



June 2021

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

My Dear friends,

I can't even begin to tell you how great it is to have in-person Sunday service. I sure have missed each and every one of you. I am looking forward to slowly resuming our other activities such as Bible Study and Sunday school, and whatever other activities you would like to have.

The pandemic has been what I call a "long haul, and it is not completely over yet. Although we could not meet together for a long time, it did **not** keep us from continuing our mission efforts. We found ways to do things in a different manner, and overall, they were all successful; from Christmas toys for the children in Perry County to fill the truck with food for the Food Bank. We are a church community that lives the Christian lifestyle verses just giving it lip service. We reach out in love to our neighbors whenever we can.

It reminds me of Matthew 25:34-40. Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. <sup>35</sup>For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, <sup>36</sup>I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' <sup>37</sup>Then **the** righteous will answer him, 'LORD, when did we see you **hungry** and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? <sup>38</sup>When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? <sup>39</sup>When did we see you sick or in

prison and go to visit you?' <sup>40</sup>"The King will reply, '**Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.**'

As we move into what is being called, "the new normal," we can rely on God's guidance. We don't know exactly where God will lead us as a congregation, but we do know that wherever it may be, we are up to the challenge for God is at the center of all that we do.

Many blessings to each of you as we enjoy all that the summer has to offer,

Pastor Linda

## Pray for our Dairy Farmers On World Milk Day



World Milk Day is observed globally on the 1st of June every year to celebrate the important contributions of the dairy sector to sustainability, economic development, livelihoods and nutrition. Please pray for our Dairy Farmers and workers this month. We thank each one of them for their hard work to provide milk for each of us for the nourishment of our bodies.



## A PRAYER FOR FATHERS

Dear God, Thank you for all the fathers and father-figures in this world and for the many ways you use them to lovingly guide others to your heart. I ask that you would bless them and give them great joy and peace. May they see You and know You in new ways. Show them how much you love them and care about them. Guide their steps, use their hands, and make them a blessing to others as you continue to fulfill your special purpose for their lives. Amen.



We are all part of the puzzle of Social Ministry in this community.

A big thank you to all who have contributed to the **“Guardian Angel Project.”** Your generosity is greatly appreciated and will make a difference in the lives of these families. We also want to thank the Howard Greaney Charitable Trust for the \$500 grant to help fund the project. The money will be used to supplement the donations of food that we are collecting to make sure that the nine teens from our Guardian Angel Project families have enough food for breakfast and lunches over the summer months when school is not in session. If you would like to contribute, monetary donations may be given to Gay, and there is a cart in the Sunday school room where you can donate easy food items such as Macaroni and Cheese, Canned Soup and Cereal. Together we can make a difference in local hunger and food insecurity! We may be a small church, but we are mighty when we work together!



A motion was approved at the May Church Council meeting to make a donation to the New Bloomfield Fire Company for their General Fund. Since we were not meeting in person for over a year we have not had the loose offering to designate to organizations and members of the Council felt it was important to support this vital part of our Community; especially since we do not pay any taxes to support them. Any donations received in May, June and July designated for the New Bloomfield Fire Company will be forwarded to them. It is the Council's hope to raise at least \$500.00 for the General Fund of the Fire Company. Thank you for considering a donation. See that Gay Weller gets anything you wish to contribute.



## **“MORNING GLORIES” MITTENS AND CAP PROJECT FOR THE LUTHERAN MISSION**

**The Morning Glories are making caps and mittens that will be blessed at the beginning of September, and sending them to the Navajo Evangelical Lutheran Mission in Arizona. The hat and mittens can be for infants through adult sizes. If you knit or crochet, please join us. We have gathered 12 hat & glove sets, 86 hats and 10 pair of gloves so far.**



### **WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE PART OF OUR PRAYER CHAIN?**

Often we get requests for prayer, not only from our congregation members but from those in our community. We are attempting to establish a group of people who will be “prayer warriors.” If you would like to be part of the prayer chain, please let a message on the church phone line, or let Gay or Pastor Linda know. This is an easy way for everyone in our congregation to participate in God’s great ministry!



Health Care Facilities: George & Dot Berrier, Ruth Dunkelberger, Marhtea Keck, Glenn Nulton, Joann Reed.

At home: Jim & Joan Carroll, Marilyn & Phil Eckert, and Pat Swenson.

Friends & Neighbors: Jean & bob Anstine, Rev. Bob and Sharron Blezard, Louise Clouser, Mary Hafer, Ted Russ, and Ruth Shepherd.

Everyone affected by the COVID-19 virus in any way.

Please contact the office (717-582-4356) with additions, corrections or deletions.

## **PLEASE CONSIDER BEING PART OF OUR” PASTORAL CARE TEAM”**

Our list of congregation members who are no longer able to attend in-person church services is growing. I would like to form a team that would be willing to visit with some of our older members. We want to give our home bound members the best care that we can give. I am sure they would be delighted to see you. If you can spare an hour or two each month, please think about joining the team. Please let Pastor Linda know if you would like to be part of this effort. [Lindashank@centurylink.net](mailto:Lindashank@centurylink.net) or 717-386-8762



## **GOD’S WORK OUR HANDS DAY – SEPTEMBER 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

The churches in the Perry Conference have decided that we will collect items for Personal Care Kits and assemble them on Sunday, September 12. Christ Lutheran will be responsible for collecting 500 nail clippers and 100 towels. Bath towels should be lightweight bath size, and can be given to Gay or put in the designated spot in the Sunday School Room. We can purchase the nail clippers in bulk through Amazon, so we will be taking monetary donations to help cover their cost.

Donations have already begun to come in **51 towels and 96 nail clippers** have been dropped off and two money donations were received. We may be a small congregation but you show that our hearts are big and working together, **WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**



## **CHRIST LUTHERAN PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

Now that we are back to in-church worship it is time to plan how we will move forward in what is being called the “New Normal.” This includes being a Hybrid Church that is a church which has both in-church and virtual programming. Old ways of thinking and doing things are shifting like quick sand under our feet. At the same time, something new is being born. In this ever increasingly complex world, to survive we need to be well prepared to meet the challenges of being a Hybrid Church, and have guidelines that will let us be nimble and ready to make changes as the “new normal” dictates.

The council is beginning this strategic planning process, with the idea that once a draft is prepared, it will be available to the congregation for input. Please keep the council members in your prayers.



## **NOT JUST FOR KIDS!**

(You will find the answers at the end of the newsletter.)

- 1. Which letter of the alphabet has the most water?**
- 2. What building has the most stories?**
- 3. A monkey, a squirrel, and a bird are racing to the top of a coconut tree. Who gets to the banana first” the monkey, the squirrel, or the bird?**



# **Our June Worship**

**SERVICE FOR June 6<sup>th</sup>**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **PRELUDE**

### **OPENING PRAYER**

All-powerful God, in Jesus Christ you turned death into life and defeat into victory. Increase our faith and trust in him, that we may triumph over all evil in the strength of the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

### **HYMN # 1**

### **How Can I Keep From Singing (WOV 781)**

1 My life flows on in endless song; Above earth's lamentation, I catch the sweet, though far off hymn That hails a new creation.

Refrain: No storm can shake my inmost calm While to that refuge clinging; Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, How can I keep from singing?

2 Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear the music ringing. It finds an echo in my soul. How can I keep from singing? (Refrain)

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS OF OUR SINS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy. **Amen.**

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

L: By the mercy and Grace of our Lord, we are granted pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all our sins.

### **READINGS OF THE DAY**

1 Samuel 8: 4-15

Psalms 138

2 Corinthians 4:13 to 5:1

Mark 3: 20-35

## THE MESSAGE

### SERMON FOR JUNE 6, 2021

#### MARK 3:20-35 – YEAR B

Perhaps when you heard the Gospel lesson read for today, you said to yourself, “Say what?” I know that I did. Then I realized that the reading starts mid-sentence recalling a large crowd of people who were following Jesus and pressing in on Him, for they had heard or seen Him perform miracles. Poor Jesus, all He wants to do is quietly eat His dinner after a long, tiring day. Yet, the scribes from Jerusalem are following after Him declaring that He is in league with the devil, and His family is on their way to take Him home because they think He has lost His mind. Talk about a divided house!

No wonder Jesus tells them a parable. ***“How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come.***

My guess is that many of us at one time or another has been part of a divided family! Cousin Mary does not talk to Aunt Jane because she thinks Aunt Jane has slighted her, then Aunt Jane thinks her sister Sue is siding with cousin Mary and decides she will not talk to her, and it goes on and on. Be honest with yourself. How many of you have said that someone in your family is crazy and off their rocker? Yep! I know I have! People are quick to jump to conclusions and to judge others. Unfortunately, these misunderstandings and miss communications are just part of human life, but they divide homes, families, communities, and yes, even the world.

These types of feelings exist everywhere as well as issues with relationships within our own families. A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six-year olds. After explaining the command to “Honor thy father and mother,” she asked, “Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?” Without missing a beat, one little boy answered, “Thou shall not kill.”



The Gospel of Mark tells us that from the beginning of Jesus' ministry, He had been dealing with divided houses and kingdoms. Jesus had cast out demons, healed lepers, and healed the man with a withered hand; all signs of God's power and great love for mankind. Yet, the lives of these people were divided, their lives were not their own, and they were shunned by those around them, considered unclean. They battled against their physical afflictions as well as battling their spiritual issues; for it is often hard to have faith when bad things happen to us.

This type of battle and internal conflict has been around since Adam and Eve separated themselves from God in the garden of Eden, and this division and inner conflict is a reality of the world around us, and if we admit it, in our own lives. We live in a nation that appears to be divided politically, and we live in an economy that divides people into the haves and have nots. Our communities are divided by prejudices, violence, and fear.

And for many, their own personal lives are divided, for no one can serve two masters. If they try, eventually their lives fall apart. You can either follow the way of the world, or you can follow the way of God. It is easy to think that you can do both, but in the end you will fail. Decisions between doing what is right in God's eyes and what the world wants us to do, can tear us apart. What the world tells us will make us happy, material things, in the end only leave us empty and wanting more. Only God can help us unite our internal house and make us whole again. Following God's way is the only way to find fulfillment, purpose in life, and the peace and happiness that we crave.

Jesus always stands before us as a model of unity and wholeness. If we let him, Jesus can do what we can't do for ourselves. He can find the right perspective on our lives, and help us put our houses back in order. He can help us to find ways to reunite our neighborhoods, and ultimately the world at large.

You may be wondering how Jesus can be such a model, especially after His response when He is told His Mother and family are outside and have come to get Him; seeking to get Him under control. Jesus responds, "**Who are my mother and brothers?**" At first glance it is easy to perceive Jesus' words as being insulting and as denying His own family members, turning His back on them. We should, however, not think of this incident as Jesus general attitude toward family life; for it is just the opposite. Jesus then said as He looked at those who were seated in a

circle around him, ***“Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.”***

It wasn’t that Jesus was rejecting His family who were waiting outside, but redrawing the boundaries of what it means to be family. Jesus was redefining who our brothers and sisters are and extending God’s love to all.

Having a family can be full of frustrations, but it is also full of love and support. This is Jesus message. Families should support one another, not hinder or undermine. This especially includes our church family. We belong to God, and God gives us hope even in the darkest times. Belonging gives us purpose and is essential for our identity.

The question for us to ponder this morning is, “Do we as disciples in God’s church live like a family? Do we see each other as family, and not just the people we like, but even the ones we’re pretty sure we wouldn’t like? Do we treat them as we would treat those who are related to us through blood? “

As we leave here this morning, let us leave knowing that we are beloved children of God. That He loved us so much He sent His Son to die on the cross for our sins. Let us seek to heal the conflicts in our own lives that divide us, whether it is family, friends, or even our brothers and sisters right here in this congregation. For a house divided cannot stand. May we each experience the peace and healing at mending these fences bring, and may we experience the joy of serving our brothers and sisters around us. May we follow God’s way and share His love with the world.

Let me leave you with this blessing: *May the Lord bless you and Keep you, May you have eyes that see the best in people. May you have a heart that forgives the worst, May your mind forget the bad, And may your Soul never lose faith. Amen*

## **HYMN # 2**

## **Seek Ye First (WOV 783)**

1. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; And all these things will be added unto you. Allelu Alleluia!
2. Ask and it shall be given unto you; seek and you shall find; knock and the door shall be opened unto you. Allelu Alleluia!

## THE APOSTLES CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. 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. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE** (Let us come before the triune God in prayer.)

God of wholeness, we pray for believers all over the globe. Unify us in service of the gospel, that we may work together as beloved siblings to share your love with all. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the cosmos, we pray for creation; the gardens, waterways and creatures near to us and diverse forms of life that remain unseen. Teach us to treat the natural world with reverence, seeking restoration when human divisions have caused harm to your beloved creation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of all people, we pray for harmony among the nations. Cast out from us unclean spirits of greed and fear that we may work in solidarity with one another for the common good. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of abundance, we pray for those who are oppressed or in any need. We pray for those who come to our border looking for sanctuary and a better life. Encourage those who have begun to lose heart. Strengthen and renew us with your Spirit. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of righteousness, we pray for this holy house of worship. Set our gaze upon things eternal, that in thanksgiving for your mercy, we may extend grace to more and more people. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of healing, this pandemic has placed a heavy burden on our hearts. Comfort those who are ill, those who are dealing with the after effects of the disease, and

Heal the hearts of all of those who are mourning the loss of a loved one. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the ages, in your goodness you have sent us faithful witnesses for every time and place. We give you thanks for those saints who now rest in your eternal mercy (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace. **Amen.**

## **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

**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 and praise to the Lord Our God.

**C. It is right to give him thanks and praise**

## **SANCTUS**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

### **COMMUNION**

### **THE COMMUNION BLESSING**

**P.** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

## **POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Jesus, Bread of life, we have received from your table more than we could ever ask. As you have nourished us in this meal, now strengthen us to love the world with your own life. In your name we pray. Amen.

## **BENEDICTION**

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus. The God of life, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. Amen.

## **HYMN # 3**

### **Blessed Assurance (WOV 699)**

1 Blessed assurance: Jesus is mine! Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.

Refrain:

This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long; this is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

2 Perfect submission; perfect delight, visions of rapture now burst on my sight; angels descending bring from above echoes of mercy, whispers of love. (Refrain)

## **THE BLESSING**

May the blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, ✝ be upon you now and forever.

## **Dismissal**

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **SERVICE FOR JUNE 13<sup>TH</sup>**

### **OPENING PRAYER**

O God, you are the tree of life, offering shelter to all the world. Graft us into yourself and nurture our growth, that we may bear your truth and love to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

### **HYMN # 1**

### **Here In This Place (WOV 718)**

1. Here in this place new light is streaming. Now is the darkness vanished away; see in this space our fears and our dreamings brought here to you in the light of this day. Gather us in, the lost and forsaken, gather us in, the blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall awaken, we shall arise at the sound of our name.
2. We are the young, our lives are a myst'ry, we are the old who yearn for your face; we have been sung throughout all of hist'ry, called to be light to the whole human race. Gather us in, the rich and the haughty, gather us in, the proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so lowly, give us the courage to enter the song.

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS**

L: God has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Therefore, let us be reconciled to God and to one another. As you reflect and examine your week, ask God to have compassion on you and forgive your sins, both known and unknown.

*Silence for reflection and examination of our sins.*

L: By the mercy and Grace of our Lord, we are granted pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all our sins.

### **READINGS FOR THE DAY**

1 Samuel 15: 34 to 16:13      Psalm 20      2 Corinthians 5:6-17      Mark 4: 26-34

### **THE MESSAGE**

## SERMON – JUNE 13, 2021 – YEAR B

### MARK 4:26-34

This morning we again find Jesus speaking in parables. Literally, the word parable means a riddle, and most often they raise more questions than they answer. They take familiar items, characters and situations, and tell us something about them that, usually, turns our customary way of thinking on its head. My guess is that is what Jesus wanted to do. There is something to be said for thinking about something, turning it over and over in our mind and contemplating its' deep meaning. Often, we wish we could understand each and every one of Jesus' parables with absolute clarity. We want the parables to make sense in terms that apply to our lives in today's world, and the parable of the mustard seed is no exception

Each day I realize how blessed I am to be back living in beautiful Perry County. I especially love this time of year, the fields are green, with the miracle of the new plants pushing through the ground for miles and miles around me. It never ceases to amaze me. Isn't it amazing how each seed produces a blade of green that peeks up through the earth? We don't even need to understand the biological functions of how the seed sprouts and grows. We just need to plant the seed in the right conditions, and the seed grows all by itself.

In eastern culture the mustard seed symbolizes something that is very small and thus, insignificant. Just as we do today, the Jewish Rabbis back then used the mustard seed as a figure of speech. I am sure you have heard someone say, "It is as small as a mustard seed." Yet, we can't forget that great things can come in a small package, and this is exactly where Jesus was going with the idea of the mustard seed.

The humble mustard seed, the smallest of seeds, can grow into something great. In fact, this seed so tiny that 1000 of them can fit in a thimble, can grow a plant that if 4 ft. high, and with proper care and watering, it can grow as tall as 10 to 15 feet. Yes, appearances can be very deceiving!

My guess is that Jesus liked to use the analogy of the mustard seed because it is a seed that has a great potential. We also know the parable of the mustard seed is an important parable as it appears in three of the four Gospels.

The mustard seed is also a good analogy of Jesus' own humble beginnings. Just like the microscopic mustard seed, Jesus had a small beginning, born of humble



parents in a stable. Yet, the message He brought was so big that it changed each of our lives forever, for Jesus' message of love and the victory of the cross brought those who believe, eternal life.

When most of us hear this parable, we think of our own faith; for it is often referred to as being like a mustard seed. Once the little seed of faith has been planted in us, it can grow exponentially over time, stronger and stronger as we continue to hear, read and ponder God's word. This is a good interpretation of the parable and one of the intended messages, but it also has additional connotations.

Let's listen to Jesus' words again. Again, he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? <sup>31</sup> It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. <sup>32</sup> Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade."

Jesus was really saying that the kingdom of heaven is already here. The seed of God's kingdom had already been planted, and despite its small beginnings would grow to great size. The kingdom of God grows by an invisible power.

All of us are indeed living in the kingdom right now, and eternal life is not something that will come when we die, but we are living eternal life right now, if we accept Jesus as our Savior.

Jesus was telling the disciples that the kingdom of God was like the mustard seed, tiny and often overlooked. During Jesus time, many thought that the kingdom Jesus was talked about was nothing. Yet, the growth of the first century church confirmed the truth of Jesus parable. Acts 2:41 tells us that "those who accepted (Peter's) message were baptized, and about 3000 were added to their numbers that day. Today, we also see the growth and influence of the kingdom in lives and believers around the world. Yep, Jesus was saying that the tiny Christian Church that would begin with the fearful disciples hiding from the authorities behind locked doors, would eventually grow to billions of people who would find their hope in what Christ had done for them on the cross.

At about this point you may be asking yourself, yes, but what does all of this have to do with me or Christ Lutheran? In the end, the parable of the mustard seed has a lot to do with us. We, as Disciples of Christ, as His church, have started a new way of thinking and being in our community. The seed of change has been planted, and like all seeds, at first its growth is imperceptible. The seed of

following what God wants us to do, of serving others in our community and showing them God's love is already taking root. Like any seed, growth is gradual, and growth at Christ Lutheran will be gradual too.

It is our job as Disciples of Christ to continue His work, and plant as many seeds for Him as we can. Passing on His love and serving others without expecting anything in return is our part in growing God's kingdom. We should not judge our labors in the name of Jesus by our own perspective or by appearance. For many seeds take a great deal of time to start to germinate. The seeds we plant may not actually grow into plants and bear fruit until a time far in the future. That does not mean we are failing at our work, for God does everything in God's time. So, don't be discouraged! Keep inviting people to church and church events. Keep praying for and serving those in the community around us. Eventually one of the seeds we plant will germinate and grow.

As we leave here this Sunday, let us thank God for the fruits of the land, and most of all for the seed of His Word. Let it grow bigger and bigger until the harvest comes. Let us marvel at the work that God does in us and through us. For salvation is totally God's work! May we go forth and help God plant more seeds so that He can bring new life to those we share them with. As beloved children of God, it is good to be part of God's mustard plant.

Let us praise God for the mysterious power His Word has to grow our faith, and the power it has to bring salvation and new life to others. May the seed of peace take root in every nation, and may true peace grow on the face of the earth.

Amen

## **HYMN # 2**

## **Blest Be the Tie that Binds (LBW 370)**

1 Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Christian love; The unity of heart and mind Is like to that above.

2 Before our Father's throne We pour our ardent prayers; Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, Our comforts and our cares.

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

**CLOSING PRAYER** Gracious God, we are your mustard seeds, oh so small and simple. Help us to be generous in our giving to others. We are your children, living richly by our poverty. Help us to grow stronger in our faith and love for all our neighbors. The mustard seed is the smallest of seeds, but through your grace will grow to the largest plants, giving shelter to all. Help us through your tender and generous grace to grow to be the noblest and purest of souls, spreading your joy to all. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

**HYMN # 3 Lord Dismiss Us With Your Blessing (LBW 259)**

1 Lord, dismiss us with your blessing, Fill our hearts with joy and peace; Let us each, your love possessing, Triumph in redeeming grace. Oh, refresh us; oh, refresh us, Trav'ling through this wilderness.

2 Thanks we give and adoration For your Gospel's joyful sound. May the fruits of your salvation In our hearts and lives abound. Ever faithful, ever faithful To your truth may we be found.

**THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL**

May the blessing of God, Who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, ☩ be upon you now and forever. Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**SERVICE FOR JUNE 20<sup>th</sup> – Happy Fathers Day to All Dad's and Mentors!**

**OPENING PRAYER**

O God of creation, eternal majesty, you preside over land and sea, sunshine and storm. By your strength pilot us, by your power preserve us, by your wisdom instruct us, and by your hand protect us, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

**HYMN # 1 The King of Love my Shepherd Is (LBW 456)**

1 The King of love my shepherd is, Whose goodness faileth never; I nothing lack if I am his. And he is mine forever.

2 Where streams of living water flow, My ransomed soul he leadeth And, where the verdant pastures grow, With food celestial feedeth.

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS

L: God has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Therefore, let us be reconciled to God and to one another. As you reflect and examine your week, ask God to have compassion on you and forgive your sins, both known and unknown.

*Silence for reflection and examination of our sins.*

L: By the mercy and Grace of our Lord, we are granted pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all our sins.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

*A brief silence.*

Holy God, you gather your people from east and west, north and south. We pray for the mission of the church throughout the world, that your steadfast love may be made known to all peoples. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You laid the foundations of the earth and the waters are the womb of creation. The morning stars sing your name and all creation shouts for joy. We pray for your blessed creation, that it may continue to flourish and magnify your glory. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You keep watch over all nations. We pray for countries experiencing violence, hunger, and unrest (*especially*). Guide worldwide and local community organizations in their efforts to establish safety and justice. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You are close to the brokenhearted and near to those in distress. We pray for those who are experiencing oppression. Liberate us from the systems and chains that bind us. Remove the barriers that separate us from one another. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You dwell with us in this faith community. We pray for our leaders and elders (*especially*). Grant them knowledge, patience, and kindness, that through their leadership you may be exalted in this assembly. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Your love endures in all situations. On this Father's Day, we pray for those who are fathers or wish to be fathers, for those with broken or strained relationships, for those who are missing their fathers, and for fathers who have lost children. Bless and strengthen them. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace. **Amen.**

## **READINGS FOR THE DAY**

1 Samuel 17: (1a, 4-11, 29-23), 32-49    Psalm 9: 9-20    Job 38: 1-11

Mark 4: 35-41

## **THE MESSAGE**

### **SERMON FOR JUNE 20, 2021**

#### **MARK 4: 35-41**

Today's Gospel lesson is an account that is included in all four of the Gospels. It is one that when you look at it closely has so many messages that it is hard to decide which one to think about first. I don't know about you, but I have always loved going to the ocean, the sound of the waves lapping the shore, and the smell of the salt water have a calming effect on me. Yet, when I look out into the depth of the ocean, I feel a little anxiety. The water looks deep and dark! The waves that seem so gentle when they reach shore appear to be strong and powerful with the ability to swallow me, pulling me down into its murky depth. Perhaps this is why I never stray further than waist deep in the ocean water, preferring to stay close to the beach. So, I have no problem identifying with the terror of the disciples out in the middle of the Sea of Galilee, in a small boat in a terrible storm.

The first lesson we can learn is that the story can be seen as a microcosm of our lives. Life is never plain sailing even if we are Christians. It is more like a roller coaster, up and down, terrifying and fun, and praying just to hang on. There are days when the ocean of life is calm, and there are days when it is stormy and the waves threaten to crash over our heads.

One might wonder why the disciples, many of whom had earned their living fishing, would start out across the Sea of Galilee if a big storm was brewing. We have to remind ourselves that there was no Channel 27 or Channel 8 weather reports, no weather reports at all. They had to base their trip on what information

they had at the time, which was that the sea looked calm and the weather was clear. They had no way to predict that a big storm would blow up, and that is how life is for all of us. One minute we may be smoothly sailing along, and then boom, the thunder rolls and the rain pours down, and we are dealing with a crisis in our life. The storm has many faces, such as loss of a job, loss of a loved one, an unexpected large expense, and on and on. Like the disciples, the storms often make us anxious and afraid. We often feel that we may not weather the storm! We may not be able to hold on until our life becomes clear and sunny again. Sometimes it leaves us like the time I was at the beach, sitting on my beach chair at the edge of the ocean, all was calm, and then all of a sudden a large wave came crashing in, turning me and my chair upside down on the beach. It took several washings to get all the sand out of my hair, and I wondered if I would ever be the same again.

Let's take a minute and step back into the story again. One point we need to remember is that the crossing of the Sea of Galilee came right after Jesus had spent a full day teaching and preaching to the multitude in the heat and humidity of the day. No wonder Jesus was lying down and sleeping in the boat. He was tired, and this story again points to the fact that Jesus was both human and divine at the same time. Yet, Jesus was there in the boat with the disciples, just as He is with us during the calm and storms of our own lives. We can always turn to Him just as the disciples did so long ago.

So, the second message Jesus is modeling for us is the need to rest when we are tired. In today's over busy and over committed world, we often push ourselves well beyond what is physically good for our bodies and soul. Remember when you were a kid, and your Mom made you take an afternoon nap? My brothers and I used to try to convince her we didn't need one, and then beg to be left up to play, but would fall asleep fast once we laid our heads down. Now, I wish that I had someone who would make me take a nap. Yet, we can rest without feeling guilt when we are tired, as our Lord Jesus did.

I have to say that I would have rather been in that raging storm with Jesus than in the storm without Him. Even though the disciples had witnessed Jesus performing other miracles, they still were afraid and panicking when they woke Jesus. We can almost hear the crash of thunder, the roaring of the wind, the pounding of the waves on the boat, feel the mist of the water on our skin, and hear the cries of the disciples.

Jesus wakes and stands up in the boat and rebukes the wind and the storm and instantly the sea becomes calm and the storm is gone. Interestingly Mark uses the verb “rebuke” which is the same verb that is often used when Jesus casts our demons or dark forces. The word was in keeping with what the Jews believed at that time. They saw the water as a dark abyss where demons and other evil forces resided.

So, our third lesson this morning is the mystery and awe of our creator God dwelling in our midst. The God that can still the waters and help keep us afloat in the storms of our human existence. Let us leave here this morning, being filled with the awe and wonder of Christ. Let us contemplate and answer the question for ourselves each day, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?” Amen

## **HYMN # 2**

## **Here I Am, Lord (WOV 752)**

1. I, the Lord of sea and sky I have heard my people cry All who dwell in dark and sin My hand will save I who made the stars of night I will make their darkness bright Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

REFRAIN

Here I am, Lord Is it I, Lord? I have heard You  
calling in the night I will go, Lord If You lead me  
I will hold Your people in my heart.

2. I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people’s pain, I have wept for love of them. They turn away. I will break their hearts of stone, give the hearts for love along, I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?

REFRAIN

**THE LORD PRAYER** Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

**CLOSING PRAYER**



We give our thanks, Creator God, for the fathers in our lives. Fatherhood does not come with a manual, and reality teaches us that some fathers excel while others fail. We ask for Your blessings for them all and forgiveness where it is needed. This Father's Day we remember the many sacrifices fathers make for their children and families, and the ways--both big and small--they lift children to achieve dreams thought beyond reach. So too, we remember all those who have helped fill the void when fathers pass early or are absent; grandfathers and uncles, brothers and cousins, teachers, pastors and coaches and the women of our families. For those who are fathers, we ask for wisdom and humility in the face of the task of parenting. Give them the strength to do well by their children and by You. In Your Holy name, O God, we pray. Amen

### **HYMN # 3**

### **Leaning on the Everlasting Arms (WOV 780)**

1. What a fellowship, what a joy divine, leaning on the everlasting arms;  
what a blessedness, what a peace is mine, leaning on the everlasting arms.

Refrain: Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms; leaning,  
leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.

2. O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way, leaning on the everlasting arms;  
O how bright the path grows from day to day, leaning on the everlasting  
arms. (Refrain)

### **THE BLESSING**

Now may the blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us,  
✠ be upon you now and forever. Amen

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

## SERVICE FOR JUNE 27<sup>th</sup>

### OPENING PRAYER

Almighty and merciful God, we implore you to hear the prayers of your people. Be our strong defense against all harm and danger, that we may live and grow in faith and hope, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
Amen.

### HYMN # 1

### Give Me Jesus (WOV 777)

1 In the morning when I rise, In the morning when I rise, In the morning when I rise, Give me Jesus

Chorus: Give me Jesus, Give me Jesus, You can have all the rest, Give me Jesus.

2 Dark midnight was my cry, Dark midnight was my cry, Dark midnight was my cry, Give me Jesus. (Refrain)

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS

L: God has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Therefore, let us be reconciled to God and to one another. As you reflect and examine your week, ask God to have compassion on you and forgive your sins, both known and unknown.

*Silence for reflection and examination of our sins.*

L: By the mercy and Grace of our Lord, we are granted pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all our sins.

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

*A brief silence.*

God of hope, the ministry of your church extends across borders, from nearby neighbors to far and distant countries. Accompany all those who labor eagerly in service of the gospel, that through your good news all might experience transformation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, we give you thanks for the air we breathe, the water we drink, the land that provides our food. Guard all species of plants and animals from harsh changes in climate and empower us to protect all you have made. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Righteous God, we pray for nations and their leaders. Give them a spirit of compassion and steer them towards a fair distribution of resources; that none among us would have too much or too little. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

God of healing, your touch has the power to make us whole. We pray for those suffering from physical or mental illness. Embrace those who are sick (*especially*). Surround them with your unwavering presence. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

We pray for this assembly and all those gathered together in worship. Revive our spirits, renew our relationships, and rekindle our faith, that we might experience resurrection in this community. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for the faithful ancestors in every age whose lives have pointed us towards you (*especially*). Envelop them in your love, that (*with Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, and all your saints*) we may be reunited with one another in the last days. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace. **Amen.**

## **READINGS FOR THE DAY**

2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27      Psalm 30      2 Corinthians 8:7-15      Mark 5: 21-43

## **SERMON FOR JUNE 27, 2021**

### **MARK 5: 21-43**

I have found in life that sometimes the cure is worse than the ailment. Let me begin my sharing a story with you. A man was not feeling very well, so he decided to go to a doctor. While he was waiting in the doctor's reception room, a nun came out of the doctor's office. She looked very ashen, drawn and haggard. The man went

into the doctor's office and said to the doctor: "I just saw a nun leaving who looked absolutely terrible. I have never seen a woman look worse." The doctor said: "I just told her that she is pregnant." The man exclaimed: "Oh my, is she?" The doctor responded: "No, but it sure cured her hiccups."

Most of us at one time or another have been impacted by some type of tragedy. It could be an illness, the death of a loved one, some catastrophic event like a flood, or any of a number of things that can touch us as humans. These events can cause us pain and anxiety. Often, we experience the pain not only physically, but also spiritually. We know that as Christians, we are not exempt from tragedy and the ups and downs of human life. Yet, we also know that we have the comfort of knowing that Jesus is walking each step of the way with us as we deal with and grow stronger through our trials and tribulations.

I am sure that you remember Job and all of his suffering. Even with all his trails and tribulations in Job 5:7, he says, "I want you to remember that when tragedy comes your way, Jesus is more than adequate to take care of the situation." Also, 1 Peter 5:7 assures us that we can cast all our anxieties on Jesus, because He cares for each and every one of us.

In this morning's passage, we meet a father who is in the midst of a tragedy. That day, death had shown up at his house and the grim reaper had come for his 12-year-old daughter. We can imagine the pain in his heart, the anguish that he must feel at his daughter's serious illness. The doctors have been there, but still the young girl is getting sicker and sicker. Jairus, who was one of the synagogue leaders, not knowing what to do turns to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jairus would have had to "lower" himself so to speak, when he sought out Jesus to heal his daughter. As one of the religious elites, he would have had an internal battle with himself to help him move beyond the rules and expectations of his upbringing. He would have had to listen to his heart and put his daughter before everything that he had held dear. By doing this, in the end, Jairus finds that Jesus is more than enough in the times of our tragedy.

As Jesus and Jairus are walking towards Jairus' house, a servant of Jairus comes running with the tragic words, "Your daughter is dead!" Can you imagine how Jairus must have felt at that moment? At that moment, all of his dreams and hopes for his daughter were shattered! Hopelessness over takes him. But then, Jesus says to Jairus, "Be not afraid, only believe!" In short, Jesus is telling him not to believe what he hears, don't believe what you know, don't believe what you see,

just trust in me. When Jesus arrived at Jarius's house, he took the girl by the hand, raised her up and immediately, she was healed and asked her parents for something to eat.

Jesus' message to us is that this is what faith says to us each day. Although every instinct we have may be telling us that the situation is hopeless, we need to have faith and look to God Who is greater than anything we can hear, know or see! We need to bring our needs to Jesus, and we need to trust our needs to Him. We need to have faith and trust Jesus, as He works it out in His time and in His way. By the way, He may not work it out how we want Him to! The trick is to be content with leaving it in Jesus hands for He is up to the task and has our best interest in mind.

The woman with the hemorrhage also sought a solution from the one person who could help her. All the doctors she saw failed her. Society failed her because her bleeding made her unclean along with everyone and everything she touched. Jesus did not fail her. He saw her as a person and as someone of value. She believed that by just touching the clothes of the one man who could help her, she would be healed, and her healing changed her, her heart, her body, her life and her soul. Again, we see an example of the type of faith Jesus wants us to have in Him.

As we leave here this morning, let us remember that Christ interrupts our daily routines and our attempts to stay in control. He beckons to us to have faith and trust in Him. To not rely only on ourselves. Christ reaches into our uncleanness, and touches us with the same kind of mercy and love that He gave to Jarius and his daughter, and to the woman who touched the hem of his robe. It is the kind of love and mercy that we cannot begin to comprehend as human beings. If we have faith, it the love and mercy that we feel in our hearts knowing that it was Jesus who died on the cross for each one of us so that we might be forgiven of our sins, and have eternal life. Believe it! Have Faith! For it is true! Amen

## **HYMN # 2**

## **Bind Us Together (WOV 748)**

**REFRAIN:** Bind us together, Lord, bind us together with chains that cannot be broken. Bind us together, Lord, bind us together, Lord, bind us together in love.

1. There is only one God. There is only one King. There is only one Body; that is why we sing. REFRAIN
2. You are the fam'ly of God. You are promise divine, You are God's chosen desire, you are the glorious new wine. REFRAIN

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**                      Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Gracious God, As we depart from this worship session today, speak to us and encourage our hearts. Teach us to walk in your precepts and let this worship be more than a gathering, but a blessing. We bless you, Lord. Thank you for ministering to us and for your comfort through this moment. We pray Lord that the peace of your presence will never depart from us. Bless us as we go and let your love be our joy. Amen

**HYMN # 3**                                      **Go, My Children, with My Blessing (WOV 721)**

1. "Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone. Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own. In my love's baptismal river I have made you mine forever. Go, my children, with my blessing, you are my own."
2. "Go, my children sins forgiven, at peace and pure. Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure. Here you heard my dear Son's story, here you touched him, saw his glory. Go, my children, sins forgive, at peace and pure."

## THE BLESSINGS

May the blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us,  
✝ be upon you now and forever.      **Amen.**

## THE SENDING

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.  
**Thanks be to God.**



## NOT JUST FOR KIDS!

1. The “C”.    2. A library.    3. There are no bananas at the top of a coconut tree!

## JUNE CALENDAR

June 6      9 a.m. In-Church and Live-Streaming Service with communion

June 13     9 a.m. In-Church and Live-Streaming Service

June 20     9 a.m. In-Church and Live-Streaming Service

June 27     9 a.m. In-Church and Live-Streaming Service

June 28 to July 5 – Pastor Linda on Vacation – should you need Pastoral care during that time, please contact Gay.





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