

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

June 16, 2024

9:00 am

Prelude

Welcome

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.

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy. **Amen.**

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

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. Amen.**

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 Hymn: ELW #793 "Be Thou My Vision"

- 1. Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart; naught be all else to me, save that thou art; thou my best thought both by day and by night, waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.**
- 2. Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word; I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord. Thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tow'r, raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.**
- 3. Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise, thou mine inheritance, now and always; thou and thou only, the first in my heart, great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.**

4. Light of my soul, after victory won, may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun! Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, still be my vision, O ruler of all.

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Prayer of the Day

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.

Readings and Psalm

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.

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.

Psalm: Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15

¹It is a good thing to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praise to your name, O Most High;

²**to herald your love in the morning
and your faithfulness at night;**

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.**

¹²The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree,
and shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon.

**¹³Those who are planted in the house of the LORD
shall flourish in the courts of our God;**

¹⁴they shall still bear fruit in old age;
they shall be green and succulent;

**¹⁵that they may show how upright the LORD is,
my rock, in whom there is no injustice.**

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:6-17

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.

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!

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. Alleluia. (James 1:21)

The Holy Gospel according to the book of Mark, beginning with the Fourth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

²⁶[Jesus] 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 our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon - Eric Henderson

Hymn of the Day: ELW #679 "For the Fruit of all Creation"

- 1. For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God. For these gifts to ev'ry nation, thanks be to God. For the plowing, sowing, reaping, silent growth while we are sleeping, future needs in earth's safekeeping, thanks be to God.**
- 2. In the just reward of labor, God's will is done. In the help we give our neighbor, God's will is done. In our worldwide task of caring for the hungry and despairing, in the harvests we are sharing, God's will is done.**
- 3. For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God. For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God. For the wonders that astound us, for the truths that still confound us, most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.**

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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. Amen.**

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

Offering

Offering Hymn: ELW #686 "We Give Thee But Thine Own" 1st verse

- 1. We give thee but thine own, whate'er the gift may be; all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.**

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Offering Prayer

Jesus, Bread of life, you have set this table with your very self, and called us to the feast of plenty. Gather what has been sown among us, and strengthen us in this meal. Make us to be what we receive here, your body for the life of the world. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

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.

Blessing

The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, ✚ be upon you now and forever. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn: ELW #790 "Day by Day"

- 1. Day by day, your mercies, Lord, attend me, bringing comfort to my anxious soul. Day by day, the blessings, Lord, you send me draw me nearer to my heavn'ly goal. Love divine, beyond all mortal measure, brings to naught the burdens of my quest; Savior, lead me to the home I treasure, where at last I'll find eternal rest.**
- 2. Day by day, I know you will provide me strength to serve and wisdom to obey; I will seek your loving will to guide me o'er the paths I struggle day by day, I will fear no evil of the morrow, I will trust in your enduring grace. Savior, help me bear life's pain and sorrow till in glory I behold your face.**

3. Oh, what joy to know that you are near me when my burdens grow too great to bear; oh, what joy to know that you will hear me when I come, O Lord, to you in prayer. Day by Day, no matter what betide me, you will hold me ever in your hand. Savior, with your presence her to guide me, I will reach at last the promised land.

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Dismissal

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Announcements:

- ✚ Church Council meeting on Tuesday, June 18, at 6:30 pm.
- ✚ Calvary's Concert and Cream on Saturday, June 22, 2024 at 5:30 pm
- ✚ 150th Anniversary Celebration, Saturday, August 17th at 4:30 pm at the Cemetery. A potluck dinner to follow at the Dam Park Shelter. Sunday worship on August 18th at 10:15 am with lunch and program to follow.

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