

**September 1st, 2013
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost**



BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

21590 State Highway 47, Isle, MN 56342

Phone: 320-684-2123 (1-877-684-2123) Fax: 320-684-2836

E-mail address: blcmalmo@frontiernet.net

Church Web Site: blcmalmo.org

Pastor: Rev. James Raisanen

Church Secretary: Evelyn Richter

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

Patti Honnold, RN CNP 320-676-8421

Kathy Berland RN ANP 320-495-3988

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.

**Sunday, September 1, 2013/Fifteenth Sunday after
Pentecost
Holy Communion**

INTRODUCTION

Invited and inviting—that is the nature of the church. By God's grace in holy baptism we have a place at the banquet table of the Lord. When, by the power of that same Spirit, humility and mutual love continue among us, the church can be more inviting still.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN: **“This is My Song”** **# 887 ELW**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

WE CONFESS OUR SHORTCOMINGS: **God, today we pause to confess our shortcomings in life and love. We want to live life to the fullest, but we always seem to become disillusioned or disappointed. We want to have deep, meaningful relationships, but we seem to short circuit those we love with our own selfishness. God, we need the power to change, but we realize now we cannot do it on our own. We are sinful. We fall short of the mark. We ask for your forgiveness.**

WE HEAR GOD’S FORGIVING PROMISES: The God of all creation has entered our human existence in the person of Jesus Christ. Through him, our sinful condition has been given new possibilities of faith and life. By his death and resurrection, the price of our sin has been paid in full and we stand before God as new people. The Holy Spirit is present with us and in us to give us power to live out this new life. By the Spirit we have life. Praise God.

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 resist those who are proud and give grace to those who are humble. Give us the humility of your Son, that we may embody the generosity of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM

FIRST READING: Hebrews 13:1–8, 15–16

The conclusion of the letter to the Hebrews contains suggestions for the conduct of a holy life, all of which are shaped by God's love toward us in Jesus Christ.

Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers. Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." So we can say with confidence,

"The Lord is my helper;

I will not be afraid.

What can anyone do to me?"

Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

PSALM: Psalm 112

Refrain: The righteous are merciful and full of compassion. (Ps. 112:4)

Hallelujah! Happy are they who fear the LORD
and have great delight in God's commandments!

**Their descendants will be mighty in the land;
the generation of the upright will be blessed. R**

Wealth and riches will be in their house,
and their righteousness will last forever.

**Light shines in the darkness for the upright;
the righteous are merciful and full of compassion.**

It is good for them to be generous in lending
and to manage their affairs with justice.

**For they will never be shaken;
the righteous will be kept in everlasting remembrance. R**

They will not be afraid of any evil rumors;
their heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.

**Their heart is established and will not shrink,
until they see their desire upon their enemies.**

They have given freely to the poor, and their righteousness
stands fast forever; they will hold up their head with honor.

**The wicked will see it and be angry; they will gnash their teeth and pine away;
the desires of the wicked will perish. R**

GOSPEL: Luke 14:1, 7-14

Jesus observes guests jockeying for position at the table. He uses the opportunity to teach his hearers to choose humility rather than self-exaltation. Jesus also makes an appeal for hosts to mimic God's gracious hospitality to the poor and the broken.

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely. When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give this person your place,' and then in disgrace you

would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

HYMN: "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies"

888 ELW

SERMON

OFFERING & OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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.

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.

A time for silent prayer.

O wise and wonderful God, continually turn the hearts of your people back to you. Mold the church to be your gracious, merciful, and righteous presence in the world. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Fill all banquet tables with the bounty that you raise up in your creation. Feed all people with food that will sustain them, even as you feed them with your compassion. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Send your Spirit of humility to the halls of legislation, governance, and justice in every land. Stir up in leaders and citizens a will to serve, and let your peace reign. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Raise up people who will extend your hospitality to those in prisons, in hospitals, and in situations of abuse (*especially*). Give to all who suffer your lasting comfort. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Inspire contentment in all who have employment; grant your provision to those who are unemployed or underemployed. Create new opportunities for all to earn their livelihood. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be made.

Remembering the saints who pointed us to Christ in the past, we beg for his presence among us today, while we long for the day when he will make all things new. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Into your hands, O Holy One, we entrust all for whom we pray, confident in your abundant and abiding mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

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.

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: “Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory” # 890 ELW

THEY WERE WATCHING CLOSELY

Once Jesus initiates his public ministry, he is perpetually under scrutiny. This is illustrated quite obviously in the fact that there are four gospels written to record what Jesus did and said. In the case of the gospels, however, this isn't **negative**. It is loving, admiring attention. It is the kind of study we make of people we want to emulate. The gospel writers watch Jesus because they want to be like Jesus. They **record** the actions and teachings of Jesus so that others can be like him, too.

The religious leaders of Jesus' time, however, watch Jesus closely in order to catch him in something. In fact, if we were to identify one primary characteristic of religious behavior that is problematic rather than helpful, this would probably be it. Religious people who scrutinize the behavior of others in order to catch them in something are watching not in faith but in judgment—and this is a problem.

Luke, on the other hand, is most interested in the fact that Jesus, when invited to a banquet, offers this teaching: "When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind" (Luke 14:13). While he is being fed, he maintains concern that others be fed also, especially those who most need to be. No calculations about the benefits of inviting them. No concern over whether the host is enabling the poor and trapping them in their poverty. No, it is simply a blessing to give. It is a blessing to strip away connections based on class and family and replace them with kingdom values, in anticipation of the resurrection. Watch Jesus here. Watch him closely.

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THOSE SERVING THIS WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 1ST, 2013

Organist: Marlys Beavers
Greeters: Jack & Paula Spetz
Ushers: 8:30 Bill & Cheri Johnson, 10:00 Dick & Sue Stebbins
Lectors: 8:30 Char Berg, 10:00 Barb Bray
Coffee Servers: ????

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD LAST WEEK (8/25/13)

Attendance: Sat. – 10 Sun. 8:30 – 118 10:00 – 49

Offering: \$ 2,739.55 Building Fund: \$ 340.00

\$ 3,077.00 – Weekly amount needed for operating expenses.

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

THIS WEEK AT BETHESDA SEPTEMBER 1ST THRU SEPTEMBER 7TH, 2013

Mon., Sept. 2 nd	7:00 p.m.	AA & Alanon
Tues., Sept. 3 rd	9:00 a.m.	Crafters
	9:30 a.m.	Bells
Wed., Sept. 4 th	8:30 a.m.	Bible Study
	9:30 a.m.	Hardanger
	11:00 a.m.	Bible Study
	5:30 p.m.	Choir
	7:00 p.m.	Praise Team
Thurs., Sept. 5 th	8:00 a.m.	R.O.M.E.O.S.
	10:30 a.m.	Worship & Music
	1:00 p.m.	Funtimers
Fri., Sept. 6 th	10:00 a.m.	Bone Builders

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today (September 1st) we will be passing around the **BLESSING BOX** and if God has smiled upon you, share these blessings with others. We are going to be using the monies received toward items on our Wish List. Thank you.

“GOD’S WORK, OUR HANDS” – MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE SUNDAY will be celebrated next Sunday, September 8th. Think about what you can do to make the world a better place on that Sunday and throughout the year. Just a little done on your part can make a world of difference to another.

REMINDER: ANNUAL REPORT: If you haven’t gotten in your report yet, please do so now. They are due by September 1st.

BETHESDA’S JAMBOREE, A Little Bit Country, A Little Bit Rock-N-Roll, will be held Friday, September 13th and Saturday, September 14th starting at 7:00 p.m. in the Bethesda Fellowship Hall. Cost is \$7 for adults and children are free. Everyone is sure to find something to love about the show! Bring your family and friends and come for a night of good, old-fashioned fun. See ya there!

COFFEE SERVERS NEEDED: We are in need of servers for September 29th, October 20th and 27th. If you drink coffee and eat goodies on Sunday mornings, consider signing up to serve. If everyone signs up, you only have to serve no more than once or twice a year. The same people should not have to be doing the job week after week when we are all capable of doing so. Pick your week and sign up on the sheet next to the kitchen serving window. We need four people weekly. Two couples work nicely to keep our schedule rotating.

An **OLD FASHION CHICKEN SUPPER** will be held Saturday, September 7th at the Light of the Cross Lutheran Church in Garrison. See bulletin board for details.