

**PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**PENTECOST - THE HOLY SPIRIT BECKONS**  
Reverend John R. Hanson  
Sunday, October 3, 2021, 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

**INTRODUCTION**

*Human beings are not created to live alone but for connections in community and relationship. Our relationships are not just with one another but also with the God who created us. Yet all of these relationships are destroyed when we become unfaithful or we allow our commitments to be weakened or broken by life's turmoil or by hardness of heart. But when we remain faithful, our relationships become the place where we experience the grace of God, and where the Kingdom of God is able to lead us into deeper, faithful commitments to God and to one another.*

**MISSION MOMENT**

**THEME AND VERSE**

**Wonderful Creator, the whole earth declares your greatness. Your glory glows in the heavens and is seen in the stars which you have set in place. What are we that you care for us? Yet you made us only a little lower than the angels and crowned us with glory. You have given us responsibility to care for all creation. Forgive us for destroying rather than restoring and for polluting rather than nurturing. Help us to declare your glory and majesty to all the world.**

***"You have put us in charge of everything you made, giving us authority over all things..."***

Psalm 8:6

**HYMN**

*"For the Beauty of the Earth"*

Green # 561

For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies,  
For the love which from our birth over and around us lies:

***Christ, our Lord, to you we raise this our sacrifice of praise.***

For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,  
Friends on earth and friends above; for all gentle thoughts and mild:

For yourself, best gift divine to the world so freely giv'n;  
For that great great love of thine, peace on earth and joy in heav'n:

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**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

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

**GOSPEL: Mark 10:2-9, 13-16**

*Jesus announced and enacted in history the new reality of God's surprising activity. These two stories demonstrate this new reality: Women and children are accepted and valued, not dismissed as inferior.*

<sup>2</sup>Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" <sup>3</sup>He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" <sup>4</sup>They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her." <sup>5</sup>But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. <sup>6</sup>But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' <sup>7</sup>For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, <sup>8</sup>and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

<sup>13</sup>People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. <sup>14</sup>But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. <sup>15</sup>Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." <sup>16</sup>And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

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.**

We know we cannot pretend to be deaf to God's call.

**Lord God, we set our minds on human things not on divine things, and we usually set our minds on our own things. We confess to be your disciples, but if it involves any discomfort, carrying a burden, or rejection, or suffering, we are quick to deny you and abandon our cross. You put the word in our ears and place it in our hands, but we do not listen or learn; how can we aspire to become your followers and disciples? For the sins we can name, forgive us. For those we hide, save us.**

Our God desires to teach us, to open our ears, to call us to true repentance. To this end God sends the Messiah, the Christ, to undergo great suffering, be rejected and killed, and after three days rise again. It is for Christ's sake that our sins are forgiven. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we may become followers, giving our very lives into the hands of God all for the good news in Jesus Christ.

**Then all might see the glory of God the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

#### SHARING OF THE PEACE

#### PRESENTATION of 3<sup>rd</sup> GRADE BIBLES

#### CHILDREN'S SERMON

"God Loves!"

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

**God of all creation, we look at the things you have made, the works of your hands, may we consider them with awe. From the immensity of the universe to the specific beauty of a flower, your works astonish us! Who are we that you pay attention to us? We are amazed at your love for us and rejoice in your presence, the Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

READING: Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:6-12

*God has spoken as never before through Jesus Christ, who was made a little lower than angels for a time in order to lead human beings to salvation. Quoting the Psalms, this text emphasizes that Jesus, in whom God created everything, who sits at his right hand, is also the one who suffered death in order to gain salvation for us.*

<sup>1</sup>Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. <sup>3</sup>He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup>having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

<sup>2:6</sup>But someone testified,

"What are human beings that you are mindful of them, or mortals, that you care for them? <sup>7</sup>You have made them for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned them with glory and honor, <sup>8</sup>subjecting all things under their feet."

Now in subjecting all things to them, God left nothing outside their control. As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them, <sup>9</sup>but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

<sup>10</sup>It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. <sup>11</sup>For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason, Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, <sup>12</sup>saying, "I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you."

HYMN

*"What a Friend We Have in Jesus"*

Green # 439

What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry ev'rything to God in prayer!  
Oh, what peace we often forfeit; oh, what needless pain we bear -  
All because we do not carry ev'rything to God in prayer!

Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?  
Precious Savior, still our refuge - take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Do your friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
In his arms he'll take and shield thee; you will find a solace there.

CCLI Song # 27714 CCLI License # 1713417

SERMON - *"We wear masks to promote a sinless self to the point of a self-made god! Cover your scars! Hide your pain! Bury your past. Soon we are so caught up in looking righteous that we end up living in sin."*

HYMN

*"My Life Flows On"*

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

***No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that Rock I'm clinging.  
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?***

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

What though my joys and comforts die? I know my Savior liveth.  
What though the darkness gather round? Songs in the night he giveth.  
The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a fountain ever springing!  
All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from singing?

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

#### BLESSING & PRAYER FOR COMMUNION

**Gracious God, you took the form of a servant and offered yourself as food, comfort, and strength to a sick and hurting world. Anoint us with a servant heart. Grant grace, mercy, healing, and hope to all who receive your body and blood and accept your words of new life. May all people recognize a place and a home in the body Jesus. Amen.**

#### BENEDICTION & SENDING

Go in peace to enjoy and employ your gift of faith. Fear neither outward foe nor inner temptation. Rejoice in your blessings and smile in your adversities.

**Our help is in the name of God who made heaven and earth.**

The inexhaustible grace of Christ crucified, the tireless, eternal love of God, and the live-in guest who fills households of faith with many gifts will be with you this day and for evermore.

**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 connections this week are fascinating and challenging. In Genesis, the man is given a fitting companion – a woman – with whom to work as stewards of creation. The miracle, as Psalm 8 reflects, is that these human beings have been made a little lower than angels and crowned with glory. As much as this is primarily true for the one who fulfilled humanity's purpose – Jesus – it is also true for all those who are called by Jesus to share in God's salvation and glory. So, as stewards of creation, and children of God, we are called to faithful devotion to God, and care of all that God has made.

Finally, in the Gospel, Jesus speaks about how faithfulness to God must be reflected in our treatment of others. Our relationship with our spouses is not to be lightly discarded – even when it gets tough – but to be nurtured, sustained and honored. So, too the place of our children in

God's Reign must be nurtured and honored, both for their sakes and for our own – for our hearts need to learn childlikeness in order to follow Jesus.

The message this week, then, is focused on relationships as a reflection of our place in God's Reign, and of our faithfulness to the ways of God. When we remain faithful to Jesus, our relationships will enjoy the benefits and blessings of our faithfulness, and, in the healing and unity that our relationships bring, we will grow more faithful in touching the world with the grace and salvation of God.

In every community there are families in need of care and support. Many are ignored because the way they “do” family life is different from the narrow definitions we generally consider “normal.” And so families break down, and society is harmed, and one of the best pictures we have of God's love and commitment to human beings is distorted.

When we can begin to offer guidance, care, support, and love for all families, and allow them to reach their full potential in Christ, not only do they benefit, but our community grows stronger, more loving and more aware of God's grace, as these families again become the parables God intended them to be. In addition, when we work to sustain the integrity and faithfulness of our own families and communities, even when it is hard and we are threatened or suffering, we reflect the grace and glory of God to the world. When we recognize that our love and faithfulness to God overflows into love and faithfulness to each other, we are able to open ourselves to the presence and strength of God that sustains us. And we are able to enter all of our relationships with the self-giving of Christ, and with the intentionality to commit, to connect, and to grow into deeper intimacy and faithfulness together.

*John van de Laar at [sacredise.com](http://sacredise.com)*