

Let those who love your salvation  
say evermore, "God is great!"

But I am poor and needy;  
hasten to me, O God!

You are my help and my deliverer;  
O LORD, do not delay!

– *Psalm 70:1-5*

## Word

### Revelation 9:13-21

Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." So the four angels were released, who had been held ready for the hour, the day, the month, and the year, to kill a third of humankind. The number of the troops of cavalry was two hundred million; I heard their number. And this was how I saw the horses in my vision: the riders wore breastplates the color of fire and of sapphire and of sulfur; the heads of the horses were like lions' heads, and fire and smoke and sulfur came out of their mouths. By these three plagues a third of humankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and sulfur coming out of their mouths. For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they inflict harm.

The rest of humankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands or give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk. And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their fornication or their thefts.

## Prayer

God of our salvation,  
Bless us with your healing presence;  
make us hungry for justice;  
strengthen our faith;  
and increase our love for others,  
especially those we find it most difficult to love. 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, 7 November 2020

## Psalmody

Be pleased, O God, to deliver me.

O LORD, make haste to help me!

Let those be put to shame and confusion  
who seek my life.

Let those be turned back and brought to dishonor  
who desire to hurt me.

Let those who say, "Aha, Aha!"  
turn back because of their shame.

Let all who seek you  
rejoice and be glad in you.

Let those who love your salvation  
say evermore, "God is great!"

But I am poor and needy;  
hasten to me, O God!

You are my help and my deliverer;  
O LORD, do not delay!

– *Psalm 70:1-5*

## Word

### **Matthew 24:1-14**

As Jesus came out of the temple and was going away, his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. Then he asked them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly I tell you, not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down."

When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" Jesus answered them, "Beware that no one leads you astray. For many will come in

my name, saying, 'I am the Messiah!'[a] and they will lead many astray. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not alarmed; for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places: all this is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

“Then they will hand you over to be tortured and will put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of my name. Then many will fall away, and they will betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because of the increase of lawlessness, the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And this good news[d] of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world, as a testimony to all the nations; and then the end will come.

## Prayer

God of our salvation,  
Bless us with your healing presence;  
make us hungry for justice;  
strengthen our faith;  
and increase our love for others,  
especially those we find it most difficult to love. 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.***