



“From Beauty to Compassion and Justice”

Week 6

August 23, 2020

At home worship with First Lutheran Church

WE GATHER

Threshold Moment

“The celebration of this beauty of beings, their communities and ecosystems, cannot exist without mourning assaults on them.”

- Wendy Farley

Are you ready ...

to be an instrument of the Good?

**Divine Goodness, prepare my spirit to see
and be beguiled by the beauty of life. Amen.**

If you have wind chimes, brush them softly to focus your attention on the spirit and this time of reflection upon God's Word. See worship preparation materials for options of creating your own set of chimes.

Pastor/Leader:

Our series ends with a reaffirmation of our call to contemplative action in the world. The awareness of one another's beauty is the "seedling for the birth of compassion and justice." A contemplative life can empty us and ready us to become instruments of the Good. Let us affirm our plans to continue practicing "a way of beauty" that makes life "rich, courageous, generous, and joyful" as active agents of the Divine Beauty in the world.

**For the beauty of the earth,
for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth,
over and and around us lies.
God of all to thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise!**

Silent Centering

You are invited to a moment of quiet rest, a time of slowing the pace of your body and mind so that the spirit can settle.

Prayer of Opening:

Divine Goodness, Holy One,

Pause us for this moment, bear us up in this time, hold us for eternity. We offer our lives in service to your creation. We dedicate ourselves to increasing beauty in this world. We commit to compassion and action.. **Amen.**

Hymn of Beauty: *Take My Life, That I May Be (PATMOS) (ELW 685)*

1 Take my life, that I may be
consecrated, Lord, to thee;
take my moments and my days;
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

2 Take my hands and let them move
at the impulse of thy love;
take my feet and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee.

5 Take my will and make it thine,
it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is thine own,
it shall be thy royal throne.

6 Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store;
take myself, and I will be
ever, only, if all for thee.

Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836-1879, alt.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

Lectio Divina

Leader: We often hear today's reading from Isaiah around the time of Christmas, as we celebrate the birth of the one called the "Prince of Peace." The people to whom Isaiah writes are oppressed and exiled by their captors. They have known much suffering. When Isaiah writes "how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the one who brings good news," it is not the feet, specifically, that are beautiful, it is the whole message of release from suffering that creates a beautiful peace. It is akin to the saying, "you are a sight for sore eyes!" The image of a messenger that brings good news is a welcome sight and cause for joy. To be part of the restoration of love and peace and hope is our call to unveil more beauty in the world.

[You are invited to read these passages several times. Even better, from different Bible Translations. Each time, listen for a word or phrase that grabs your attention. Write it down, so you can carry it with you all week. Let the Holy Spirit inspire and teach you as God Word seeps into your heart and waters it with God's goodness.]

FIRST READING: Isaiah 52:7-10

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news,
who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

⁸Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,
together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight they see
the return of the LORD to Zion.

⁹Break forth together into singing,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the LORD has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations;
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 138

¹I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with my whole heart;
before the gods I will sing your praise.

²**I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name, because of your
steadfast love and faithfulness;
for you have glorified your name and your word above all things.**

³When I called, you answered me; you increased my strength within me.

⁴**All the rulers of the earth will praise you, O LORD,
when they have heard the words of your mouth. R**

⁵They will sing of the ways of the LORD,
that great is the glory of the LORD.

⁶**The LORD is high, yet cares for the lowly,
perceiving the haughty from afar.**

⁷Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe; you stretch forth your hand
against the fury of my enemies; your right hand shall save me.

⁸**You will make good your purpose for me;**

**O LORD, your steadfast love endures forever; do not abandon the works of your
hands. R**

SECOND READING: Romans 12:1-8

¹I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

²Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God — what is good and acceptable and perfect.

³For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, ⁵so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

GOSPEL: Matthew 16:13-20

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At a climactic point in Jesus' ministry, God reveals to Peter that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God," and Jesus responds with the promise of a church that will overcome the very gates of Hades.

¹³Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermo Divina

WE RESPOND

[There are many ways to enter into this time of contemplation on God's Word. Maybe capture images with photography, sketches or painting, quilting, with poetry like haikus, listen or play music, go for a prayer walk. Journal with the prompts given in the supplemental Preparation at Home materials. Share your reflections with the congregation, family or friends.]

SONG OF THE DAY: "There's A Wideness In God's Mercy" (ELW 588)



1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy, like the wide - ness of the sea;
2 There is wel - come for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;
3 For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;
4 'Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice which is more than lib - er - ty.
there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing in his blood.
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.
great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in heav'n.
There is grace e - nough for thou - sands of new worlds as great as this;
But we make this love too nar - row by false lim - its of our own;
Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,



There is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
there is room for fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.
and we mag - ni - fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.
and our lives will be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, alt.
Music: LORD, REVIVE US, North American, 19th cent.

Confession of Faith

We believe in God, who made us in God's own image.

We live, we love, we laugh, because we are like God.

We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord and Savior.

He had the last laugh on the devil when He rose from the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Son.

Our counselor, our guide, our motivator - The Spirit is our joy!

Forgive us, O God,

when we take ourselves too seriously,

when we lose sight of your divine goodness,

when we don't claim the happiness that is rightfully ours as your children,

when we forget that you will have the last laugh in this world.

Restore to us the joy of our salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Beloved of God,

by the radical abundance of divine mercy

we have peace with God through + Christ Jesus.

Through Christ you have been given grace upon grace.

Your sins are forgiven.

Let us live together, now in hope.

Amen.

Prayers of the People

Held together in one body by the Spirit of Christ, let us pray for the church and the world, responding to each petition with words from today's psalm, "your steadfast love endures forever."

A brief silence.

Bless the church, that despite the hardships experienced during this pandemic, Christians around the globe will stand firm on the rock, who is Christ. Support pastors, deacons, and congregational committees during this difficult time. Give wisdom to churches that are considering when and how to resume their communal worship schedule.

A brief silence.

Unfailing God, hear our prayer:

your steadfast love endures forever.

Bless the earth, that it be saved from ecological harm. Restore all lands and seas to the beauty and vigor that you intend. Protect animals whose habitat is endangered. Train us to be gardeners of your creation. We pray for those suffering the effects of destructive summer storms and scorching heat.

Creator God, hear our prayer:

your steadfast love endures forever.

Bless the leaders of nations, that they govern their people with integrity and attend to the needs of the poor. Guard the United States from violence. Give clear purpose to protestors and to police. Inspire our political parties to conduct the election season with honesty and respect for all.

God of justice, hear our prayer:

your steadfast love endures forever.

Bless our various means of communication, our phones, the internet, our postal service, and delivery businesses, that our communities be sustained for fruitful life together.

Merciful God, hear our prayer:

your steadfast love endures forever.

Bless students, that whether in class or at home they be kept safe and able to learn. Uphold faculty and families and protect all who will be affected by the opening of schools. Form college students to conduct themselves with maturity.

Benevolent God, hear our prayer:

your steadfast love endures forever.

Bless all who are in need; all who have tested positive for the virus; the sick and the dying. We pray for the unemployed; for medical workers; for those seeking a vaccine; for those who are overwhelmed with anxiety about the future. We pray for those we name here:

A brief silence.

Compassionate God, hear our prayer:

your steadfast love endures forever.

Finally, we pray also for ourselves, that with Christ as our rock, we can stand firm.

A period of silence.

Merciful God, hear our prayer:

your steadfast love endures forever.

We praise you for the lives of all your faithful people. We mourn the death of those we have loved. Bring us at the end, we pray, into the joy and gladness of life together in you.

Eternal God, hear our prayer:

your steadfast love endures forever.

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

THANKSGIVING

OFFERING

Share what you are grateful for.

If you would like to offer financial support for the ministries of First Lutheran, you can mail them to the church. 526 S. Olive, Ave. Sandpoint, ID 83864

SONG OF THANKSGIVING *Doxology (Sing or Speak)* (ELW 884)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise him all creatures here below.

Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

HOLY COMMUNION

If you are with someone or on the phone with friends or family, Holy Communion can be shared now. Follow the liturgy in the "Spirit and Life" document, beginning on page 7.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

WE GO FORTH

RITUAL ACTION FOR THE WEEK

Leader: Throughout our time contemplating the theology of beauty and Divine Goodness, we have been making the connections between the well-being of our souls to the well-being of the whole of earth and all beings. My prayer is that you will continue to use the contemplative practices experienced in this time to cultivate your life of compassion. The note for this last week is a quote from Dr. Farley: “A contemplative life can empty us and ready us to become instruments of the Good... for the beauty of the earth.” May it continue to be so.

And now, let us add our singing to the song of creation already in progress...

Sending Hymn:

(ELW 879)

For the Beauty of the Earth



- 1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the beau - ty of the skies,
- 2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
- 3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,
- 4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
- 5 For each per - fect gift of thine, peace on earth and joy in heav'n;



for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light:
for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:
friends on earth and friends a - bove; for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
for thy - self, best gift di - vine, to our world so free - ly giv'n:

Refrain



Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sac - ri - fice of praise.

Text: Follitt S. Pierpoint, 1835–1917, alt.
Music: DIX, Conrad Kocher, 1786–1872

Benediction

The world is so varied and beautiful.
Seek wisdom wherever it is to be found.*
And may the goodness of the Creator,
the companionship of the Christ,
and the insight of the Spirit,
infuse your life now and always.
Amen.

Benediction Song Reprise

**God of all to thee, we raise,
This our hymn of grateful praise!**

Worship Notes:

* The first two lines of the Benediction are a quote from Dr. Wendy Farley's father, Dr. Edward Farley, a renowned theologian.

Adapted and used with permission. "Beguiled By Beauty" Worship Series.
www.worshipdesignstudio.com/series

Prayers of Intercession, Post Communion Prayer and Lord's Prayer From sundaysandseasons.com.
Copyright © 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved

Songs:
Are all public domain.

Photo by Pastor Lori Morton: The Dead Sea and Mountains surrounding Jerusalem as seen from Jordan. It is estimated that the Dead Sea will go dry by 2025. It is dropping 1 Meter ever year. The Jordan River Valley is what feeds into the Sea and is the area spoken about that Israel wants to annex from Jordan (the last peaceful country in the Mid-East).

Contact:
208-263-2048
www.firstlutheransandpoint.org



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Angie: For the Weekly update:

Readings for the Week:

Monday (Bartholomew, Apostle) John 1:43-51. Tuesday Romans 11:33-36. Wednesday Isaiah 28:14-22. Thursday Psalm 26:1-8. Friday (commemoration of Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, died 430; Moses the Black, monk, martyr, died around 400) 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12. Saturday Jeremiah 15:10-14. Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost Jeremiah 15:15-21; Psalm 26:1-8; Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28.