

## FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 5th, 2021



9:15am - Hybrid Worship

### Lutheran Church of the Living Christ

*This week's texts are linked by a pronounced emphasis on our Creator's identity as the one who reverses power imbalance and establishes justice. James tells us to stop showing favoritism in the assembly, treating the rich visitor with more honor than the poor one. Jesus himself seems to show partiality in his first response to the Syrophenician woman in today's gospel. Was he testing her faith in saying Gentiles don't deserve the goods meant for God's children? Or did he learn something from his encounter with this woman when her reply took him by surprise?*

*Either way, the story tells us that God shows no partiality. Everyone who brings a need to Jesus is received with equal honor as a beloved child.*

**Notes about our worship service:** Guidance and extra information is printed in *italics* throughout the bulletin. "P" indicates the speaking part of the presiding minister; "L" indicates a speaking part of a lay leader; "C" and parts in boldface indicate speaking parts of the whole congregation.

Worshipping in this time continues to be impacted by the Delta variant. As such, the following precautions remain in place: Masking is required. You will drop off your offering and pick up prepackaged communion supplies and bulletins on your way in. You may choose to sit where you like (no capacity limitations). Sharing of communion and peace will remain distanced. We will sing only the last song of the service. Finally, please be mindful of others' comfort with touch. Ask before giving a handshake or hug.

**PRELUDE:** "Let Us Break Bread" arr. Ross Anderson

## **WELCOME**

*The assembly is invited to stand as worship begins.*

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

P: The God of the suffering disrupts systems that divide and labor that exploits;

**C: God created us for relationship, to share the labor of living.**

P: The God of the oppressed dreams of communities of care and mutual aid;

**C: God created us to delight in times of sabbath rest.**

P: The God who is with us imagines a life of collective flourishing;

**C: Christ comes to us, that all may know fullness of life.**

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

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

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,

whose teaching is life, whose presence is sure, and whose love is endless.

**C: Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sins to the one who welcomes us with an open heart.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P: God our comforter:

**C: like lost sheep, we have gone astray. We gaze upon abundance and see scarcity.**

**We turn our faces away from injustice and oppression. We exploit the earth with our apathy and greed. Free us from our sin, gracious God. Listen when we call out to you for help. Lead us by your love to love our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.**

P: All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

By the gift of grace in † Christ Jesus, God makes you righteous.

Receive with glad hearts the forgiveness of all your sins.

**C: Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

## **OPENING HYMN - Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, ELW #859**

*You are invited to listen to the hymn tune and reflect on the lyrics below.*

1. Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the God of creation!  
My heart is longing to offer up sweet adoration.  
Melody make; dulcimer, harp, now awake. Sound forth your praise, ev'ry nation.
2. Praise the Almighty, o'er all life so wondrously reigning,  
and, as on wings of an eagle, uplifting, sustaining.  
Have you not seen? All that is needful has been sent by God's gracious ordaining
3. Praise the Almighty, who prospers your work and defends you;  
see from the heavens the showers of mercy God sends you.  
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do; Infinite Love here befriends you.
4. Praise the Almighty! In wonder my spirit is soaring!  
All that has life and breath, come now with praises outpouring.  
Let the amen sound from God's people again, gladly forever adoring.

## **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: Gracious God, throughout the ages you transform sickness into health and death into life. Open us to the power of your presence, and make us a people ready to proclaim your promises to the whole world, through Jesus Christ, our healer and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## **FIRST READING - Genesis 32:7-14**

*Moses' role as prophet includes being a mediator between God and the people. Moses pleads with God on the Israelites' behalf, appealing to God's faithfulness and the promise of the covenant, which would be broken if the people were wiped out.*

The Lord said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; <sup>8</sup> they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!'" <sup>9</sup> The Lord said to Moses, "I have seen this people,

how stiff-necked they are. <sup>10</sup> Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation.”

<sup>11</sup> But Moses implored the Lord God, and said, “O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? <sup>12</sup> Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. <sup>13</sup> Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, ‘I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.’” <sup>14</sup> And God changed God’s mind about the disaster that was planned to bring on the people.

L: Word of God, Word of life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

#### **PSALM: Psalm 146**

L: Hallelujah!

Praise the Lord, O my soul!

**C: I will praise the Lord as long as I live;**

**I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.**

L: Put not your trust in rulers,  
in mortals in whom there is no help.

**C: When they breathe their last, they return to earth,  
and in that day their thoughts perish.**

L: Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,  
whose hope is in the Lord their God;

**C: who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;  
who keeps promises forever;**

L: who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.  
The Lord sets the captive free.

**C: The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;  
the Lord loves the righteous.**

L: The Lord cares for the stranger;  
the Lord sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

**C: The Lord shall reign forever,  
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**

## **SECOND READING - James 2:1-10**

*Faithful Christians do not show partiality to the rich and powerful of the world, especially at the expense of the poor and weak. Likewise, faith does not pay mere lip service to God's will. Instead, a living Christian faith expresses itself in acts of compassion and mercy for those in need.*

My siblings, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? <sup>2</sup>For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, <sup>3</sup>and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," <sup>4</sup>have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? <sup>5</sup>Listen, my beloved siblings. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom promised to those who love God? <sup>6</sup>But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? <sup>7</sup>Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

<sup>8</sup>You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>9</sup>But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. <sup>10</sup>For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

L: Word of God, Word of life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

*The assembly stands for the reading of the gospel.*

## **GOSPEL READING - Mark 7:24-37**

*In Mark's gospel, encounters with women usually signify turning points in Jesus' ministry. A conversation with a Syrophenician woman marks the beginning of his mission to the Gentiles.*

[Jesus] set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice,<sup>25</sup> but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. <sup>26</sup>Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. <sup>27</sup>He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." <sup>28</sup>But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." <sup>29</sup>Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter." <sup>30</sup>So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

<sup>31</sup>Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. <sup>32</sup>They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. <sup>33</sup>He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. <sup>34</sup>Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” <sup>35</sup>And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. <sup>36</sup>Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. <sup>37</sup>They were astounded beyond measure, saying, “He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Following the reading the assembly is seated.*

**SERMON** - Pastor Melissa Woeppel

**MUSIC FOR REFLECTION - Healer of Our Every Ill, ELW #612**

*You are invited to listen to the hymn tune and reflect on the lyrics below.*

*Refrain:* Healer of our ev'ry ill, light of each tomorrow,  
give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow.

1. You who know our fears and sadness,  
grace us with your peace and gladness;  
Spirit of all comfort, fill our hearts. *Refrain*
2. In the pain and joy beholding  
how your grace is still unfolding,  
give us all your vision, God of love. *Refrain*
3. Give us strength to love each other,  
ev'ry sister, ev'ry brother;  
Spirit of all kindness, be our guide. *Refrain*
4. You who know each thought and feeling,  
teach us all your way of healing;  
Spirit of compassion, fill each heart. *Refrain*

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

*The prayers reflect the wideness of God's mercy – for the church and its ministry; for the well-being of creation; for peace & justice; for the poor, oppressed, & sick; for all who suffer; for the congregation; & for special concerns/occasions.*

As children of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need. *A brief silence.*

Holy One, you bring your people together in worship. Enliven your church. Guide all evangelists, preachers, prophets, and missionaries who seek to share your love through word and deed. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You provide water for thirsty ground and sunshine to feed hungry plants. Bless all who advocate for healthy forests, unpolluted air, and clean waterways. Inspire all people to show care for the world you have made. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You show no partiality. Increase justice in all nations. Encourage leaders and governments to work with one another for the good of our common world. Especially as we celebrate Labor Day, unite us in seeking the health, safety, and dignity of all. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You accompany those who are most in need. Shelter all fleeing violence or persecution, protect any who are in danger, and sustain them through uncertain and unstable times (*especially...*). Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You support the work of your disciples. Continue to nurture the leadership and ministries of this congregation. Inspire, lead, and guide us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

You embrace all who have died in the faith and bring them into your glorious presence. We thank you for their example and rejoice in their lives. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*The assembly is invited to stand.*

### **SHARING OF THE PEACE**

P: The peace of the risen Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

*Share a sign of peace by waving, flashing a peace sign, or other form of **distanced** greeting.*

*If you are joining us online, type a message or share a brief word of peace.*

### **OFFERING AND PRAYER**

*We continue to be the church together during this time through prayer and financial support.*

*Your giving ensures that the ministries of this congregation continue now and into the future.*

P: God of abundance, you cause streams to break forth in the desert and manna to rain from the heavens. Accept the gifts you have first given us. Unite them with the offering of our lives to nourish the world you love so dearly; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**C: Amen.**

### **COMMUNION LITURGY**

P: The Lord be with you

**C: And also with you**

P: Lift up your hearts

**C: We lift them to the Lord**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God **C: It is right to give God thanks and praise**

Maker and redeemer of all, we lift our hearts to thank you, because you open our ears to hear your voice and release our tongues to sing your praise. As we proclaim the triumph of your grace, we join the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, praising your name, and joining the unending refrain of all creation:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**

**Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy God, you created the earth as a place of encounter between you and your creatures. You called your people from slavery and wilderness into freedom, covenant, and abundant life. You gave your children manna to share, and even from the crumbs there is banquet enough for all. As Jesus shared bread with the poor, so this bread and cup are Christ's body given for the healing of the world.

In the night in which he was handed over, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Great is the mystery of faith. **Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Life-giving God, make this meal a moment of reconciliation. Let those who share it be ambassadors of compassion and welcome to your wounded world. Hasten the day when your gentle mercy triumphs, that all may find a place in the feast of your reign, ever one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

#### **LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us.

**C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

#### **DISTRIBUTION**

P: All who hunger and thirst, receive what is offered here. The body and blood of Christ given and shed for you.

**C: Amen.**

*The assembly is seated. Time is given for the sharing of elements among households.*

## **BLESSING**

P: May this sign of God's presence, this shared bread between us, strengthen us and give us peace.

**C: Amen.**

## **PRAYER**

P: God of life, in the gift of your body and blood you turn the crumbs of our faith into a feast of salvation. Send us forth into the world with shouts of joy, bearing witness to the abundance of your love in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS (see last page)**

*The assembly is invited to stand for the end of the service.*

## **BENEDICTION**

P: People of God, you are Christ's body,  
bringing new life to a suffering world.

The holy Trinity, † one God,  
bless you now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

SENDING HYMN - O Christ, Your Heart, Compassionate, ELW #722



1 O Christ, your heart, com - pas - sion - ate, bore ev - 'ry hu - man pain.  
2 As once you wel - comed those cast down and healed the sick, the blind,  
3 O Christ, cre - ate new hearts in us that beat in time with yours,  
4 O Love that made the dis - tant stars, yet marks the spar - row's fall,



Its beat - ing was the pulse of God; its breadth, God's vast do - main.  
so may all bruised and bro - ken lives through us your help still find.  
that, joined by faith with your great heart, be - come love's o - pen doors.  
whose arms stretched wide up - on a cross em - brace and bear us all:



The heart of God, the heart of Christ com - bined in per - fect rhyme  
Lord, join our hearts with those who weep that none may weep a - lone,  
We are your bod - y, ris - en Christ; our hearts, our hands we yield  
come, make your church a ser - vant church that walks your ser - vant ways,



to write God's love in hu - man deeds, e - ter - ni - ty in time.  
and help us bear an - oth - er's pain as though it were our own.  
that through our life and min - is - try your love may be re - vealed.  
whose deeds of love rise up to you, a sac - ri - fice of praise!

**DISMISSAL**

L: Go in peace; you are the body of Christ.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: "The Lord's My Shepherd" arr. Lloyd Larson

## Announcements for the week of 9/5/21

1. God's Work, Our Hands **Next Sunday Sept. 12** - Sign up on the bulletin boards in the narthex or talk to Laurie Brown to volunteer! Special face masks will be available to wear during the service projects. (Suggested donation \$8).
2. September Diaper Drive - We are collecting diapers for babies age 12 months and older. This would include diapers size 4 and up as well as pull-ups. In-kind and monetary donations will be accepted - Doris Stoehner & Kathy Endorf
3. Fall Faith Formation begins this week following worship. See The Communicator (pg. 3) for all the details!
4. Exercise classes resume on Tues. and Thurs. at 11am in the basement. Masks required. See Bill Kaepfel with questions.
5. **Vaccine Clinic - 9/23, 1-4pm.** We will need to recruit and schedule individuals who wish to be vaccinated (details TBA). We also need volunteers to help with set up and staffing. Talk to Pr. Melissa if you'd like to be involved.

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## Worship Leadership

### September 5, 2021

**Preaching/Presiding:** Pastor Melissa  
**Assisting Minister:** Elizabeth Carr  
**Lector:** Kathy Carr  
**Zoom and Slides:** Laurie/Gary Brown  
**Musician:** Greg Ott  
**Ushers:** Cathie Lehr and Marilyn Wiley  
**Greeter:** Angela Bennett

### September 12, 2021 *God's Work Our Hands*

**Preaching/Presiding:** Pastor Melissa  
**Assisting Minister:** Randy Henning  
**Lector:** Laurie Brown  
**Zoom and Slides:** Erle Craig  
**Musician:** David Eggers  
**Ushers:** Ann Schultz and Cora Wallace  
**Greeter:** Jeanne Calderwood

### September 19, 2021

**Preaching/Presiding:** Pastor Melissa  
**Assisting Minister:** Angela Bennett  
**Lector:** Gary Brown  
**Zoom and Slides:** Elizabeth Carr  
**Musician:** Greg Ott  
**Ushers:** Glenn and Jann Mueller  
**Greeter:** Kathy Endorf

### September 26, 2021

**Preaching/Presiding:** Pastor Melissa  
**Assisting Minister:** Elizabeth Carr  
**Lector:** Sharon Perko Davis  
**Zoom and Slides:** Bryan Miles  
**Musician:** David Eggers  
**Ushers:** Dave Endorf & Randy Henning  
**Greeter:**