

SUNDAY, 9:00 A.M., JUNE 13, 2021

The mustard seed becomes a great shrub that shelters the birds, recalling ancient images of the tree of life. We'd expect a cedar or a sequoia, but Jesus finds the power of God better imaged in a tiny, no-account seed. It's 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's looking it grows with a power beyond our understanding.



Welcome to guests and visitors! *This pamphlet will guide your worship today. The assembly's parts are indicated by ☒ and bold font. The vertical line in the left margin indicates when the assembly stands as each is able.*

About Holy Communion with Saint John Lutheran Church

“It is taught that the true body and blood of Christ are truly present under the form of bread and wine in the Lord’s Supper and are distributed and received there” (Augsburg Confession, Article X)· “A person who has faith in these words, ‘given for you’ and ‘shed for you for the forgiveness of sins,’ is really worthy and well prepared.” “Forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are given to us in the sacrament” (The Small Catechism, Part VI)· “This church practices Eucharistic hospitality. All baptized persons are welcomed to Communion” (The Use of the Means of Grace, Principle 50)·

Following the introductory verses, a welcome and introduction to the day are made.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

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

☒ Amen.

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God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

☩ Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
The assembly kneels or stands. Silence is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God,

☩ we confess

**that we are captive 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.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

☩ Amen.

GATHERING PSALM (27)

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?

☩ The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid?

When evildoers came upon me to eat up my flesh,

☩ it was they, my foes and my adversaries, who stumbled and fell.

Though an army should encamp against me,

☩ yet my heart shall not be afraid;

and though war should rise up against me,

☩ yet will I put my trust in him.

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.

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.

KYRIE

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

☩ Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation,
let us pray to the Lord.

☩ Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of
God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

☩ Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and
praise, let us pray to the Lord.

☩ Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

☩ Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

☩ And also with you.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

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.

MUSICAL OFFERING: *180 Group video.*

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 17:22-24

²²Thus 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. ²³On 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. ²⁴All 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.

The word of the Lord.

☩ Thanks be to God.

PSALMODY: Psalm 92:1-4, 11-14

¹It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord,
and to sing praises to your name, O Most High;

**☩ ²to tell of your lovingkindness early in the morning
and of your faithfulness in the night season;**

³on the psaltery, and on the lyre,
and to the melody of the harp.

**☩ ⁴For you have made me glad by your acts, O Lord;
and I shout for joy because of the works of your hands.**

¹¹The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree,
and shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon.

**☪ ¹²Those who are planted in the house of the Lord
shall flourish in the courts of our God;**

¹³they shall still bear fruit in old age;
they shall be green and succulent;

**☪ ¹⁴that they may show how upright the Lord is,
my rock, in whom there is no fault.**

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:6-17

⁶So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord—⁷for we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. ¹⁰For 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.

¹¹Therefore, 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. ¹²We 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. ¹³For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. ¹⁴For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. ¹⁵And 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.

¹⁶From 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. ¹⁷So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

The word of the Lord.

☪ Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

It is good to give thanks to the Lord,

☩ to sing praises to your name, O Most High;

to declare your steadfast love in the morning,

☩ and your faithfulness by night,

Alleluia. Welcome with meekness the implanted word

☩ that has the power to save your souls. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Mark 4:26-34

The holy gospel according to Mark.

☩ Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁶Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground,²⁷ and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. ²⁸The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. ²⁹But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come."

³⁰He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? ³¹It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; ³²yet 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."

³³With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; ³⁴he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

The gospel of the Lord.

☩ Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Silence for reflection may follow the sermon.

MUSICAL OFFERING: *Megan Rebout*

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

☞ And also with you.

The assembly remains in place, as the service continues.

APOSTLES' CREED

God has made us God's people through our baptism into Christ.
Living together in trust and hope, we 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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends: Lord, in your mercy,

☞ hear our prayer.

The prayers conclude: We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace.

☞ Amen.

OFFERING PRESENTATION

Offerings are received at the door as one enters. The offering is presented for the work of Christ's Church, here and throughout the world.

OFFERTORY

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood,

☩ a holy nation, God's own people,

in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of God

☩ who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people;

☩ once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

OFFERING PRAYER

At the conclusion, the assembly responds:

☩ Amen.

The table is set.

DIALOGUE

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.

PREFACE

The minister continues, concluding: ... and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (SANCTUS)

**☞ Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God. . . .

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we
proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

☞ Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.

☞ Amen.

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

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

☞ Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION SONG (AGNUS DEI)

**☩ Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Please remain seated where you are. The communion elements will be brought to you. The host is received in your open hand. The wine will be taken by you from an individual glass. Carefully place your empty glass on the pew until end of worship.

BLESSING & POST-COMMUNION PSALM (27)

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

☩ Amen.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?

**☩ The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be
afraid?**

You speak in my heart and say, "Seek my face."

☩ Your face, Lord, will I seek.

Hide not your face from me,

☩ nor turn away your servant in displeasure.

Show me your way, O Lord;

☩ lead me on a level path, because of my enemies.

What if I had not believed that I should see the goodness of the Lord
in the land of the living!

☩ Oh, tarry and await the Lord's pleasure;

be strong, and he shall comfort your heart;

☩ wait patiently for the Lord.

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.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

At the conclusion, the assembly responds:

☩ Amen.

BLESSING

Response after the blessing:

☩ Amen.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please check web-sites and printed materials for further information.

PRAYER FOR MEMORIAL DAY

At the conclusion, the assembly responds:

☩ Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

☩ Thanks be to God.

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Cradle of Life

In the parables of the growing seed and the mustard seed we hear Jesus using agricultural imagery to give us some sense of what the kingdom of God is about. Our reflections and interpretations of these parables usually focus on what they tell us about God's kingdom and how God works in our lives. From these two parables we can gather that the kingdom grows. More specifically, we may say that God provides harvest and shelter. One of the points of parables is to engage our thinking and to keep us asking questions. What else might we see here?

The mustard seed grows into a shrub in which birds can make nests. Bird nests are one of the small wonders of this world. The sort of nest one might find in a tree may be made from sticks, grasses, and spider webs. The bird gathers all of this and may add saliva to weave it into a well-shaped cup to cradle the eggs that will hatch into new life. All of this is done with a beak and two feet. In these nests we see resourcefulness, patience, skill, and elegant design. In the shade of the mustard bush the bird has the freedom to construct something beautiful, practical, and life-giving.

Perhaps this is part of what it means for us to live in God's kingdom. Through Jesus we are given the freedom to use our gifts to make beautiful, practical, life-giving things. We build houses and neighborhoods, families and relationships; we make art and music, friendships and promises. In the shade of grace we are given space to thrive, not simply for our own sake, but for the sake of the world. We can gather in the things of resurrection life: forgiveness, kindness, mercy, compassion, and love. Woven together these acts of faith lead to hope, and hope is always a cradle for new life.

