



Season of the Spirit

LWF Communion Prayer
for Pentecost 2020

**Week 24 – Twenty-Third
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, 8 November 2020

Psalmody

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings from of old,

things that we have heard and known,
that our ancestors have told us.

We will not hide them from their children;
we will tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might,
and the wonders that he has done.

He established a decree in Jacob,
and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our ancestors
to teach to their children;

that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,
and rise up and tell them to their children,

so that they should set their hope in God,
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments.

– *Psalm 78:1-7*

Word

Matthew 25:1-13

Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

Meditation

Keeping watch. There are many stories in the Bible about keeping watch. The prophet calls to awaken to greet the light. The Psalmist speaks of the watchmen on the heights. The shepherds in the field kept watch by night. Jesus begged his disciples to stay awake and keep watch with him in the garden. In this parable, the lesson of wisdom is, keep awake.

Keeping watch features in the wisdom traditions and stories of nearly every culture. The Cherokee People tell a story of the Creator asking the trees and animals to keep watch for the moment when people were created. Most trees and animals fell asleep, of course. And the few who didn't are the evergreen trees who never sleep and were rewarded for their vigilance by possessing medicinal powers. And of course, the nocturnal animals like the panther, the bat, and the wise owl.

There are still many places where people actually keep watch. Cattle herders in western Africa, and campesinos/as in Latin America for instance. Security personnel. Those who tend fires through the night to make charcoal. Nurses who care for the infirm, and loved ones who watch with the dying. Those who keep watch may experience the wisdom that comes with being faithful to the task of being available, open, ready to receive what comes.

Most people today have little experience of keeping watch. Alarms, locks on our doors, calendars, news updates, weather radars and traffic signals make it so that we rarely have

to think about keeping watch anymore. We will be notified or reminded when the time comes. We can sleep or continue our work without fear of missing something. But is it possible that in an information age, we are actually less aware? Less awake? Less wise?

Keeping our calendars and security features updated is not the same as keeping our lamps trimmed with oil. Prayer. Silence. Vigil with loved ones. Scripture. Telling stories. Reading the signs of the nature. Noticing our bodies where we are. Listening for the Spirit to help us discern the spirits of our age. Looking for Love to lead us in this moment. How do you keep watch for Holy Wisdom? Are you available to receive her when she comes today?

Keep awake, therefore, the Beloved is near.

Prayer

Gracious God, by your Word, fill us with the hope that will sustain the light of faith. Stir up your Spirit to help us watch for you this day. 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, 9 November 2020

Psalmody

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings from of old,

things that we have heard and known,
that our ancestors have told us.

We will not hide them from their children;
we will tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might,
and the wonders that he has done.

He established a decree in Jacob,
and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our ancestors
to teach to their children;

that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,
and rise up and tell them to their children,

so that they should set their hope in God,
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments.

– *Psalm 78:1-7*

Word

1 Corinthians 14:20-25

Brothers and sisters, do not be children in your thinking; rather, be infants in evil, but in thinking be adults. In the law it is written,

“By people of strange tongues
and by the lips of foreigners
I will speak to this people;
yet even then they will not listen to me,”

says the Lord. Tongues, then, are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is not for unbelievers but for believers. If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your mind? But if all prophesy, an unbeliever or outsider who enters is reprovved by all and called to account by all. After the secrets of the unbeliever’s heart are disclosed, that person will bow down before God and worship him, declaring, “God is really among you.”

Prayer

Gracious God, by your Word, fill us with the hope that will sustain the light of faith. Stir up your Spirit to help us watch for you this day. 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, 10 November 2020

Psalmody

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings from of old,

things that we have heard and known,
that our ancestors have told us.

We will not hide them from their children;
we will tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might,
and the wonders that he has done.

He established a decree in Jacob,
and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our ancestors
to teach to their children;

that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,
and rise up and tell them to their children,

so that they should set their hope in God,
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments.

– *Psalm 78:1-7*

Word

1 Thessalonians 3:6-13

But Timothy has just now come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love. He has told us also that you always remember us kindly and long to see us—just as we long to see you. For this reason, brothers and sisters, during all our distress and persecution we have been encouraged about you through your faith. For we now live, if you continue to stand firm in the Lord. How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? Night and day, we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith. Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Prayer

Gracious God, by your Word, fill us with the hope that will sustain the light of faith. Stir up your Spirit to help us watch for you this day. 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, 11 November 2020

Psalmody

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings from of old,

things that we have heard and known,
that our ancestors have told us.

We will not hide them from their children;
we will tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might,
and the wonders that he has done.

He established a decree in Jacob,
and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our ancestors
to teach to their children;

that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,
and rise up and tell them to their children,

so that they should set their hope in God,
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments.

– *Psalm 78:1-7*

Word

Jeremiah 31:31-34

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Prayer

Gracious God, by your Word, fill us with the hope that will sustain the light of faith. Stir up your Spirit to help us watch for you this day. 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, 12 November 2020

Psalmody

To you I lift up my eyes,
O you who are enthroned in the heavens!

As the eyes of servants
look to the hand of their master,
as the eyes of a maid
to the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes look to the LORD our God,
until he has mercy upon us.

Have mercy upon us, O LORD,
have mercy upon us,
for we have had more than enough of contempt.

Our soul has had more than its fill
of the scorn of those who are at ease,
of the contempt of the proud.

– *Psalms 123*

Word

Judges 2:6-15

When Joshua dismissed the people, the Israelites all went to their own inheritances to take possession of the land. The people worshiped the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the Lord had done for Israel. Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of one hundred ten years. So, they buried him within the bounds of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. Moreover, that whole generation was gathered to their ancestors, and another generation grew up after them, who did not know

the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel. Then the Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and worshiped the Baals; and they abandoned the Lord, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; they followed other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were all around them, and bowed down to them; and they provoked the Lord to anger. They abandoned the Lord, and worshiped Baal and the Astartes. So, the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers who plundered them, and he sold them into the power of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. Whenever they marched out, the hand of the Lord was against them to bring misfortune, as the Lord had warned them and sworn to them; and they were in great distress.

Prayer

We lift our eyes to you, Lord, giver of Life. In a world that seems full of contempt, distrust and scorn, our souls yearn for your mercy. Heal all that is broken in us, so that we may speak that word of mercy to a hurting world. In the name of Jesus Christ, 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, 13 November 2020

Psalmody

To you I lift up my eyes,
O you who are enthroned in the heavens!

As the eyes of servants
look to the hand of their master,
as the eyes of a maid
to the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes look to the LORD our God,
until he has mercy upon us.

Have mercy upon us, O LORD,
have mercy upon us,
for we have had more than enough of contempt.

Our soul has had more than its fill
of the scorn of those who are at ease,
of the contempt of the proud.

– *Psalm 123*

Word

Judges 2:16-23

Then the Lord raised up judges, who delivered them out of the power of those who plundered them. Yet they did not listen even to their judges; for they lusted after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their ancestors had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the Lord; they did not follow their example. Whenever the Lord raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge, and he delivered them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the Lord would be moved to pity by their groaning because of those who persecuted and oppressed them. But

whenever the judge died, they would relapse and behave worse than their ancestors, following other gods, worshiping them and bowing down to them. They would not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways. So, the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel; and he said, "Because this people have transgressed my covenant that I commanded their ancestors, and have not obeyed my voice, I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died." In order to test Israel, whether or not they would take care to walk in the way of the Lord as their ancestors did, the Lord had left those nations, not driving them out at once, and had not handed them over to Joshua.

Prayer

We lift our eyes to you, Lord, giver of Life. In a world that seems full of contempt, distrust and scorn, our souls yearn for your mercy. Heal all that is broken in us, so that we may speak that word of mercy to a hurting world. In the name of Jesus Christ, 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, 14 November 2020

Psalmody

To you I lift up my eyes,
O you who are enthroned in the heavens!

As the eyes of servants
look to the hand of their master,
as the eyes of a maid
to the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes look to the LORD our God,
until he has mercy upon us.

Have mercy upon us, O LORD,
have mercy upon us,
for we have had more than enough of contempt.

Our soul has had more than its fill
of the scorn of those who are at ease,
of the contempt of the proud.
– *Psalm 123*

Word

Matthew 12:43-45

When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting place, but it finds none. Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' When it comes, it finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then it goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there; and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So, will it be also with this evil generation.

Prayer

We lift our eyes to you, Lord, giver of Life. In a world that seems full of contempt, distrust and scorn, our souls yearn for your mercy. Heal all that is broken in us, so that we may speak that word of mercy to a hurting world. In the name of Jesus Christ, 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.