

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
PENTECOST - THE HOLY SPIRIT BECKONS
Rev. John R. Hanson
October 24, 2021, 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

PRELUDE

J. Hanson, Musician

INTRODUCTION - *The Scriptures are clear – God is in the business of restoration. How this restoration happens, and what its results are, can be surprising. This week reveals the importance of restorative relationships in our experience of God’s restoration and in the quest for a world of justice, peace, and love. May we seek to build relationships in our communities.*

THEME AND VERSE

Gather us together, O God, that we may celebrate the witness of our ancestors and their courage which gave birth to this ministry. Teach us how to honor the saints of God in ages past as well as those in our present day. May the belief of your grace be written on our hearts and form our faith. Inspire us with your Holy Spirit. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen

Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

HYMNS

“Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior”

Burgundy # 150

Pass me not, O gentle Savior, hear my humble cry;
While on others thou art calling, do not pass me by.

***Savior, Savior, hear my humble cry;
While on others thou art calling, do not pass me by.***

Trusting only in thy merit, would I seek thy face;
Heal my wounded, broken spirit, save me by thy grace.

CCLI Song # 41594 CCLI License # 1713417

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

God is good.

All the time.

GOSPEL: Mark 10:46-52

As Jesus enters Jericho, a blind man named Bartimaeus shouts out asking for Jesus to have mercy on him. Then Jesus calls the blind man and asks him what he wants. When he answers that he wants to see, Jesus heals him, and he follows Jesus.

⁴⁶They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. ⁴⁷When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began

to shout out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” ⁴⁸Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” ⁴⁹Jesus stood still and said, “Call him here.”

And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart; get up, he is calling you.”⁵⁰ So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus.⁵¹ Then Jesus said to him, “What do you want me to do for you?” The blind man

said to him, “My teacher, let me see again.”⁵² Jesus said to him, “Go; your faith has made you well.” Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION All the time.

God is good!

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

We gather on this Holy Day in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Let us put aside our good works and remember that we do sin and fall short of the glory of God.

Lord of all, the demands of your righteousness are too hard for us to fulfill alone, so we use this excuse and ignore your law. You forgive our iniquity and remember our sin no more, and we abuse this freedom as if it gave permission for selfishness. You give us the gift of grace, paid with the blood your son, yet we make it cheap without serious repentance. We fail to see the power of your faithfulness. We are your people, but do we know you as our God? Forgive us, Lord. God of our refuge and strength, have mercy on us. Amen

God does show us his own righteousness and divine tolerance. Through the work of the Holy Spirit given to us, we may come to know the truth and be made free. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, sets us free from our slavery to sin. Our sins are forgiven. Through his death and resurrection, a place is made for us in the household, and we may be known as children of God. To the glory of the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

SERVICE OF HOLY BAPTISM (10:30)

WELCOME AND SHARING OF THE PEACE

CHILDREN’S SERMON

“I Can’t See!”

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and ever gracious God, since all our salvation depends upon your holy word, therefore grant that our hearts may be set free from worldly things so that we may with all diligence and faith hear your word, rightly understand your gracious will, and in all sincerity live according to the same, to your praise and glory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

READING: Hebrews 7:23-28

Jesus is an eternal priest who constantly prays for God’s people. He doesn’t need to offer sacrifices every day because he offered himself once and for all.

²³Furthermore, the former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office; ²⁴but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he

continues forever. ²⁵Consequently he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

²⁶For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. ²⁷Unlike the other high priests, he has no need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for those of the

people; this he did once for all when he offered himself. ²⁸For the law appoints as high priests those who are subject to weakness, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever

HYMN

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

Green # 229

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
Our helper, he, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe, doth seek to work us woe,
His craft and pow'r are great, and armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

A mighty fortress is our God, a sword and shield victorious;
He breaks the cruel oppressor's rod and wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe has sworn to work us woe!
With craft and dreadful might he arms himself to fight.
On earth he has no equal.

God's Word forever shall abide, no thanks to foes who fear it;
For God himself fights by our side with weapons of the Spirit.
Were they to take our house, goods, honor, child, or spouse,
Though life be wrenched away, they cannot win the day.
The Kingdom's ours forever!

CCLI Song # 42964 CCLI License # 1713417

SERMON - FREEDOM for ALL who desire it!

HYMN *"Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)"*

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now I'm found, was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.

***My chains are gone, I've been set free. My God, my Savior, has ransomed me.
And like a flood, his mercy rains, unending love, amazing grace.***

The Lord has promised good to me; His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow, the sun forbear to shine;
But God who called me here below will be forever mine,
Will be forever mine. You are forever mine.

CCLI Song # 4768151 CCLI License # 1713417

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

BLESSING & PRAYER AT COMMUNION

Because God loves us, we lack for nothing; because God forgives us, we have everything we need; because God surrounds us with sisters and brothers, we do not journey alone. Committing everything to God, trusting in the one who redeems us, we live as God's faithful and forgiven people. Amen.

BLESSING & SENDING

God sends us out with encouragement and a challenge: Lead lives worthy of God's reign and glory.

We are to live as God intends. In freedom we will work and rest in God's care.

Live in faithfulness to one another and to God who calls you forth in his service.

The Word of God is at work in us; in him we are able to witness.

Blessed are all who seek their strength in God alone, happy are they who live the gospel.

God be praised in all we say and do; may we be gentle and courageous disciples.

We go in the name of Christ.

Thanks be to God!

Portions are reprinted from Words for Worship, copyright 2017 Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission. Scripture quotations from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

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.

A Mighty Fortress

On this day in 1517, Martin Luther attempted to open a public theological dialogue about reforming the practice of the Church. One of the results was the Reformation as social, political, and ideological conflicts divided the Western Church. Various branches of the Protestant tradition emphasize different ideas about the Christian faith: the primacy of grace, the distinction between law and gospel, the sovereignty of God, the freedom of the Christian.

The readings for today touch on these themes, which the reformers would assert are not theirs alone but true for all Christians. Perhaps the most enduring and most radical notion was the reformers' return to the Bible, translating Scripture into modern languages.

Reading and hearing the actual words of Scripture has, of course, produced some bizarre, idiosyncratic interpretations. But this has also been eye-opening and liberating for uncounted millions and for the people of God. For the Lord often says something more surprising, more subtle, more challenging, and more grace-filled than we expect.

Take Psalm 46, which was a starting point for Martin Luther's most famous hymn: "God is our mighty fortress, always ready to help in times of trouble" (Psalm 46:1, CEV).

This kind of prayer is a staple of personal faith. So often we need protection from the things which bedevil us, from real enemies and forces which threaten our safety and well-being. Luther himself spent nine months hidden from his enemies at Wartburg Castle, in that time translating the New Testament into German.

Yet the psalm – and the whole of Scripture in which it is set – takes us well beyond that very real desire for God’s protection. It is a declaration that our refuge goes far beyond that which we imagine.

We hope for security. But God’s strength is not found in fortifications – the walls of Jericho, Jerusalem, Babylon, and Berlin have all come tumbling down. It is not found in mighty empires – they all crumble, leaving behind the rubble of their fleeting glory. It is not found in the created order – for neither the earth nor the sea is secure. It is not found in wealth, nor family, nor even our religious institutions, despite our deep desires to find something in this world we can trust wholeheartedly. (The psalmist himself may well believe that the holy city of Zion is so closely tied to God that it is such a fortress.) But the words are clear: “**God** is our mighty fortress...”

God is more than we dare suspect. More than creation: “At the voice of God the earth itself melts” (Psalm 46:6, CEV). More than empires: God “breaks the arrows, shatters the spears” (Psalm 46:9, CEV). And even when we dare to cling to God’s might, “The LORD All-Powerful is with us” (Psalm 46:11, CEV), we might ponder the nature of God’s power. For we know that, much as we might wish it, the fact that God is our fortress does not make us invulnerable. That is the desire of those who build castles and fortifications, which stand only for a moment. “A mighty fortress is our God,” sing the Psalmist and Brother Martin and all the faithful. If we wish to find refuge in God, let us cling not to that which is fleeting – but to God’s righteousness, God’s justice, God’s saving power, God’s loving faithfulness, and yes – though it may be unjustified and totally unexpected – let us cling to God’s mercy.

This Reflection for Reformation Sunday was prepared by Paul Bellan-Boyer,