



THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 19, 2021

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

*In worship we learn the reversals in the kingdom of God:
greatness is not defined by wealth, power, or prestige.
Rather, all people are welcomed in the name of Christ.
The children in our midst are a sign of the hospitality that
God offers to all persons regardless of their status in the*

*world. We go forth from the liturgy to be servants who find greatness in humble service on behalf of those
who are often forgotten or rejected in society.*

† GATHERING †

OPENING HYMN

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy



1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy, like the wide-ness of the sea;
2 There is wel - come for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;
3 For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;
4 'Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice which is more than lib - er - ty.
there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing in his blood.
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.
great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in heav'n.
There is grace e - nough for thou - sands of new worlds as great as this;
But we make this love too nar - row by false lim - its of our own;
Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,



There is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
there is room for fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.
and we mag - ni - fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.
and our lives will be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as we begin.

P. We are gathered in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C. **Amen.**

P. Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P. Gracious God,

C. **we confess that we have sinned and fallen short of Your glory. We have turned away from You. We have not kept Your commandments. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have neglected the poor, and we have not welcomed all people in Your name. Forgive our sin, increase our faith, strengthen us in service, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.**

P. God, Who is rich in mercy . . . of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

GREETING

P. Holy people of God, called through the gospel of Christ, enlightened by the Spirit: grace, mercy, and peace be with you all.

C. **And also with you.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

Glory to God

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PRAYER OF THE DAY

P. O God, our teacher and guide, You draw us to Yourself and welcome us as beloved children. Help us to lay aside all envy and selfish ambition, that we may walk in Your ways of wisdom and understanding as servants of Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C. **Amen.**

+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 11:18–20

Today's reading tells of the suffering of the prophet Jeremiah, who announced God's word to Judah but was met with intense opposition and persecution. Jeremiah continues to trust in God in the midst of his suffering.

It was the LORD who made it known to me, and I knew;
then you showed me their evil deeds.

¹⁹But I was like a gentle lamb
led to the slaughter.

And I did not know it was against me
that they devised schemes, saying,

“Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,
let us cut him off from the land of the living,
so that his name will no longer be remembered!”

²⁰But You, O LORD of hosts, Who judge righteously,

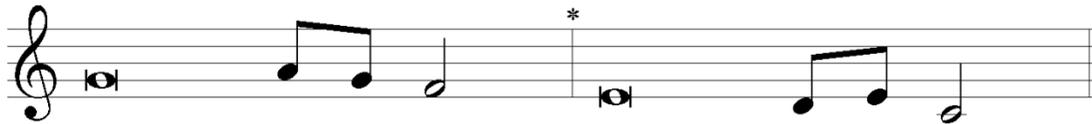
Who try the heart and the mind,
let me see Your retribution upon them,
for to You I have committed my cause.

L. The Word of the Lord.

C. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 54

God is my helper; it is the Lord Who sustains my life.



Save me, O God, | by Your name;
in Your might, de- | fend my cause.

²Hear my | prayer, O God;
give ear to the words | of my mouth.

³For the arrogant have risen up against me, and the ruthless have | sought my life,
those who have no re- | gard for God.

⁴Behold, God | is my helper;
it is the Lord Who sus- | tains my life.

⁵Render evil to those who | spy on me;
in your faithful- | ness, destroy them.

⁶I will offer You a | freewill sacrifice
and praise Your name, O LORD, for | it is good.

⁷For You have rescued me from | every trouble,
and my eye has seen the ruin | of my foes.

SECOND READING: James 3:13—4:3, 7–8a

The wisdom God gives unites our hearts and minds. Instead of living to satisfy our own wants and desires, we manifest this wisdom in peace, gentleness, mercy, and impartiality toward others.

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. ¹⁴But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. ¹⁵Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. ¹⁶For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. ¹⁷But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. ¹⁸And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

^{4:1}Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? ²You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you

engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures.

⁷Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

⁸Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.

L. The Word of the Lord.

C. Thanks be to God

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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HOLY GOSPEL: St. Mark 9:30-37

Jesus' teaching and action in this text are directed to the church whenever it is seduced by the world's definition of greatness: prestige, power, influence, and money. The antidote to such a concern for greatness is servanthood.

C. Glory to You, O Lord.

[Jesus and the disciples went on] and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; ³¹for He was teaching His disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill Him, and three days after being killed, He will rise again." ³²But they did not understand what He was saying and were afraid to ask Him.

³³Then they came to Capernaum; and when He was in the house He asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" ³⁴But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. ³⁵He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." ³⁶Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking [the child] in His arms, He said to them, ³⁷"Whoever welcomes one such child in My name welcomes Me, and whoever welcomes Me welcomes not Me but the one who sent Me."

P. The Gospel of the Lord.

C. Praise to You, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Children of the Heavenly Father

#474 (grn)

THE APOSTLES' CREED

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SHARING THE PEACE OF THE LORD

ANNOUNCEMENTS

✠ PRAYER ✠

OFFERING

OFFERTORY



Re - mem - ber and re - jice, re - newed by floods of grace.
God, bless us by your grace; re - mind us of your care.



We bear the sign of Je - sus Christ, that time can - not e - rase.
Re - new - ing Spir - it, fill us now, in - spire our work, our prayer.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

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PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

P. ... Lord, in Your mercy,
C. hear our prayer.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

✠ SENDING ✠

BENEDICTION

P. God Almighty send you light and truth to keep you all the days of your life. The hand of God protect you; the holy angel accompany you; and the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the ✠ Son and the Holy Spirit, be with you now and forever.
C. Amen

CLOSING HYMN

The Lord Now Sends Us Forth



En - via - do soy de Dios, mi ma - no lis - ta es - tá
The Lord now sends us forth with hands to serve and give,
pa - ra cons - truir con él un mun - do fra - ter - nal.
to make of all the earth a bet - ter place to live.
Los án - ge - les no son en - via - dos a cam - biar
The an - gels are not sent in - to our world of pain
un mun - do de do - lor por un mun - do me - jor;
to do what we were meant to do in Je - sus' name;
me ha to - ca - do a mí ha - cer - lo rea - li - dad.
that falls to you and me and all who are made free.
A - yú - da - me, Se - ñor, a ha - cer tu vo - lun - tad.
Help us, O Lord, we pray, to do your will to - day.

DISMISSAL

P. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

C. Thanks be to God.

Ministers: All the People of God

Musician: Lou Knutson

Camera: Josh Sumption

Presider: Pastor Ellen Munter

Reader: Haley Noyes

Projection: James Kamrath/Kendon Knutson

Katie Munter/Sara Wollum

Acolytes: Haley Noyes & Lillie Wollum

Sound Room: Ken Jeremiason & Jerome Bruns

How to reach us:

Church Office: 507-296-4658
Pastor's Cell: 507-828-1000(call or text)
Bethel email: bethel@bethelofporter.com

Pastor's House: 507-296-4558
Pastor's email: pastormunter@gmail.com
Bethel web page: www.bethelofporter.com

September 12, 2021

General: \$4,922.35 (\$726.85 received through eGiving)



The attached QR Code can be used to directly access the online giving form for Bethel Lutheran.

Just one way of our continuing to modernize so you can give conveniently to Bethel.

Grief and Loss Support Group

Last Tuesday of every month starting September 28th, 2021 through January 25th, 2022, 10-11:30 am at Christ Lutheran Church in Hendricks, MN.

This is a free monthly support group that gives you an opportunity to meet other people who are grieving and share experiences, gain knowledge and coping strategies.

Contact GOOD SHEPHERDHOSPICE to register. (507)275-2210, Colleen Petersen.
Additional information is on the bulletin board in the church.



Emily Morton, Angie Denelsbeck Anderson, Shirlee Gabbert,
Bill and Karen Pohlen, Carol Moon, Gail Sumption, Kendon Knutson

The Greatest

In today's gospel from Mark, the disciples have just witnessed Jesus' transfiguration atop the high mountain. Riding high on this experience, they are now traveling with Him through the countryside, processing what they have seen, contrasting it with the story of crucifixion and death Jesus keeps hinting at. They begin to argue about which of them is the greatest—who will be given the highest honors for hanging out with Jesus? But Jesus stops them in their tracks. It isn't about the highest honors, or about who shines most brightly: "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all" (Mark 9:35).

Jesus' words to the disciples and to us are a reminder that God flips upside-down the way the world judges greatness. As Christians, most of us know this almost instinctively. We talk about avoiding "works righteousness" and rejecting the need to earn our salvation or prove our faith. And yet, even within the "servant of all" framework, we too often compete with one another to be the greatest servant. We hold ourselves up as examples of charity and justice, patting ourselves on the back for our works of service, hoping that the world—and God—will be impressed. Even when we know that this isn't how God works, we still get sucked into the ways of the world.

But Jesus' statement to the disciples is not just about them: it is also about Himself. It is a reminder that Jesus' greatness is precisely because on the cross, He has become "last of all and servant of all." Our own efforts at service and humility will always pale in comparison to the Son of God. To be sure, we are called to love and serve our neighbors; but we are called to trust Jesus, "last of all and servant of all," for our salvation. This is good news, for now our competitions and attempts to impress are no more. We simply receive from the Lord and pass it along.

Upcoming Commemorations

Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist

Tuesday, September 21, 2021

Matthew (or Levi) was a tax collector in Capernaum for the Roman government. Tax collectors were frequently despised for dishonesty and for assisting the occupiers. Jesus nevertheless showed love for them, and chose Matthew to be a disciple.