

September 8th, 2013
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost



BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

21590 State Highway 47, Isle, MN 56342

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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.

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INTRODUCTION

Called to contemplate the cost of discipleship today, we might be helped by translating Paul's request to Philemon into our prayer of the day: Refresh my heart in Christ. Strengthened by the company and forgiveness of the Christ in the blessed sacrament and recalling God's grace in remembrance of baptism, we can be strengthened in this hour to "choose life"—to choose life in God as our own.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN:

"Morning Has Broken"

556 ELW

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

LET US CONFESS: Father, our faith contains such splendid glowing nouns: blessing, goodness, peace, heaven. These are words rich in meaning and feeling to us. But, somehow the verbs don't give us the same comfortable warmth: go, do, come, help, forgive, work, pardon, love. They require us not just feeling but an action. We must involve ourselves and get our hands dirty, and we have often been unwilling to do this. Forgive us, Lord, and help us to realize that You expect us to forgive and help others, as you have forgiven us and are helping us each day, through Christ. Amen.

WE HEAR THE WORDS OF NEW LIFE: Our God knows our every need and gives new life to those who believe. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is our new beginning as the old things die and we are made new. Death no longer rules us and we look forward to eternal life with our Creator God. Our sin has been forgiven in the forever action of Jesus as he died on the cross and rose from the grave. We will live forever.
Alleluia!

PRAISE TEAM ANTHEM:

“10,000 Reasons”

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 30:15–20

Moses speaks to the Israelites, who are about to enter the land promised to their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In this passage, he lays out the stark choice before them: choose life by loving and obeying the Lord; or choose death by following other gods.

See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

PSALM: Psalm 1

Refrain: They are like trees planted by streams of water. (Ps. 1:3)

Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!

**Their delight is in the law of the LORD,
and they meditate on God's teaching day and night. R**

They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season,
with leaves that do not wither; everything they do shall prosper.

It is not so with the wicked; they are like chaff which the wind blows away.
Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes,
nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

**For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked shall be destroyed. R**

GOSPEL: Luke 14:25–33

Jesus speaks frankly about the fearsome costs of discipleship. Those who follow him should know from the outset that completing the course of discipleship will finally mean renouncing all other allegiances.

Now large crowds were traveling with him; and he turned and said to them, "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

HYMN: "All Creatures, Worship God Most High!" # 835 ELW

SERMON

HYMN: "Oh, Worship the King" # 842 ELW

OFFERING & OFFERTORY PRAYER

God of our life and our resources, we bring these gifts with thankful hearts for all you have done for us. Bless the labor of our minds and hands. We pray that our gifts would create community and justice would be done for all people. 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.

Holy and faithful God, teach your church to walk in ways of trust and obedience. Plant your presence among us, that the life you intend for us may flourish. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Strengthen fruit-bearing trees and plants, as harvests are gathered. Increase yields, and encourage just distribution of food throughout the world. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Grant that all who are imprisoned or enslaved would know the freedom that you alone can give. Sustain them, that they would each one day know a safe and joyful homecoming. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Gather together all people who feel removed from you because of illness, crisis, or fear (*especially*). Deliver them to a place of healing, and embrace them with your unfailing mercy. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Bless Sunday school teachers and students, Bible study participants, and all teaching ministries. Let your life-giving word be freely shared among all who hunger for it. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be made.

Living God, refresh our hearts through the witness of the saints. Build us up as one community in Christ, and lead us to the good that comes from following you. 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

BLESSING

As we use our hands to make God's world a better place may you be blessed as you are a blessing to others. God bless you always.
Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: “I Love to Tell the Story” # 661 ELW

WHERE'S MY ABACUS?

Help! Where's my abacus—and where's our good news? Demand follows demand: hate family, even life; carry the cross; calculate; give up everything. Where's the grace? Has Jesus exchanged his halo for an accountant's visor?

From August through October, our Sunday gospel readings speak of coins, debts, possessions, and money management. Now, as ever, among the greatest threats to faith in God is worry over finances: what will we live on? Will it be enough?

In today's passage Jesus uses examples from construction and politics to emphasize the cost of following him. Measure twice, cut once; nobody starts a successful project without first doing an estimate. But his examples raise questions; calculating cost is far from straightforward. We know of wars not included in national budgets, underwater construction markets, and a world economy at risk over imaginary financial products. If it's hard to anticipate everyday costs, how can we possibly figure ahead of time the price of total commitment? The realm of faith is beyond practical and logical management. (Today Jesus speaks of prudence, but in coming weeks we will read parables that fling cost-benefit logic to the wind: there is more joy in heaven over the one found than over the many never lost.)

Certain people sell the Christian faith as a means to financial prosperity and self-help. The truth that God wills our well-being is distorted into the promise that God will add to our bank accounts. By contrast, Jesus is honest that there is a cost to following. Conflicts of loyalty are inevitable. "Hate" is the attention-grabbing way he says, "In an ethical conflict, I want you to love me even more than any of these other good things." Today's gospel tells us that suffering loss or getting caught up in conflict may actually be a sign that we've chosen well. Jesus trusts us with the truth. And that—hidden as it is under the surface—is good news.

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THOSE SERVING THIS WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2013

Organist: Marlys Beavers
Greeters: Diane Sandberg & Barb Bray
Ushers: 8:30 Bill & Cheri Johnson, 10:00 Dick & Sue Stebbins
Lectors: 8:30 Audrey Kullberg, 10:00 Val Benton
Coffee Servers: Ron & Jan Aho, Sue Lehman

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD LAST WEEK (9/1/13)

Attendance: Sat. – 56 Sun. 8:30 – 90 10:00 – 33

Offering: \$ 4,034.50 Building Fund: \$ 880.00 Blessing Box: \$166.98

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

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

THIS WEEK AT BETHESDA SEPTEMBER 8TH THRU SEPTEMBER 14TH, 2013

Mon., Sept. 9 th	7:00 p.m.	AA & Alanon
Tues., Sept. 10 th	9:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m.	Quilters Bells
Wed., Sept. 11 th	8:30 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 11:00 a.m. Evening	Bible Study Hardanger Bible Study Dress Rehearsal for Jamboree
Thurs., Sept. 12 th	8:00 a.m. 8:30-1:00 1:00 p.m.	R.O.M.E.O.S. Foot Care Clinic Funtimers
Fri., Sept. 13 th	10:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Bone Builders Jamboree
Sat., Sept. 14 th	7:00 p.m.	Jamboree

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today, **September 8th** is “**God’s Work, Your Hands—Make the World a Better Place**” **Sunday**. Let us all search our hearts for something we can do this day and in the weeks to come that will make the world a better place. Just one thing every day that we can do for someone else can make a tremendous difference in this world of ours. What are you going to do?

BETHESDA JAMBOREE—A Little Bit County - A Little Bit Rock ‘n’ Roll is next Friday & Saturday, September 13th & 14th, at 7PM. Bring your family, bring your friends and come enjoy a fun evening!

COFFEE SERVERS needed for October 20th. Please sign up on the list next to the kitchen serving window. Thank you.

CLARENCE BURMAN (husband of Ellen Burman & brother of Irene Long) passed away on Tuesday, September 3rd. Funeral will be held at Bethesda on Saturday, September 14th at 11:00 a.m. Visitation at the church one hour prior to the service and also on Friday, September 13th at Sorenson-Root-Thompson Funeral Home in Aitkin from 5:00-7:00 p.m.

ANNUAL MEETING on September 29th following the 9:00AM Worship Service. (One Service Only that day.)

MEATBALL SUPPER at Zion Lutheran Church in Milaca on Wednesday, September 25th from 5:00-8:00PM. See Bulletin Board for details.

WELCA—September 18th meeting at 9:30 a.m. will feature speaker Jean Prickett from First Lutheran in Aitkin. She and Patty Honnold will talk about hazardous waste and pollution to our homes. Hope to see you there.

NEW ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER:

Irene Long
200 Elm Street Apt 270
Onamia, MN 56359

Telephone: 320-532-2060

A **Caring Bridges** site has been created for former member **Dick Aitken**:

www.caringbridge.org/visit/richardaitken/guestbook

Dick has been diagnosed with a brain tumor, lymphoma cancer. Judy and Dick could use our prayers.