



THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

July 11, 2021

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

In today's gospel reading, we recognize the danger of being a prophetic voice in the world. John the Baptist denounced the intrigues of the Herodian court and eventually lost his head. Jesus criticized religious leaders who twisted life-giving practices into heavy

burdens. He pointed to a justice suffused with love for all people of the earth. Jesus was put to death, as if the grave would silence Him. Our worship leads us to believe just the opposite: He is alive among us, still challenging us with the vision of God's justice for this world and inspiring us to be ministers of peace.

Today the Church remembers Benedict of Nursia, d. 540. Benedict is known as the father of Western monasticism.

✝ GATHERING ✝

OPENING HYMN *Come, Thou Font of Every Blessing*

#499 (grn)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

P. We are gathered in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
C. Amen.

P. Trusting God's promise of forgiveness, let us confess our sin against God and one another.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P. Loving God,
C. we confess that we have not loved You with our whole hearts; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have failed to worship You with our whole being and to share the abundance of grace You give us. We have acted out of selfish ambition rather than the interests of others; we have nursed grudges rather than seeking reconciliation and peace. Forgive us and renew in us the mind of Christ Jesus, that we may live according to Your will. Amen.

P. Since we are justified by faith . . . the Holy Spirit.
C. Amen.

GREETING

- P. The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C. And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P. O God, from You come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works. Give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give; that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments, and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord.
- C. Amen.

+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Amos 7:7-15

Amos was not the kind of prophet attached to temples or royal courts. Rather, he was an ordinary farmer from Judah called by God to speak to Israel. God's word of judgment through Amos conflicted with the king's court prophet Amaziah, whom Amos encountered at Bethel.

This is what He showed me: the LORD was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in His hand. ⁸ And the LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the LORD said,

"See, I am setting a plumb line
in the midst of My people Israel;
I will never again pass them by;
⁹ the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate,
and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste,
and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

¹⁰ Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very center of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. ¹¹ For thus Amos has said,

'Jeroboam shall die by the sword,
and Israel must go into exile
away from his land.'

¹² And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; ¹³ but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

¹⁴ Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, ¹⁵ and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.'

- L. The Word of the Lord. C. Thanks be to God.

PSALM 85:8-13

I will listen to what the LORD God is saying.

I will listen to what the LORD God is saying,
for He is speaking peace to His faithful people
and to those who turn their hearts to Him.

**⁹Truly, His salvation is very near to those who fear Him,
that His glory may dwell in our land.**

¹⁰Mercy and truth have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

**¹¹Truth shall spring up from the earth,
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

¹²The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.

**¹³Righteousness shall go before Him,
and peace shall be a pathway for His feet.**

SECOND READING: Ephesians 1:3-14

*In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made known as heaven and earth are united in Christ.
Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ just as He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before Him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶ to the praise of His glorious grace that He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ that He lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹ He has made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure that He set forth in Christ, ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in Him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of Him Who accomplishes all things according to His counsel and will, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of His glory. ¹³ In Him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in Him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of His glory.

L. The Word of the Lord. C. **Thanks be to God**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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HOLY GOSPEL: St. Mark 6:14-29

As Jesus and His disciples begin to attract attention, Mark recalls the story of John the Baptist's martyrdom. Like John, Jesus and His disciples will also suffer at the hands of those opposed to the gospel of salvation.

C. Glory to you, O Lord.

King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in Him." ¹⁵ But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." ¹⁶ But when Herod heard of it, He said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."

¹⁷ For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. ¹⁸ For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." ¹⁹ And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, ²⁰ for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. ²¹ But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. ²² When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it." ²³ And he solemnly swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom." ²⁴ She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?" She replied, "The head of John the baptizer." ²⁵ Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." ²⁶ The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. ²⁷ Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, ²⁸ brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹ When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

P. The Gospel of the Lord.

C. Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Let Justice Flow Like Streams



1 Let jus - tice flow like streams of spar-king wa - ter, pure,
 2 Let righ - teous - ness roll on as oth - ers' cares we heed,
 3 So may God's plumb line, straight, de - fine our mea - sure true,



en - a - bling growth, re - fresh - ing life, a - bun - dant, cleans-ing, sure.
 an ev - er - flow - ing stream of faith trans-lat - ed in - to deed.
 and jus - tice, right, and peace per-vade this world our whole life through.

Text: Jane Parker Huber, b. 1926

Music: ST. THOMAS, Aaron Williams, 1731–1776

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✠ THE RITE OF HOLY BAPTISM ✠

P. In holy ... and obedience to the will of God.

PRESENTATION

RENUNCIATION OF EVIL

PROFESSION OF FAITH

The presiding minister addresses the assembly:

P. With the whole church, let us confess our faith. Do you believe in God the Father?

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

P. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

C. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
 and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day He rose again.

He ascended into heaven,
 and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

P. Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

C. 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.

THANKSGIVING

P. The Lord be with you.

C. And also with you.

P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P. Holy God ... all living things.

C. Blessed be God now and forever.

P. By the waters of the flood ... the freedom of the promised land.

C. Blessed be God now and forever.

P. In the waters of the Jordan ... and of the Holy Spirit.

C. Blessed be God now and forever.

P. Pour out Your Holy Spirit ... the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C. Amen.

BAPTISM

RESPONSORY SONG:

All who believe and are baptized Shall see the Lord's salvation;
Baptized into the death of Christ, They are a new creation;
Through Christ's redemption they will stand
Among the glorious heav'nly band Of every tribe and nation.

LAYING ON OF HANDS

SIGNING WITH THE CROSS

PRAYER FOR THE PARENTS

PRESENTATION OF A CANDLE

PRESENTATION OF THE FAITH CHEST

WELCOME

Through baptism you have been received into the household of God, entrusted with the good news of Jesus Christ, and strengthened to serve by the holy and life-giving Spirit.

C. We welcome you into the body of Christ and the mission we share. Join us as we give praise to God and bear God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

SHARING THE PEACE OF THE LORD

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERING /OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P. Blessed are you,

C. O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through Your goodness You have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to Your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that You have made, for the sake of Him Who gave Himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

✠ MEAL ✠

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P. You are indeed holy ... accomplished our salvation.

C. Amen.

P. In the night in ... the Lord's death until He comes.

C. Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P. Send now Your Holy Spirit ... both now and forever.

C. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

DISTRIBUTION

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P. The Body and Blood . . . keep you in His grace.

C. Amen

POST-COMMUNION SONG

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

P. Jesus Christ, You have given . . . Lord forevermore.

C. Amen.

✠ SENDING ✠

BENEDICTION

P. Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. May you be rooted and grounded in His love.

Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C. Amen

CLOSING HYMN

Faith of Our Fathers



1 Faith of our fa - thers, liv - ing still in spite of dun - geon,
2 Faith of our moth - ers, dar - ing faith, your work for Christ is
3 Faith of our sis - ters, broth - ers too, who still must bear op -
4 Faith born of God, oh, call us yet, bind us with all who



fire, and sword. Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy
love re - vealed, spread - ing God's word from pole to pole,
press - ion's might, rais - ing on high, in pris - ons dark,
fol - low you, shar - ing the strug - gle of your cross



when-e'er we hear that glo - rious word. Faith of our fa - thers,
mak - ing love known and free - dom real. Faith of our moth - ers,
the cross of Christ still burn - ing bright. Faith for to - day, O
un - til the world is made a - new. Faith born of God, O



ho - ly faith, we will be true to you till death.
ho - ly faith, we will be true to you till death.
liv - ing faith, we will be true to you till death.
liv - ing faith, we will be true to you till death.

DISMISSAL

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

C. Thanks be to God.

THOSE WHO SERVE:

Ministers: All the People of God

Musician: Lou Knutson

Camera: Josh Sumption

Presider: Pastor Ellen Munter

Reader: Sara Wollum

Projection: James Kamrath/Kendon Knutson
Katie Munter

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July 4, 2021

General: \$2,389.5 (\$779.50 received through eGiving)

Includes: \$1,000.00 from Hemnes Lutheran Church. \$100.00 for funeral luncheon.

Savings: \$1,070.00

Includes: \$1,000.00 in memory of Mavis Anderson for Digital Resources. \$50.00 in memory of Norma Dovre. \$10.00 in memory of Bill Ningen. \$10.00 in memory of Jim and Sylvia Pridal.



Emily Morton, Angie Denelsbeck Anderson
Shirlee Gabbert, Bill and Karen Pohlen
Carol Moon,



Welcome to Our Family

Today we welcome Halston Ruth Longhenry into the family of God. Halston is the daughter of Travis and Chelsea. Halston's sponsors are Lauren Dolly and Jordan Hurt. We joyfully receive Halston Ruth into our community and accept our responsibilities in nurturing her life of faith.

It's almost time for Vacation Bible School.

This year our VBS is going to Mars and Beyond!! Our mission is July 26 to July 29, at Bethel, from 6:00 – 8:30 pm. All space cadets in preschool through 5th grade are welcome to sign up and travel with us this week. The link to register is on our webpage www.bethelofporter.com.

Don't miss out on the fun! It will be a trip to remember!

Which Kingdom?

Amid the dancing, feasting, and complicated family dynamics of this week's gospel text, we hear a story of two leaders who embody power very differently: John, a man of righteousness and integrity, and Herod, whose power is corrupted by fear, greed, and paranoia. The former embodies the kind of power that points us to life and wholeness. The latter kind of power results in gruesome and irrational death.

All too often, corruption and greed seem to win the day. We might find ourselves desperately searching for Christ and wondering if there is any hope to be salvaged from the wreckage of grief, anxiety, and pain present in our world.

The good news is that the story of God doesn't end in senseless violence at the hands of power-hungry rulers. There is another banquet to come. This banquet will be a celebration in which the wealthy and powerful are not front and center. It will be a feast where Jesus is the host and there is more than enough for everyone to eat their fill. It is a banquet of new life, hope, and a kind of power that empties itself for the sake of the other.

But first we sit in the hard truths of our world. In his dying breath, John continues to challenge us, pointing the way to Jesus and proclaiming a baptism of repentance. We must train our eyes to recognize power run amok, the places where fear governs our nations, our cities, our hearts. We must cry out against injustice, and speak up when we witness the truth of God's mercy and love being silenced.

In Christ, we have been freed to boldly proclaim and embody the gospel for the sake of our neighbors. We are citizens of *God's* kingdom after all, not Herod's. So, will we be people of courage and truth, or will we be people of self-preservation and fear? What kind of power will the Church be known for in this time and place?

Upcoming Commemorations

Sunday, July 11, 2021

Benedict of Nursia, Abbot of Monte Cassino, died around 540

Benedict is known as the father of the Western monastic movement. Educated in Rome, he went to live as a hermit, and eventually gathered a community of monks around him. He wrote a rule for living in monasteries that is used by Benedictines and adapted by others.

Monday, July 12, 2021

Nathan Söderblom, Bishop of Uppsala, died 1931

A winner of the Nobel Prize for peace for his efforts to unite peoples after the First World War, Söderblom also called attention to the revival of early church worship principles, and helped to lay the groundwork for the World Council of Churches.

Saturday, July 17, 2021

Bartolomé de Las Casas, missionary to the Indies, died 1566

A native of Spain, Las Casas first came to the Western hemisphere while serving in the military. Granted a large estate with indigenous slaves, he freed them after he was ordained a priest. He worked in the Caribbean and Central America to improve the lives of the native peoples.

Acknowledgements

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