

CREATED, SAVED AND GIFTED BY GOD,  
WE SEEK, SERVE AND SHARE JESUS CHRIST.



TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
CROWDED TABLE

AUGUST 6, 2023 - 10:30 AM

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH  
901 EAST STROOP ROAD  
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# TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

## CROWDED TABLE

*“This is what God’s kingdom is like: a bunch of outcasts and oddballs gathered at a table, not because they are rich or worthy or good, but because they are hungry, because they said yes. And there’s always room for more.” Rachel Held Evans, Searching for Sunday: Loving, Leaving, and Finding the Church?*

### *Introduction*

In today’s first reading God invites all who are hungry or thirsty to receive food and drink without cost. Jesus feeds the hungry multitude and reveals the abundance of God. At the eucharistic table we remember all who are hungry or poor in our world today. As we share the bread of life, we are sent forth to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry.

### *The Problem with Numbers*

So much attention to numbers! Five. Two. Twelve. Five thousand. And far more than five thousand when the women and children are included in the count (almost as if it’s a census-taker’s afterthought). But who, really, was doing the counting? And why? Was there a crew in that deserted place tallying attendance like ushering teams who survey church pews on Sunday mornings? Probably not. Yet the numbers often dominate this story, a miraculous story so significant to the evangelists that it is, unlike any other miracle, written into all four gospels.

What might be lost from this story when the numbers—how many people, so few loaves, only a couple fish, and even the counted leftovers—command our attention? The numbers apparently consumed the disciples’ imaginations and produced their reaction: “Send them away.”

Consider how often stories end like this: “Send them away.” How quickly, even easily, numbers settle an issue and decide a story’s conclusion, people’s fate. But for Jesus the story is not over. Instead he says, “They need not go away” (Matthew 14:16). The numbers neither control nor tell the story. Compassion does. And more, that is not only how the story ends; compassion is how the story begins: “When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them” (Matt. 14:14).

Rather than the numbers, it is the “where” of this story that is significant. We easily overlook where Jesus is doing his ministry: Ashore. In a deserted place. It is not in the religious space of the synagogue. In the religious space, Jesus’ teaching so offended the congregation that, dishonored, he left unable to accomplish anything among them. Unable to make a space of compassion and care there, he goes out to where the people are. If this doesn’t give us pause, we are not paying attention.

We see where Jesus is. Where is the church?

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\*\* Indicates to stand as you are able.

# GATHERING

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CALL TO WORSHIP

One: May God the World Maker bless you;

Many: **Let us delight in sunlight and starlight and surprises of the turning earth.**

One: May Jesus the Peace Maker bless you;

Many: **Let us celebrate Life as it is found in this community, in all its struggles and joys.**

One: May Spirit the Journey Maker bless you;

Many: **Let us walk with saints and angels in the wisdom and wildness of Love.**

Amen.

### OPENING LITANY *(inspired by Psalm 145)*

The Lord our God overflows with loving kindness,  
and is close to all who call on the Holy One's name!

**We praise and bless God's holy name forever.**

The Lord our Great God is glorious beyond  
our imagination, yet God hears our cries for help!

**We praise and bless God's holy name forever.**

The Lord our God is worthy to be honored  
by every generation, and by all people from lands east to west!

**We come with hearts ready for worship to praise and bless God's holy name. Amen.**

## GATHERING SONG

*We Would Be Building*

Re - veal the life that God would give to man.  
To see the tow - ers gleam - ing in the light,  
Un - til the heav'n - ly king - dom comes on earth. A-MEN.

The image shows a musical score for the song 'We Would Be Building'. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff for the melody and a bass clef staff for the accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the treble staff. The melody starts with a G4 quarter note, followed by a B-flat4 quarter note, then a G4 quarter note, and a B-flat4 quarter note. The accompaniment starts with a G2 half note, followed by a B-flat2 half note, then a G2 quarter note, and a B-flat2 quarter note. The lyrics are: 'Re - veal the life that God would give to man. To see the tow - ers gleam - ing in the light, Un - til the heav'n - ly king - dom comes on earth. A-MEN.'

## **CONFESSION**

Our God is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He is close to all who call on him in truth, listening to their cries for help, and offering them salvation. So, let's bring our confession to God, knowing that he will hear our prayers and forgive.

*(A period of silence for reflection.)*

**God of love, You have given us a world of beauty, and we have spoiled it, A world to feed us, and so many go hungry, A world of riches, and we are unwilling to share, A world in need, and we think only of ourselves. Forgive us, gracious God, for those times your heart is saddened by our selfishness; for those times we think only of our own desires. Enable us to see this world anew as a gift from you, to be shared and nurtured; and give us hearts to care for all who live upon it. Amen.**

## **FORGIVENESS**

God is a cup of cold water when we thirst. God offers boundless grace when we fail. Claim the gift of God's mercy: you are freed and forgiven in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## **THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

# WORD

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

## FIRST READING

**Isaiah 55:1-5**

*God invites Israel to a great feast at which both food and drink are free. God also promises to make an everlasting covenant with all peoples, with promises that previously had been limited to Israel. As David was a witness to the nations, these nations shall now acknowledge the ways in which God has glorified Israel.*

A reading from the book of Isaiah.

Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM

**Psalms 145:8-9, 14-21**

*You open wide your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. (Ps. 145:16)*

The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,  
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love.

**LORD, you are good to all,  
and your compassion is over all your works.**

The Lord upholds all those who fall  
and lifts up those who are bowed down.

**The eyes of all wait upon you, O LORD,  
and you give them their food in due season.**

You open wide your hand  
and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

**You are righteous in all your ways  
and loving in all your works.**

You are near to all who call upon you,  
to all who call upon you faithfully.

**You fulfill the desire of those who fear you;  
you hear their cry and save them.**

You watch over all those who love you,  
but all the wicked you shall destroy.

**My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD;  
let all flesh bless God's holy name forever and ever.**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

One time when Jesus went for a Sabbath meal with one of the top leaders of the Pharisees, all the guests had their eyes on him, watching his every move. Right before him there was a man hugely swollen in his joints. So Jesus asked the religion scholars and Pharisees present, "Is it permitted to heal on the Sabbath? Yes or no?" They were silent. So he took the man, healed him, and sent him on his way. Then he said, "Is there anyone here who, if a child or animal fell down a well, wouldn't rush to pull him out immediately, not asking whether or not it was the Sabbath?" They were stumped. There was nothing they could say to that. He went on to tell a story to the guests around the table. Noticing how each had tried to elbow into the place of honor, he said, "When someone invites you to dinner, don't take the place of honor. Somebody more important than you might have been invited by the host. Then he'll come and call out in front of everybody, 'You're in the wrong place. The place of honor belongs to this man.' Red-faced, you'll have to make your way to the very last table, the only place left. "When you're invited to dinner, go and sit at the last place. Then when the host comes he may very well say, 'Friend, come up to the front.' That will give the dinner guests something to talk about! What I'm saying is, If you walk around with your nose in the air, you're going to end up flat on your face. But if you're content to be simply yourself, you will become more than yourself." Then he turned to the host. "The next time you put on a dinner, don't just invite your friends and family and rich neighbors, the kind of people who will return the favor. Invite some people who never get invited out, the misfits from the wrong side of the tracks. You'll be - and experience - a blessing. They won't be able to return the favor, but the favor will be returned - oh, how it will be returned! - at the resurrection of God's people."

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **YOUTH MESSAGE**

### **MESSAGE**

*Pr. Michelle Wilkey*

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;  
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art;  
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,  
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;  
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;  
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son;  
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Be Thou my battle Shield, Sword for the fight;  
Be Thou my Dignity, Thou my Delight;  
Thou my soul's Shelter, Thou my high Tow'r:  
Raise Thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,  
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always:  
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,  
High King of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

High King of Heaven, my victory won,  
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heav'n's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whate'er befall,  
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

**\*\* 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 power of the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
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,  
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 THE COMMUNITY**

**GATHERING OF GIFTS**

**OFFERTORY**

**OFFERING PRAYER**

God of field and forest, sea and sky, you are the giver of all good things. Sustain us with these gifts of your creation, and multiply your graciousness in us, that the world may be fed with your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**



# MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

Lift up your heads; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your voices; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your hearts; **we lift them up to God.**

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

And so we gather at the table. We come from many different places in life. And as we come together around the table we discover that our differences are not something we just tolerate, but that our differences are indeed a blessing. So come, children of God, just as you are. Wherever you are on this journey of life and faith, you are welcome here - here in this place, here in this community, here at this table. Come, children of God, come and remember. Remember the stories that Jesus' friends tell: Stories of bread broken and shared to feed a multitude; stories of gathering both enemy and friend together around a common table; stories of unlikely guests revealing the face of the sacred.

On a night of both celebration and betrayal Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it; gave it to his disciples and said, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Then Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to his disciples 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."

And so we pray: Lord, bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be open, and that we might recognize the risen Christ in our midst, indeed in one another.

## **\*\* LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

All people are called to Christ's table. Come, eat what is good.

**HOLY COMMUNION** - *Receiving the Lord's tangible presence.*

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Each person may respond: **Amen.**

**Communion Statement** ~ *If you believe in your heart that Jesus Christ is your Savior and Redeemer and would like to receive Holy Communion, then come forward to receive the elements. If you would just like to come forward and receive a blessing, then you may do that also.*

*NOTE: We invite everyone to come forward for Holy Communion. If you have a gluten allergy, gluten-free wafers are available upon request when receiving Communion. Also, if you prefer not to receive wine at Communion, apple juice is available upon request.*

**REFLECTION DURING COMMUNION**

*As we prepare to receive the sacrament today, may we quietly take this time to center ourselves on Christ, and the amazing gifts of grace and forgiveness that we have been given. As we receive the body and the blood of our Lord, let us reflect upon His sacrifice. Finally, may we take this time to ask the Holy Spirit to enter our hearts, and then to work **in** us and **through** us in the coming days.*

**\*\* TABLE BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and always keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

We thank you, generous God, for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table. Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

# SENDING

## BLESSING

The God who calls across the cosmos and speaks in the smallest seed bless, keep, and sustain you now and to the end of the age. **Amen.**

## SENDING SONG

*Lord of the Dance*

*Unison*

**Lively and rhythmic**

1 I  
2 I  
3 I  
4 I

3

danced in the morning when the world was be - gun, and I  
danced for the scribe and the phar - i - see, but they  
danced on the Sab-bath and I cured the lame; the  
danced on a Fri-day when the sky turned black— it's

5

danced in the moon and the stars and the sun, and I  
would not dance and they would-n't fol - low me. I  
ho - ly peo - ple said it was a shame. They  
hard to dance with the dev - il on your back. They

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7

came danced down from heav - en and I  
 danced for the fish - er - men, for  
 whipped and they stripped and they  
 bur - ied my bo - dy and they

8

danced on the earth; at  
 James and the John— at  
 hung me on high, and they  
 thought I'd gone; but

9

Beth - le - hem I had my birth.  
 came with me and the Dance went on.  
 left me there on a cross to die.  
 I am the Dance, and I still go on.

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667  
 Refrain

11

*Dance, then, wher-ev-er you may be; I am the Lord of the*

14

*Dance, said he, and I'll lead you all, wherever you may be, and I'll*

17

*lead you all in the Dance, said he.*

*vv. 1-4*

*Turn for verse 5.*

19

**5** They cut me down and I leapt up high;

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23

I am the life that'll never, never die; I'll live in you if you'll

26

live in me: I am the Lord of the Dance, said he:

29 Refrain

*Dance, then, wher-ev-er you may be; I am the Lord of the*

32

*Dance, said he, and I'll lead you all, wher-ev-er you may be, and I'll*

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35

*lead you all in the Dance, said he.*

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the harvest.

**Created, saved and gifted by God, we seek, serve and share Jesus Christ.**

**Hallelujah! Thanks be to God!**

## POSTLUDE

**“W + 2” = Worship Plus Two**

**Make a commitment to not only worship each week  
 but also try to find a way to serve in the congregation  
 and seek out a way to serve our community.**

**YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD**

## Upcoming Commemorations

### **Dominic, founder of the Order of Preachers (Dominicans), died 1221**

**Tuesday, August 8, 2023**

Dominic was a Spanish priest who saw the wealth of the clergy as a stumbling block for the church, so he formed a movement, the Order of Preachers (commonly called Dominicans) devoted to itinerant preaching and living in poverty.

### **Lawrence, deacon, martyr, died 258**

**Thursday, August 10, 2023**

As one of the seven deacons of the church at Rome, Lawrence was responsible for the church's financial matters and for the care of the poor. Asked by the emperor to gather the church's treasure, he presented a collection of orphans, lepers, and the like. The enraged emperor had him put to death.

### **Clare, Abbess of San Damiano, died 1253**

**Friday, August 11, 2023**

A contemporary of Francis of Assisi, Clare and a growing number of companions established a women's Franciscan community, called the Order of Poor Ladies, or Poor Clares. She inspired other women to pursue spiritual goals.

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