

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
PENTECOST - THE HOLY SPIRIT BECKONS
Reverend John R. Hanson
Sunday, November 7, 2021, 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

MUSICIAN

Julie Hanson

INTRODUCTION

What does faith look like when it is connected to power and wealth? What part do we play as we seek to trust in God? These are some of the questions that are evoked by the readings for this week. They challenge our alliances, our use of our resources, our care for the most vulnerable in our world, and the extent to which we are willing to “gamble” all our resources on God. May we discover a deep, practical, generous, and compassionate trust in God.

THEME AND VERSE

Do not put your trust in princes or rulers of this world. No matter how important, they stop breathing like the rest of us, and on that day their schemes perish and they return to the earth.

Praise the Lord. Let all who draw breath praise the Lord. Happy are those whose help is from God—the one who made heaven and earth, the one who created the seas and all that is in them. Happy are those whose hope is in God—the one who keeps faith forever, the one who feeds the hungry and defends the oppressed. God will reign forever, for all generations. Psalm 146

ANTHEM

“God Made Us All”

Psalm 100 Kids

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

God is good.

All the time.

GOSPEL: Mark 12:38-44

Jesus warns against the religious leaders who seek honor and who cheat poor widows and show off with long prayers. Jesus contrasts the proud and oppressive ways of those leaders with the sacrificial humility and poverty of the widow.

³⁸As [Jesus] taught, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, ³⁹and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! ⁴⁰They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

⁴¹He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the

treasury. Many rich people put in large sums.

⁴²A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny.

⁴³Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. ⁴⁴For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION All the time.

God is good!

HYMN

“Open the Eyes of My Heart”

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord, open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see you; I want to see you. *(repeat)*

To see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of your glory,
Pour out your power and love as we sing holy, holy, holy.

Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy. I want to see you.

CCLI Song # 2298355 CCLI License # 1713417

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

We gather together to worship

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

Let us turn our hearts back over to God.

Lord God, we are afraid we will run out, we won't have enough, we won't be happy, we won't be respected, we won't be good enough, we won't be loved, we won't be remembered. We want to fix this ourselves - we want to buy all these things. Forgive us the sins we name today, save us from the sins we hoard for tomorrow.

The Lord provides for all things. To the glory of our Heavenly Father, Jesus the Christ appeared once, for all, to remove sin by the sacrifice of himself. Our sins are forgiven. By the Holy Spirit, in our baptism, we are made children of God. We are invited to live in the love God pours upon us.

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

SHARING OF THE PEACE

CHILDREN'S SERMON

“What Can I Do?”

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, you broke down barriers when you created us. In Jesus, your hands touched all and still touch us. You open our eyes to see how rich hands were empty and poor hearts were full. You took the widow's mite and used it to show us your kingdom. Now, in the company of those we know and the strangers in our midst, may we learn to love as Jesus loved. Make this the place and time when we know ourselves as beloved. Amen.

READING: Hebrews 9:24-28

Christ entered into heaven, offering himself once as the sacrifice for human sin. Christ is described as the high priest who offers himself as a sacrifice for our sin. Christ does not die again and again each year. He died once, is alive with God, and will reveal himself on the last day.

²⁴Christ did not enter a sanctuary made by human hands, a mere copy of the true one, but he entered into heaven itself, now

to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. ²⁵Nor was it to offer himself again and again, as the high priest enters the

Holy Place year after year with blood that is not his own; ²⁶for then he would have had to suffer again and again since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to remove sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁷And just as it is appointed for

mortals to die once, and after that the judgment, ²⁸so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

HYMN

“The King of Love My Shepherd Is”

Green # 456

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

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed, but yet in love he sought me,
And on his shoulder gently laid, and home rejoicing brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill, with thee, dear Lord, beside me,
Thy rod and staff my comfort still; thy cross before to guide me.

And so, through all the length of days, thy goodness faileth never.
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise within thy house forever.

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SERMON - *“Jesus teaches about an ‘Active Faith’ that requires a dynamic relationship with God whose presence is known, even in scarcity.”*

HYMN

“My Faith Looks Up to Thee”

Green # 479

My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine!
Now hear me while I pray, take all my guilt away,
Oh, let me from this day be wholly thine!

May thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart, my zeal inspire;
As thou hast died for me, oh, may my love to thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be, a living fire!

While life's dark maze I tread and griefs around me spread, be thou my guide;
Bid darkness turn to day; wipe sorrow's tears away,
Nor let me ever stray from thee aside.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORDS OF INSTITUTION
THE LORD’S PRAYER

BLESSING & PRAYER FOR HOLY COMMUNION

Lord God, we have been caught up in the ways of the world. Call us back to your way of life - a way of love, commitment, respect, and forgiveness. Encourage us to live in a way that honors you and creation, guiding us to better love our neighbors. In the name

of Jesus the Christ, who ended the need of sacrifices and the fear of death fulfilling the promise of new life for all who believe, we pray. Amen.

BENEDICTION & SENDING

Hear God's promise! May we observe God's commands, so that it may go well with us and so that we experience the way God multiplies even the smallest of offerings or skill.

Wherever we go, we will live as servants of God.

Go from here and live with peace and confidence knowing the grace of service in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, The immeasurable love of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, who multiplies every gift, be with us 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 Scriptures all examine the human dynamics between those who are powerful and those who are poor and weak, but who trust in God. Elijah the powerful prophet, finds security and provision at the hands of a poor widow. In Hebrews, Christ is shown as both priest and sacrifice, who offers himself in order to save his people, while, in Mark, the religious leaders, who should be sacrificing for the sake of others, are rather using their position for self-aggrandizement and corruption.

The message is clear – human power is limited, often corrupt and ultimately fails those who trust in it. God's care, protection and justice is sure and eternal, and through the self-offering of Christ, all people can find security within the grace of God. The challenge is to ensure we place our trust in the right place, while also doing our best to be faithful and righteous in whatever power or leadership we may exercise.

There are two specific applications of today's readings on a local level. The first is the challenge to be engaged in the work of justice and compassion in our own communities and churches, where rich and poor often live and worship side by side. We must be careful how we measure the "success" of our churches – not by wealth and power, but by commitment to God's Reign – and we must ensure that we embody the compassion and generosity of Christ in our neighborhoods.

The second application has to do with where we place our faith, and how this impacts how we live. The Scriptures contrast our trust in human leadership and resources with trusting in God. Whatever we may do to ensure that we have life's necessities, we always need to remember that it is ultimately God in whom we must trust – as the poor widow did. However, this trust does not mean that we do nothing, but we actively do what is necessary to provide and protect our lives, while trusting God's guidance and empowerment to sustain and enable us. In the lesson, the trust that God seeks is very different from that of the religious leaders, who claim faith, but live by corruption and exploitation.

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