

# FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

1100 E. SUPERIOR ST., DULUTH, MINNESOTA

September 27, 2020

10:00 a.m.

## SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own.

### GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God*

**PRELUDE** *Nun Bitten Wir den Heiligen Geist (We Pray Now to the Holy Spirit)* Dietrich Buxtehude  
Karen Sande, organ

### WELCOME

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,  
who extends an invitation to the Waters, the Word, and the Meal.

**Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Sometimes we divide our lives between church and world,  
between Sunday and the rest of the days,  
but You, O God, are Lord over all our days.

**Forgive us when we fail to be bearers of Christ in our daily lives.**

**Forgive us when our hands fail to be an extension of your grace.**

**Forgive us when our words hurt rather than heal.**

**Forgive us when we forget that we have been forgiven and set free  
to be your forgiving people in your world.**

Deeply rooted in a boundless God beyond measure,  
Draw sustenance from the truth that God proclaims:  
Your sins are forgiven in the name of ☩ Jesus Christ.

Be renewed in hope and filled with the Spirit  
so that you may accept God's invitation to be Christ's body in the world.

**Amen.**

## GATHERING HYMN #522 *As We Gather at Your Table*



1 As we gath-er at your ta - ble, as we lis - ten to your word,  
2 Turn our wor-ship in - to wit-ness in the sac - ra - ment of life;  
3 Gra - cious Spir - it, help us sum-mon oth-er guests to share that feast



help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.  
send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.  
where tri - umphant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.



Nour-ish us with sa - cred sto - ry till we claim it as our own;  
Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for - give as you for - gave;  
There no more will en - vy blind us nor will pride our peace de - stroy,



teach us through this ho - ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic - t'ry known.  
may we still be - hold your im - age in the world you died to save.  
as we join with saints and an - gels to re - peat the sound-ing joy.

### **APOSTOLIC 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.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

God you empty yourself to become one of us. Continue to grace us with your presence,  
that our words and deeds being one may reflect the new heart and spirit you have placed  
within us, through the One who emptied himself for us through Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

## WORD

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song*

**TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES**

Pastor Dianne O. Loufman

**FIRST READING** Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

*read by Paul Anderson*

<sup>1</sup>The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? <sup>3</sup>As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. <sup>4</sup>Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

<sup>25</sup>Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? <sup>26</sup>When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. <sup>27</sup>Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. <sup>28</sup>Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. <sup>29</sup>Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

<sup>30</sup>Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. <sup>31</sup>Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? <sup>32</sup>For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**SECOND READING** Philippians 2:1-13

*read by Laura Stahl*

<sup>1</sup>If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, <sup>2</sup>make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. <sup>3</sup>Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup>Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.

<sup>5</sup>Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, <sup>7</sup>but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, <sup>8</sup>he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup>Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and

trembling; <sup>13</sup> for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,  
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.  
*Repeat alleluia*

Choir: My sheep hear my voice, | says the Lord;\* I know them and they | follow me. ***Alleluia.***

### GOSPEL Matthew 21:23-32

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>23</sup>When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” <sup>24</sup>Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. <sup>25</sup>Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ <sup>26</sup>But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.” <sup>27</sup>So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

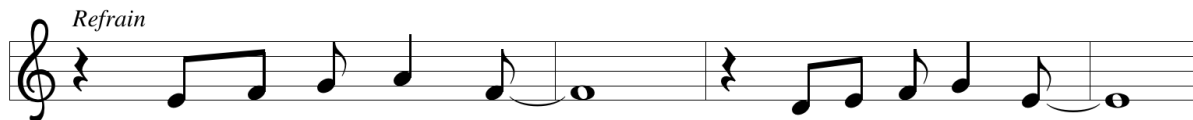
<sup>28</sup>“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ <sup>29</sup>He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. <sup>30</sup>The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. <sup>31</sup>Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. <sup>32</sup>For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.”

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

Pastor Dianne O. Loufman

**HYMN OF THE DAY #801 *Change My Heart, O God***



Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.



Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.



You are the pot - ter; I am the clay.



Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Boundless God, remind me:

**I AM Created by an ever-present, loving God,  
Deeply rooted in Christ Jesus  
Equipped to be resilient amidst change,  
Grounded in community,  
Free to struggle, grow and expand,  
Compelled to reach out in response,  
Renewed in hope each day.**

God, speak these words to me today, plant them within me, that I may find my identity in you. **Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

*or*

Bless we the Lord,  
**Thanks be to God!**

## THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

## OFFERING

*You are invited to use our digital offering plate. Simply send a text to 218-325-9525 with amount you would like to contribute. Enter a simple number (with no decimal). You'll be sent a text with a link to register. Click on the link and enter your card information. Thank you for supporting God's mission through FLC.*

## OFFERTORY MUSIC *My Jesus, I Love Thee*

arr. B. Childers

pre-recorded by Sarah Climis, handbell solo; Karen Sande, piano

*Choir members may recognize this 19th century hymn (tune: A. Gordon) because we have sung the choral arrangement by Paul Sjolund. Verse 1 (text: W.R. Fetherston):*

My Jesus, I love thee, I know thou art mine; for thee all the follies of sin I resign.  
My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art thou; if ever I loved thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

## OFFERING PRAYER

God our provider,

You extend an invitation to offer ourselves in response to your goodness.

Accept the gifts you have first given us, which we bring to your table,  
and which we share in your world in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

## FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

*The LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He has watched over your journey through this vast wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God has been with you, and you have not lacked anything. Deuteronomy 2:7*

While we are a scattered community today, we remain one body in Christ, rooted and held together by the ever-present love of God. As with the Israelites in the wilderness, God watches over us even as we are apart, providing what is needed to sustain us on the journey.

It is often through the ordinary work of our lives that God's nourishing presence is revealed and offered. Tear off a piece of bread and hold it in your hand. Give thanks for the many hands that worked separately but in common purpose to produce this food for our bodies. Remember God's presence through hands that create, hands that support and protect, hands that reach out in love, hands that soothe and console, hands that work together for peace and justice. As you eat this bread, pray that your own hands will be strengthened and blessed for service, revealing in all they do the loving presence of God in the world. **Amen.**

## HYMN #493 *Taste and See*

*Refrain – All*

Taste and see, taste and see the good-ness of the Lord. Oh,

taste and see, taste and see the good-ness of the Lord, of the Lord.

Cantor: Worship the Lord, all you people. You'll want for nothing if you ask.  
Taste and see that the Lord is good; in God we need put all our trust. *Refrain*

## SENDING

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world*

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Nourished by the living God and grounded in this community of faith, we pray:

**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.**

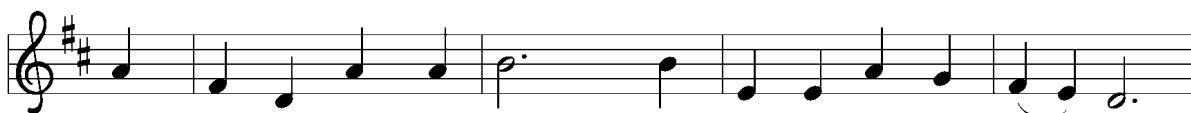
### OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

### BLESSING

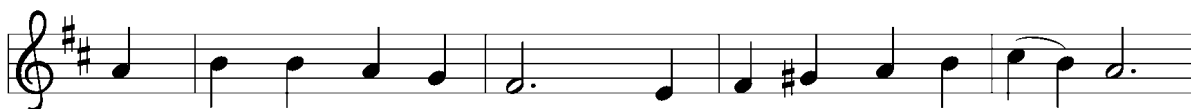
*The presiding minister proclaims God's blessing.*

**Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN #806 *O God, My Faithful God*



1 O God, my faith - ful God, true foun-tain ev - er flow - ing,  
2 Give me the strength to do with read - y heart and will - ing  
3 Keep me from say - ing words that lat - er need re - call - ing;  
4 When dan-gers gath - er round, oh, keep me calm and fear - less;



with - out whom noth - ing is, all per - fect gifts be - stow - ing:  
what - ev - er you com - mand, my call - ing here ful - fill - ing—  
guard me, lest i - dle speech may from my lips be fall - ing;  
help me to bear the cross when life seems dark and cheer - less;



give me a health - y frame, and may I have with - in  
to do it when I ought, with all my might—and bless  
but when, with - in my place, I must and ought to speak,  
help me, as you have taught, to love both great and small,



a con - science free from blame, a soul un - stained by sin.  
what - ev - er I have wrought, for you must give suc - cess.  
then to my words give grace, lest I of - fend the weak.  
and, by your Spir - it's might, to live at peace with all.

### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Be Christ's hands and feet in the world.

**Thanks be to God.**

### POSTLUDE *Pasticcio*

Jean Langlais (1907-1991)

Karen Sande, organ

Langlais was a French organist and composer. Blind from age two, he studied at, then taught at, the National Institute for Blind Children and the Paris Conservatory. He was organist at the Basilica of Saint Clotilde, where many Americans studied with him, including my first teacher.



**MINISTERS** All People of First Lutheran Church  
**PASTOR** The Rev. Dianne O. Loufman  
**PROGRAM STAFF** Ann Beck, Pastoral Associate  
Karen Sande, Director of Music  
Michael Fuchs, Director of Choral Activities  
Bryan Gatten, Director of Contemporary Worship  
Rachael Kresha, Apostle Choir Director, Associate Organist  
**MUSICIANS** Suzanne Rauvola, Erna Peterson, Glenn Peterson, Dennis Paulson, and Michael  
Fuchs, singers; Sarah Climis, handbells; Karen Sande, piano  
**VIDEOGRAPHER** Sam Weston  
**VIDEO EDITOR** Stacie Curnow

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** Evangelical Lutheran Worship texts and hymns ©2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS009917 and One License #A-729428.

First Lutheran Church, dedicated to the mission of Jesus Christ, welcomes YOU into this community of faith, where we share life in its entirety, with all its joys and sorrows. We believe all people are created in the image of God and are offered God's love, grace, and forgiveness, regardless of religious tradition, age, gender, race, education, economic status, sexual orientation, family structure, mental or physical abilities. We extend a special welcome in Christ's love.

**faithlovecommunity**  
First Lutheran Church