



Season of the Spirit

LWF Communion Prayer
for Pentecost 2020



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

A Communion
of Churches

Week 11 – Tenth Week after Pentecost

Introduction

Welcome to ordinary time! The liturgical season of Pentecost is called “ordinary” because the weeks are ordered, or numbered. Some of our churches order these weeks according to the Sundays after Pentecost, some after Trinity Sunday, and others, until the start of Advent, and a new liturgical year. This season is replete with stories of the early church, and the ways in which the Holy Spirit calls, enlightens and equips the Church to participate in the ministry of reconciliation begun in Jesus Christ. Though it is called ordinary, the season of Pentecost is rather extraordinary!

Pentecost is a Season of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit descends upon the disciples like tongues of fire, giving the ability to be understood in diverse languages. In a great reversal of the Tower of Babel story (Genesis 11) the story of Pentecost reminds us that the Holy Spirit equips illuminates a diversity of gifts. As a priesthood of all believers, each of us is uniquely gifted to live out our baptismal vocation. During this season, there are also a diversity of church festivals, such as Trinity Sunday, Holy Cross Day, All Saints and All Souls, and the Reign of Christ. The Pentecost season also leads into the 16 Days of Action against Gender Based Violence, where we profess the image of God and the breath of the Spirit in each human being.

Pentecost is a green time. The prominent liturgical color of this season is green, which signifies growth in many cultures. In some parts of the globe this is the growing season. But regardless of what hemisphere in which we live, Pentecost is a season to focus on the work of the Spirit who nurtures our gifts to bear fruit. In these weeks we mark the Season of Creation (1 September – 4 October). This is a time to give thanks for all creation, and the Holy Spirit who renews the face of the earth, and our vocation to till and keep this garden in a sustainable and just peace.

The ongoing experience of a global pandemic reminds us of our common nature, and the vulnerabilities and limits of being a creature. May Pentecost be for us a hopeful season to remember the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We offer this resource to our global Lutheran communion, as a way to be in the solidarity of prayer during this Season of the Spirit. Daily prayer follows a simple order: psalmody and prayer. Prayers can be adapted for use in your practice of prayer: singing songs, adding your prayers, or any liturgical acts that are meaningful in your context. In addition to the texts, which follow the Revised Common Lectionary, you will notice that each week contains a meditation on the Sunday text.

We commend these prayers to your use, whether alone in your home, as a family, or as your community is able to gather at a distance. As you pray in solidarity with the

communion across the globe, and the communion of saints in all times and places, be encouraged by the counsel that Luther offers in his letter, *A Simple Way to Pray*:

“Never think that you are kneeling or standing alone, rather think that the whole of the Church...are standing there beside you and you are standing among them in a common, united petition which God cannot disdain. There we find God the Creator, God the Redeemer, God the Holy Spirit, that is, God who daily sanctifies us.”

And throughout this green time, may the Spirit of God bring forth new growth in you.

Prayers are from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Augsburg Fortress, 2006 and Revised Common Lectionary Prayers, Augsburg Fortress, 2002. All scriptural texts are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). The daily lectionary of the Revised Common Lectionary is followed.

Sunday, 9 August 2020

Psalmody

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people,
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.
Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.
Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.

The Lord will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness will go before him,
and will make a path for his steps.

– *Psalm 83:8-13*

Word

Matthew 14:22-33

Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."

Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Meditation

Living during this time of pandemic, it seems like we are stuck in a global boat beaten up again and again by the wind and waves of a stubborn pandemic that might sink us. While we try to cope and keep hope alive among us, many might still wrestle with a range of hard questions where simple answers won't come easily: "Where is God in all this?", "How can we pull through this global storm together?", "Who will save us?", "What would life look like when all this is over?" At times we note the apparent 'absence' of God while we keep ourselves afloat. Other times, especially during times of prayer, we may be comforted by God's 'presence' with us. Even then, we might struggle to 'see' God clearly in the midst of so much confusion and disorientation around us.

While the image of Jesus walking on water toward the disciples is a powerful one, and even terrifying since they cried out in fear because of mistaking him as a ghost, the following words from Jesus turns this episode around: "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." "It is I" or "I am " (in the original Greek *ego emmi*) echoes all the moments from Moses' encounter with God in the burning bush right through the ups and downs of the people of God until this point. Jesus words also resonates with the "I am" sayings we read in

the Gospel of John too. We need these words of assurance that God is present with us more than ever in the midst of our storms.

Although we know Peter's attempt at walking on water wasn't a glorious success story of faith, his 'sinking' story is perhaps what we might identify with most of the time. Let us not forget, he still started doing what was humanly impossible — even for a little while. Indeed, faith, fear, and doubt all are entangled within us as we try to navigate through unwelcome winds and waves beating us up day after day. One day we feel we are 'walking on water', another day we are frightened again, start to 'sink' and cry out with the same words, "Lord, save me!"

We press on during these exceptional times where our faith is severely challenged and doubts often still linger in our minds. But who God is *for us* is even more important than our self-doubt or little faith. The good news is the Lord who reached out and caught hold of a fearful disciple is the same Lord whom we worship today. God's steadfast love and faithfulness is stronger than the storms raging within us or pounding us from the outside. God's word remains true: "Take heart, It is I; do not be afraid".

Prayer

Through the storms of life, O God,
you are with your people
in the person of Jesus your Son.
Calm our fears and strengthen our faith
that we may never doubt his presence among us
but proclaim that he is your Son,
risen from the dead,
living for ever and ever. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Monday, 10 August 2020

Psalmody

I love you, Lord, my strength.

The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer;
my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

I called to the Lord, who is worthy of praise,
and I have been saved from my enemies.

The cords of death entangled me;
the torrents of destruction overwhelmed me.

The cords of the grave coiled around me;
the snares of death confronted me.

In my distress I called to the Lord;
I cried to my God for help.

From his temple he heard my voice;
my cry came before him, into his ears.

The earth trembled and quaked,
and the foundations of the mountains shook;
they trembled because he was angry.

Smoke rose from his nostrils;
consuming fire came from his mouth,
burning coals blazed out of it.

He parted the heavens and came down;
dark clouds were under his feet.

He mounted the cherubim and flew;
he soared on the wings of the wind.

He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him—
the dark rain clouds of the sky.

Out of the brightness of his presence clouds advanced,
with hailstones and bolts of lightning.
The Lord thundered from heaven;
the voice of the Most High resounded.
He shot his arrows and scattered the enemy,
with great bolts of lightning he routed them.
The valleys of the sea were exposed
and the foundations of the earth laid bare
at your rebuke, Lord,
at the blast of breath from your nostrils.

He reached down from on high and took hold of me;
he drew me out of deep waters.
He rescued me from my powerful enemy,
from my foes, who were too strong for me.
They confronted me in the day of my disaster,
but the Lord was my support.
He brought me out into a spacious place;
he rescued me because he delighted in me.

– *Psalm 18:1-19*

Word

Genesis 7:11-8:5

But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and all the domestic animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided; the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, and the waters gradually receded from the earth. At the end of one hundred fifty days the waters had abated; and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. The waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains appeared.

Prayer

Eternal God,
you are present with us throughout our lives,
even when others plot to do us harm.
May we learn to live together in unity,
that in all we do,
we may sing your praises now and forever. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Tuesday, 11 August 2020

Psalmody

I love you, Lord, my strength.

The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer;
my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

I called to the Lord, who is worthy of praise,
and I have been saved from my enemies.

The cords of death entangled me;
the torrents of destruction overwhelmed me.

The cords of the grave coiled around me;
the snares of death confronted me.

In my distress I called to the Lord;
I cried to my God for help.

From his temple he heard my voice;
my cry came before him, into his ears.

The earth trembled and quaked,
and the foundations of the mountains shook;
they trembled because he was angry.

Smoke rose from his nostrils;
consuming fire came from his mouth,
burning coals blazed out of it.

He parted the heavens and came down;
dark clouds were under his feet.

He mounted the cherubim and flew;
he soared on the wings of the wind.

He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him—
the dark rain clouds of the sky.

Out of the brightness of his presence clouds advanced,
with hailstones and bolts of lightning.
The Lord thundered from heaven;
the voice of the Most High resounded.
He shot his arrows and scattered the enemy,
with great bolts of lightning he routed them.
The valleys of the sea were exposed
and the foundations of the earth laid bare
at your rebuke, Lord,
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He reached down from on high and took hold of me;
he drew me out of deep waters.
He rescued me from my powerful enemy,
from my foes, who were too strong for me.
They confronted me in the day of my disaster,
but the Lord was my support.
He brought me out into a spacious place;
he rescued me because he delighted in me.

– *Psalm 18:1-19*

Word

Romans 9:14-29

What then are we to say? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! For he says to Moses,

"I will have mercy on whom I have mercy,
and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."

So it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who shows mercy. For the scripture says to Pharaoh, "I have raised you up for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth." So then he has mercy on whom-ever he chooses, and he hardens the heart of whomever he chooses.

You will say to me then, “Why then does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?” But who indeed are you, a human being, to argue with God? Will what is molded say to the one who molds it, “Why have you made me like this?” Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one object for special use and another for ordinary use? What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the objects of wrath that are made for destruction; and what if he has done so in order to make known the riches of his glory for the objects of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory— including us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?

Prayer

Eternal God,
you are present with us throughout our lives,
even when others plot to do us harm.
May we learn to live together in unity,
that in all we do,
we may sing your praises now and forever. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Wednesday, 12 August 2020

Psalmody

I love you, Lord, my strength.

The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer;
my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

I called to the Lord, who is worthy of praise,
and I have been saved from my enemies.
The cords of death entangled me;
the torrents of destruction overwhelmed me.

The cords of the grave coiled around me;
the snares of death confronted me.

In my distress I called to the Lord;
I cried to my God for help.
From his temple he heard my voice;
my cry came before him, into his ears.
The earth trembled and quaked,
and the foundations of the mountains shook;
they trembled because he was angry.

Smoke rose from his nostrils;
consuming fire came from his mouth,
burning coals blazed out of it.

He parted the heavens and came down;
dark clouds were under his feet.

He mounted the cherubim and flew;
he soared on the wings of the wind.

He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him—
the dark rain clouds of the sky.

Out of the brightness of his presence clouds advanced,
with hailstones and bolts of lightning.
The Lord thundered from heaven;
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He shot his arrows and scattered the enemy,
with great bolts of lightning he routed them.
The valleys of the sea were exposed
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at your rebuke, Lord,
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He reached down from on high and took hold of me;
he drew me out of deep waters.
He rescued me from my powerful enemy,
from my foes, who were too strong for me.
They confronted me in the day of my disaster,
but the Lord was my support.
He brought me out into a spacious place;
he rescued me because he delighted in me.

– *Psalm 18:1-19*

Word

Matthew 8:23-27

And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. A windstorm arose on the sea, so great that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him up, saying, “Lord, save us! We are perishing!” And he said to them, “Why are you afraid, you of little faith?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm. They were amazed, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?”

Prayer

Eternal God,
you are present with us throughout our lives,
even when others plot to do us harm.
May we learn to live together in unity,
that in all we do,
we may sing your praises now and forever. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Thursday, 13 August 2020

Psalmody

May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us, *Selah*
that your way may be known upon earth,
your saving power among all nations.
Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. *Selah*
Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, has blessed us.
May God continue to bless us;
let all the ends of the earth revere him
– *Psalms 67:1-7*

Word

Revelation 15:1-4

Then I saw another portent in heaven, great and amazing: seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is ended.

And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb:

“Great and amazing are your deeds,
Lord God the Almighty!
Just and true are your ways,
King of the nations!
Lord, who will not fear
and glorify your name?
For you alone are holy.
All nations will come
and worship before you,
for your judgments have been revealed.”

Prayer

God of awe, from whom we flee in holy terror:
your silence burns like ice;
your whisper cuts through fear;
we long to hear your faithful word
of righteousness and peace.
Bless us with bold belief
even in the darkness of the night
and the assault of life's storms,
that we may be messengers of your justice,
in the name of the One whom wind and wave obey.

Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Friday, 14 August 2020

Psalmody

May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us, *Selah*
that your way may be known upon earth,
your saving power among all nations.
Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. *Selah*
Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, has blessed us.
May God continue to bless us;
let all the ends of the earth revere him
– *Psalm 67:1-7*

Word

Acts 14:19-28

But Jews came there from Antioch and Iconium and won over the crowds. Then they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. But when the disciples surrounded him, he got up and went into the city. The next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe.

After they had proclaimed the good news to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, then on to Iconium and Antioch. There they strengthened the souls of the disciples and encouraged them to continue in the faith, saying, "It is through many persecutions that we must enter the kingdom of God." And after they had appointed elders for them in each church, with prayer and fasting they entrusted them to the Lord in whom they had come to believe.

Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. From there they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work[a] that they had completed. When they arrived, they called the church together and related all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles. And they stayed there with the disciples for some time.

Prayer

God of awe, from whom we flee in holy terror:
your silence burns like ice;
your whisper cuts through fear;
we long to hear your faithful word
of righteousness and peace.

Bless us with bold belief
even in the darkness of the night
and the assault of life's storms,
that we may be messengers of your justice,
in the name of the One whom wind and wave obey. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.
Amen.

Saturday, 15 August 2020

Psalmody

May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us, *Selah*
that your way may be known upon earth,
your saving power among all nations.
Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. *Selah*
Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, has blessed us.
May God continue to bless us;
let all the ends of the earth revere him.
– *Psalm 67:1-7*

Word

Matthew 14:34-36

When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret. After the people of that place recognized him, they sent word throughout the region and brought all who were sick to him, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

Prayer

God of awe, from whom we flee in holy terror:
your silence burns like ice;
your whisper cuts through fear;
we long to hear your faithful word
of righteousness and peace.

Bless us with bold belief
even in the darkness of the night
and the assault of life's storms,
that we may be messengers of your justice,
in the name of the One whom wind and wave obey. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.
Amen.

