

Sunday, July 12, 2020 – Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Trinity's Weekly Connection

Join us for live streaming of our "Virtual Worship" service for the Sixth Sunday after Pentecost from Centennial Hall on Sunday, July 12 at 9:15 a.m. If you are unable to join us at that time, be welcome to access the service at your convenience via Trinity's YouTube channel. Instructions for that access are below.

Trinity is live streaming worship – how do I find it?

We are streaming our 9:15 a.m. "Virtual Worship" service on YouTube. To find it, do the following:

- Follow the home page link to "Virtual Worship" on Trinity's website, select "video" and you will be connected to the stream.

OR

- Go to YouTube, either by opening the app on your phone or by visiting the webpage on your computer.
- Search for 'Trinity Lutheran Church Grand Rapids.' The first option should be one with a picture of our cross tower (that is our channel).
- When you click on it you will be brought to our channel. If the service is live (from about 9:10 to 10:20 a.m. on Sunday morning) there will be a video with 'Live Now' on it.
- Simply click on the video and you will be connected to the stream.
- We also save past services in a play list called 'Rejoice Worship,' so you can view a past worship service at any time. It takes a couple of hours for the video to download on YouTube after worship ends.

If you have a YouTube account please subscribe to the channel. This will allow our videos to show up in your video feed and when we reach enough subscriptions allow us to change our YouTube url.

Prayer of the Day for Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

A prayer for health care providers

Merciful God, your healing power is everywhere about us. Strengthen those who work among the sick; give them courage and confidence in all they do. Encourage them when their efforts seem futile or when death prevails. Increase their trust in your power even to overcome death and pain and crying. May they be thankful for every sign of health you give, and humble before the mystery of your healing grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Trinity Members in Our Prayers

We pray for Trinity members George Bauer and family, Krysta Billock, Mike and Amy Bishop and family, Amy Bonjour, Doug Brackmann and family, Dixie Brinks, Captain Karl Crist, Jack Danielson, Riley Day, Samantha DeBoer, John Derbin, Bill and Deb DeWitt's preemie granddaughters Joanna and Evelyn, Awilda Diaz, Lois Engel, Beth Engstrom, Ruth Ann Evans, Jeff Fischer and family, Sarah Frecka, Mary Frick, Richard and Phyllis Gehl, Adam Guigue, Craig Gunderson, Carol Welz-Gustafson, Mark Hahn, Steve and Brenda Heacock and family, Bob and Linda Heine and family, Jerry Hendricks, David and Sarah Huckstep and family, Callan Hughes, Christopher Humphrey, Marge Jeltema and the Bolthuis family, Austin, Meredith and Theodore Johnson, Christopher Keller, Susan Knoll, Jen Knowles, Susan Kwast, Logan Landon, Geoff Larsen and family, Marilyn Leese, Bob and Cathy Luders, Dan and Yvonne Lynn and family, Judy Mallen, Roger Marks, Carolyn McCready, Joyce McKenzie, Marilyn Mellema, Johnny Mielock, Jim Miller and family, Benita Tshiswaka Muganza and family, Tim Neilson, Maddie Nojos, Karen Palaszek and family, Roger Perham, Posthumus family, Mae Preston and family, Valeriano Ramirez, Jacqueline Riegling, Mark and Gayle Rohde and family, Lynn Rose, Marian Schaible, Carolyn Schaner, Chas Schaner, Chris Schomberg, Schuen Family, Ilene Seadal, Karen Selle, Joan Sellman, Jim Searfoss, Michael Smith, Joyce Snyder, Courtney Stekete and family, Dennis Tanis and family, Linda Taffs and family, Shirley Tedford, Jeremiah (JD) Thamban, Sheryl VanderBaan and family, Dale Volkerding, Joan Walls, John Walls, Meghan Walls, Eric Wollen, Peyton Wollen, Rick and Michelle Wolner, Dave and Kathy Young, Susan Youngren, and Kathryn Zielinski.

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

July 12, 2020

God's word is like the rain that waters the earth and brings forth vegetation. It is also like the sower who scatters seed indiscriminately. Our lives are like seeds sown in the earth. Even from what appears to be little, dormant, or dead, God promises a harvest. At the Lord's table we are fed with the bread of life, that we may bear fruit in the world.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:10-13

God's word to Israel's exiles is as sure and effective as never-failing precipitation. Their return to the Holy Land in a new exodus is cheered on by singing mountains and by trees that clap their hands.

¹⁰For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
¹¹so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

¹²For you shall go out in joy,
and be led back in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

¹³Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;
and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial,
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

SECOND READING: Romans 8:1-11

There is no condemnation for those who live in Christ. God sent Christ to accomplish what the law was unable to do: condemn sin and free us from its death-dealing ways. The Spirit now empowers proper actions and values in our lives and gives us the promise of resurrected life.

¹There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of

the Spirit. ⁶To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

In Matthew's gospel, both Jesus and his disciples "sow the seed" of God's word by proclaiming the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near." Now, in a memorable parable, Jesus explains why this good news produces different results in those who hear.

¹That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ²Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹Let anyone with ears listen!"

¹⁸"Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²²As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, your word has been sown in many ways and places. We pray for missionaries and newly planted congregations around the world. Inspire us by their witness to the faith we share. We also pray for those who share in our ministry, including Pastor Nan Dehnke and the people of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Rose City, synod partners with us in mission and ministry. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

God of all, we pray for those who worship you in different ways. Guide us to a spirit of unity and harmony so that we may come to respect and cherish our commonalities. Bless our three "Standing Together" partner congregations here in Grand Rapids, Temple Emanuel, Masjid At-Tawheed and Westminster Presbyterian Church. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Creating God, the mountains and hills burst into song and the trees and fields clap their hands in praise. We pray for the birds and animals who make their home in the trees, and for lands stripped bare by deforestation. Empower us to sustainably use what you have given. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Reigning God, we pray for our nation's leaders in these challenging times. Increase their desire for justice and equality. We pray for our enemies. Bridge the chasms that divide us and guide authorities to a deep and lasting peace. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Abiding God, care for all who are in need, including those we name now in our hearts (*a brief silence*). For those who are doubting, renew faith. For those who are worrying, provide release. For those who are struggling, ease burdens. For those in fear, give hope. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Renewing God, revive your church in this place. Nourish and nurture the seeds you have planted, that we might grow as disciples. Replace what has been depleted. Sustain our ministries during this time of slow reentry at Trinity, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic upheaval of 2020, and deepen our congregation's relationships with the wider community. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Eternal God, we give thanks for all who have died. Comfort us in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

A Prayer for the Power of the Spirit among the People of God

God of all power and love, we give thanks for your unfailing presence and the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss. Send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire. Revive us to live as Christ's body in the world: a people who pray, worship, learn, break bread, share life, heal neighbors, bear good news, seek justice, rest and grow in the Spirit. Wherever and however we gather, unite us in common prayer and send us in common mission, that we and the whole creation might be restored and renewed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer for this time of closure and distancing

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams. All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

JULY 12, 2020
SIXTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking†
faith
home

God delivers abundant harvests.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23	Parable of the sower
Monday	Romans 8:1-11	Life in the Spirit
Tuesday	Isaiah 55:10-13	God's word is powerful
Wednesday	Psalms 119:105-112	Light from the Lord's law
Thursday	Genesis 25:19-34	Esau and Jacob
Friday	2 Corinthians 9:6-15	Give with generosity
Saturday	Psalms 65:1-13	Thanksgiving for earth's bounty
Sunday	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43	Parable of the weeds

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance, O God of our salvation; you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas. **Psalm 65:5 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God of abundant grace and mercy, help us to receive your word of life that we may be your good soil to grow in faith and share your word with others. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

God of abundant harvests, we thank you for your eternal care that blesses us with daily food through Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

Through the Spirit of Christ, may you go out in joy, and be led back in peace. (Isaiah 55:12)



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JULY 12, 2020
HYMN OF THE WEEK
As Rain from the Clouds

taking†
faith
home

WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Do you talk about your faith as part of daily conversations? Why or why not?
- Have you ever planted a garden? If so, what was it like?
- How does God's word get planted into your life like a seed planted into good soil?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Isaiah 55:10-13.

Yes, we have an awesome God, as noted in Psalm 65:5. In Isaiah 55 that awesomeness is expressed through God's word that is powerful. It does what God intends. It is productive. Isaiah 55 announces the return from exile for God's people. God's word, God's will shall accomplish it. This text is often used at the ordination of a pastor or a deacon. However, could we not also use it at weddings, baptisms, and any other occasion that celebrates God's people living together in faith, hope, and love? God's word is given for all of us to speak aloud to one another for our encouragement and growth in life and faith. God's word at a meal creates thankful hearts for the abundance of God's love with daily food. God's word at morning, evening, or at bedtime reminds us of the eternal care of God as those in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells and for whom there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1 and 11). Let's be wasteful as we cast God's word into all the corners of the earth, landing on all kinds of soil that God's word may sprout and produce an abundant harvest (Matthew 13:23). Who has blessed you with God's word recently? How did it impact your life?

Pray: **Creative God, may the Spirit of Christ create in me the good soil to receive your word and grow in grace. Amen.**

SERVICE

Plants of the earth not only serve as metaphors for the kingdom of God, but of God's life sustaining work in creation. Join a community garden, plant a garden in your own yard, or find a way to support the vital work of local farmers.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

"But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields" (Matthew 13:23a). Take a sheet of paper and write "Good Soil" across the bottom. Draw a fruit tree with a trunk, leaves, and fruit. On each drawing of fruit, write different ways you show God's love to others. Read what you have written and think or talk about how your "fruits" help you and others grow in their faith.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org