

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 29, 2021

American Lutheran Church, Filley, Nebraska

Rev. Jonathan Jensen, Transitional Minister, 402-768-3665

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP (Psalm 15)

P: O LORD, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill?

C: Those who walk blamelessly, and do what is right, and speak the truth from their heart;

P: who do not slander with their tongue, and do no evil to their friends, nor take up a reproach against their neighbors;

C: in whose eyes the wicked are despised, but who honor those who fear the LORD;

P: who stand by their oath even to their hurt; who do not lend money at interest, and do not take a bribe against the innocent.

C: Those who do these things shall never be moved.

GATHERING HYMN: "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God" WOV 783

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy.

C: Amen.

P: Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God, our provider,

C: 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. Amen.

P: 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.

C: Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray...

C: O God our strength, without you we are weak and wayward creatures. Protect us from all dangers that attack us from the outside, and cleanse us from all evil that arises from within ourselves, that we may be preserved through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

¹So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. ²You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God with which I am charging you.

⁶You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!" ⁷For

what other great nation has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is whenever we call to him? ⁸And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today?

⁹But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children.

SECOND READING: James 1:17-27

¹⁷Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

¹⁹You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. ²¹Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

²²But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. ²³For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; ²⁴for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. ²⁵But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

²⁶If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

GOSPEL: Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

¹Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around [Jesus], ²they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. ³(For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; ⁴and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) ⁵So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" ⁶He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, "This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; ⁷in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.' ⁸You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition."

¹⁴Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile." ²¹For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, ²²adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. ²³All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

MESSAGE

Pastor Jonathan Jensen

HYMN OF THE DAY: "The Church's One Foundation" LBW 369, vv. 1,2,5

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

Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

We pray for the church, that it is a safe haven for all who seek your presence. Fill it with pastors, deacons, and leaders who echo your expansive and generous welcome. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for the whole of creation, that plants and animals have the habitat and resources to thrive and flourish. Inspire us to protect threatened habitats and ensure a sustainable future for generations to come. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for individuals in positions of authority. Raise up wise and discerning leaders in federal, state, and local governments and guide them to seek the benefit of every person. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for all who are in need. Support and encourage those who are unemployed, underemployed, or experiencing poverty. Bring food, shelter, clothes, and stability for daily life. Bring healing to Jody, Henry and Ann. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for this congregation, especially those beginning a new school year. Empower teachers and school administrators. Guide students in their learning and development. Accompany parents, foster parents, and caregivers who provide encouragement and love. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father we bring our praise and thanks for your steadfast love that you have shown to Your church. Especially on this occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Nebraska Synod we give you thanks for guidance in the past. Through the Holy Spirit you called and gathered your people into this church and through that same Spirit you enlightened them, opening their eyes to ministries in this Synod that have blessed so many. We thank you for bishops and presidents that led us and were there with us and for us in times of celebration and dark days of turmoil. We give you thanks for those in our Synod that challenged us to open our eyes for the sake of social justice and peace. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Now we pray for your continued guidance in the future. As you led the people of Israel by a pillar of cloud and fire lead us. May the fires of compassion and justice burn within our hearts. May the evangelical zeal of the apostles consume us. May our baptism and the promised coming of your Son give us the hope we need to meet any challenges trusting always in the Jesus who has claimed us and made us his own. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We give thanks for the faithful departed who showed us how to honor God with our heart. Inspire us by their example and renew our faith, trusting that we will be united with them in glory. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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: **“Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus”** **LBW 389, vv. 1,3,4**

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 in person, in the parking lot and on-line!

THE OFFICIAL FOUNDING DATE OF THE NEBRASKA SYNOD is Sept. 1, 1871. You are invited to help celebrate our 150th Anniversary with cake and fellowship during our fellowship hour following worship.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: Jody Illies, Henry Lenner, Ann Lenner, our shut-ins.

OUR SYMPATHY to the family of Paul Kaufman, Ross (Lodene) Kaufman’s brother, who passed away August 25. Paul’s memorial service will be held Monday, August 30, at Capital View Winery, Roca, NE. We commend Paul to God’s care and ask His blessings on his family and friends.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Chris Lenner (Aug 29), Bev Weiss, Linda Searcey, Stanley Fritzen (Aug 30), Fynleigh Kunza, Caden Searcey (Sept. 2).

RACE TO RALLY SUNDAY – Sunday, September 12, at American Lutheran Church. There will be Recognition of Little Lambs and Presentation of Bibles to Kindergarten & 3rd graders at the 9:30 a.m. worship service and then at 10:30 a.m. Race to fun with games and real life race cars! Hamburgers, hotdogs and trimmings will be provided for everyone at the 11 a.m. meal. The only thing you need to bring is yourself!

INSTALLATION OF SUNDAY SCHOOL AND BELOVED TEACHERS/STAFF will be held Sunday, September 12. Our thanks to all who volunteer to work with children of American Lutheran and our community. If you are interested in helping in any way, please contact Brenda Hippen.

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS will take place on Sunday, September 12, as we celebrate and bless this new year. Students, preschool through adult, bring your backpacks, bookbags, or lunch boxes to worship. The service will lift up children and students of all ages, dedicating them to God's glory as we begin a new school year. Teachers, aides, secretaries, cooks, librarians, janitors, bus drivers, etc., come to church to be blessed, affirmed in your vocation, and encouraged as you serve children and families in your daily work! Invite your family and friends!

BELOVED REGISTRATIONS are on the table in the narthex or can be found on our website, filleylutheranchurch.com. Please get your registration in as early as possible so we know how many

teachers, etc. we need to find. Thank you!

A CALL COMMITTEE HAS BEEN ORGANIZED to find a new spiritual leader for our congregation.

Members volunteering to serve include Lodene Kaufman, Brad Frerichs, Steve Knoche, Arlys Jurgens, Norm Flesner and Council Representative, Virgil Jobman. The Call Committee recently met with Assistant to the Bishop, Megan Morrow, to review the Transition Manual, which outlines the call process as written by the ELCA. The Call Committee will be meeting weekly until harvest begins. Status updates will be provided periodically in the church bulletin and a member of the call committee will also provide monthly updates for the congregation during the announcements.

CONFIRMATION MEETING: September 1, 5:30 p.m. All confirmation students and their parents will meet with Pastor Jensen and the council on Wednesday, Sept. 1, 5:30 p.m.

THE WOMEN OF THE CHURCH will be meeting Sept 8th at 11:30 at Classic's in Beatrice. Bible study and meeting will follow the meal. Lesson is on Martha, led by Carlyne Wolken.

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH, Thank you very much for your gracious donation of money, school supplies, and the beautiful blankets. We are so blessed to have your support. Juli Smith Lewiston Principal

AUGUST THRIVENT CARD PROJECT: **UNDIE MONTH!!!** Who would think that there would be a shortage of underwear!! But it is one item that families will do without buying. Please help support this project this month. Bring new men's, women's, and children's underwear through the month of August. Delores Huls is sponsoring the Thrivent card for this project.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! A huge thank you to everyone who donated school items, shoes and socks. The shoes and socks have been donated to those most in need and approximately 110 school kits for Lutheran World Relief will be put together on God's Work-Our Hands day which will be determined soon. Your generosity to these ministries is a blessing!

SIGN-UP SHEET FOR FELLOWSHIP HOUR: Please sign the sheet on the table in the narthex if you would be willing to host Fellowship Hour. As of now, we are serving individually bagged cookies/treats. Thank you for your help!

SUNMART RECEIPTS: Thanks to everyone who has been saving their SunMart receipts! SunMart/Spartan Nash Co. supports a fundraising program called "Support Our Schools and Churches." All you have to do is save your SunMart cash register receipt tapes and put them in the box in the Fellowship Hall (or give to a council person). When we have collected \$150,000 in receipt tapes Spartan Nash Company awards us a check for \$1000. We have reached our goal of \$150,000 two times so far and are starting over again with a balance of about **\$29,000.00**. You can also ask your check-out person if they have any extra receipts. They save the ones that people don't want and give them out – first come, first serve. Thank you to everyone who is helping with this ministry!

PLEASE DONATE TO OUR LOCAL FOOD PANTRY: American Lutheran Church gathers food donations for the Community Pantry and Emergency Services in Beatrice on an ongoing basis. The Food Pantry serves all of Gage County. If you would like to give to this ministry, please leave your donated items in the shopping cart in the Fellowship Hall at any time. NO glass jars, please. **THANK YOU for your continued support to this ministry!**

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND A KEVIN & HEIDI CHENG COMMUNITY OUTDOOR CONCERT - HOLY CROSS PARKING LOT SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 7:00 P.M. Bring a lawn chair or blanket and enjoy the music of Heidi and Kevin Cheng on Saturday evening, September 11, at 7:00 p.m. Gifted, engaging, and energetic are just a few of the descriptors that have been used in connection with this classically trained piano-violin duo! The dynamic couple play a range of styles, including popular, country, classical, ragtime, romantic, western, bluegrass, patriotic, and contemporary and traditional sacred music. Kevin is a native of Taiwan who has organized large-scale orchestral concerts to bring classical music to rural Nebraska. He has performed as guest pianist with Lincoln, Kearney, Sandhills and Cherokee symphonies. Heidi has served as second principal violinist in the Kearney Symphony Orchestra.

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.

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

WORSHIP HELPERS:

Transitional Minister – Pastor Jonathan Jensen, 402-768-3665

Council – Dave Norton-President (402-520-3555), Virgil Jobman-Vice President (402-310-6339), Carol Frerichs-Secretary (402-223-7919), Brenda Hippen-Treasurer (402-688-4466), Linda Searcey-at large (402-223-8237).

Reader – Susan Frerichs

PowerPoint Preparer/Presenter – Brenda Hippen

Audio/Video – Virgil Jobman

Accompanist: Sandy Mahler

150 Years as the Nebraska Synod: Built of Living Stones

A Short History

The very first Lutherans in the Territory of Nebraska were among the waves of homesteaders of the 1840s and 50s who the U.S. government settled here on indigenous land. But these lay Lutherans preceded the church; no Lutheran churches or pastors were here in Nebraska until the missionary Pastor Henry Kuhns arrived in the late 1850s to organize the Lutheran settlers he found already living here. Preaching points slowly became congregations and the church members eventually constructed their own church buildings. The Nebraska Synod as a governing body was first established in 1871 as a conference of the larger General Synod, the Lutheran denomination on the east coast dating back to the colonial period. However, throughout the 19th and 20th century, there were many different and evolving denominations of Lutherans in America (many represented within the Nebraska state border), divided along lines of national origin and language. In addition, these Lutherans held different convictions on doctrine, worship practices, and spirituality which resulted in yet more denominational splits. The congregations of the Nebraska Synod, ELCA today are descended from many of these antecedent Lutheran bodies. Beginning in the late 19th century, the various ethnic Lutheran denominations established academic and social welfare institutions here in Nebraska. The (English and German speaking) General Synod founded Midland College and Western Theological Seminary which eventually located to Fremont. The (German speaking) Midwest Synod (formerly German Nebraska Conference) founded Martin Luther Seminary in Lincoln. The Swedish Augustana Synod founded Luther College in Wahoo and the Immanuel Deaconess Institute in Omaha as well as Bethphage Mission in Axtell. The "Inner Mission" Danes founded Trinity Seminary/Dana College as well as a Danish language printing press in Blair Nebraska. This is by no means an exhaustive list of Lutheran institutions; but these historic examples of Lutheran energy for education and social services are still in evidence today in our ongoing support for the Nebraska Synod serving arms and the larger work of the ELCA.

The early 20th century for Lutherans in Nebraska proved to be a deeply painful and challenging time. When the United States entered WWI, the government launched an anti-German propaganda campaign. As a result, German-speaking people, and indeed, many other non-English speaking people, were persecuted by the government as well as harassed by their neighbors. This pressured Lutheran congregations in Nebraska to quickly move towards English-only worship services and religious education. In addition, as younger generations of Lutherans became "Americanized" the previous divisions between Lutheran bodies seemed less formidable by degrees. As a result, Lutheran denominations started merging.

By the 1970s the three Lutheran bodies that would eventually join together to form the ELCA were the Lutheran Church in America, The American Lutheran Church, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (having separated earlier from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod). The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was born in 1988. At that time, there were about 276 congregations in the new Nebraska Synod, ELCA. Its first bishop was Dennis Anderson.

-written by Rev. Kristen Van Stee

Footnote:

- The term "Synod" was used (very confusingly) by different Lutheran bodies in different ways at different times: a synod might refer to a separate denomination and sometimes to refer to a subsidiary body within a denomination. This remains true today as the ELCA calls the subsidiary bodies within it "synods" while the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod is its own separate denomination.