

**Elim Lutheran Church
Service for Sunday, June 21, 2020**

Since many of you are unable to view today's worship service, lessons, a short message, and prayers for this day are provided for your devotion.

Discipleship is hard. Discipleship is messy. We are disciples of Jesus Christ.

Greeting

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

The Word

The 1st reading is from the Book of Jeremiah, the 20th Chapter.

⁷O LORD, you have enticed me,
and I was enticed;
you have overpowered me,
and you have prevailed.
I have become a laughingstock all day long;
everyone mocks me.

⁸For whenever I speak, I must cry out,
I must shout, "Violence and destruction!"
For the word of the LORD has become for me
a reproach and derision all day long.

⁹If I say, "I will not mention him,
or speak any more in his name,"
then within me there is something like a burning fire
shut up in my bones;

I am weary with holding it in,
and I cannot.

¹⁰For I hear many whispering:

“Terror is all around!

Denounce him! Let us denounce him!”

All my close friends
are watching for me to stumble.

“Perhaps he can be enticed,
and we can prevail against him,
and take our revenge on him.”

¹¹But the LORD is with me like a dread warrior;
therefore my persecutors will stumble,
and they will not prevail.

They will be greatly shamed,
for they will not succeed.

Their eternal dishonor
will never be forgotten.

¹²O LORD of hosts, you test the righteous,
you see the heart and the mind;
let me see your retribution upon them,
for to you I have committed my cause.

¹³Sing to the LORD;
praise the LORD!

For he has delivered the life of the needy
from the hands of evildoers. (Jeremiah 20:7- 13)

Jeremiah 20:13

King James Version

Sing unto the LORD, praise ye the LORD:
for he hath delivered the soul of the
poor from the hand of evildoers.

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Hymn

Healer of Our Every Ill

Healer of our every ill, light of each tomorrow,
Give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow.

You who know our fears and sadness,
Grace us with your peace and gladness;
Spirit of all comfort, fill our hearts.

Healer of our every ill, light of each tomorrow,
Give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow.

In the pain and joy beholding
How your grace is still unfolding,
Give us all your vision, God of love.

Healer of our every ill, light of each tomorrow,
Give us peace beyond our fear and hope beyond our sorrow.

Give us strength to love each other,
Every sister, every brother;
Spirit of all kindness, be our guide.

Healer of our every ill, light of each tomorrow,
Give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow.

You who know each thought and feeling,
Teach us all your way of healing;
Spirit of compassion fill each heart.

Healer of our every ill, light of each tomorrow,
Give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow.

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Text and Music: Marty Haugen

Today's Gospel is from the 10th Chapters of Matthew. *Glory to you, O Lord.*

[Jesus said to the twelve:] ²⁴“A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; ²⁵it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

²⁶“So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your God. ³⁰And even the hairs of your head are all counted. ³¹So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

³²“Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Lord in heaven; ³³but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Lord in heaven.

³⁴“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

³⁵For I have come to set a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;

³⁶and one's foes will be members of one's own household.

³⁷Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.” (Matthew 10:24-39)

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

The Message

Have you ever been so afraid, so disappointed, so devastated by someone or something, that you feel as though you'd like to give up? How about the times when you believed no one was on your side to support you or your own beliefs? God does not promise us our lives will be carefree, with no bumps in the road, no horrors to face. We are not promised that being a follower of Christ, being a disciple, will be easy.

After reading the Old Testament text for today, we see that Jeremiah is feeling pain and rejection because there are those who refuse to hear what he has to say. What he has to say is important. Jeremiah knows that because he is a prophet, he is to proclaim the good news of God's love for the people of Israel.

Coming from the prophet's mouth, his lament is filled with utter despair. Jeremiah says that God has duped, has deceived him. Everyone is mocking him. He cries for "violence and destruction." The prophet even goes on to say that he will not speak the name of the Lord anymore. These words against God are some of the most blasphemous in the Bible.

In the midst of this reading we hear words that seem a bit confusing after his lament. Jeremiah says, "...then within me something like a burning fire shut up in my bones. I can't keep it in any longer. I am weary from trying to hold this within, but I just can't do it. I just cannot."

Yes, Jeremiah is fed up! But the words he just spoke proclaim that it is harder for him to not follow his call than it is to follow life's struggles. He goes on to say that his enemies, his close friends, have terrorized him. They are waiting for him to stumble. The Lord will cause his enemies to stumble. But by the end of his diatribe, we hear Jeremiah speaking something wonderful, something amazing. We hear him say, "Sing to the Lord! Praise the Lord!" Why does he want this? "For the Lord has given care and life to all with needs and has taken these unfortunate lives away from the evildoers."

In spite of all this anguish and gloom, Jeremiah sees that God is deserving of thanksgiving and praise. Jeremiah has told us that God has promised salvation and deliverance to God's people following this vile and blasphemous lament.

And when we hear the words of Jesus in today's reading from Matthew, he says that a disciple is not above his or her master but is like, LIKE, the master. In other words, we are called to not be Christ but to be LIKE Christ. We are called to be servants and share these sometimes-difficult words that others need to hear. Everything that Jesus is speaking to his disciples is also spoken with each of us in mind.

These very words may bring division between one another, even between family and dear friends: Set a man against his father and daughter against her mother. These words are difficult to hear, especially when the Sixth Commandment has been given to us by God as an imperative: *You shall honor your father and mother (and those who are in authority) that all your days will be long in the land God has given you.*

I am not sure I'm really in favor of being told to set myself against my mother, the one who gave me birth, cared for me, and loved me. Would this allow me to experience

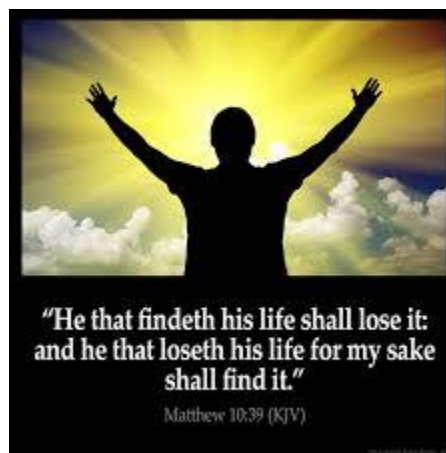
rejection from those I love the most? Wondering about this verse, I recall reading somewhere that a mother's love is, or should be, a love that passes all understanding just below the level of love God, in the Son, has for each of us.

Love in this world is the true grace that makes a new creation each day. A new creation to enjoy and to bless us. This love is marked by the God who knows the number of hairs on our heads...such an insignificant thing, the number of hairs on our heads. The love of God rescues us from the evil that is set to destroy.

This love is marked by the cross where Christ was crucified. This love is marked by Christ's body and blood, the redeeming holy food. And from the table and the cross we are sent out to witness to the world, sharing with all the true amazing love that promises grace and promises life eternal. We are to share the Good News of all we've been given in this world and all we will receive in the time to come.

While we are out sharing the news of everything we've been given by the crucified, died, and risen Christ, we may also know the frustration and pain, the rejection and anguish, just as Jeremiah did. And when this pain and rejection stares at us face-to-face, may we know God is one we can trust. With this faith, we can have courage to take on those who deceive us, those who reject us, and those who cause us pain.

May you experience a true and intimate relationship with the one true and only God. May you know the love of family and friends. May you be a disciple of the crucified and risen Lord. Amen.



Hymn

Lord of All Hopefulness

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever childlike, no cares could destroy:

Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe:
Be there at our labors, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts: Lord, at the end of the day.

Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hand swift to welcome, your arms to embrace:
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm;
Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

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Text: Jan Struther

Tune: Irish traditional

Prayers of the People

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

A brief silence.

Expansive God, You bring diverse voices together to form Your church. Open our hearts and unstop our ears to learn from one another, that differences might not overshadow our baptismal unity. During this time of racism, help us to see Your likeness in all people. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Providing God, Your creation shows us that life comes from death. Renew the places where the land, air, and waterways have been ill for too long, where Your creatures are becoming extinct, and where there are vast shortages of food and water for all. Direct the work of all toward healing the ills of this world. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Protecting God, sustain and keep safe all who work to defend others across the world. Revive and strengthen organizations and people dedicated to caring for refugees and migrants, people of all colors, and those who are unserved or underserved with needs of many kinds. Heal this world as we mourn for peace. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Healing God, care for those who are sick, especially Daniel Strand – nephew of Scott and Pastor Carol Strand, Sarah VanRaden, Bonnie Duggan, Jeanne Roen, Edna Mae Lewis, Judy - Curt Meyer's sister, Doug Nordland – family friend of Derek Miller, Rose – Lenora Scheer's niece, Greg Turner, Fern Softing, Brandon - Victoria Savanh's cousin, and all others we name in our hearts before You. Give each the assurance that You are with them always. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Reigning God, You bless us with guides and caretakers in the faith. As we give thanks for those who have died and increase our care for one another until we walk with them in newness of life. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those prayers which are too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As the Holy Spirit gathers us into one, let us pray together the prayer that Jesus teaches us.

Our Father, who art in heaven hallowed by 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.

Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory. Forever and ever. Amen.

Blessing and Sending

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.
God, the creator, ✠ Jesus, the Christ,
and the Holy Spirit, the comforter,
bless you and keep you in eternal love. **Amen.**

Go in peace. Christ is with you.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

Happy Father's Day

to

all the fathers and to anyone who is like a father to someone.

God Bless You all!