

Sunday, June 17, 2012 --Third Sunday after Pentecost

INTRODUCTION

The mustard seed becomes a great shrub that shelters the birds, recalling ancient images of the tree of life. We'd expect a cedar or a sequoia, but Jesus finds the power of God better imaged in a tiny, no-account seed. It's not the way we expect divine activity to look. Yet the tree of life is here, in the cross around which we gather, the tree into which we are grafted through baptism, the true vine that nourishes us with its fruit in the cup we share. It may not appear all that impressive, but while nobody's looking it grows with a power beyond our understanding.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN: “Shall We Gather at the River” # 423 ELW

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

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

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. 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. 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.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

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

Let us pray.

O God, you are the tree of life, offering shelter to all the world. Graft us into yourself and nurture our growth, that we may bear your truth and love to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM (8:30 a.m. Service Only) “ O Come, Let Us Sing”

FIRST READING: 2 Corinthians 5:6–10[11–13] 14–17

Paul encourages believers to live by faith and not by sight. We do not consider Jesus from a human perspective but through the eyes of faith, believing he died for all and was raised. All who are in Christ are now in God’s new creation.

So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord — for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are well known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences. We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are

convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

PSALM: Psalm 92:1–4, 12–15

Refrain: The righteous shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon. (Ps. 92:12)

It is a good thing to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praise to your name, O Most High;
to herald your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night;
on the psaltery, and on the lyre, and to the melody of the harp.
or you have made me glad by your acts, O LORD;
and I shout for joy because of the works of your hands. R

The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree,
and shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon.
Those who are planted in the house of the LORD
shall flourish in the courts of our God;
they shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be green and succulent;
that they may show how upright the LORD is,
my rock, in whom there is no injustice. R

GOSPEL: Mark 4:26–34

Jesus frequently uses parables to teach ordinary people as they are able to hear and understand. Images of sowing and growing show the vitality of God's kingdom.

He also said, "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come."

He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the

greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

HYMN: "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us"

789 ELW

SERMON

OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation. With reverence for the earth, those in need, and the whole human family, let us offer our prayers to God.

A time for silent prayer.

For preachers, teachers, poets, writers, visual artists, and all who proclaim the mystery of the kingdom of God. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

For social service agencies, relief organizations, shelters, food pantries, and all who care for those in need. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

For the green earth and the gifts of seeds and crops, fruits and vegetables, trees of the field, and birds of the air. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

For all who seek healing and relief (*especially*), that they may flourish in the love of Christ. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

For this assembly, that you teach us to walk by faith and not by sight, trusting that you make all things new. For fathers and those who provide fatherly care for others. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be made.

We give thanks for your holy people of all times and places. Send us forth to scatter seeds of mercy until we join all your saints in the harvest of eternal life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive our hopes and prayers, O God of mercy, for great is your faithfulness in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

**Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.
Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go forth into the world, spread the Good News.

Thanks be to God.

CLOSING HYMN: “All Creatures Worship God Most High” # 835 ELW

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Winfield Johnson passed away this week at the age of 96. Funeral services will be Tuesday, June 19th at 11:00 a.m. at Christ Lutheran Church in St. Paul. *(Anyone who wishes to car pool meet during Sunday coffee hour to make arrangements.)*

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL will be meeting every day this week of June 18-22 at 9:00 a.m.

There will be **NO BIBLE STUDIES** and **NO FUNTIMERS** this week due to VBS.

Tuesday, June 19th at 4:00 p.m. the **Church Council** will meet.

Bob & Darlene Vorlicek are having an **auction** at 10:00 a.m., Saturday June 23rd.

We still **need coffee servers** for the months of July & August. The bulletin board on which you may sign up on is next to the serving window by the kitchen. Thank you for helping out.

Summer Camp Martha Sammes at Isle Community Ed office has received a grant for kids ages 8-15 to go to summer camp of their choice. Parents obligation is to get kids to & from camp. If you have grandkids, children, friends who would enjoy camp, please call Martha at 320-676-1585. This is not limited to Mille Lacs County.

HAPPY FATHER’S DAY to all the fathers in our congregation as well as visitors. Have a great day!!

June 30th at 5 p.m. & July 1st at 10 a.m. there will be featured **Rock the Spirit – Music of the 60’s & 70’s – A Celebration of Freedom** in the Fellowship Hall of Bethesda. Sunday, July 1st at 8:30 a.m. a Traditional Communion Service will be held. Join us! Invite your friends!

Our **Annual Beef & Corn Feed** this year will be held July 20th.

THOSE SERVING THIS WEEK OF JUNE 17TH, 2012

Organist: Marlys Beavers
Greeters: Carol Schlottman & Bruce Gingerich
Ushers: 8:30 Chuck & Elsa Carlson, 10:00 Ron & JoAnn Haglund
Lectors: 8:30 Ruth Hamman, 10:00 Lyle Nyberg
Coffee Servers: Terry Carlson, Cindy Smith, Joyce Rimer

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD LAST WEEK (6/9 & 6/10, 2012)

Attendance: Sat. 5:00 p.m. – 45 Sun. 8:30 a.m. – 120 10:00 – 31

Offering: \$ 3,303.00 Building Fund: \$ 545.00

\$ 3,846.00 – Weekly amount needed for operating expenses.

\$ 580.00 – Weekly amount (building fund) needed for mortgage payment.

THIS WEEK AT BETHESDA JUNE 17TH THRU JUNE 23RD, 2012

Mon., June 18 th	9:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Vacation Bible School AA & Alanon
Tues., June 19 th	9:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.	Vacation Bible School Council Meeting
Wed., June 20 th	9:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Vacation Bible School WIC
Thurs., June 21 st	9:00 a.m.	Vacation Bible School
Fri., June 22 nd	9:00 a.m.	Vacation Bible School
Sat., June 23 rd	5:00 p.m.	Sat. Eve. Worship Service