

St. Matthew's Ev. Lutheran Church
1615 N. Wauwatosa Ave., Wauwatosa, WI 53213

June 13th, 2021

8:30 & 10:15 a.m. Services

Introduction for the Day: The mustard seed becomes a great shrub that shelters the birds, recalling ancient images of the tree of life. We would expect a cedar or a sequoia, but Jesus finds the power of God better imaged in a tiny, no-account seed. It is not the way we expect divine activity to look. Yet the tree of life is here, in the cross around which we gather, the tree into which we are grafted through baptism, the true vine that nourishes us with its fruit in the cup we share. It may not appear all that impressive, but while nobody is looking it grows with a power beyond our understanding.

Gathering

Prelude

Welcome to Worship

Pastor Sheila Rawn

(Please stand as you are able)

Call to Worship

This is the day that you have made, Lord.

Let us rejoice in it and be glad!

Confession and Forgiveness

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Drawn to Christ we seek God's abundance.

If we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Today we consider the planting of the Lord, and the wondrous growth which he promises.

(Silence is kept for reflection)

God, our provider,

help us. It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn? Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for life in the world.

Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.

Amen.

Gathering Song

#533 Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty [Stanzas 1 & 3]

Open now thy gates of beauty, Zion, let me enter there, where my soul in joyful duty waits for God who answers prayer. Oh, how blessed in this place, filled with solace, light, and grace!

Here thy praise is gladly chanted, here thy seed is duly sown; let my soul, where it is planted, bring forth precious sheaves alone, so that all I hear may be fruitful unto life in me.

Text: Benjamin Schmolck, 1672-1737; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1829-1878, alt. Music: Joachim Neander, 1650-1690.
Tune: Unser Herrscher, 87 87 77.

Opening Litany for “*Growth in God’s Garden*” Sunday

O Lord, you have planted the seed of your love in us.

May your love in us continue to grow stronger each day.

O Lord, you have planted the seed of your word in us.

May our understanding of your Scriptures grow deeper each day.

O Lord, you have showered us with your grace.

May your grace continue to enrich us and restore us each day.

O Lord, you have given us the ability to bear fruit.

May we continue to bear fruit that is pleasing to you.

Apostolic 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 are the tree of life, offering shelter to all the world. Graft us into yourself and nurture our growth, that we may bear your truth and love to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Word

(Please be seated)

First Reading

Ezekiel 17:22-24

Tree imagery is used in a messianic prophecy to tell how the LORD will choose someone from Judah's royal family (the cedar tree) to reign over all creation. This tree will be planted on Mount Zion, the location of the holy temple.

A reading from Ezekiel, Chapter 17.

Thus, says the Lord GOD: I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of a cedar; I will set it out. I will break off a tender one from the topmost of its young twigs; I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain.

On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it, in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar. Under it every kind of bird will live; in the shade of its branches will nest winged creatures of every kind.

All the trees of the field shall know that I am the LORD. I bring low the high tree, I make high the low tree; I dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I the LORD have spoken; I will accomplish it.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15

The righteous shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon. (Ps. 92:12)

Let us read responsively from Psalm 92.

It is a good thing to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praise to your name, O Most High;

to herald your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night;

on the psaltery, and on the lyre, and to the melody of the harp.

For you have made me glad by your acts, O LORD; and I shout for joy because of the works of your hands.

The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree and shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon.

Those who are planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God;

they shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be green and succulent;

that they may show how upright the LORD is, my rock, in whom there is no injustice.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

2 Corinthians 5:6-10 [11-13] 14-17

Paul encourages believers to live by faith and not by sight. We do not consider Jesus from a human perspective but through the eyes of faith, believing he died for all and was raised. All who are in Christ are now in God's new creation.

A reading from 2 Corinthians, Chapter 5.

So, we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord—for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

[Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are well known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences. We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you.]

For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore, all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

(Please stand as you are able)

Gospel Acclamation

#512 Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil

Lord, let my heart be good soil, open to the seed of your word. Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow, and peace is understood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone away. When my heart is cold, warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let me hear, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

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Gospel

Mark 4:26-34

Jesus frequently uses parables to teach ordinary people as they are able to hear and understand. Images of sowing and growing show the vitality of God's kingdom.

The holy gospel according to Mark, the 4th chapter.

Glory to You O Lord.

[Jesus] said, "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come."

He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

The Gospel of the Lord for you this day.

Praise to You, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

Sermon

Pastor Sheila Rawn

(Please stand as you are able)

Hymn of the Day

#550 On What Has Now Been Sown

[Stanza 1 & 2]

*On what has now been sown your blessing Lord, bestow; the pow'r is your alone
to make it sprout and grow. O Lord, in grace the harvest raise, and yours
alone shall be the praise!*

*To you our wants are known, from you are all our pow'rs; accept what is your
own and pardon what is ours. Our praises, Lord, and prayers receive
and to your word a blessing give.*

Text: John Newton, 1725-1807, alt. Music: John Darwell, 1731-1789. Tune: Darwall's 148th 66 66 88.

(Please stand as you are able)

Profession of Faith

The Apostles' 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 to the dead.**

**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.**

Prayer of Intercession

Filled with the Holy Spirit, we join with the church in every place, praying for the world
and the church, and all people in need.

... Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

By the sure guidance of your Holy Spirit, O God, we lift up our prayers in trust and
thanksgiving, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Stephen Ministry Commissioning

(Please be seated)

Presentation

Gloria, Julie, Leah and Marge, you have been equipped to serve as Stephen Ministers at
St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church. Listen now to these words from 2
Corinthians, "*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the
Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our
troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we
ourselves have received from God.*"

Requests

Each of you has been comforted by God with the Good News of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. We ask you now to join in serving our Lord and those in our Community who need to be comforted.

- As the Lord Jesus has responded to your needs, we ask you to strive to be responsive to the needs of others.
- As the Lord Jesus took the burdens of the world on his shoulders and has been a friend to you in troubled times, we ask you to be a friend to those who are burdened under the stress of daily life.
- As the Lord Jesus patiently listens, we ask you to be a patient listener in a hurried world.
- As the Spirit of Christ has given you gifts for service, we ask you to use your skills and talents to help and pray for those people whom you serve.
- As the Lord Jesus has shown his care to you, we ask you to help this congregation grow as a caring community through your ministry.
- As the Lord Jesus has revealed his presence to you through faith, we ask you to share your personal experiences of faith with those around you so that they too may celebrate the presence of Christ in our world today.

Vows

[to the Stephen Ministers]: Are you prepared to nurture the skills you have learned and use them in service to others to support, encourage, build up, and comfort people in their needs? If so, answer, "Yes, with the help of God."

Yes, with the help of God.

[to the Congregation]: Now, we ask you, members of St. Matthew's to open your hearts to the ministry of these people and to pray for them, that they may be effective servants of Christ. Are you prepared to meet this request? If so, answer, "Yes, with the help of God."

Yes, with the help of God.

We also ask you to accept their ministry when *you* need help, to allow these individuals to work with you as you face struggles in your life, that you might receive support and help from your Christian brothers and sisters. If you are prepared to meet this request, answer, "Yes, with the help of God."

Yes, with the help of God.

Prayer

Let us pray. O God we commend our newest Stephen Ministers to your care. May they serve you through the power of the Holy Spirit; may they be courageously compassionate, patient in listening, and willing to share of themselves. Give to us thankful hearts for them, and show them in times of stress and satisfaction a special measure of your mercy and joy. Keep them strong in the faith you have given them for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Dismissal and Sharing the Peace of Christ

Go now to serve boldly and without fear, for Christ is with you.

The peace of the Lord be with you all.

And also with you.

Meal

(Please be seated)

Musical Offering

Sagedahl Waltz and Ole's Polka by Elmo Wick,
arr. by Mary Pat Kleven
Meghan Murphy, Violin; Julia Murphy, Piano

(Please stand as you are able)

Offering Prayer

Let us pray. Our Creator, you are a God of miraculous growth. Gather and increase our gifts and add to them our love. Add to them our service. Use them to grow your kingdom. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Eucharistic Prayer

Lord's Prayer

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

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

Lord Jesus Christ, you have broadened our vision to see great shrubs in tiny seeds, to see body and blood in bread and wine, to see God's glorious kingdom in this simple place. Give us eyes to see the breadth of the kingdom.

Make us one, one in you. Come, eat, and be satisfied.

(Please be seated)

Please take your belongings with you to communion.

Communion Hymn

#484 You Satisfy the Hungry Heart [Stanzas 3 & 5]

***You satisfy the hungry heart with gift of finest wheat. Come give to us, O
saving Lord, the bread of life to eat.***

*Is not the cup we bless and share the blood of Christ outpoured? Do not one cup
One Loaf, declare our oneness in the Lord? [Refrain]*

*You Give yourself to us, O Lord; then selfless let us be, to serve each other in
your name in truth and charity. [Refrain]*

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