



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Wilton, WI
13th Sunday after Pentecost
August 30, 2020
**Inviting People to Journey with Christ's
Family in Spreading God's Love and Mercy**

The prophet Jeremiah speaks of the incurable wound of his suffering yet finds in God's words the delight of his heart. When Peter doesn't grasp Jesus' words about suffering, Jesus tells the disciples they will find their lives in losing them. Such sacrificial love is described by Paul when he urges us to associate with the lowly and not repay evil with evil. In worship we gather as a community that we might offer ourselves for the sake of our suffering world.

Gathering

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God**

You Are Holy
Du är helig

^{1*}

Du är he - lig, du är hel. Du är all - tid myck-et mer
You are ho - ly, you are whole. You are al - ways ev - er more

än vi nån - sin kan för - stå, du är nä - ra än - då.
than we ev - er un - der - stand. You are al - ways at hand.

Väl - sig - nad va - re du som kom - mer hit just nu,
Bless - ed are you com - ing near. Bless - ed are you com - ing here

väl - sig - na - de vår jord, blir till bröd på vår jord.
to your church in wine and bread, raised from soil, raised from dead.

²

Du är he - lig, du är hel - het,
You are ho - ly, you are whole - ness,

du är när - het he - la kos - mos lo - var dig!
you are pres - ent. Let the cos - mos praise you, Lord!

Ho - si - an - na, ho - si - an - na,
Sing ho - san - na in the high - est!

ho - si - an - na, ho - si - an - na vår Gud.
Sing ho - san - na! Sing ho - san - na to our God!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, we thank you for your Son, who chose the path of suffering for the sake of the world. Humble us by his example, point us to the path of obedience, and give us strength to follow your commands, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

Word

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.**

FIRST READING

Jeremiah's delight in the word of the LORD is contradicted by the heaviness of God's hand upon him and God's seeming unfaithfulness. God's tough love to Jeremiah says that if he repents, he will be allowed to continue in his strenuous ministry. Jeremiah is strengthened by the simple words, "I am with you."

Jeremiah 15:15-21

- ¹⁵O LORD, you know;
remember me and visit me,
and bring down retribution for me on my persecutors.
In your forbearance do not take me away;
know that on your account I suffer insult.
- ¹⁶Your words were found, and I ate them,
and your words became to me a joy
and the delight of my heart;
for I am called by your name,
O LORD, God of hosts.
- ¹⁷I did not sit in the company of merry-makers,
nor did I rejoice;
under the weight of your hand I sat alone,
for you had filled me with indignation.
- ¹⁸Why is my pain unceasing,
my wound incurable,
refusing to be healed?
Truly, you are to me like a deceitful brook,
like waters that fail.
- ¹⁹Therefore thus says the LORD:
If you turn back, I will take you back,
and you shall stand before me.
If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless,
you shall serve as my mouth.
It is they who will turn to you,
not you who will turn to them.

²⁰And I will make you to this people
a fortified wall of bronze;
they will fight against you,
but they shall not prevail over you,
for I am with you
to save you and deliver you,
says the LORD.

²¹I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked,
and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.

P: The word of the Lord. C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 26:1-8

¹Give judgment for me, O LORD, for I have lived with integrity;
I have trusted in the LORD and have not faltered.

²Test me, O LORD, and try me;
examine my heart and my mind.

³For your steadfast love is before my eyes;
I have walked faithfully with you.

⁴I have not sat with the worthless,
nor do I consort with the deceitful.

⁵I have hated the company of evildoers;
I will not sit down with the wicked.

⁶I will wash my hands in innocence, O LORD,
that I may go in procession round your altar,

⁷singing aloud a song of thanksgiving
and recounting all your wonderful deeds.

⁸LORD, I love the house in which you dwell
and the place where your glory abides.

SECOND READING

Paul presents benchmarks for faithful relationships with Christians and non-Christians. Love is the unflagging standard of our behavior. When we encounter evil, we do not resort to its tactics but seek to overcome it with good. While Christians cannot control the actions and attitudes of others, we seek to live at peace with all people.

Romans 12:9-21

⁹Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; ¹⁰love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹²Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. ¹³Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. ¹⁷Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take

thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." ²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

P: The word of the Lord. C: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

After Peter confesses that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (16:16), Jesus reveals the ultimate purpose of his ministry. These words prove hard to accept, even for a disciple whom Jesus has called a "rock."

The gospel according to Matthew 16:21-28

Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹From that time on, [after Peter confessed that Jesus was the Messiah,] Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²²And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you." ²³But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

²⁴Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ²⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. ²⁶For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?

²⁷"For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. ²⁸Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

P: The gospel of the Lord. C: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Sermon

Like many of you, I have been watching the television reports and reading the newspaper articles about Jacob Blake and the unrest in Kenosha. We are aware of the incident, and the shots fired from a police officer's gun

that caused Mr. Blake to become partially paralyzed. We are aware of the violent protests and the protestors unlawful actions. We are aware of their looting, burning of buildings, and the death of two men and the injury of another from the gun of a vigilante. Through the sights and sounds of television, we are aware of all these things. While we do not condone violent protests, we are, nevertheless, aware of them.

Kenosha is 200 miles from Wilton. Minneapolis is about 200 miles from Wilton. Two hundred miles that may seem like thousands of miles to us. Because, most of us do not fully understand the depths of pain surrounding the unrest. We have never experienced inequality or injustice of this magnitude in our own lives. We do not live in communities with large numbers of people of color. We do not live in communities where we see face-to-face the issues that daily confront people in Kenosha, Minneapolis, and other communities at this time. While the protests in Kenosha have become more peaceful in recent days, we have seen people on television who appear to be angry, agitated, distraught, emotionally drained, and even, out of control. For many of the protesters, the most recent incident, was just one of many incidents that they have experienced in their lifetimes. They are incidents in which inequality, oppression, and the injustice of being a person of color, have come to the forefront. For many persons of color, the most recent incident, was not an isolated incident, but yet another incident, yet another example, of systemic racism.

The current situation is a reminder of the world that we live in, and the divisiveness that too often takes precedence. Have there been people who have gathered non-violently and peacefully in Kenosha? Yes, but, what we have seen has most often been the protestors who are not promoting peace, but rather, getting even. The evil of "an eye for an eye," thinking. Their violent actions do not move anyone or anything closer to justice or peace. Burning buildings, looting, and hurting others, does nothing but destroy the livelihoods of people, often innocent people and their families, and proliferate a culture of evil and hatred.

Perhaps some of us, if not most of us, have been tempted to ignore what is going on in the world, including what is going on in these communities 200 miles away from us. Most, if not all of us, have plenty of food to eat, apartments or homes to live in, jobs or Social Security checks, bank accounts, and all the other things that we need to live comfortably day-to-day. Knowing this, we are tempted to focus on ourselves, and to continue to accumulate more and more for ourselves. This is a temptation that surrounds us and many others in our world. But, resting while others in the world are hurting, is not what Jesus taught us as Christians to do.

Thinking only about ourselves and our individual human needs, is not what Jesus desires of us.

Our gospel passage for today is a continuation of the pericope of last Sunday. We recall that Jesus praised Peter when he described Jesus as the "... Messiah, the Son of the living God." But, in our passage today, we hear Jesus chastising Peter. Jesus says to him, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your sights not on divine things but on human things." (vs. 23)

Jesus' words to Peter are reminiscent of Jesus' time in the wilderness, when he was tempted by the evil one (Matthew 4: 1-11). We recall the three temptations that Satan places before Jesus. First, Jesus is told to turn stones into bread, so that he will have plenty of food. Second, he is told to throw himself off the pinnacle of the temple, thereby calling the angels to save him from hurting himself. Third, the evil one takes Jesus to a high mountain, and offers him the kingdoms of the world if Jesus will follow Satan. To all these temptations, Jesus refuses the evil one, and instead quotes scripture. At each temptation, Jesus refuses to focus on himself, and instead, focuses on God and furthering God's kingdom.

In our gospel passage today, Jesus prepares the disciples by telling them what will happen to him when he gets to Jerusalem. He will suffer, be killed, and on the third day be raised. Peter says to Jesus, "God forbid it, Lord. This must never happen to you" (vs. 22).

As human beings, we can understand Peter's thinking. Jesus is on earth. Jesus is teaching the disciples, he is healing the sick, he is performing miracles. Why would Peter, or any of the disciples, want Jesus to leave them! Why would they want Jesus to suffer and be killed! But, it is not these horrible things that Peter should be focusing on, but rather, on Jesus' words, "and on the third day be raised." Peter is listening with human ears, but missing the most important part! Yes, Jesus will suffer. Yes, Jesus will be killed. Jesus knows these things and he is telling the disciples so they will be prepared. Jesus knows that his death is not for his sake, but to atone for the sins of all humanity. And Jesus' death is not the end of the story. Jesus will be raised! Jesus will be raised, and his divinity will be made known throughout the world. This cannot be undone, for it is God's will! God's will be done!

This past Friday, 57 years ago, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., gave what has become known as his, "I Have A Dream" speech. The setting was Washington, D.C., during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The reason for this non-violent march, was to promote civil and economic rights and an end to

racism. But Rev. Dr. King communicated a message about God and God's kingdom on that day. Here is an excerpt from his speech.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."

This is our hope, and this is the faith that I go back to the South with.

With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day." (*American Rhetoric*, online)

The protests that are happening in Kenosha, Minneapolis, and other places, continue to be about basic human rights. We may be tempted to ignore these protests thinking, "What do they have to do with me?" But they have everything to do with us. We are Christians. We are the body of Christ. We are to look beyond our own human wants and needs to the hopes, the dreams, the desires and needs of others. There are persons in our country and world who do not know the freedoms that most of us as white persons know. Yet, we are tempted to ignore the challenges that others face. We are tempted to forget about God and God's kingdom. We are tempted to ignore God's desire for justice and peace throughout the world.

God's love for us, and all that God has created, is unlimited! The love that God shares with us, we can share with others. Why would we not want other people to have happier, healthier, better lives? Why would we not want to share what we have with others, when God has given us so much? Many of us have more than we will ever need! Jesus tells us that we are to move beyond human thinking to heavenly thinking. To do this, we need to focus not on our own wants and needs, but on furthering God's kingdom on earth. With God's help, through the work of the Holy Spirit, we can do this! We can do this by leading the way, using non-violent words and actions. We can do this by praying for those who have been persecuted throughout the world. We can do this by offering our resources and ourselves to help create better lives for those who have been degraded, demeaned, and otherwise devalued. With God's help, we can serve God, share God's love, and proclaim the good news of the gospel to others. For God's love has been poured out for us, and we have been richly blessed. May we joyously share God's love with others, today and every day. Amen.

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

God of faithfulness, you bid your people to follow Jesus. Set the mind of your church on divine things. Grant us trust in you, that we lose our lives for the sake of Christ and thereby discover joy in life through him. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of wonder, the earth is yours and all that is in it. Heal your creation and give us eyes to see the world as you do. As the seasons change, pattern the rhythm of our lives in harmony with all creation. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of all nations, you call us to live peaceably with all. Give us ears to hear one another, even those we name as enemies. Fill all leaders with mercy and understanding, that they advocate and genuinely care for those who are poor and most vulnerable in their communities. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of salvation, you promise to deliver us. Help those who have affected by fire, wind and rain. Give those who suffer a strong sense of your presence and love. Accompany those who are uncertain, raise the spirits of those who are despairing from Coronavirus and other health concerns, and heal the sick especially Katie, Dakota, Carla, Ruth, Judy, Alrita, Dick, Lisa, Pam, Curt, Deb, Lois, Dale, Peggy, Tim, Michelle, Darlene, Richard, Allyson, Karl, Kurt, Kari, Tessa, and all those we name aloud and in our hearts. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of community, you call us to rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, and persevere in prayer. Make our congregation a workshop of your love. When we quarrel, bring reconciliation. Help us overcome evil with good. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of all grace, you give us everlasting life. In love we recall your holy ones who now live in your undying light. In our remembering, give us a foretaste of the feast to come. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SENDING
God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

Blessing

Hymn

I Love to Tell the Story



1 I love to tell the sto - ry of un - seen things a - bove,
2 I love to tell the sto - ry: how pleas - ant to re - peat
3 I love to tell the sto - ry, for those who know it best



of Je - sus and his glo - ry, of Je - sus and his love.
what seems, each time I tell it, more won - der - ful - ly sweet!
seem hun - ger - ing and thirst - ing to hear it like the rest.



I love to tell the sto - ry, be - cause I know it's true;
I love to tell the sto - ry, for some have nev - er heard
And when, in scenes of glo - ry, I sing the new, new song,



it sat - is - fies my long - ings as noth - ing else would do.
the mes - sage of sal - va - tion from God's own ho - ly word.
I'll sing the old, old sto - ry that I have loved so long.

Refrain



I love to tell the sto - ry; 'twill be my theme in glo - ry



to tell the old, old sto - ry of Je - sus and his love.

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

IN OUR PRAYERS

Katie Wallace, Bill Collar, Dakota Holiday, Carla Von Haden, Ruth Johnson, Judy Bever, Alrita Ornes, Dick Krause, Lisa Rhodes, Pam Liefke, Curt Brueggen, Deb Paeth, Lois Reineke, Darlene Benish, Tessa Klipstein, Kurt, Kari & Karl Radke, Peggy, Tim, Michelle, Richard, Allyson.

IN THE MILITARY

Jacob Picha, Todd Nofsinger, Dylan Dougherty, Danelle Dougherty, Seth Tormoen, Robert Cale.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHICKEN DINNER

We are having a chicken dinner fundraiser on September 13, 2020, to help reduce the effect of the pandemic on our finances. The meal will cost \$10.00 and will consist of ½ barbeque chicken, potato salad, beans, cranberry relish, dinner roll, and 8 oz. water. All meals will be take-out with serving time from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM. **Tomorrow is the last day to purchase tickets.**

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

We'll be packing school supplies again this year in support of Lutheran World Relief. The following are items for the school kits:

- ONE 30-centimeter ruler, or a ruler with centimeters on one side and inches on the other
- ONE pencil sharpener
- ONE pair of blunt scissors (safety scissors with embedded steel blades work well)
- ONE box of 16 or 24 crayons
- ONE 2 ½" eraser
- FOUR 70-sheet notebooks of wide- or college-ruled paper, approximately 8" x 10 ½"; no loose leaf paper
- FIVE unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers; secure together with a rubber band
- FIVE black or blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink); secure together with a rubber band

Please bring the items with you to drive-in church or call Nalani (608-387-2311) and she will make arrangements to get them from you. Thank you.

ELCA WORLD HUNGER

ELCA World Hunger, like many organizations that work to end hunger, has experienced a decline in donations because churches are not operating in their normal capacity. Yet, due to the pandemic, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of people that are experiencing food insecurity and acute hunger. **To help support ELCA World Hunger, a virtual benefit for ELCA World Hunger entitled "Hunger in the Time of Covid-19; Life for Today & Hope for Tomorrow" will be held on September 24th at 7 pm.** This will be led by ELCA Presiding Bishop Eaton, Rick Steves, and Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee. We encourage you to participate in this event.. Register at: <https://community.elca.org/online-registration/sept-24-rick-steves-virtual-hunger-event>

CONTACTS DURING CORONAVIRUS CLOSURE

In case of emergency, contact Pastor Cathleen, via text, 608-865-1074, Justin Arndt (608-435-6336) (414-587-6642) or Nalani Bever (608-387-2311).

To activate the prayer chain, please contact Nalani or Louise Buchholz (608-435-6435).

Additional Contact Information:

Pastor Cathleen: cathleenmorris@go.mccormick.edu

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Nalani Bever: nananib@gmail.com

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FACEBOOK!! Home page: St. Paul's Lutheran Church Wilton WI

*The Sunday Assembly, Lorraine S. Brugh, Gordon W. Lathrop, Augsburg Fortress, 2008

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Last Sunday, I read an article about the needs of homeless persons in the La Crosse Area. ("Our hearts are so full," *La Crosse Tribune*, Sunday, August 23, 2020, pp. A1-A2). At present, there are 77 persons known to be without shelter. Yet, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, many of the shelters have had to reduce the number of persons they can serve to half capacity. The shelters have needed to limit capacity in order to follow social distancing and sanitation requirements, and to meet other health and safety guidelines. While these requirements are necessary, they have increased the numbers of persons living especially in Riverside and Cameron Parks. As such, there is an even greater need for donations of items to assist them.

The article explained that a group of nurses from Gundersen Hospital have been raising awareness about the needs of the homeless. They are asking people to donate items and to otherwise express a loving concern for the welfare of those in this vulnerable population. The number of persons who are homeless is increasing, but, they do not yet know how long the shelter restrictions will be in place. They do know that their needs will continue, for the end of the pandemic is not yet in sight, and the end to homelessness in La Crosse is not yet in sight.

As I read the article, one thing that stood out for me, was the terminology that the nurses use to describe their patients. Nurse Catie Cramer stated,

"A lot of us really disliked calling them 'homeless,'" says Cramer, who works primarily with patients with behavioral health or addiction issues and those without shelter. "We're now referring to that population as 'hearts' because that's what they are."

Using the term, "hearts," changes our focus. It moves our thinking away from what they lack, to what they have. Through using the term, "hearts," we, too, can take away some of the stigma of being homeless, or hungry, or any number of other challenges. We, too, can come face-to-face with the reality that all persons are living, breathing, human beings created by God. They are people, they are "hearts," they are persons who deserve to be treated fully as human beings who have value. Rather than focusing on the many things that they don't have, we can focus on what they do have. Like the familiar hymn, "Blest be the Tie that Binds," let our hearts be joined with their "hearts" in Christian love.

Peace,

Pastor Cathy