

**Sunday, September 2nd, 2012
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost**



BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

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Pastor: Rev. James Raisanen

Church Secretary: Evelyn Richter

Parish Nurses: Darlene Christensen, RN, C 320-684-2846

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Ministers: All Members of the Congregation

MISSION STATEMENT

We will grow spiritually and in numbers as we serve Christ. We will reach out and address the hurts and hopes in our community. We will maintain a church home that is reverently joyous and extend a welcome to all who seek to join us in our mission.

Hearing Assistance is available during the service.

Please notify usher if you would like assistance

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Holy Communion

INTRODUCTION

Jesus protests against human customs being given the weight of divine law, while the essence of God's law is ignored. True uncleanness comes not from external things, but from the intentions of the human heart. Last week Jesus told us "the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life." Now James says God has given us birth by the word of truth. We, having been washed in the word when we were born in the font, return to it every Sunday to ask God to create in us clean hearts.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN:

"On Eagle's Wings"

787 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 our strength, without you we are weak and wayward creatures. Protect us from all dangers that attack us from the outside, and cleanse us from all evil that arises from within ourselves, that we may be preserved through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM: “Then Sings My Soul”

FIRST READING: James 1:17–27

The letter of James was intended to provide first-century Christians with instruction in godly behavior. Here, Christians are encouraged to listen carefully and to act on what they hear, especially by caring for those least able to care for themselves.

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they

were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act — they will be blessed in their doing.

If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

PSALM: Psalm 15

Refrain: LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle? (Ps. 15:1)

LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle? Who may abide upon your holy hill?

**Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,
who speak the truth from their heart;**

they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

**In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear the LORD.
They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.**

They do not give their money in hope of gain,
nor do they take bribes against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be overthrown. **R**

GOSPEL: Mark 7:1–8, 14–15, 21–23

Mark's gospel depicts Jesus as challenging traditional ways in which religious people determine what is pure or impure. For Jesus, the observance of religious practices cannot become a substitute for godly words or deeds that spring from a faithful heart.

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

**'This people honors me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;**

in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.'

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition."

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile."

For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

HYMN: "Faith of Our Fathers" # 812 ELW

SERMON

OFFERING & OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of mercy and grace, the eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things at your table, that we may come to the help of all in need, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As disciples of Christ Jesus called to love and serve all people, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A time for silent prayer.

God our truth, by your word you created us to continue your mission. Bless all who hear the word, that we will be doers also. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God our treasure, you have given us great wealth and generous resources. Help us use these sensibly, that all creatures may live. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God our justice, you dignify our labor by sharing our toil. Grant workers fair employment, adequate income, and safe conditions. Bring an end to the exploitation of children, women, and those most vulnerable. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God our compassion, you call us to care for all in need. Hear our prayers for the unemployed, orphans, widows, and all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God our life, you gather us together in your name to send us forth to be your hands and feet in the world. Make us generous in our giving and service to others. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be made.

God our hope, we give you thanks for those who have made your word known *Nikolai* and now rest from their labors. Give us strength to follow your commandments until we abide with you forever. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Hear our prayers, faithful God, and renew us by your Spirit, that we may joyfully love and serve you and one another, 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

Let us pray.

Gracious God, in this meal you have drawn us to your heart, and nourished us at your table with food and drink, Now send us forth to be your people in the world, and to proclaim your truth this day and evermore, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.
Thanks be to God.

CLOSING HYMN: “This is My Father’s World” # 824 ELW

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”

1 Thessalonians 5:11

September 2, 2012

Love in Action

Tradition is a tricky business. On the one hand, it binds the generations together and creates a feeling of closeness among those who share it. Yet if we're not mindful, tradition can come to replace a living and responsive faith. Relying too heavily on tradition, we might go through the motions but no longer listen for the genuine leadings of the Spirit. We might not expect to be surprised or challenged by God to do something new. Indeed, when someone suggests change, we might be offended.

Jesus would have none of this. When the Pharisees missed his message because of what they saw as his disregard for custom, he chided: "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.' You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition." More important to Jesus than outer, ritual "cleanliness" was inner cleanliness, a pure receptivity to God's urgings that we practice deeds of charity and service. We are to "be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves" (James 1:22).

Jesus isn't telling us to abandon all tradition. However, he does insist that our traditions retain their vitality, reflecting the spirit with which they were created. Do they draw people closer to God and to one another? Do they encourage love? Do they honor the full humanity of our brothers and sisters? If not, we should let them go, remembering they're just human precepts, not divine writ.

As a well-known song states, "They'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love." This means love in action—loving deeds appropriate to present circumstances.

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THOSE SERVING THIS WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 2ND, 2012

Organist: Marlys Beavers
Greeters: Ron & Evie Richter
Ushers: 8:30 Jan Phillipp, Carol Bipes, 10:00 Dennis & Audrey Bistodeau
Lectors: 8:30 Myra Honl, 10:00 Darwin Bruesewitz
Coffee Servers: Wayne & JoAnne Danielson, Maynard & Kathy Berland

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD LAST WEEK (8/25 & 8/26/2012)

Attendance: Sat. 5:30 – 19 Sun. 8:30 – 112 10:00 – 43

Offering: \$ 2,484.00 Building Fund: \$ 295.00

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

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

THIS WEEK AT BETHESDA SEPTEMBER 2ND THRU SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2012

Mon., Sept. 3	7:00 p.m.	AA & Alanon
Tues., Sept. 4	9:00 a.m.	Crafters
	9:30 a.m.	Bells
Wed., Sept. 5	8:30 a.m.	Bible Study
	9:30 a.m.	Hardanger
	11:00 a.m.	Bible Study
	6:00 p.m.	Choir
	7:00 p.m.	Praise Team
Thurs., Sept. 6	8:00 a.m.	R.O.M.E.O.S.
	10:30 a.m.	Worship & Music
	1:00 p.m.	Funtimers

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANKS to everyone who helped with the **Veggie Stand**. It is now officially closed for the season.

JAMBOREE—The Bethesda Jamboree is set for September 14th & 15th at 7 p.m. Invite your friends and neighbors and come enjoy an evening of great fun with music and hilarious antics.

WORSHIP & MUSIC will meet this Thursday, September 6th at 10:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATION classes begin Wednesday, September 19th at 7:00 p.m.

OLD FASHIONED CHICKEN DINNER at **Light of the Cross Lutheran Church** in Garrison on Saturday, September 8th. See Bulletin Board for details.

CAMP ONAMIA is having a **Quilt Auction and Fall Family Fest** on Saturday, September 22nd. See Community Bulletin Board in Fellowship Hall for details.

There will be a **FLU CLINIC** held at Bethesda on Tuesday, October 16th from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Put October 27th on your calendar as the day to come to **BETHESDA'S ANNUAL JAMBOREE**. Hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Check out the crafts, the cookie walk, baked goods, lunch, lefse, etc.