



Season of the Spirit

LWF Communion Prayer
for Pentecost 2020

Week 4 – 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).

Sunday, 21 June 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

I will praise the name of God with a song;
I will magnify God with thanksgiving.

Psalmody

It is for your sake that I have borne reproach,
that shame has covered my face.

I have become a stranger to my kindred,
an alien to my mother's children.

It is zeal for your house that has consumed me;
the insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.

When I humbled my soul with fasting,
they insulted me for doing so.

Answer me, O LORD, for your steadfast love is good;
according to your abundant mercy, turn to me.

Do not hide your face from your servant,
for I am in distress—make haste to answer me.

Draw near to me, redeem me,
set me free because of my enemies.

– *Psalm 69:7-10, 16-18*

Word

Matthew 10:24-39

Jesus said, “A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household! So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven. Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

Meditation

This year, the lectionary guides us through the Gospel of Matthew. It is good to remember that the teaching in the Gospel of Matthew is rooted in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-6). The Sermon on the Mount outlines a joyful obedience for the new community of followers. It defines them as a beloved community in which everyone, no matter their own personal identity, finds a place. This community is marked by the “extraordinary” as Dietrich Bonhoeffer pointed out, not that the community is special or privileged but rather the community witnesses, in its life, to the extraordinary ways of God, who knows no middle road.

The extraordinary as expressed in the Sermon on the Mount accentuates the extremes of a gospel way. The extraordinary has an appeal and inspiration when it awakens profound hope and joy within us (for example, the parable of the treasure in the field);

however, it makes us uncomfortable and confuses us when the gains seems exorbitant and the losses damning.

The extraordinary is heard first hand in the Gospel this week. The gospel demands a total obedience but this obedience is not one that we conjure up out of our own efforts, it is one that comes with faith. The gospel way, as described in Matthew, is a way of dependence on the One who has called and sent us. We are not greater than the one who calls. The disciple is not above teacher. Christ traces the way for us. What does this dependence and obedience look like in the faith community, in your context?

The verse from the Sermon on the Mount – let your “yes” be “yes and your “no” be “no” – is echoed in this week’s reading. The extraordinary freedom of the gospel challenges the values a culture or society might hold tightly. We see this today as racism and white supremacy are brought to broad daylight. In this struggle for justice even the value of family bonds, can be sorely tested and may encounter and lead to division. But we are not to fear for God the Father holds us continually in a gentle embrace, an embrace of faith.

Prayer

Teach us, good Lord God, to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to labor and not to ask for reward, except that of knowing we do your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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, 22 June 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

I will praise the name of God with a song;
I will magnify God with thanksgiving.

Psalmody

Teach me your way, O LORD,
that I may walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,
and I will glorify your name forever.

For great is your steadfast love toward me;
you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

O God, the insolent rise up against me;
a band of ruffians seeks my life,
and they do not set you before them.

But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

Turn to me and be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant;
save the child of your serving girl.

Show me a sign of your favor,
so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame,
because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

– *Psalm 86:11-17*

Word

Revelation 2:7

Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers, I will give permission to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God.

Prayer

O God, give us to eat from the tree of life at every moment in life and especially when death surrounds us. Strengthen our hearts and our deeds in faithfulness to your love. 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, 23 June 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

I will praise the name of God with a song;
I will magnify God with thanksgiving.

Psalmody

Teach me your way, O LORD,
that I may walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,
and I will glorify your name forever.

For great is your steadfast love toward me;
you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

O God, the insolent rise up against me;
a band of ruffians seeks my life,
and they do not set you before them.

But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

Turn to me and be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant;
save the child of your serving girl.

Show me a sign of your favor,
so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame,
because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

– *Psalm 86:11-17*

Word

Revelation 2:10b-11

Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

Prayer

O God, you are the source of all faithfulness. Fill our hearts and direct all our actions according to your will. We ask this through your son, our Savior, and your Holy Spirit, our Advocate. 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, 24 June 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

I will praise the name of God with a song;
I will magnify God with thanksgiving.

Psalmody

Teach me your way, O LORD,
that I may walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,
and I will glorify your name forever.

For great is your steadfast love toward me;
you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

O God, the insolent rise up against me;
a band of ruffians seeks my life,
and they do not set you before them.

But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

Turn to me and be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant;
save the child of your serving girl.

Show me a sign of your favor,
so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame,
because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

– *Psalm 86:11-17*

Word

Matthew 10:5-8

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, proclaim the good news, ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment.

Prayer

Turn to us, O God, for you are merciful and gracious. Send us out as witnesses to your coming kingdom of peace and justice for all. 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, 25 June 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

I will praise the name of God with a song;
I will magnify God with thanksgiving.

Psalmody

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?

How long must I bear pain^[a] in my soul,
and have sorrow in my heart all day long?

How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

Consider and answer me, O LORD my God!
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,

and my enemy will say, "I have prevailed";
my foes will rejoice because I am shaken.

But I trusted in your steadfast love;
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

I will sing to the LORD,
because he has dealt bountifully with me.

– *Psalm 13*

Word

Micah 7:18-20

Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity
and passing over the transgression
of the remnant of your possession?
He does not retain his anger forever,
because he delights in showing clemency.
He will again have compassion upon us;
he will tread our iniquities under foot.
You will cast all our sins
into the depths of the sea.
You will show faithfulness to Jacob
and unswerving loyalty to Abraham,
as you have sworn to our ancestors
from the days of old.

Prayer

Give light to our eyes and heart, O God, that we may see your compassion and share it with all. Keep us steadfast in this faith through our Lord and Savior, 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.

Friday, 26 June 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

I will praise the name of God with a song;
I will magnify God with thanksgiving.

Psalmody

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?

How long must I bear pain in my soul,
and have sorrow in my heart all day long?

How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

Consider and answer me, O LORD my God!
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,

and my enemy will say, "I have prevailed";
my foes will rejoice because I am shaken.

But I trusted in your steadfast love;
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

I will sing to the LORD,
because he has dealt bountifully with me.

– *Psalm 13*

Word

Galatians 5:7-10b

You were running well; who prevented you from obeying the truth? Such persuasion does not come from the one who calls you. A little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough. I am confident about you in the Lord that you will not think otherwise.

Prayer

Merciful and ever-living God, nurture and strength the yeast within us and our community that it may leaven our whole life and witness to your coming kingdom. We ask this through Jesus Christ and in your Holy Spirit. 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, 27 June 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

I will praise the name of God with a song;
I will magnify God with thanksgiving.

Psalmody

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?

How long must I bear pain in my soul,
and have sorrow in my heart all day long?

How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

Consider and answer me, O LORD my God!
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,

and my enemy will say, "I have prevailed";
my foes will rejoice because I am shaken.

But I trusted in your steadfast love;
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

I will sing to the LORD,
because he has dealt bountifully with me.

– *Psalm 13*

Word

Genesis 26:23-25

From there Isaac went up to Beer-sheba. And that very night the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not be afraid, for I am with you and will bless you and make your offspring numerous for my servant Abraham's sake." So he built an altar there, called on the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there. And there Isaac's servants dug a well.

Prayer

O God, you direct our lives by your grace, and your words of justice and mercy reshape the world. Mold us into a people who welcome your word and serve one another, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

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.