

+DIVINE SERVICE II+
OF THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
+SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST+ 16 JULY 2023+



The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

A member congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

902 S. Maple

Inglewood, CA 90301-3824

tgsicms.org

The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

“A Church where God gives and we receive.”

- ❖ The Rev. Edward Killian, Pastor (mobile) 424.293.6588
- ❖ Ms. Moira Killian, Secretary (Office) 310.671-7644
 - ❖ Mr. Jay Rogers, Organist/Music Director
 - ❖ Mr. Jose Lopez, Congregational Chairman
 - ❖ Mr. Greg Griffin, Acolyte

Welcome to our Divine Service!

We are pleased that you are with us.

+Worship Notes+

The entire service, including the rubrics of when to sit and when to kneel or stand, and what to say, is printed out in this folder so you may follow along.

Welcome to weekly Divine Service at The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church! We are a congregation that confesses the Holy Bible as inerrant, that justification is by faith according to the Holy Bible and confessed in the 1580 Book of Concord. God bless you.

To all of you who are visiting our service this morning, we extend a most cordial welcome in Jesus' name. Please introduce yourself to our pastor. It is our hope that you will feel at home in our midst and will be blessed by our message of Christ crucified and risen for the sins of the world. If you are looking for a church home and would like to know about our membership, pastor would love to speak with you!

A Note From The Organist:

Benjamin Culli lives in Milwaukee, where he is a Vice-President at Hal Leonard music publishers, and music director at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Whitefish Bay. His Partita on “Thy Strong Word” was published in 2017, as one of a group of compositions commissioned by Concordia Publishing House for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

We are using three of the five movements. I. Tune, II. Meditation, and V. Toccata. The Toccata is very dramatic, with some tricky cross rhythms and the melody in the pedal, including some double pedal passages.

Confession and Absolution

Hymn of Invocation

655 Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word

1 Lord, keep us stead - fast in Your Word; Curb those who
 2 Lord Je - sus Christ, Your pow'r make known, For You are
 3 O Com - fort - er of price - less worth, Send peace and

by de - ceit or sword Would wrest the king - dom from Your
 Lord of lords a - lone; De - fend Your ho - ly Church that
 u - ni - ty on earth; Sup - port us in our fi - nal

Son And bring to naught all He has done.
 we May sing Your praise e - ter - nal - ly.
 strife And lead us out of death to life.

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.
 Tune: Geistliche Lieder auff's new gebessert, 1543, Wittenberg, ed. Joseph Klug
 Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Exhortation

LSB 167

- P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- C** But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Kneel/Stand

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

Confession of Sins

LSB 167

- P** Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.
- C** **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Absolution

LSB 167

- P** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the **✠** Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen.**

Stand

Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 103:15–19; antiphon: v. 8

The LORD is merciful and | gracious,*
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love.

As for man, his days | are like grass;*
he flourishes like a flower | of the field;
for the wind passes over it, and | it is gone,*
and its place knows | it no more.

**But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those
who | fear him,***

and his righteousness to children's | children,
to those who keep his | covenant*
and remember to do his com- | mandments.

The LORD has established his throne in the | heavens,*
and his kingdom rules | over all.

Glorify be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

The LORD is merciful and | gracious,*
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love.

Kyrie

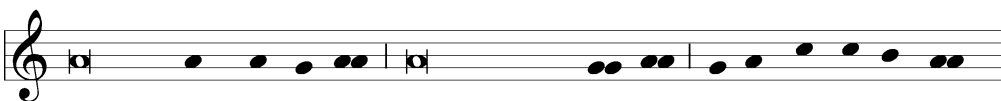
LSB 168



A In peace let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



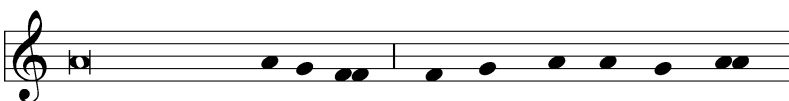
A For the peace from a-bove and for our sal-va-tion let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



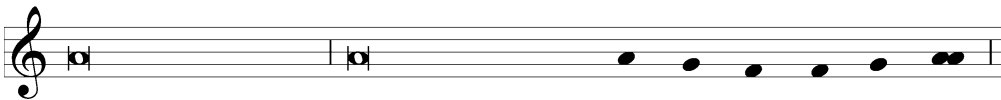
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the uni - ty of all let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



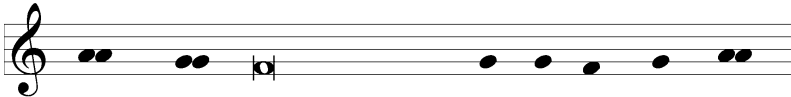
A For this holy house and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise



let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



A Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



C A - men.

This Is the Feast

LSB 171



A This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.



C Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,



whose blood set us free to be peo-ple of God.



Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and strength and



hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are His.

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le -
 lu - ia. Sing with all the peo - ple of
 God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion:
 Bless - ing and hon - or and glo - ry and might be to
 God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.
 This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God,
 for the Lamb who was slain has be - gun His reign.
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

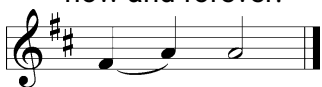
P The Lord be with you.



C And al - so with you.

P Let us pray.

Lord of all power and might, author and giver of all good things, graft into our hearts the love of Your name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of Your great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 55:10-13

¹⁰“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there but water 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 shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.
¹²“For you shall go out in joy
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall break forth into singing,
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 make a name for the LORD,
an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 65:9–13

⁹You visit the earth and water it;
you greatly enrich it;
the river of God is full of | water;*
you provide their grain,
for so you have pre- | pared it.

¹⁰**You water its furrows abundantly,
settling its | ridges,*
softening it with showers,
and bless- | ing its growth.**

¹¹You crown the year with your | bounty*;
your wagon tracks overflow with a- | bundance.

¹²**The pastures of the wilderness | overflow,*
the hills gird them- | selves with joy,**

¹³the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,
the valleys deck them- | selves with grain,*
they shout and sing together | for joy.

Epistle

Romans 8:12–17

Heirs with Christ

¹²So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.
¹³For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia and Verse

LSB 173



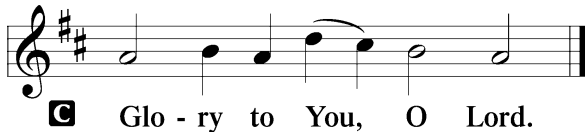
C Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



Holy Gospel

Matthew 13:1-9

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the thirteenth chapter.



The Parable of the Sower

¹That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ²And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, 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 produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹He who has ears, let him hear."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



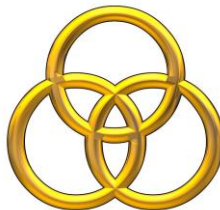
Nicene Creed

☩ I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ✝ of the world to come. Amen.

Sit



Hymn of the Day

578 Thy Strong Word



1 Thy strong word did cleave the dark - ness; At Thy
 2 Lo, on those who dwelt in dark - ness, Dark as
 3 Thy strong Word be - speaks us righ - teous; Bright with
 4 From the cross Thy wis - dom shin - ing Break - eth



speak - ing it was done. For cre - at - ed
 night and deep as death, Broke the light of
 Thine own ho - li - ness, Glo - rious now, we
 forth in con - qu'ring might; From the cross for -



light we thank Thee, While Thine or - dered sea - sons run.
 Thy sal - va - tion, Breathed Thine own life - breath - ing breath.
 press toward glo - ry, And our lives our hopes con - fess.
 ev - er beam - eth All Thy bright re - deem - ing light.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to



Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
 Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
 Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
 Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
 al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
 al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
 al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!

5 Give us lips to sing Thy glory,
Tongues Thy mercy to proclaim,
Throats that shout the hope that fills us,
Mouths to speak Thy holy name.
Alleluia, alleluia!
May the light which Thou dost send
Fill our songs with alleluias,
Alleluias without end!

△ 6 God the Father, light-creator,
To Thee laud and honor be.
To Thee, Light of Light begotten,
Praise be sung eternally.
Holy Spirit, light-revealer,
Glory, glory be to Thee.
Mortals, angels, now and ever
Praise the holy Trinity!

Text: Martin H. Franzmann, 1907–76

Sermon

Pastor Edward Killian

Stand

Prayer of the Church

Proper response is "Hear our prayer".

P Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Father of mercy, our sins have merited thorns and briars and yield only trouble and strife. Forgive our transgressions and discipline us against temptation, that we may rejoice in Your name and the promise of everlasting life. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Almighty God, You send forth Your Word as abundantly as rains upon the earth. Grant that we would never take Your generosity for granted, but would seek the help and refreshment of Your Word in every circumstance. Lord, in Your mercy,

P Lord of life, continue to sow Your Word through the fields of the earth. Bless pastors and missionaries as they proclaim Your truth. Prepare the hearts of all who hear to believe and yield abundant fruit. Lord, in Your mercy,

- P** Heavenly Father, bless parents with faithfulness as they plant Your Word into their children, that they may grow steadfast among the cares and troubles of this world. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Creator of heaven and earth, by Your Word You send forth rain and snow to make the world bring forth and sprout. Give seed to the sower and bread to the eater. Provide us seasonable weather and bountiful harvest, that we may enjoy daily bread and praise Your name. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Lord God, look with mercy upon those who suffer from illness of body or mind. *Be especially with Alice, Cynthia, Debra, Dolores, Gene, Jane, Jod, Johnathan, Karen, Lynette, Marion and her family, Megan, Naomi, Sabrina, Steven, Suzanne, and Timothy.* Give them healing. Comfort them with Your presence. Grant them patience to endure suffering, and assure them at all times that they are Your dear children and that the glory of Christ awaits them. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** God of all grace, You have made us Your holy children and freed us from bondage to the flesh. Sustain us in repentance and faith, that we may receive Christ's body and blood for life and salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Almighty God, Your Spirit calls us by the Gospel to the new life of faith. We praise You and acknowledge You as our Lord. Deliver us from the devil's temptations, that we may live under You and serve You in righteousness, innocence and blessedness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the same Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

Offering *Collected after service in the back of the church.*

Offertory

LSB 176

C What shall I ren - der to the Lord for all His ben - e-fits to
 me? I will of - fer the sac - ri - fice of thanks - giv - ing and will
 call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal-

va-tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my

vows to the Lord now in the pres-ence of all His peo-ple, in the

courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je-ru-sa-lem.

Service of the Sacrament

Preface

LSB 177

P The Lord be with you.

G And al-so with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

G We lift them to the Lord.



P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Proper Preface (Abbreviated)

LSB 177

P It is truly good, right, and salutary . . . evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

LSB 178



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of



pow'r and might: Heav'n and earth are full of Your



glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is He who comes in the name



of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✝ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Proclamation of Christ

P As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

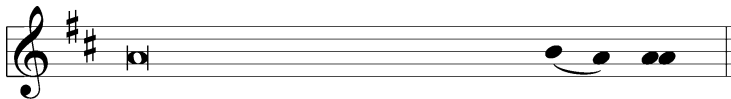
Lord's Prayer

C 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.

Pax Domini

LSB 180



P The peace of the Lord be with you al - ways.



C A - men.

Agnus Dei

LSB 180



C Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the world;



have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the



sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of



God, You take a-way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

Sit

Distribution

Distribution Hymn

627 Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior



1 Je - sus Christ, our bless - ed Sav - ior, Turned a - way God's
2 As His pledge of love un - dy - ing, He, this pre - cious
3 Je - sus here Him - self is shar - ing; Heed then how you
4 Praise the Fa - ther, who from heav - en To His own this



wrath for - ev - er; By His bit - ter grief and woe
food sup - ply - ing, Gives His bod - y with the bread,
are pre - par - ing, For if you do not be - lieve,
food has giv - en, Who, to mend what we have done,



He saved us from the e - vil foe.
And with the wine the blood He shed.
His judg - ment then you shall re - ceive.
Gave in - to death His on - ly Son.

5 Firmly hold with faith unshaken
That this food is to be taken
By the sick who are distressed,
By hearts that long for peace and rest.

6 Agony and bitter labor
Were the cost of God's high favor;
Do not come if you suppose
You need not Him who died and rose.

7 Christ says: "Come, all you that labor,
And receive My grace and favor:
Those who feel no pain or ill
Need no physician's help or skill.

8 "For what purpose was My dying
If not for your justifying?
And what use this precious food
If you yourself were pure and good?"

9 If your heart this truth professes
And your mouth your sin confesses,
You will be your Savior's guest,
Be at His banquet truly blest.

10 Let this food your faith so nourish
That its fruit of love may flourish
And your neighbor learn from you
How much God's wondrous love can do.

Text: John Hus, c. 1369–1415; German version, Martin Luther, 1483–1546; (sts. 1–2, 4–5, 7, 9): tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.; (sts. 3, 8): tr. Lutheran Service Book, 2006; (sts. 6, 10): tr. F. Samuel Janzow, 1913–2001, alt.

Tune: Geistliche Lieder auff's new gebessert, 1533, Wittenberg, ed. Joseph Klug, alt.

Text (sts. 3, 6, 8, 10): © 1980 and 2006 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000401

Text (sts. 1–2, 4–5, 7, 9) and tune: Public domain

Distribution Hymn

642 O Living Bread from Heaven



1 O liv - ing Bread from heav - en, How well You
 2 My Lord, You here have led me To this most
 3 You gave me all I want - ed; This food can
 4 Lord, grant me then, thus strength - ened With heav'n - ly



feed Your guest! The gifts that You have giv - en
 ho - ly place And with Your - self have fed me
 death de - stroy. And You have free - ly grant - ed
 food, while here My course on earth is length - ened,



Have filled my heart with rest. Oh, won - drous food of
 The trea - sures of Your grace; For You have free - ly
 The cup of end - less joy. My Lord, I do not
 To serve with ho - ly fear. And when You call my



bles - ing, Oh, cup that heals our woes! My heart, this
 giv - en What earth could nev - er buy, The bread of
 mer - it The fa - vor You have shown, And all my
 spir - it To leave this world be - low, I en - ter,



gift pos - sess - ing, With prais - es o - ver - flows.
 life from heav - en, That now I shall not die.
 soul and spir - it Bow down be - fore Your throne.
 through Your mer - it, Where joys un - min - gled flow.

Text: Johann Rist, 1607–67; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.
 Tune: Musae Sioniae, 1609, vol. 7, Wolfenbüttel, ed. Michael Praetorius
 Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

Thank the Lord

LSB 181

C Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev-'ry-one what
He has done. Let ev - 'ry-one who seeks the Lord re -
joice and proud - ly bear His name. He re-calls His prom-is-
es and leads His peo - ple forth in joy with shouts of thanks -
giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Post-Communion Collect

P Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

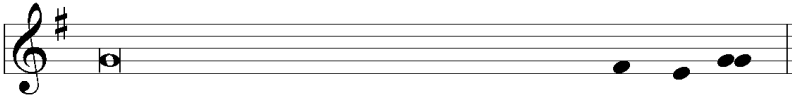


C A - men.



Benediction

LSB 183



P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you
and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.



C A - - - men.

Hymn to Depart

583 God Has Spoken by His Prophets



1 God has spo - ken by His proph - ets, Spo - ken His un - chang - ing Word;
2 God has spo - ken by Christ Je - sus, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Son,
3 God is speak - ing by His Spir - it, Speak - ing to our hearts a - gain,



Each from age to age pro - claim - ing God, the one, the righ - teous Lord.
Bright - ness of the Fa - ther's glo - ry, With the Fa - ther ev - er one;
In the age - less Word de - clar - ing His own mes - sage, now as then.



In the world's de - spair and tur -moil, One firm an - chor holds us fast:
Spo - ken by the Word In - car - nate, God of God, be - fore time was;
Through the rise and fall of na - tions One sure faith yet stand - ing fast;



God is king, His throne e - ter - nal; God the first, and God the last.
Light of Light, to earth de - scend - ing, He re - veals our God to us.
God a - bides, His Word un - chang - ing; God the first, and God the last.

Text: George W. Briggs, 1875–1959, alt.

Tune: Henry T. Smart, 1813–79

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Tune: Public domain

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✝ THIS WEEK'S NOTES ✝

Announcements

- + **Last Sunday's Attendance: 32**
- + **Altar Guild Set Up:** July 16th Gayle
July 23rd Maurine
- Cleanup for July:** Gayle
- + **Ushers for July:** Dick Huhn and Clinton Galloway
- + **Christmas in July!** Royce Morton left a great many items to the church. Throughout the month of July, there will be a table located in the Narthex, for anyone to look through.
- + **Join us for Wednesday Evening Virtual Bible Study at 7pm on Zoom.**

July Birthdays

Brent Tilley 18th

Ed Griffin 28th

A Snippet From 1517

The Parable of the Sower

We can't predict the harvest. We can only sow.

Martin Franzmann sings:

The sower sows; his reckless love
scatters abroad the goodly seed,
intent alone that all may have
the wholesome loaves that people need.

Though some be snatched and some be scorched
and some be choked and matted flat,
the sower sows; his heart cries out,

"Oh, what of that, and what of that?" (*Christian Worship* 895)...

...After Jesus told this parable, he called out, "*He who has ears to hear, let him hear.*" But Jesus' disciples were confused. They wanted to make sure they had it right. Jesus

explained the parable. His explanation is pretty straightforward. The seed is the word of God. It produces different results in different soil. Much of the seed is lost. It never grows or grows only to fizzle out or be choked. Nothing comes of it in the end. Not all is lost, though.

Some seed grows and bears fruit with patience. This was why the sower sowed. Much of his work came to naught, but not all of it. This made it all worthwhile. It did no good to obsess over the harvest. The seeds didn't grow better by worrying about them. It would be counter-productive to dig them up day after day to check. You sowed and you prayed. You waited and hoped. You trusted that something would be there come harvest.

Welcome to the life of a preacher, whether a pastor, parent, friend, or neighbor. Welcome to the task of the church. We sow our seed. We can't know the fertile ground from the unfertile. We can't predict the harvest. We can only sow. We cast word into the wind and say with Jesus, "*He who has ears to hear, let him hear.*"

Despite this, the church can develop a very unhealthy obsession with results, especially the American church. Business models abound. Marketing programs are in no short supply. We want to plan, predict, and produce. We want to measure. We want everything to grow, and grow quickly. But that's not our calling. That's not our task. We plant. We water. But the Lord grants the growth, and we give thanks when he does.

What soil are you? We can obsess about that, too. Am I the rocky soil? Am I doomed for thorns? Or am I the good soil? We're tempted to look inward for impeccable dispositions or outward for impressive works. That's foolishness, though. Jesus says to listen. He says to hear. And here you are. And here is the good news for you. Put on your ears. All your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The preacher preaches. The hearer hears. The rest is the Lord's problem.

In Mark's retelling of this parable, he includes a little more of what Jesus said at the end. He writes, "*And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.*" While we're tempted to read this, or better, listen to it, and fret about being rocky or thorn-infested soil, what Jesus says here at the end would have caught his hearer's attention. This would have been an amazing harvest. God's Word does incredible things. That Word is your word, a word to you and for you. Hear it.

Franzmann continued to sing with words we end our meditation well with here. As preachers and hearers, may we take them to heart:

"Preach you the Word and plant it home
and never faint; the Harvest Lord
who gave the sower seed to sow
will watch and tend his planted Word." (*Christian Worship* 895).

He will tend his planted Word. Amen.

Wade Johnston, March 14, 2023, 1517.org