

**St. Peter's Lutheran Church & Elementary School
Sixth Sunday after Pentecost – July 12, 2020**

~~~~~



God's word is like the rain that waters the earth and brings forth vegetation. It is also like the sower who scatters seed indiscriminately. Our lives are like seeds sown in the earth. Even from what appears to be little, dormant, or dead, God promises a harvest. At the Lord's table we are fed with the bread of life, that we may bear fruit in the world.

~~~~~

*You can say the **BOLD** words with Pastor.*

CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

We make the sign of the cross, which was marked on us at baptism.
We bless the holy Trinity, † one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. **Amen**

Trusting in the mercy of God, we confess our sin. *Silence for reflection.*
Reconciling God, **we confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives. We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts. We fail to believe that you provide enough for all. We abuse your good creation for our own benefit. We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us. We sin in thought, word, and deed. By your grace, forgive us; through your love, renew us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen**

Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through † Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

GREETING and PRAYER of the DAY

Gathered on the Lord's Day, we remember that we are baptized
**in the name of the Father, and of the † Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

Jesus promised his followers at his ascension:
I will be with you always, even until the end of the world.

**And we will follow all he has taught us,
making disciples wherever we are.**

Join me in prayer. *A brief silence.* Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

SCRIPTURES, SERMON, & SONG

READING: Romans 8:1-11

There is no condemnation for those who live in Christ. God sent Christ to accomplish what the law was unable to do: condemn sin and free us from its death-dealing ways. The Spirit now empowers proper actions and values in our lives and gives us the promise of resurrected life.

Paul writes: There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 (CEV)

In Matthew's gospel, both Jesus and his disciples "sow the seed" of God's word by proclaiming the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near." Now, in a memorable parable, Jesus explains why this good news produces different results in those who hear.

P: This is the Good News of the victory of Our Lord Jesus Christ,
as the Word was given to Matthew.

That same day Jesus left the house and went out beside Lake Galilee, where he sat down to teach. Such large crowds gathered around him that he had to sit in a boat, while the people stood on the shore. Then he taught them many things by using stories. He said:

A farmer went out to scatter seed in a field. While the farmer was scattering the seed, some of it fell along the road and was eaten by birds. Other seeds fell on thin, rocky ground and quickly started growing because the soil wasn't very deep. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched and dried up, because they did not have enough roots. Some other seeds fell where thorn bushes grew up and choked the plants. But a few

seeds did fall on good ground where the plants produced a hundred or sixty or thirty times as much as was scattered. If you have ears, pay attention!

Now listen to the meaning of the story about the farmer:

The seeds that fell along the road are the people who hear the message about the kingdom, but don't understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches the message from their hearts. The seeds that fell on rocky ground are the people who gladly hear the message and accept it right away. But they don't have deep roots, and they don't last very long. As soon as life gets hard or the message gets them in trouble, they give up.

The seeds that fell among the thorn bushes are also people who hear the message. But they start worrying about the needs of this life and are fooled by the desire to get rich. So the message gets choked out, and they never produce anything. The seeds that fell on good ground are the people who hear and understand the message. They produce as much as a hundred or sixty or thirty times what was planted.

GOSPEL REFLECTION [*for your own use, & for our Thursday Zoom Meeting*]

1 What are some of those 'soils' where God's message lands & they do or don't take root & grow?

2 Do you understand that God's message can cause trouble, or that either needs or greed can move us away from trusting that message?

3 Farming does require patience; when does being a witness of this message ask you to be patient? Can we still go back to those who are in thin soil, in the rocks or weeds? Who might they be in your experience?

MESSAGE: *Mind & Body*

You know how in those personality tests, human behavior studies, or pop psychology quizzes featured in grocery store magazines, we're led to believe that 1 can be this or that type of person. If you are given extreme examples of a trait or a belief, you'll find you may bounce between the 2 poles based on how we answer the questions or respond to the situations that experts have laid out to test us. I don't feel strongly against using such methods to discover what kind of person 1 can be—often these things ring true when I consider how I've responded. But I don't know my numbers or letters or grades; I know I'm more of an introvert who has put myself in this situation where I must be extroverted—this is not an act, since few folk are extremely anything. If one is, I hope such a person is getting help for their troubles.

I also subscribe to the idea that 1 of the basic human traits is that 1 is either more *people* oriented or more *task* oriented. Clearly you can't be exclusively one or the other—you'd never get anything done, & we can't survive without

having relationships. & we *know* how this plays out at any church: more will say, I don't want to go to a meeting when you could just tell me what to do. Others may not like meetings, but they get energy from the folks they are with. In other words, let's have fewer meetings & do more to help people!!!

1 more idea that points us to what Paul is sharing about who we are is this: is it better to be flexible or determined? Of course, you can put a negative connotation on this: he's so reckless & wishy-washy, never making up his mind; she's just stubborn & willful, not letting anyone *ever* change her mind. Either way, people can be set in their minds in a bad way, but it's better to be steady & faithful, while keeping an open mind. Because when change happens, as it inevitably will, responding in a consistent way can be more helpful for us to prevent collapsing into our fears of what's different. For example, if the pandemic is hurting the poor & people of color more so than the *middle* of our population, we believers will answer that we trust that **all** lives are sacred, that we shall treat the most vulnerable as they deserve. This past holiday weekend reminded us again of the ideal set forth in our Declaration of Independence: this truth is self-evident– *all* are created equal.

Elsewhere in Paul's letters, we hear this: "set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth (Col 3:2)." That's a lofty ideal, much like our nation's higher standards, that we often fail to live up to. Yet our failures do not remove the motivation to be faithful to our calling. Our *weak flesh*, our selfish desires, have corrupted our good intentions to follow God's will. As I've said throughout Paul's argument in Romans, being *in the flesh*, we are divided within our self: in heart & mind & action. Martin Luther called it being at the same time saint & sinner. He also took after Augustine, citing the idea that humans are a 'turned-in-on self'. Paul had lamented that such people *-us-* are devoted to our bellies. Our motto is 'what's in it for me?' Our patron saint is Narcissus. Our favorite furniture is the full-length mirror. But our purpose shouldn't be trying to get God on our side, seeing just how good we've been– Jesus put us on God's side to accomplish what God wants done.

This 8th chapter of Romans is the letter's heart, & in 2 weeks you'll find its answer: nothing can separate us from God's love found in Christ Jesus. I'd like to reinforce how we get there by sharing the CEB's translation of vv 3-9:
God has done what was impossible for the Law [to do], since it was weak because of selfishness. God condemned sin in the body by sending his own Son to deal with sin in the same body as humans, who are controlled by sin. He did this so that the righteous requirement of the Law might be

fulfilled in us. Now the way we live is based on the Spirit, not based on selfishness. People whose lives are based on selfishness think about selfish things, but people whose lives are based on the Spirit think about things that are related to the Spirit. The attitude that comes from selfishness leads to death, but the attitude that comes from the Spirit leads to life and peace. So the attitude that comes from selfishness is hostile to God. It doesn't submit to God's Law, because it can't. People who are self-centered aren't able to please God. But you aren't self-centered. Instead you are in the Spirit, if in fact God's Spirit lives in you. If anyone doesn't have the Spirit of Christ, they don't belong to him.

So it is a constant struggle for believers to walk according to the Spirit, to remain faithful & true. But we trust that Jesus has done what is required to save us, & we receive his righteousness thru the Spirit we've been given in baptism. Now we walk in newness of life, in following the Spirit. Will we ever stumble, can we go astray or become lost, or even turn off the path? Yes, but God has condemned sin & death that had held us in their power. Could we ever fail in a way that negates Jesus' victory over the evil one? We can't possibly be hostile to God since we've been tempted & tested, & fallen short—that is what sin is, & still, God has not let us go. All we can ever do, how we live under God's rule, is to submit ourselves to God's will. We let go of our selfish desires, set our mind on the Spirit as best we can, calling on that same Spirit to uphold us in the fight. Because God has said so, we trust that God will never condemn those the Spirit has called to be Jesus' disciples.

HYMN of the DAY: # 533 "Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty"

- 1 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 is this place,
filled with solace, light, and grace!**
- 2 Gracious God, I come before thee;
come thou also unto me;
where we find thee and adore thee,
there a heav'n on earth must be.
To my heart, oh, enter thou,
let it be thy temple now!**
- 3 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.**

**4 Thou my faith increase and quicken,
let me keep thy gift divine;
howsoe'er temptations thicken,
may thy word still o'er me shine
as my guiding star through life,
as my comfort in all strife.**

**5 Speak, O God, and I will hear thee,
let thy will be done indeed;
may I undisturbed draw near thee
while thou dost thy people feed.
Here of life the fountain flows;
here is balm for all our woes.**

Text: Benjamin Schmolck, 1672-1737; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE [*please phone/email your requests by Wednesday*]

A: Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world. *A brief silence.*

Gracious God, your word has been sown in many ways and places. We pray for missionaries and newly planted congregations around the world. Inspire us by their witness to the faith we share. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creating God, the mountains and hills burst into song and the trees and fields clap their hands in praise. We pray for the birds and animals who make their home in the trees, and for lands stripped bare by deforestation. Empower us to sustainably use what you have given. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Reigning God, we pray for our nation's leaders. Increase their desire for justice and equality. We pray for our enemies. Bridge the chasms that divide us and guide authorities to a deep and lasting peace. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Abiding God, care for all who are in need. For those who are doubting, renew faith. For those who are worrying, provide release. For those who are struggling, ease burdens. For those in fear, give hope. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Renewing God, revive your church in this place. Nourish and nurture the seeds you have planted, that we might grow as disciples. Replace what has

been depleted. Sustain our ministries and deepen relationships with the wider community. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray especially for Lisa, Tonya, Vince, Nettie, Steve, Irene, Caroline, Allan, Jessie (transplant), Beth, ... Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Other intercessions may be offered here.

P: Eternal God, we give thanks for all who have died. Comfort us in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

APOSTLES CREED

Together let us confess our faith.

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. Amen

OFFERING PRAYER

Thanks to all those of you who have mailed or dropped in their tithes & offerings, that believers may reach out to a world in need. Let us pray.

O God of justice and love, we give you thanks that you guide our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your resurrection feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. **Amen**

LORD'S PRAYER *From Romans 8*

'When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God,' and so we are bold to pray:

**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**

BLESSING *From Romans 8*

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. God, the creator, † Jesus, the Christ, and Holy Spirit, the comforter, bless us and keep us in eternal love. **Amen**

SENDING into MISSION

Live in peace. Christ is with you.

We will Learn God’s Truth.

We will Share the Spirit’s Healing.

We will Follow the Way of Jesus. Amen

PEACE

The peace of Christ is always with you. **And also with you.**

*Please share words & gestures of peace with those near you,
or in the comments of our FB page*

~~~~~

**At the time of this writing, please keep the following in your prayers:**  
ELCA Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Synod Bishop Bill Gohl, those hospitalized or at home recuperating, and our homebound members.

~~~~~

Today’s Altar Flowers are Given to the Glory of God

In Honor of Sarah & Phil Thacker’s wedding anniversary, July 16th,
and Phil’s birthday, July 8th. Best wishes from Mom-Mom Diepold.

For the Glory of God.

~~~~~

*Today’s Bulletins are Given to the Glory of God*

For the Glory of God.

~~~~~

Attendance for July 5, 2020: 17

Learning, Serving, & Fellowship Opportunities

The Quest: Join Becca Plantholt, our Youth & Family Coordinator, for this on-line VBS bible study expedition to develop a deeper relationship with God. See the attached flier for time/date details on the kid-friendly and adult studies. Register by emailing Becca at christedcoord@st-peterslutheran.com.

Synod Women's Organization Retreat at Claggett Center is scheduled for September 11-13. Registration form attached.

Baltimore Cancer Support Group's 7th Annual Car Show: Sunday, October 4th from 10-2:30 pm. at the Joppatowne Shopping Center at the corner of Route 40/Pulaski Hwy. & Joppa Farm Rd. Raffles, prizes, and concessions!

Chair Request: The school is looking for 2 chairs to be donated to place in the school lobby. Please contact the school at 410-665-4521 if you (or someone you know) can help.

Flower Sponsorships Needed: 8/2 (both services), 8/23 & 30 for the 10:15 service.

Request from The Village at Rockville: The Village is requesting in kind donations of used iPods and other items purchased from their Amazon Wish list that will be used in their memory care neighborhood. You can contact Alice Benson at 301-354-8422 with any questions.

CLAIM Virtual Walk-a-thon: "Claim" your freedom to get out a little more in the first week of August for our CLAIM Virtual Walkathon. You pick your day, distance, and mode of movement and send out invites to folks who can sponsor you. See the flier at the end of the bulletin.

Summer Generosity Series: On Thursday, July 23rd from 3:30-5:30pm, the DE-MD Synod will host the Rev. CeCee Mills from the North Carolina Synod staff. She will focus her time on *Generosity in the Urban Context* and we will have an opportunity to breakout into small groups as well. This training does have a cost of \$25 and entitles you to participate in several virtual Fall gatherings with Pastor Mills to touch base and further share best practices. Register online at <https://demdsynod.org/generosity-and-partnerships-in-the-urban-context/>.

Align Your Budget with Ministry of This Time: On Tuesday, August 25th from 4-5:30pm, the DE-MD Synod will offer this workshop by Scott McKenzie, which reminds us that during this time of disruption and change, we have an opportunity for evaluation of ministry impact and effectiveness that is essential as we work to align budgets with ministry in the new normal. Cost will be \$10. Register online at <https://demdsynod.org/align-your-budget-with-ministry-of-this-time/>.

Connecting Faith & Justice – Critical Conversations: Join us for a series of panel discussions and conversations for community members interested in the intersection of faith and justice. Zoom conversations will take place at 7:00 pm on the last Tuesday of each month beginning August 25th. Get more information by emailing claimbaltimore@gmail.com.

We are branching out on social media! You can connect with us on Instagram and Twitter (search for [stpeterselcafullerton](#)) and on YouTube (search for St. Peter's Lutheran Church Fullerton).

Amazon Smile: When you shop on Amazon, please consider supporting St. Peter's Elementary School by using Amazon Smile. A portion of every purchase goes back to St. Peter's. To use Amazon Smile, please type in the following and sign in with your Amazon user name and password: smile.amazon.com/ch/52-0796248.

Internet Search: Help St. Peter's church and school reach the top of the search engine results by typing our web address (www.st-peterslutheran.com) directly into the search line/box (not the browser bar) on all of your devices!

Help St. Peter's Food Center by opening a new regular deposit account at Eastern Savings Bank (Fullerton location only). When you do, the Food Center receives \$5! Visit the Fullerton branch at 4113 Wholesale Club Drive, Suite 130, or go online to EasternSavingsBank.com. **By appointment only.**

Need a floral arrangement for an upcoming holiday event or special celebration? Consider using our Sunday bouquet florist, Drayer's Florist! Call them for pricing and design information at 410-335-6286.



St. Peter's Lutheran Church

BIBLE STUDY

The Quest

an expedition to a deeper relationship with God

Kids: Saturdays @ 9:30am starting July 11th
Adults: Sundays @ 6:30pm starting July 12th

CONTACT christedcoord@st-peterslutheran.com
to reserve your spot!



SWC Retreat

September 11-12-13, 2020

Claggett Center
3035 Buckeystown Pike
Adamstown, MD 21710
claggettcenter.org • (310) 874-5147

Speaker: Sara Mullin
Theme: *Wild Women of the Bible*

Cost:
Single Room \$250
Double Room \$230

Deposit due July 15, 2020
Total monies due August 1, 2020
Check payable to SWC

Mail to check and form:
Peggy Green
71 Carroll View Avenue
Westminster, MD 21157
(410) 868-5188

REGISTRATION FORM

NAME	
ADDRESS	
PHONE	
CHURCH	
EMERGENCY CONTACT	
FOOD ALLERGIES	
ROOMMATE FOR DOUBLE ROOM	
FIRST TIMER?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
SCHOLARSHIP NEEDED	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes -- please explain:
Is this the first-time for a scholarship request?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

"Virtual" Walk-A-Thon



“Claim” your freedom to get out a little more in the first week of August for our CLAIM Virtual Walkathon. You pick your day, distance, and mode of movement and send out invites to folks who can sponsor you. We also invite you to wear a t-shirt that tells your neighbors who you are – a “God’s Work Our Hands” shirt, your church’s shirt, a youth gathering shirt, Thrivent shirt, etc.

Here’s a template of what you can write or post:

Please sponsor me for the CLAIM “Virtual” Walkathon. CLAIM (Coalition of Lutherans Advancing in Mission) is our way to build relationships within our faith community. I will walk/bike ___ minutes/miles on August __. I ask you to hold me in prayer that day and consider sponsoring me either with an online donation or by mailing me a check made out to CLAIM, c/o Epiphany Lutheran Church, 4301 Raspe Ave., Baltimore, MD 21206.

To give online, go https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithely/give-one-time/644796. Enter your donation amount under “Give” and under “To” scroll down to “CLAIM.” Then fill in information for your credit or bank card. Under “Note/Memo” please write Walkathon and the name of the person you are sponsoring.

Be sure to post your photos on the C.L.A.I.M. Facebook page!

