

Jesus said, “Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” – John 16:7-8

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (LCMC)
Springfield, GA
Home Worship Bulletin
May 31, 2020 – Pentecost Sunday**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

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

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God, **we confess that we are in bondage 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**

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, 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 our sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen. **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

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.**

SALUTATION

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. **God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as you sent upon the disciples the**

promised gift of the Holy Spirit, look upon your Church and open our hearts to the power of the Spirit. Kindle in us the fire of your love, and strengthen our lives for service in your kingdom; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

+LITURGY OF THE WORD+

FIRST READING

Numbers 11:24-30

²⁴ So Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD. And he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tent. ²⁵ Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. And as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied. But they did not continue doing it. ²⁶ Now two men remained in the camp, one named Eldad, and the other named Medad, and the Spirit rested on them. They were among those registered, but they had not gone out to the tent, and so they prophesied in the camp. ²⁷ And a young man ran and told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp." ²⁸ And Joshua the son of Nun, the assistant of Moses from his youth, said, "My lord Moses, stop them." ²⁹ But Moses said to him, "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!" ³⁰ And Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalms 25:1-15

- ¹ To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul; my God, I put my trust in you; let me not be humiliated, nor let my enemies triumph over me.
- ² **Let none who look to you be put to shame; let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.**
- ³ Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.
- ⁴ **Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.**
- ⁵ Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.
- ⁶ **Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; remember me according to your love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.**
- ⁷ Gracious and upright is the LORD; therefore he teaches sinners in his way.
- ⁸ **He guides the humble in doing right and teaches his way to the lowly.**
- ⁹ All the paths of the LORD are love and faithfulness to those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.
- ¹⁰ **For your name's sake, O LORD, forgive my sin, for it is great.**
- ¹¹ Who are they who fear the LORD? He will teach them the way that they should choose.
- ¹² **They shall dwell in prosperity, and their offspring shall inherit the land.**
- ¹³ The LORD is a friend to those who fear him, and will show them his covenant.
- ¹⁴ **My eyes are ever looking to the LORD, for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.**
- ¹⁵ Turn to me and have pity on me, for I am left alone and in misery.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning is now, and will be forever. Amen. Alleluia! Alleluia!

SECOND READING

Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. ⁵ Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶ And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. ⁷ And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?” ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? ⁹ Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹ both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.” ¹² And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” ¹³ But others mocking said, “They are filled with new wine.” ¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. ¹⁵ For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ “‘And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; ¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹ And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; ²⁰ the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. ²¹ And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’”

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE HOLY GOSPEL

John 7:37-39

The Holy Gospel according to St. John. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

³⁷ On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” ³⁹ Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ.**

THE SERMON

Dr. James Cavanah

Our Second Reading on this Pentecost Sunday comes from the pen of Luke as recorded in the book of Acts. There we read, “³⁸And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call’ ... ⁴¹So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:38-39, 41).

There is an old legend about a godly prophet. Every week, this prophet went into the market square to preach to the people. There he proclaimed this message, “People do evil and they fail to do good.” Week-after-week, month-after-month, year-after-year, the prophet continued to faithfully proclaim his message. Despite all his efforts, the people continued to do

evil and not good. The prophet didn't seem to be making any progress in the town. Finally, the prophet's friends and followers begged him to cease. They said, "All your efforts are futile. Your words have made no difference in this town. You cannot change the people's hearts." The prophet replied, "I must continue to speak out lest I too become one of them."

The message of the holy Gospel is about change. It is about embracing the good and turning from the evil. The Gospel is also forgiveness and it is about purpose and that is exactly what happened on the day of Pentecost. People responded to Peter's preaching of the Gospel. They heard the word of God, they repented of their sin, and their lives were given a new purpose.

On this Pentecost Sunday, we know that we are forgiven. We also we know that we have a purpose. Yet, it is embarrassing how little the modern church resembles that of the first century. A small group of about 120, faithfully proclaiming the Gospel, grew to over 3,000. Within a short time, the church added another 5,000 men plus women and children.

Today is the seventh (7th) Sunday after Easter and it is the day on which the church celebrates Pentecost – the day in which the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the church.

We need to know and to remember that Pentecost, like Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, and the Ascension, is not just an historical event way back in history. Pentecost is a present reality that should remind us and encourage us of God's present power working in us who believe.

The question for you and me today is this, What is the real significance of Pentecost for me? We need to make that question personal. We need to know just why Pentecost is important to me today where I am? You and I need to see Pentecost not as just an historic event but as a continuing reality of God's love and provision given to each one of us here and now.

First, Pentecost reminds us of God's forgiveness for sinners. This is the foundational truth of the Gospel and it is the message of God's forgiveness for you and me! Immediately after God's outpouring of the Holy Spirit and Peter's powerful sermon, Luke wrote that the people were "cut to the heart" and they cried out, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Without hesitation, Peter told the people exactly what they needed to do! He said, "³⁸... 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call' ... ⁴¹So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand soul" (Acts 2:38-39, 41).

The significance of Pentecost is that God is still calling people to repent of their sin. Furthermore, He is calling you and me to repentance of our sins and to follow Him daily.

Many years before the Day of Pentecost, the psalmist wrote, "Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from ever-lasting. Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions, remember me according to your love and for the sake of your goodness... For your sake, O Lord, forgive my sin for it is great" (Psalm 25:5-6, 10). The psalmist prayed, "O Lord, forgive my sin for it is great." That is the prayer we need to pray daily. It reminds us of our need for the Gospel and it also reminds us of God's love for needy people like us.

Let's think back in time. It was a Sunday, just like any other. Only on this Sunday, the disciples were in shock and despair. The events of the previous Friday were fresh in their minds. They had lost their friend and Rabbi. They had watched as He was arrested and taken away as all but a couple scattered in fear. They had lost their hopes and their dreams. They were filled with a deep sense of foreboding. What would happen next? Would they too be arrested? Would they be tried, condemned, and executed?

That evening, as they were hiding behind locked doors, Mary Magdalene, Peter, and John reported that the stone in front of the tomb had been rolled away. Mary Magdalene proclaimed that she had seen the Lord. The disciples were hoping her words were true, but it was not easy.

Then it happened! Suddenly Jesus appeared right in their midst. He stood among them. He spoke and He said, "Peace be with you." Jesus showed them His hands and His side. He said

to them, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you. And with that He breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’ [Jesus then added] If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

Pentecost reminds us that we are forgiven. Not just the disciples. Not just the early Christians but we are forgiven! You and I, we are forgiven! It is significant that at the first appearance of Jesus to His disciples following His resurrection, He talked about forgiveness. Then, on the day of Pentecost, Peter proclaimed the Gospel and called the people to repentance that they too might receive God’s forgiveness.

Sometimes, our modern churches are like a certain small town. A traveler stopped at a gas station to buy gas. He also asked if there was a place close by where he could get something to eat. The attendant answered, “No, there’s just the cafe down the road but it closed at 7:00 o’clock.” The motorist replied, “Your town’s only café closed at 7:00 o’clock. What do you folks do around here for excitement?” The attendant replied, “Well, around here, folks just don’t get all that excited.”

If there is anything you and I need to really get excited about, it is the promise and the eternal assurance of our forgiveness! Pentecost reminds us that we are forgiven.

In 1522, Martin Luther preached on John 20 and the appearance of Jesus to His disciples on that Easter evening. Luther said, “...the Lord’s hands and feet really signify nothing but His works ... And the showing of His side is nothing but the showing of His heart, in order that we may see how kind, loving and father-like His mind is toward us.”

Dr. Luther elaborated on these points. Commenting on Jesus’ appearance to the disciples, “He did not wait for His disciples to come to Him. Rather, Jesus came to them and He still comes to us in our day. He comes to comfort, strengthen, and lift us up out of our sin.”

In another sermon, preached in 1540, Luther said the greatest treasure of the human heart is to hear that we are forgiven – that God Himself forgives us of all our sins.

What is the real significance of Pentecost for you and me? It is this, we are forgiven.

Secondly, Pentecost reminds us that we are forgiven because it also reminds us that God has a purpose for us. This fact too, is significant! In John 7:38-39, Jesus said, “‘Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ Now this He said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive, for as yet the spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.” Pentecost is the fulfillment of the promise. It is the gift of the Holy Spirit to every believer.

We live in a day when way too many churches have completely forgotten what the Gospel is all about. Today’s mainline churches are more interested in social programs, cultural awareness, and political-correctness than they are in the eternal truth of the Gospel.

On the Day of Pentecost, Peter proclaimed THE answer, THE only answer to the problems of our world and ourselves. He said, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”

You see, the issues we face are not political, economic, social, racial, religious, or culture (to only name a few). These are only symptoms of a more prolific and fundamental problem. That problem, the real problem that few want to discuss, is called “sin.” The problem of sin is the age-old adversary of mankind. It is the root cause of all of man’s woes.

I’ve always been partial to these words of James, “¹³Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am being tempted by God,’ for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death” (James 1:13-15). It is because of sin that Jesus came to die.

In his book, *The Christian Persuader*, Leighton Ford wrote about the time his daughter, Debbie Jean, was lost. Ford's wife had gone to the store and left Leighton to watch their little girl. One moment she was there. The next, she was gone! The frantic search began immediately. A neighbor's child said she saw Debbie Jean walking toward the school which was only a few hundred yards away from her home.

They searched the school yard and did not find Debbie Jean. While Ford's wife checked the shopping center across the street, Leighton Ford and the school principal looked in every room in every school building. There was no sign of the little girl.

Panic gripped Leighton Ford's heart. He remembered all the stories about strange men picking up little girls. He called the police and he walked up and down the road calling her name.

Two hours passed. Everyone was searching for Debbie Jean. Ford had reached the end of his rope and just then Debbie Jean came around the corner of a building. She was laughing, smiling, and happy. She had gone to the candy store a few blocks away from the school. There she met a friend. The two had then gone to the friend's house to play. She had no idea people were looking for her.

For hours, Debbie Jean was missing. During that time, nothing else mattered to Leighton Ford, his wife, his extended family, their friends, or the police. They were all focused. They were intent on finding Debbie Jean.

Back home, there were things to do. There was work to be done. There were letters to be read and answered. There were articles to be written and planning to be done. But, for those few hours, nothing else mattered. Everything else was forgotten. Ford could think of only one thing. He had only one purpose in mind, finding his lost daughter. For a time, he had only one prayer and he prayed it a thousand times, "Oh God, please help me to find my daughter."

Pentecost reminds us that we are forgiven because God has a purpose for us. What is your purpose? Some of you have been on the foreign mission field. You have helped spread the Gospel in foreign lands through words and deeds. Others have labored in Bible School, year after year. On the 4th Sunday of each month, we help to feed the hungry in Effingham County. Some of you sing in the choir, take up the offering, serve as acolytes, lectors, counters, watch the children in the nursery, teach in many different ways such as children's church or Sunday School, take care of the property, help on the altar guild, fold the bulletins and newsletters, work on various committees, give hours to the Council, are faithful in worship, provide sermons for the children, and most importantly pray regularly for this congregation and our ministry to others.

What is the real significance of Pentecost for us? Is it God's empowering of His church. It is God equipping you and me to fulfill our purpose for Him! As Paul wrote in his epistle to the Colossians, "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:17)

Pentecost is a constant reminder of God's continual provision for us in His forgiveness of ALL our sin, past, present, and future. It is also the evidence of His empowering you and me for His service as we glorify His name and to give of ourselves to others even as He gave Himself for us!

Thanks be to God!

APOSTLES' CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,

And born of the virgin Mary.

He 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, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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!**

THE PRAYERS

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, You love us with a never-ending love. You gave Your one and only Son to die for our sins, You give us faith to embrace His Gospel. You have not allowed us to live as orphans but You have given to us the gift of the Holy Spirit, poured out on the day of Pentecost. He is with now and He is our Helper, our Guide, our Companion, and our Assurance. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Holy Spirit, today we celebrate Your coming upon the blessed Church of our Lord Christ and into our hearts, minds, and lives. Fill us with Your presence. Grant us wisdom. Strengthen us and empower us with boldness to live and to speak the Gospel. Make us Your witness to the power of the Gospel and instruments of Your peace in the midst of an evil and sinful world. Conform us to the image of our Saviour so that our thoughts, words, and deeds will glory Him who gave Himself for us. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious Holy Spirit, You are the Spirit of truth. We pray that You will fill the Church of Christ. Fill us as we pray for each other and especially for the LCMC. Bless our sister churches, pastors and congregations. We pray for our partners in the work of the Gospel: World Mission Prayer League, Mission on the Move, Treutlen House, Family Promise, Habitat for Humanity, God's Mission House, Tartu Theological Academy, St. Paul Lutheran Seminary, and all who faithfully serve You in proclamation of Your One True Gospel. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty Father, we pray for our nation. We pray for Your peace to reign in our midst. We pray for an end of violence, crime, all wickedness. We pray for our elected and appointed officials and for all who serve in our courts. We pray for our nation's military and especially for Dustin and all who are deployed. Holy Father watch over and protect all of our First Responders. Give wisdom to our medical workers as they labour against the Covid-19 virus and all other diseases and sickness. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are out of work and have families to support. Lord, provide for them according to Your riches in glory. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, You have called to worship and serve You. Give us Your strength and Your wisdom to in our individual callings and stages of life. Give us a unity to work and to share together in our different ways to build Your Kingdom and to establish Your will in our lives and to encourage one another in Your rule over all things. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, we pray for so many in need: for our members Susan, Brian, Fulton, Loretta & Charles, Margaret, Brenda & Carl, Doris, Harper, Preston, Angie, Debbie, and Dawn; for our extended family and friends Becky, Darwin, Pr. Robert, Merry, Elizabeth, Raymond, Steve,

Christopher, Alice, Shirley, Jim, Monteen, Fran, and Izzy for our homebound Betty Jo, Linda, Eva Belle; and for those serving in the military, Marcus, and Dustin who is deployed. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, hear our prayers and receive them for the sake of the crucified and risen one, your Son our Lord, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

As our Saviour taught us we are bold to prayer: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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.**

GREETING OF PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

BLESSING

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make His face shine on us and be gracious to us. The Lord look upon us with favor + and give us peace. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Let us go in peace to serve the Risen Lord. Hallelujah!