

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH
305 Livingston St, Filley, NE
Pastor LuRae Hallstrom

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
July 19, 2020

PLEASE MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING.

Radio frequency will be announced. Facebook @ American Lutheran Church - Filley, NE
Financial contributions can be brought to Sunday morning worship or can be forwarded to American Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 66, Filley, NE 68357. You may also do on-line giving at www.filleylutheranchurch.com.

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

We gather together in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP: (based on Psalm 86:11-17)

P: Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth.

C: Knit my heart to you that I may fear your name.

P: I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart.

C: I will glorify your name forevermore...

P: For great is your love toward me...

C: Enemies seek my life...

P: But you, O Lord, are gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.

C: Turn to me and have mercy on me...

P: Show me a sign of your favor...

C: For you, O Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: In the Gospel lesson for this day Jesus teaches how wheat and weeds can grow together. Even the roots become intertwined.

C: What a graphic picture this is of our own lives.

P: We have good in us, yet we can lose our way.

C: We can sense the 'weed' in us that wants to choke out the wheat in us.

P: Jesus said that there will be ultimate judgment on "children of the evil one."

C: Jesus also said that the "righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

P: We are in need of God's encouragement to be the righteous ones.

C: We are in need of forgiveness for any wrong in our lives. We are in need of grace in order to see more clearly how to live in God's image. Lord, have mercy on us and forgive us.

P: We are called to be God's wheat. We are to gladly hear God's Word and grow in righteousness. As we listen to Jesus' teaching in today's Gospel lesson about the final judgment...we come to a fresh awareness of our need for forgiveness. Our forgiveness has been promised in the atoning work of Christ our Lord. 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 your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

P: Let us pray...

C: O Lord, grant us the strength and the wisdom to be your righteous people. Increase among us the ability to see the dangers to our spiritual health that all around us. Keep us safe that we might receive the rewards of righteousness that come from grounding ourselves in your holy word. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

READINGS

Reading: Isaiah 44:6-8

Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:

I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.

Who is like me? Let them proclaim it, let them declare and set it forth before me.

Who has announced from of old the things to come? Let them tell us what is yet to be.

Do not fear, or be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it?

You are my witnesses! Is there any god besides me? There is no other rock; I know not one

Gospel: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?" He answered, "An enemy has done this." The slaves said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" But he replied, "No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn."

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.' He answered, 'The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

MESSAGE:

Pastor LuRae Hallstrom

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 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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Merciful God, your reign is revealed to us in common things: a mustard shrub, a woman baking bread, a fishing net. Help your church witness to the surprising yet common ways you encounter us in daily life.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

When your word is opened, it gives light and understanding. Increase our understanding and awe of your creation; guide the work of scientists and researchers. Treasuring the earth, may we live as grateful and healing caretakers of our home. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

As the birds of the air nest in branches of trees, gather the nations of the world into the welcoming shade of your merciful reign. Direct leaders of nations to build trust with each other and walk in the way of peace. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Your Spirit helps us in our weakness and intercedes for the saints according to your will. Help us when we do not know how to pray. Give comfort to the dying, refuge to the weary, justice to those who are oppressed, and healing to the sick. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You show steadfast love and direct us to ask of you what we need. Help this congregation ask boldly for what is most needed. Refresh us with new dreams of being your people in this place and time. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

In you our lives are never lost. Strengthen us by the inspiring witness of your people in all times and places. Embolden our witness now and one day gather us with all your saints in light. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

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

Amen.

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

Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to Communion

As we come to the table as repentant sinners, Christ wants to assure us of his forgiveness. As we come with our struggles, Christ wants to assure us of his living presence. As we come with our doubts, Christ wants to touch us with the flesh and blood reality of his life. God, today you have called us together to be the church. Unite us now at your table and make us one in Christ Jesus.

The Words of Institution

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Prayer of Consecration

Lord, our God, send your Holy Spirit so that this bread and cup may be for us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we and all your saints be united with Christ and remain faithful in hope and love, and may this, the bread of life, bring healing of body, mind, and spirit. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

DISTRIBUTION

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

P: Let us pray.

All: Pour out upon us the spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of those whom you have fed with one heavenly food; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BENEDICTION

P: May the Lord bless you and keep you. May his face shine upon you with grace and mercy. May He look upon you with favor and grant you peace. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: "We Plow the Fields and Scatter" (*Words printed for meditation/reflection only - no singing.*)

We plow the fields and scatter the good seed on the land, but it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand. He sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain, the breezes and the sunshine, and soft refreshing rain.

All good gifts around us are sent from heav'n above.

Then thank the Lord, oh, thank the Lord for all his love.

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SENDING

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

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WELCOME TO WORSHIP! It's wonderful to gather as the body of Christ to worship and give thanks to God!
Thanks be to God for all of you here!

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: Dustin Fritch

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Amanda Farmer, Tiffany Jurgens, (July 19), Justice Currie, David Wolken (July 22), Jenna Malik, Mrl Nelson, Brandie Waldron (July 23).

HAPPY WEDDING ANNIVERSARY to Chris & Ashley Milburn (July 21, 2012).

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH WEBSITE: You can find our church website at www.filleylutheranchurch.com or by scanning this QR code:



BULLETIN ITEMS are due by Tuesday evenings. Please call Sandy or email her at smahleris@gmail.com.

THANK YOU to everyone who supports Community Food Pantry. Please note that they could use financial support rather than food items at this time.

WE ARE COLLECTING ITEMS FOR SCHOOL KITS (new items only) for both globally through Lutheran World Relief and for local needs. Please do not donate items with any religious symbols, a U.S. flag, patriotic or military symbols, or references to the armed forces, including camouflage. There is a box in the narthex for your items. Each School Kit needs:

Four 70-sheet notebooks of wide- or college-ruled paper approximately 8" X 10½"; no loose-leaf paper

One 30-centimeter ruler, or a ruler with centimeters on one side and inches on the other

One pencil sharpener;

One blunt scissors (safety scissors with embedded steel blades work well)

Five black or blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink); One box of 16 or 24 crayons

Please help fill our bags and be a part of this ministry. Thank you!!!

THERE ARE ALSO QUILTS to be hemmed and quilt blocks to be sewed together in the fellowship hall. If you would like these delivered to you, please contact Carol Frerichs.

BULLETINS EACH WEEK CAN BE FOUND on Facebook and on our website, filleylutheranchurch.com.

They are also being sent out by email to everyone that we have an email address for. If you are not receiving the bulletin by email and would like it, please email Sandy at smahleris@gmail.com with your email address. We will try to send these out by Thursday of each week so that you can print it out if you desire.



A Letter from Nebraska Synod Bishop Brian Maas:

¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.... ²⁰So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.... See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! -- 2 Corinthians 5:18,20; 6:2

Beloved in Christ:

Now *is* the acceptable time; now *is* the day of salvation! Now is the time for the people of God truly to engage the ministry of reconciliation, to be ambassadors for Christ, who willingly gave his life that all humanity may be reconciled to God, and all humans might be reconciled to one another.

This is an extraordinary moment. The universal fatigue of living with pandemic has peeled back the thin veneer long kept in place over the internal divisions that let the sin of racism persist around, among, and in too many of us. There's no energy left to pretend that our fellow citizens of color, fellow members of the Body of Christ, live on a playing field as level as the one on which the white majority lives. As a nation, we have seen, so starkly in the last gasps of George Floyd and so frequently in the deaths of so many others, how the lives of people of color are devalued; how they are treated as less-than.

More and more people are willing to acknowledge, as they have not before, that racism exists and is a problem in our nation. That willingness is a start, but it is only a beginning. Now is the time for people of faith not only to acknowledge it but to *do* something about it.

As ambassadors for Christ, charged with the ministry of reconciliation, we in the church are called to lead in examining our own role in sustaining a status quo that allows racism to continue. *Now* is the time for this hard work, and for the first strong steps toward a future in which all are wholly equal and truly free of racism's ugly stain.

I am asking, inviting, challenging you—each member and every congregation of the Nebraska Synod—to take advantage of this moment, this holy *now*, to do one thing, to take one step toward the reconciliation for which Jesus died, and for which humanity continues to wait. I call you to this work not from a position of righteousness or innocence, but as one who has to confess how often I've been wrong not only about the extent to which racism infects our culture, but about my own contribution to it and my own responsibility to do something about it. I can ignore that responsibility no longer. *We*, the church, can ignore that responsibility no longer.

As pastor to this synod, I am not asking you to agree with me. I am asking only that you join me in a commitment to ask questions, to listen to the experience of others, to learn, and to act. Attached is a brief list of resources compiled specifically for this work. Choose one to engage, at whatever level you feel ready. Engage it with others, and pray, discuss and learn together.

Know too that I am calling on our pastors, deacons, PMAs, and all ministry leaders to raise the matter of racism in their preaching and teaching, to provide leadership and insight as we step into this work together. Prepare to be challenged by their words. Support them as they strive to be both faithful and courageous in speaking difficult truths and proclaiming a powerful gospel.

This is work too many of us have avoided for too long, and we are now gifted with a rare moment to engage it. We who are the church owe it to those who most suffer the consequences of racism, we owe it to one another, and we owe it to Jesus Christ, who at the cost of his life has called us to the ministry of reconciliation. Let us not fail in this calling. Let us not fail to grasp this moment. Now is the time.

With gratitude for you and prayers for this important work we share,
Brian D Maas, Bishop



Bishop Maas has challenged each of us as congregations and individuals to do one thing together to start conversations about racism. In August, you are invited to a Zoom book study and video series based on the book **ONE-Unity in a Divided World** by Deidra Riggs.

In September of 2018, Southwood Lutheran Church in Lincoln launched a Small Group Study and Sermon Series based on this book. In partnership with Deidra, who lived in Lincoln for several years and was familiar with the church, video teaching segments were created along with this study guide. The Southwood people felt that her words were too powerful not to share with the world and so have made these videos and the study guide available for congregations to use. Changing the way we think and relate to others truly can unite us.

If you would like to take a look at the videos, you can find them here:

<https://www.southwoodlutheran.org/news-updates/oneunity-in-a-divided-world/>

Look for more information on this Book Study in coming bulletins. Now is a great time to order the book and start reading it. If you would like to order a book now, please let Sandy Mahler know by emailing smahleris@gmail.com or calling her at 402-688-4230. Leave a message if no one answers. We want every person who is interested to join in this book study, so we will purchase a book for you at no charge. If you are able to donate \$10 for the book, please put it in the offering marked “ONE”.

More about the book ONE-Unity in a Divided World:

Jesus didn't say that the world would know we are his followers by our biting rhetoric, our political leanings, our charity work, or even by our knowledge of Scripture. He said the world would know us by our love for one another. Yet it's so easy to put others at arm's length, to lash out, to put up walls. Deidra Riggs wants us to put our focus on self-preservation aside and, like Jesus, make the first move toward reconciliation.

In *One*, Riggs shows readers that when Jesus offered himself up in our place, he was not only purchasing our salvation but also setting an example for us to follow. She helps readers understand that they are secure in God's inexhaustible love, making them free to love others lavishly--not just in what they do but in what they say, what they don't say, what they will endure, and what they will forgive.

Anyone who longs for unity in the church, in their family, and in their community will find in this book both inspiring examples of loving done well and encouragement to begin the often unnoticed hard work of building bridges with those around them.