

PANDEMIC JOINT WORSHIP IN SWENSSON PARK SHELTER

September 20, 2020

MESSIAH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



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Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

PRELUDE

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

J.S. Bach

GATHERING

All you who gather, hear this: the first shall be last.

We come to worship as we are.

From Jesus we know, the last shall be first;

Yet by the Holy Spirit, we come with confidence.

We truly believe, the first shall be last,

So, we come with questions.

Knowing the last shall be first,

We come burdened by failure.

Understanding that the first shall be last.

We come celebrating success!

With full awareness that the last shall be first,

We come fearful of the future.

The first shall be last and the last shall be first.

Almighty God empowers the first and the last and for this reason,

We come to worship!

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. **Amen.**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Faithful God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of **✝** Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world. **Amen.**

Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me

1 Lord, take my hand and lead me up - on life's way;
2 Lord, when the tem - pest ra - ges, I need not fear;
3 Lord, when the shad - ows length - en and night has come,

The first system of music consists of a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature. The melody is written in a simple, hymn-like style. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. The lyrics are aligned with the notes in the treble staff.

di - rect, pro - tect, and feed me from day to day.
for you, the Rock of A - ges, are al - ways near.
I know that you will strength - en my steps toward home,

The second system of music continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. The lyrics are aligned with the notes in the treble staff.

With - out your grace and fa - vor I go a - stray;
Close by your side a - bid - ing, I fear no foe,
then noth - ing can im - pede me, O bless - ed Friend!

The third system of music concludes the piece. The melody in the treble staff features a final cadence with a whole note chord. The bass staff provides a final accompaniment. The lyrics are aligned with the notes in the treble staff.

so take my hand, O Sav - ior, and lead the way.
 for when your hand is guid - ing, in peace I go.
 So, take my hand and lead me un - to the end.

Text: Julie von Hausmann, 1825–1901; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
 Music: SO NIMM DENN MEINE HÄNDE, Friedrich Silcher, 1789–1860
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GREETING

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

KYRIE

Refrain

Ky-ri-e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.

Ky-ri-e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.

- 1 For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the
- 2 That we may live out your im - passioned re - sponse to the
- 3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . . for
- 4 For your Spir - it to guide; that you cen - ter our lives in the



u - ni - ty of all; for
 hun - gry and the poor; that
 friends and fam - i - ly; for
 wa - ter and the word; that you



this ho - ly house, for all who wor-ship and praise,
 we may live out truth and jus - tice and grace,
 life and for love, for our work and our play,
 nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod - y and blood,



let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

Canticle of Praise



This is the feast of vic - t'ry for our God, for the



Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.



1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be



peo-ple of God. Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and

Refrain

hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his. This is the feast of
 vic-t'ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign. Al -
 le - lu - ia. 2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and
 join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,
 glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Final refrain

This is the feast of vic - t'ry for our God, for the
 Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading: Jonah 3:10--4:11

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?

¹⁰When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

^{4:1}But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ²He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the

beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. ³And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” ⁴And the LORD said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” ⁵Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.”

⁹But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” ¹⁰Then the LORD said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?”

Holy Scripture, Holy Word. **Thanks be to God!**

Psalm: Psalm 145:1-8

The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. (Ps. 145:8)

¹I will exalt you, my God and king, and bless your name forever and ever.

²**Every day will I bless you and praise your name forever and ever.**

³Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised! There is no end to your greatness.

⁴**One generation shall praise your works to another and shall declare your power.**

⁵I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty and all your marvelous works.

⁶**They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts, and I will recount your greatness.**

⁷They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness; they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.

⁸**The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

Second Reading: Philippians 1:21-30

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God’s doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the

privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Holy Scripture, Holy Word. **Thanks be to God!**

Gospel Acclamation.



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

Glory to you, O Lord!

Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the

same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

This is the Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ!**

SERMON

Hymn of the Day

Here I Am, Lord



1 "I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.
2 "I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo - ple's pain.
3 "I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.



All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way.
I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.



I, who made the stars of night, I will make their dark-ness bright.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.
Fin-est bread I will pro-vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?"
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?"
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?"

Refrain



Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you

call-ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you
lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

Text: Daniel L. Schutte, b. 1946

Music: HERE I AM, LORD, Daniel L. Schutte

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Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

Generous God, you make the last first, and the first last. Where this gospel challenges the church, equip it for its works of service. Strengthen those who suffer for Christ. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Sun and wind, bushes and worms, cattle and great cities—nothing in creation is outside your concern, mighty God. In your mercy, tend to it all. Give us a spirit of generosity toward all you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Where we find envy and create enemies, you provide enough for all. Bring peace to places of conflict and violence. Inspire leaders with creativity and wisdom. Bless the work of negotiators, peacekeepers, and development workers. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Reveal yourself to all in need as you are gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, ready to relent from punishing. Accompany judges and lawyers, victims of crime and those serving sentences. Give fruitful labor and a livelihood to those seeking work. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Even beyond our expectations, you choose to give generously. Grant life, health, and courage to all who are in need. We pray for all who are sick, all who need assistance, and those in our military. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We praise you for the generations that have declared your power to us. Give us faithfulness to follow them, living for Christ, until you call us to join them in the joyful song around his throne. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

A time of silence or special music as we gather first fruits from the people of God for the work of God.

Offering Prayer

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. You have set before us these gifts of your good creation.

Prepare us for your heavenly banquet, nourish us with this rich food and drink, and send us forth to set tables in the midst of a suffering world, through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also 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.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -



san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -



est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -



san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus 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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

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.

O Christ, Our Light, O Radiance True



1 O Christ, our light, O Ra - diance true, shine forth on
2 Fill with the ra - diance of your grace the wan - d'ers
3 Lord, o - pen all re - luc - tant ears and take a -
4 Lord, let your mer - cy's gen - tle ray shine down on
5 Make theirs with ours a sin - gle voice up - lift - ed,



those es - tranged from you, and bring them to your home a -
lost in er - ror's maze. En - light - en those whose se - cret
way the child - ish fears of those who trem - ble to ex -
oth - ers strayed a - way. To those in con - science wound - ed
ev - er to re - joice with wond - 'ring grat - i - tude and



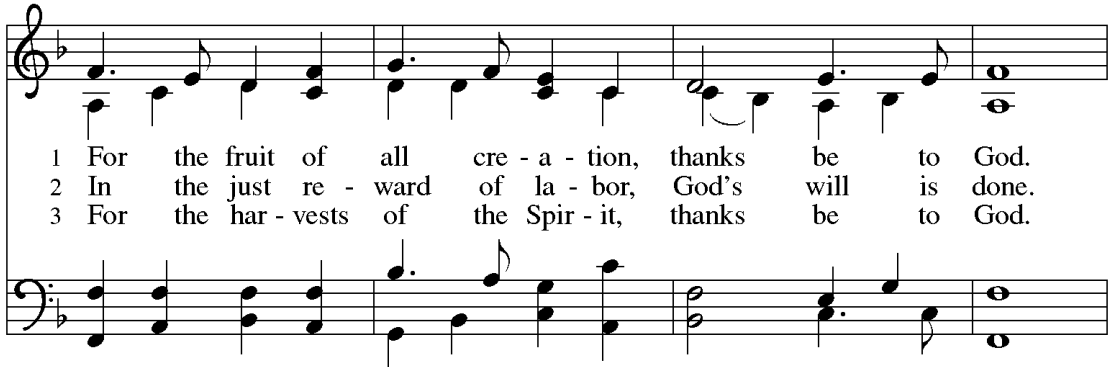
gain, where their de - light shall nev - er end.
minds some deep de - lu - sion haunts and blinds.
press the faith their se - cret hearts con - fess.
sore show heav - en's wait - ing, o - pen door.
praise to you, O Lord, for bound - less grace.

Text: Johann Heermann, 1585–1647; tr. composite
Music: O JESU CHRISTE, WAHRES LICHT, *Gesang-Buch*, Nürnberg, 1676

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For the Fruit of All Creation



1 For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.
2 In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will is done.
3 For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God.



For these gifts to ev - 'ry na - tion, thanks be to God.
In the help we give our neigh - bor, God's will is done.
For the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God.



For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are sleep - ing,
In our world - wide task of car - ing for the hun - gry and de - spair - ing,
For the won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con - found us,

fu - ture needs in earth's safe-keep - ing, thanks be to God.
 in the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will is done.
 most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000
 Music: AR HYD Y NOS, Welsh traditional; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958
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POST COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare, the body and blood of Christ. Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven, into your beloved vineyard to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst, guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

BLESSING

Mothering God, Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life. **Amen.**

Savior, Again to Your Dear Name

1 Sav - ior, a - gain to your dear name we raise
 2 Grant us your peace up - on our home - ward way;
 3 Grant us your peace, Lord, through the com - ing night;
 4 Grant us your peace through - out our earth - ly life,

with one ac - cord our part - ing hymn of praise;
 with you be - gan, with you shall end the day;
 for us trans - form its dark - ness in - to light.
 our balm in sor - row, and our stay in strife;

once more we bless you ere our wor - ship cease,
 guard all the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,
 Keep us from harm and dan - ger till the dawn;
 then, when your voice shall bid our con - flict cease,

then, low - ly bend - ing, wait your word of peace.
 that in this house have called up - on your name.
 your eve - ning pres - ence prom - ise to your own.
 call us, O Lord, to your e - ter - nal peace.

Text: John Ellerton, 1826–1893, alt.
 Music: ELLERS, Edward J. Hopkins, 1818–1901; arr. Arthur S. Sullivan, 1842–1900

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Remember the poor. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You

Messiah Lutheran Church
8/31/2020

	Actual Aug-20	Actual Jan - Aug 20	Budget Jan - Aug 20
Revenue	\$16,663.34	\$111,630.30	\$98,840.00
Expenses	\$13,870.00	\$106,148.22	\$110,020.18
Surplus (Deficit)	\$2,793.34	\$5,482.08	-\$11,180.18

Reserve
Balance \$75,780.18

Members, Friends, and Family for Whom We Pray Members of Messiah:

Rolland Christenson, Har Shogren, Donna Forsberg, Walli Ellis, Betty Peterson, Gloria and Gene Holdsworth, Gretchen Norland, Teddy Atkinson, Louise Benson

Friends of Messiah

Donna Stejksal	Daniels' friend	Erin Erb	Friend of Sherry Peterson
Denise	Pari Ford's mother	Stephani White	Betty Holcombe's daughter
Bill Stephenson	Joy Janis's brother	Karla Goewert	Friend of Kirsten Bruce
Dawn	Sharon Hoffman's Daughter	Orin Shogren	Har's brother
CJ Griffith's	Carla Wilson and Corey Griffith's brother	Danielle VanDeVyvere	Robbie Peterson's granddaughter
Bryan Otte	Chris Reinert's brother	Bruce Butler	Mary Jo Roch
Chip Brock	Bill and Caroline Brock's son	Krista Bahler	Betty Peterson's Niece
Dorothy Carmichael	Friend of Messiah	Betty Finney Meghan Presley	Sharon Hoffman's friend John & Margaret Presley's daughter

Serving the U.S.A.

Alex Klapp	Betty Russin's grandson	Vicki Charboneau	Elaine Eller's granddaughter
Ben Youngquist	S Hoffman's nephew	Jeremy Guy	Hensley's son-in-law
Luke Hammontree	Daniel's grandson	T.J. Paulsen	Barb Malm's child

Serving the U.S.A. Overseas

Daniel & Miranda Norland Randy/Gretchen's son & wife

Seminary

Kaylie Ines

Please pray for all affected by Covid-19: Healthcare workers/administration/staff, residential staff and residents, those who seem unaffected and those who are currently aware they are infected and are fighting the virus. Also, we pray for all who are being negatively affected by the virus and it's social disruption.

Birthday's next week:

Gavin Doughty	9/14	Carol Gusenius	9/14
Kelly Carlson	9/15	Andrew Loder	9/15
David Janis	9/15	Tom Haxton	9/16
Rita Hilt	9/18		

We've all heard about the wildfires presently raging across California, Oregon, Washington and other western states. Perhaps we even know someone who is affected by them. It isn't hard to imagine the total devastation hundreds of thousands of people are facing. The combination of a heat wave and unfavorable winds has created a crisis of immeasurable proportions.

People may have been warned, told to pack their essentials and evacuate. There is only so much time to decide what to take along and what to leave behind, not knowing whether there will be a house to come back to once the danger is past. Moreover, there have already been casualties. At this writing, at least 20 people have died, hundreds of thousands are under evacuation orders and more than 3.5 million acre have burned across the three states. Complicating the situation further, evacuees must face the difficult decision of whether to stay in a shelter in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lutheran Disaster Response is engaging with at least three Lutheran social services agencies and five synods to assess the situation and determine the best ways to respond. Certainly immediate needs will be food and other necessities, not to mention emotional and spiritual care for those who have been traumatized.

We can support wildfire survivors. Gifts to "U.S. wildfires" will be used in full to assist them. Together we can reflect Christ's light and hope to our neighbors in need.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Messiah Church Women will meet this Wednesday Sept. 23 at 7:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Daytha Lindsborg will lead the Bible Study and Linda Lewis will be hostess. We are planning on meeting at church each month. Providing food will be optional with each hostess. We will be wearing masks and practicing social distancing. All women are invited. If you feel comfortable coming, please join us!

Thank you to everyone who helped us reach our goal for Lutheran World Relief School Kits! Extra school supplies will go to our local schools or the Dala Pantry.

Bethany Church is collecting individually wrapped bars of soap for Lutheran World Relief. We will celebrate Lutheran World Relief Sunday on October 4, 2020. Pastor Chris will bless our quilts, kits and bars of soap. Donations be dropped off in the blue buckets inside Trinity Hall.

Volunteers are needed on October 7 at 9:00 am to tape the boxes for LWR. Two pick up trucks are needed to deliver the boxes to Salina at 9:00 am on Thursday, September 8. Contact the church office to sign up and help.

Please **pray for Bethany College, the students, faculty, administrators, and staff**, that all remain healthy and mindful of best health practices, that learning be deep and strong, and that all might live into their vocation.

Please pray for **USD 400 and all teachers, students, administrators, and staff**, that they might remain healthy and mindful of best health practices, that learning be deep and strong, and the all might benefit from the community of learning.

KICK (Kids in Christ's Kingdom) will be on hold for the fall until we see how the virus remains contained or spreads. If you have innovative ideas about how our congregation might engage our youth or any other population in the community or congregation, please talk with Rachel Ann Atkinson or leave a message at the office. Ideas about how we are to be Church in this time are welcome, even as we see people being Church to one another through small actions and thoughtful gestures.

Dala Pantry – Remember that Messiah Lutheran members are asked to provide the following items for the Dala Pantry donations – canned chicken, tuna, pickles, vienna sausages, peanut butter & jelly; Bethany is asked to bring single serving macaroni and cheese, ravioli, applesauce, fruit cups and canned tuna.

The Dala Pantry has gained a few new volunteers but is still looking for people to be of assistance from time to time. Please let Logan know if you are interested! 😊 daweslm@bethanylb.edu.

SEPTEMBER 20, 2020
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST



God is gracious and merciful.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 20:1-16	Parable of the vineyard workers
Monday	Jonah 3:10–4:11	Jonah goes to Nineveh
Tuesday	Philippians 1:21-30	What life means to Paul
Wednesday	Exodus 16:2-15	Bread from heaven
Thursday	Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45	God’s faithfulness to Israel
Friday	Titus 2:11-15	God’s kindness
Saturday	Psalm 145:1-8	The Lord is kind and merciful
Sunday	Matthew 21:23-32	Parable of the two sons

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

Psalm 145:8 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Gracious God, we thank you that you care for all, especially those who feel left behind, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealttime Prayer:

God of grace and mercy, we thank you for your care for us that gives us food from your fruitful creation. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the undeserved kindness of God bless you with faith and good courage now and always.

HYMN OF THE WEEK

God Created Heaven and Earth

WEEKLY MILESTONES CARING CONVERSATIONS

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Think about or tell a story of how someone was kind to you.
- Has it ever been difficult for you to be kind to someone? What made it difficult?
- Is God's kindness to you a surprise or not? Explain.

DEVOTIONS

Read: Jonah 3:10–4:11.

Frankly, we don't really like God's justice. It's too supportive of people unlike us! Like Jonah, we don't want a God who is slow to anger and full of steadfast love for people we don't think deserve it, especially those we would consider our enemies. That's why Jonah ran away from God (v. 4:2). Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrians who had destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC. Now God told Jonah to preach repentance to the Ninevites. Jonah was afraid to do this because he knew of God's love and mercy, something he did not want showered upon his enemies. And Jonah was right; it happened, and it angered him. It's just like in Jesus' parable of the generous landowner (Matthew 20:1-16) where it seems so wrong for people who worked in the fields all day only to get the same wage as those who started at the end of the day. Is it easy or hard for you to accept God's justice where "the undeserving" receive the same generosity you receive? Explain.

Pray: **Gracious and merciful God, give me faith to love your generosity for all people, especially those who are different from me. In Jesus' name, amen.**

SERVICE

The story of the vineyard in Matthew 20:1-16 is about a generous owner who paid the laborers the same amount at the end of the day even if some worked harder and longer than others. Some of the laborers grumbled. The owner asked, "Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?" (Matthew 20:15). In what ways are you generous to others with what belongs to you?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

In Exodus 16:2-15 bread was provided from heaven. Prepare a meal that includes bread. Think or talk about Moses and the Israelites and how they had to learn to be patient and have faith in God to feed them daily as they traveled to the Promised Land. What does this mean for you? Before you eat, pray: **Lord, thank you for this bread you have given us to eat. Help us to never forget how you provide for us just as you did for the Israelites. Amen.**

In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org

