

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
PENTECOST - THE SPIRIT BECKONS

Reverend John R. Hanson

Sunday, August 15, 2021, 8:00, 9:15, and 10:30 a.m.

MUSICIAN

J. Hanson

INTRODUCTION The word for this week is wisdom. Sometimes we view wisdom as akin to intelligence, as an individual intellectual capacity. But the readings this week move us into a whole different experience of wisdom as something that is gained through intimate union with God in Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, and that is lived in simple but practical ways in our daily lives. May our worship lead us into deeper union with Christ and with the wisdom Jesus offers.

THEME AND VERSE

We give thanks to God at all times and for everything in the name of Jesus Christ. We thank God for joy, for laughter, and for abundant blessings of every kind. We thank God when we can and as we can for struggles, for solitude, and for fears. We thank God that, in Christ, our joys as well as our pains, our losses as well as our laughter, are in God's hands.

⁹Fear the LORD, you saints! For those who fear the LORD lack nothing. ¹³Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from lying words. ¹⁴Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. Psalm 34:9,13-14

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

HYMN

"Love the Lord..."

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind.
And love all humankind as you would love yourself and...
Lo---ve the Lord your G---od with all your heart,
With all your soul and mind and love all humankind.
We've got Christian lives to live, we've got Jesus' love to give, we've got nothing to hide
because in him we abide...

I will love you, Lord, with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind.
And love all humankind as I would love myself and...
Lo---ve you Lord my G---od with all my heart, with all my soul and mind and love all
humankind.
We've got Christian lives to live, we've got Jesus' love to give, we've got nothing to hide
because in him we abide... LOVE!

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION God is good. **All the time!**

GOSPEL: John 6:51-58 Jesus continues proclaiming that he is the Bread of Life, inviting the people to eat his flesh and drink his blood as true food and drink. Those who do this will live, he promises, unlike those who died even after eating the bread in the wilderness.

[Jesus said,] ⁵¹"I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

⁵²The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" ⁵³So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them

up on the last day; ⁵⁵for my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever."

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION All the time.

God is good!

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

We gather together to worship

in the name of the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Are we ready to hear this? God calls us to right relationship. Let us admit our error: living outside God's will for us.

Lord God, you invite us to feast on your wisdom, but we choose our folly. We ignore and rationalize our mortality pretending we don't need you for life. You call us to step up the living of our lives, but we will not yield our religion or piety to listen to your voice or find your redemption in Christ. Save us from ourselves. Please, forgive our sins.

Our heavenly father sends us his only son to give his very life for the life of the world, for you and for me. It is for Christ's sake that our sins are forgiven. It is through the power of the Holy Spirit that we may lay aside our immaturity and feast at the banquet of wisdom. We may live and walk in the ways of insight, insight of God's grace.

All to the glory of the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

HYMN

"We are One in the Spirit"

All praise to the Father from whom all things come,
And all praise to Christ Jesus, his only son,
And all praise to the Spirit who makes us one.

*And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.*

SHARING OF THE PEACE

CHILDREN'S SERMON "You Are One Bright Light!"

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, give us wisdom. O God, give us discernment. O God, give us the will to be faithful. O Lord God, give us your power to love. Amen.

READING: Ephesians 5:15-20 *Paul encourages the Ephesian Christians to live wisely and in the power of God's Spirit that fills them and to encourage one another through songs and through worship and thanksgiving to God. All things done are in the name of Jesus.*

¹⁵Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷So do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit,

¹⁹as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, ²⁰giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

HYMN

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

Green # 543

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!
Come all who hear; now to his temple draw near,
Join me in glad adoration.
Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is wondrously reigning;
And, as on wings of an eagle, uplifting, sustaining!
Have you not seen all that is needful has been
Sent by his gracious ordaining?

Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend you;
Surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend you.
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do,
If with his love he befriend you.

Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me adore him!
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him!
Let the amen sound from his people again,
Gladly forever adore him!

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SERMON - Living "Christ-wise," not just being one who has "knowledge" but one who experiences Christ-wise understanding! This isn't a weapon to be used to justify my actions but a force to bring health, wholeness, and healing! Let the "Amen" sound from his people again!

HYMN

"When Morning Gilds the Skies"

Green # 546

When morning gilds the skies, my heart awaking cries: May Jesus Christ be praised!
When evening shadows fall, this rings my curfew call: May Jesus Christ be praised!

When mirth for music longs, this is my song of songs: May Jesus Christ be praised!
God's holy house of prayer has none that can compare with "Jesus Christ be praised!"

No lovelier antiphon in all high heav'n is known than "Jesus Christ be praised!"
There to the eternal Word the eternal psalm is heard: Oh, Jesus Christ be praised!

Let all of humankind in this their concord find: May Jesus Christ be praised!
Let all the earth around ring joyous with the sound: May Jesus Christ be praised!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BLESSING & PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord God, you draw us to you and welcome us, emptied of pride and hungry for grace, to this your kingdom feast. Nowhere can we find the food for which our souls cry out but here, Lord, at your table. Invigorate and nourish us that in and through this bread and wine, your love may meet us and your life complete us with the power and glory of your kingdom. Amen

BENEDICTION & SENDING

These are complex times. As we go into this following week, let us look carefully how we walk, not blundering along like fools but as those who live in the wisdom of Christ.

Wherever we go and whatever happens to us, we will give thanks to God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Go, blessed and filled with the wisdom of God, blessed and nourished by the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, +, and blessed and directed by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Amen! We go in Christ's name, to love and serve!

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Worship, as an action, continues to change.

Use this space to guide your thoughts as the Spirit may lead you.

Use this time to center your distractions in order to help activate your worship.

The key word this week is wisdom. Proverbs invites all who lack understanding to eat and drink in Wisdom's house in order to grow wise. In Paul's letter, the Ephesians are encouraged to live wisely by being filled with God's Spirit as they sing to one another and to God in songs of praise and as they give thanks in all things. Finally, although Jesus doesn't speak of wisdom specifically in the passage from John, the Proverbs passage creates a link through the metaphor of eating and drinking. Those who seek life find it, Jesus says, by eating of his flesh and drinking of his blood. This shocking image speaks of absolute union with God, taking the very essence of Christ into our beings, and it results in life, the same life that comes from living wisely.

Wisdom is found, then, through union with Christ and through living in the power of Christ's Spirit that fills us as we "ingest" the Christ-nature. The strong resonances with the sacrament that come through the readings should also not be missed this week, since it is at Christ's Table that we are invited into this mystical union with God.

Wisdom is found by uniting with Christ, by “eating his flesh and drinking his blood”, by taking his presence and purpose into our selves, and being filled with the Holy Spirit. This requires two movements in our daily living. Firstly, we need to recapture the discipline of daily spiritual practice – Prayer, Scripture Reading and Christlike ACTION. Secondly, we need to allow our union with Christ to overflow into lives of gracious, generous, gentle, and humble living. It is when we commit to union with God and to living from God’s wisdom, that we are able to bring the life of Christ into our homes, our churches, our neighborhoods and our communities.

This means rejecting many of the values of our society – instant gratification and consumerism, accumulation and rampant individualism, protectionism and the avoidance of diversity. It also means learning to live in the same self-giving way that Jesus did, for when we all learn to sacrifice ourselves for the sake of others, we discover a wisdom and life that we all are able to enjoy together. The quest for wisdom, then, is not just about how we think, but about how we live, and it is only in union with God and in the strength of God’s Spirit that we can hope to embrace this life.

John van de Laar at sacredise.com