

New Hope Lutheran Church

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June 6, 2021

2nd Sunday after Pentecost

Coming Events

All services have been cancelled.

June 8 6:30pm Zoom Raamatupiiri
June 9 6:30pm Zoom Council mtg
June 11 7:00pm Zoom Confirmation

In our prayers Ruth, Fred, Esme, Martha.

Father's Day bilingual zoom service

For Father's Day, June 20, 2021 at 10:00am, we are planning a bilingual service by **zoom only**. If you would like to take part, please send the office an email to let us know. Then on June 19, 2021 you will receive an invitation with instructions to join.

Opening Hymn – Now We Join in Celebration
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZc0-YN9xxQ>

Prayer of the Day

All-powerful God, in Jesus Christ you turned death into life and defeat into victory. Increase our faith and trust in him, that we may triumph over all evil in the strength of the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Psalm 130

- 1 Out of the depths I cry to you, LORD;
- 2 Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.
- 3 If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand?
- 4 But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, serve you.
- 5 I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope.
- 6 I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning.
- 7 Israel, put your hope in the LORD, for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption.
- 8 He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.

First Reading “**Genesis 3:8 – 15**”

8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?” 10 He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.” 11 And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” 12 The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” 13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” 14 So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, ‘Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.’”

Second Reading “**2 Corinthians 4:13 – 5:1**”

4:13 It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.” Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, 14 because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present

us with you to himself. 15 All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. 16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

5:1 For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.

Gospel “**Mark 3:20 – 25**”

20 Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. 21 When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, “He is out of his mind.” 22 And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, “He is possessed by Beelzebul! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons.” 23 So Jesus called them over to him and began to speak to them in parables: “How can Satan drive out Satan? 24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

Sermon

“Community, Not Chaos”

I have to admit, that when I first read the gospel lesson, I was a bit confused, wondering: what is going on? Between entering a house, not being able to eat due to uninvited guests, having family think he's gone crazy, and esteemed teachers claiming Jesus is possessed... the scene appears to be absolute chaos!

It is better explained in The Message version of the Bible which, in this case anyway, helps take away the mayhem by simply explaining: “Jesus came home and, as usual, a crowd gathered – so many making demands on him that there wasn't even time to eat. His friends heard what was going on and went to rescue him, by force if necessary. They suspected he was getting carried away with himself.

The religion scholars from Jerusalem came down spreading rumors that he was working black magic, using devil tricks to

impress them with spiritual power...” and the rest is pretty self explanatory.

Trying to make sense out of chaos can be difficult, if not impossible without the right tools at hand. We are reminded today that the powers of evil want to create chaos, confusion, and divisions in order to make life more miserable for humans. That is already apparent in our first lesson for today from Genesis. God has been in this wonderful relationship with Adam and Eve, the humans have all they need to survive comfortably, and life is good.

But then evil butts in and the result is chaos. Adam feels guilt and hides from God, and when God calls on him, Adam makes the lame excuse that he didn't want the creator (who made every single part of him) to see him naked. Like God hadn't seen all that before! Then, after lying to God, Adam tries to shift the blame over to Eve, who in turn, shifts the blame onto the serpent. And we all know how the story ends. Adam and Eve are turfed from the Garden of Eden and have to go to work for a living.

So, on top of creating divisions between God and humans, evil also created divisions between the humans themselves. What was once an orderly and peaceful lifestyle has now become an inconsistent life of hardship and drudgery. And while the Bible never says anything about it, it's pretty easy to imagine that after a disappointingly tough day Adam and Eve would be found arguing over who got them kicked out of the paradise they used to have. Thanks a bunch evil.

In many ways, the point of that account from Genesis is to remind us that evil still has the ability to cause us chaos and mayhem in our lives. We are all Adam and Eve. We all have tried to hide from God our sins, sometimes by pretending they don't happen, or allowing our own ignorance to hide evil from us. If we don't know about some injustice going on, how can we do anything about it?

The recent discovery of 215 children's graves at a former residential school is a reminder of how even when horrible things are covered up, they still come to light with the passing of time. Like Adam and Eve, we can make the attempt to hide our sin from God or push the blame elsewhere, but in the end we cannot hide from the evil that happened. We may well say that

those events in British Columbia happened in another time, or that we had nothing to do with it, but as children of God, are we not obliged to see to it that justice is somehow served?

Evil works at its best when it separates us and make us feel like we are simply individuals with no concern for others. Like Adam and Eve, we fall for the temptation to distance ourselves, to make excuses, and to blame others. In such a way chaos can continue onward, it can continue to hurt people who have already been hurt, as well as hurting many others.

Going by Genesis and the example of Jesus, we are reminded that God wants us to build community, rather than some individualistic type of society. And if it means that we don't have time to eat, or that our friends think we might be losing our grip on reality, so be it. Building community is hard, its time consuming, and it takes a lot of work. Looking out for others before ourselves can feel like a waste of time, but it is also a part of building community.

We are reminded today that the purpose of building community is to fight off chaos and mayhem. Community is a place where we can make sense of our lives and find true purpose and meaning. Community is a place where we find comfort in times of trial, shoulders to lean on, ears to listen, and hearts that will pray for us. In this time of pandemic, in this time when we deal with the loss of 215 children, may we see that the work of building community in Christ is always worth it. Amen.

Hymn – Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gM7gt_cSxjw

Prayers

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

God of wholeness, we pray for believers all over the globe. Unify us in service of the gospel, that we may work together as beloved siblings to share your love with all. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the cosmos, we pray for creation; the gardens, waterways and creatures near to us and diverse forms of life that remain unseen. Teach us to treat the natural world with reverence, seeking restoration when human divisions have

caused harm to your beloved creation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of all people, we pray for harmony among the nations. Cast out from us unclean spirits of greed and fear, that we may work in solidarity with one another for the common good. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of abundance, we pray for those who are oppressed or in any need. Encourage those who have begun to lose heart. Strengthen and renew us with your Spirit. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of righteousness, we pray for this congregation. Set out gaze upon things eternal, that in thanksgiving for your mercy, we may extend grace to more and more people. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the ages, in your goodness you have sent us faithful witnesses for every time and place. We give you thanks for those saints who now rest in your eternal mercy. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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

Lord's Prayer

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.

Hymn – I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXjV-FiCBTs>