

New Hope Lutheran Church

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June 21, 2020

3rd Sunday after Pentecost

**ALL EVENTS FOR THE COMING
WEEK HAVE BEEN CANCELLED except**

June 26 6pm Youth zoom mtg

Happy Father's Day to all fathers

Please remember to send in your offering.

*We now have a **donate button** on our web site nhlc.ca*

Previous Sunday sermons can be found on the website.

The office is closed, but phone messages, email and mail are being checked regularly.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Aline, Fred, Pentti, Esme, Martha, Derek, Maria and Kai.

Prayer of the Day

Teach us, good Lord God, to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labour and not to ask for reward, except that knowing that we do your will, we pray through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading Jeremiah 20:7 – 13

7 You deceived me, LORD, and I was deceived; you overpowered me and prevailed. I am ridiculed all day long; everyone mocks me. 8 Whenever I speak, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction. So the word of the LORD has brought me insult and reproach all day long. 9 But if I say, "I will not mention his word or speak anymore in his name," his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot. 10 I hear many whispering, "Terror on every side! Denounce him! Let's denounce him!" All my friends are waiting for me to slip, saying, "Perhaps he will be deceived; then we will prevail over him and take our revenge on him." 11 But the LORD is with me like a mighty warrior; so my persecutors will stumble and not prevail. They will fail and be thoroughly disgraced; their dishonor will never be forgotten. 12 LORD Almighty, you who examine the righteous and probe the heart and mind, let me see your vengeance on them, for to you I have committed my cause. 13 Sing to the LORD! Give praise to the LORD! He rescues the life of the needy from the hands of the wicked.

Psalm 69:7 – 18

7 For I endure scorn for your sake, and shame covers my face. 8 I am a foreigner to my own family, a stranger to my own mother's children; 9 for zeal for your house consumes me, and the insults of those who insult you fall on me. 10 When I weep and fast, I must endure scorn; 11 when I put on sackcloth, people make sport of me. 12 Those who sit at the gate mock me, and I am the song of the drunkards. 13 But I pray to you, LORD, in the time of your favor; in your great love, O God, answer me with your sure salvation. 14 Rescue me from the mire, do not let me sink; deliver me from those who hate me, from the deep waters. 15 Do not let the floodwaters engulf me or the depths swallow me up or the pit close its mouth over me. 16 Answer me, LORD, out of the goodness of your love; in your great mercy turn to me. 17 Do not hide your face from your servant; answer me quickly, for I am in trouble. 18 Come near and rescue me; deliver me because of my foes.

Second Reading Romans 6:1 – 11

1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into

his death? 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. 5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— 7 because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. 10 The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. 11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Gospel Matthew 10:24 – 39

24 "The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household! 26 "So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. 28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. 30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. 32 "Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. 33 But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven. 34 "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to turn " 'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—36 a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.' 37 "Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39

Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

June 21, 2020 – 3rd Sunday after Pentecost
“The Loving Parent”

I realize that today’s gospel doesn’t send much of a cheery Father’s Day message. On the surface, one could even say that it is pretty grim. “*Sorry Dad, but I have to cut ties with you because Jesus says so.*” Not exactly a message we would care to send to most parents; especially on this day.

In our gospel, Jesus is being perfectly candid with the disciples on the kinds of struggles they will encounter. He isn’t going to sugar-coat what they (or we) are going to face if we are to be faithful followers.

We can expect ridicule, for example, just as the prophet Jeremiah expressed in our 1st lesson. Being made fun of or mocked has been part of the experience of being in fellowship with God since earliest times. Where in the Bible do you find the God fearing person who lived a life without some sort of difficulties?

We are also informed that there may be threats to our lives and livelihood. People may avoid us or even threaten us if we speak out regarding justice issues for example.

And finally, the gospel warns us that there is always the possibility of some type of family strife. Differing opinions on a variety of topics can balloon into some form of conflict. Showing unconditional love to those Jesus called our neighbors may include asking the family to sacrifice – which doesn’t come easily to everyone.

In any of those situations Jesus cautions us to stand firmly on the side of the gospel message. It may be helpful to understand that all of these things may be the powers of evil attempting to dissuade us from following God and getting us to turn aside.

In order to overcome these obstacles, Jesus also reminds us of our value to God, and that we are so cherished that God sees value even on each hair on our heads. So this can be a difficult lesson to embrace because it seems to expect a lot from us.

But what if we turned it around and looked at it from the viewpoint of a parent giving their children some wise advice?

We are at a point in the gospel of Matthew where our gospel readings have been moving from teaching the disciples the basics, to sharing wisdom on how that life is lived out and experienced fully. Think of it as instructing a young adult on some of the challenges they might come across in their lives. Is it wise (or even loving) to simply tell them that all will go well in their lives and send them on their way? Or should we inform them that life can be messy and difficult, but whatever happens, we will be there to stand by them?

Isn’t this why we have days that celebrate the best aspects of parents? When we consider how difficult it must have been for our parents to tell us in so many different ways that; sorry, the world is not a totally rosy place and you are going to face difficulties. It’s not easy to do such a thing and it takes a loving courage. It also takes resolve to inform us that a parent will stand by us, and follow through with that regardless of whatever kind of mess we’ve stumbled into.

Rather than being a message we might want to turn off then, our gospel today is about how much God loves and cares about us. How much better is it to be sent into the world knowing the dangers ahead of time, and being aware that we always have the heavenly parent backing us up? Amen.

Prayers

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

Expansive God, you bring diverse voices together to form your church. Open our hearts and unstop our ears to learn from and about one another. Be with us to listen especially to those who seek justice, so that our differences might not overshadow our baptismal unity.

Loving God, you promise to be with all who are persecuted for your sake. Guide all who speak your word of justice and console any who are tormented or targeted for being who they are. Bless us with your presence in times of torment.

Compassionate God, you are with us and we are never alone. Bless all fathers and father figures who strive to love and nurture as you do. Comfort all who long to be fathers and all for whom this day is difficult.

Protecting God, we pray for those who have strayed from your fellowship. Give us the wisdom to understand and address their situation in life so they will once again seek your presence in their lives. Give them eyes to see your hand working around them and ears to hear your word with newness and life. Bless our efforts to spread your message to them.

Healing God, we pray for those who are ill. Be with those in our parish who suffer from pain, look over those who cannot fully function. Ease their pain, their anxiety, and their suffering. Look up them with pity and strengthen them through their illness.

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**