

# Lutheran Church of the Redeemer

Our Mission: To share Christ's love with the greatest number of people.

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, July 30, 2023

The Service at 10:30 am



*As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!*



## GATHERING

### PRELUDE

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*Please stand.*

Pastor In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Congregation **Amen.**

Pastor Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open, all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hid:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Congregation **Amen.**

Pastor Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Pastor Most merciful God,  
Congregation **we confess that we are in bondage to sin  
and cannot free ourselves.  
We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us.  
Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,  
so that we may delight in your will  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your holy name.  
Amen.**

Pastor God, who is rich in mercy,  
loved us even when we were dead in sin,  
and made us alive together with Christ.  
By grace you have been saved.  
In the name of Jesus Christ,  
your sins are forgiven.  
Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit,  
that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Congregation **Amen.**

# GATHERING HYMN: GATHER US IN #532

*We invite you to turn and face the cross (as you are comfortable). Please turn to the front of the sanctuary after the cross has passed you. All sing.*

## Gather Us In



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing, now is the dark - ness  
2 We are the young, our lives are a mys - t'ry, we are the old who  
3 Here we will take the wine and the wa - ter, here we will take the  
4 Not in the dark of build-ings con - fin - ing, not in some heav - en,



van - ished a - way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings  
yearn for your face; we have been sung through - out all of his - t'ry,  
bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ers,  
light years a - way— here in this place the new light is shin - ing,



brought here to you in the light of this day.  
called to be light to the whole hu - man race.  
call us a - new to be salt for the earth.  
now is the king - dom, and now is the day.



Gath-er us in, the lost and for - sak - en, gath-er us in, the  
Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty, gath-er us in, the  
Give us to drink the wine of com-pas - sion, give us to eat the  
Gath-er us in and hold us for - ev - er, gath-er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en,  
proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low - ly,  
bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash - ion  
make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo - ples to - geth - er,



we shall a - rise at the sound of our name.  
give us the cour - age to en - ter the song.  
lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are true.  
fire . . of love in our flesh and our bone.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: GATHER US IN, Marty Haugen

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## APOSTOLIC GREETING

Pastor

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

Congregation

**And also with you.**

## HYMN OF PRAISE

*All sing.*

### Now the Feast and Celebration

*Refrain*



Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion, all of cre - a - tion



sings for joy to the God of life and love and free - dom;



praise and glo - ry for - ev - er - more!



1 Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain, whose blood has



*Refrain*  
freed and u - nit - ed us to be one great peo - ple of God.



2 Pow - er and rich - es, wis - dom and might, all hon - or and



*Refrain*  
glo - ry to Christ for - ev - er.



3 For God has come to dwell with us, to make us peo - ple of



*Refrain*  
God; to make all things new.

Text and music: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

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## PRAYER OF THE DAY

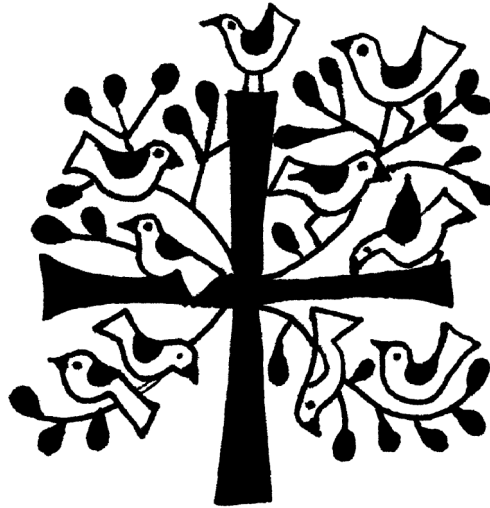
Pastor           The Lord be with you.  
Congregation   **And also with you.**

Pastor           Let us pray.  
Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation   **Amen.**

*Please sit.*

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE



## THE WORD

### Reading: 1 Kings 3:5-12

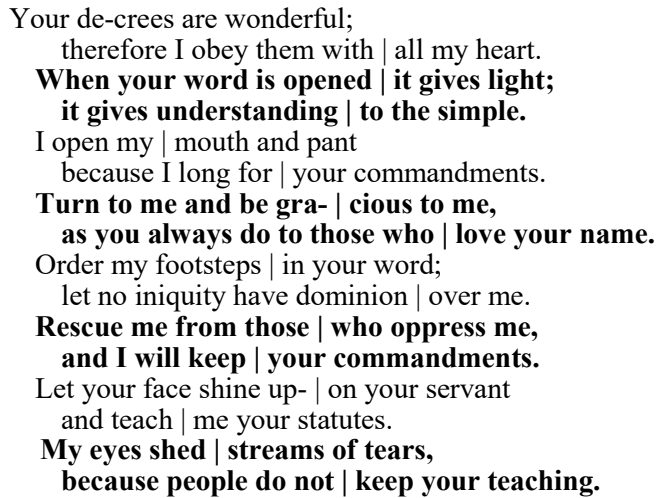
*Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people well.*

At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, “Ask what I should give you.” And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?”

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.”

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

*Congregation sings words in bold.*



*These words celebrate the depth of God's actions for us. Through Christ's death for us and the activity of the Spirit praying for us, we are fused to God's love poured out in Jesus Christ. Nothing, not even death itself, is able to separate us from such incredible divine love.*

The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that 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 our Lord.

Reader	Word of God, word of life.
Congregation	<b>Thanks be to God.</b>

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Please stand and sing.*



The Gospel is announced.

Pastor	The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.
Congregation	<b>Glory to you, O Lord.</b>

### **Gospel: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52**

*Throughout Matthew's gospel, Jesus and his disciples proclaim the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near!" Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people's lives.*

[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it."

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

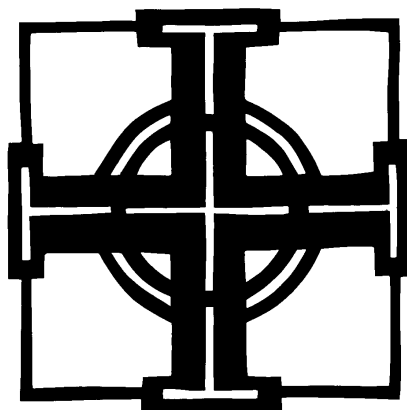
"Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

Pastor	The Gospel of the Lord.
Congregation	<b>Praise to you, O Christ.</b>

## SERMON

*"The Kingdom of heaven is... .."*  
*Pastor Josh Wullenweber*





# HYMN OF THE DAY: BE THOU MY VISION #793

*Please stand and sing.*

## Be Thou My Vision

1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;  
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;  
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,  
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,

naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.  
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:  
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!

thou my best thought both by day and by night,  
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,  
 thou and thou on - ly, the first in my heart,  
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.  
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.  
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.  
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Text: Irish, 8th cent.; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860–1935, alt.; tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1880–1931  
 Music: SLANE, Irish traditional

## APOSTLES' CREED

Pastor With the whole church, let us confess our faith.  
Congregation **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.**

## PRAYERS

*Prayers are included for the whole Church, the nations, those in need, the parish and special concerns.  
After each portion of the prayers:*

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

*At the end of the prayer:*

Pastor Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray,  
trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.  
Congregation **Amen.**

## THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

Pastor The peace of Christ be with you always.  
Congregation **And also with you.**

*The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace and may say, "Peace be with you" or similar words.*

## OFFERING

*An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. Offering plates are found at the front of the worship space by the baptismal font and in the back of the church as you leave our worship space.  
Please give as you are able.*

*Please sign the red attendance book and pass it down the pew.*

## OFFERTORY

*"Simple Song" by Leonard Bernstein, Courtney Ruckman, soloist*

## COME TO THE TABLE

### OFFERTORY SONG

*Please stand and sing.*



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right  
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take  
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of  
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923  
Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

### OFFERTORY PRAYER

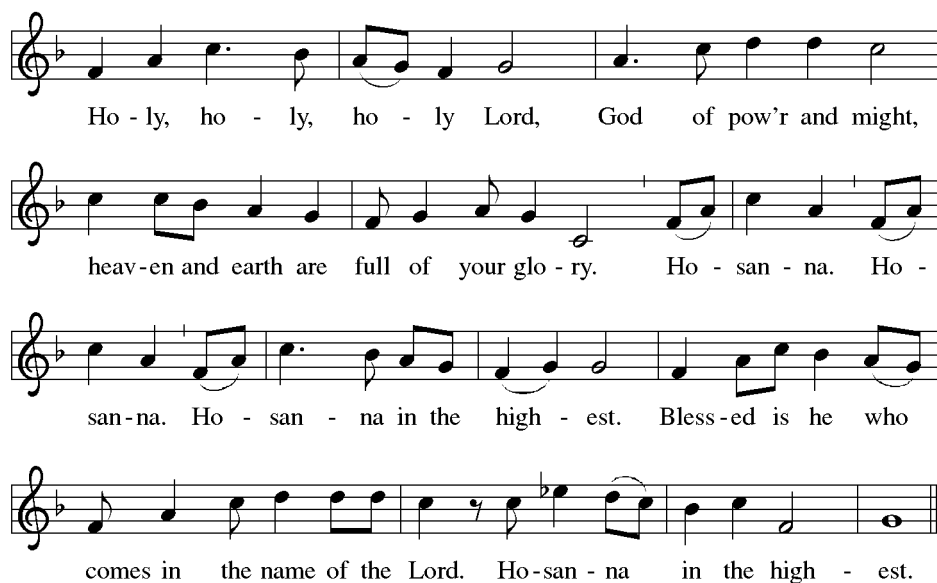
Pastor	Let us pray.
Congregation	<b>God of all creation,  all you have made is good,  and your love endures forever.  You bring forth bread from the earth  and fruit from the vine.  Nourish us with these gifts,  that we might be for the world  signs of your gracious presence  in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  Amen.</b>

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

*Please stand.*

Pastor	The Lord be with you.
Congregation	<b>And also with you.</b>
Pastor	Lift up your hearts.
Congregation	<b>We lift them to the Lord.</b>
Pastor	Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
Congregation	<b>It is right to give our thanks and praise.</b>
Pastor	It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*All sing.*



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -  
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor

Congregation

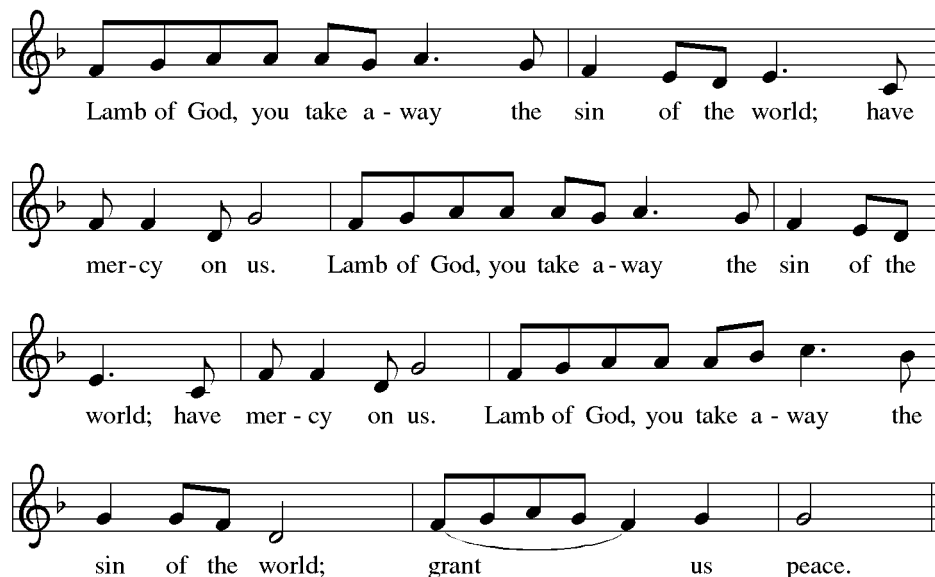
Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

*All sing.*



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the  
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

## INVITATION TO COMMUNE

*All are welcome to receive Holy Communion.*

*We gather around the communion rail either kneeling or standing to receive communion.*

*Communion will be offered by intinction.*

*For those not comfortable receiving from the pastors' hands a separate tray with preset elements will follow.*

*Anyone not comfortable receiving the bread or the wine are invited to come forward for a blessing.*

*You are an important part of our faith community.*

*All sing.*

## Our Father, God in Heaven Above

1 Our Fa - ther, God in heav'n a - bove, we pray, u - nit - ed  
 2 Give us to - day our dai - ly bread; let ev - 'ry - one be  
 3 In time of tri - al, res - cue us. Let your word give suc -  
 4 A - men. Yes, yes, it shall be so! Build up our faith and

in your love: Your name be hal - lowed. Help us, Lord,  
 clothed and fed. For - give our sins, as we for - give  
 cess to us when, on our left and on our right,  
 make it grow; be - set by doubt, help us be - lieve

in faith - ful - ness to keep your word. Your king - dom come; your  
 when oth - ers hurt us as we live. Help us to dwell in  
 temp - ta - tions chal - lenge us to fight. De - liv - er us from  
 what here we ask we shall re - ceive. So, by your prom - ise,

will be done on earth as there be - fore your throne.  
 har - mo - ny and serve each oth - er will - ing - ly.  
 e - vil's pow'r and com - fort us in life's last hour.  
 in your name, with loud A - men your Yes we claim!

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546, abridged; tr. hymnal version  
 Music: VATER UNSER, V. Schumann, Geistliche Lieder, 1539  
 Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

*Please stand.*

Pastor           The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you  
                    and keep you in his grace.  
Congregation   **Amen.**

## POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE

*Please stand and sing.*

### Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise

Thank-ful hearts and voic-es raise; tell ev-'ry-one what God has done. Let  
ev - 'ry-one who seeks the Lord re - jice and bear the name of Christ.  
Send us with your prom - is - es and lead your peo - ple forth in joy with  
shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980  
Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927  
Text and music © 1978, 1995 Augsburg Fortress.

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Pastor           Let us pray.  
                    Life-giving God,  
                    in the mystery of Christ's resurrection  
                    you send light to conquer darkness,  
                    water to give new life,  
                    and the bread of life to nourish your people.  
                    Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection,  
                    that we may show your glory to all the world,  
                    through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.  
Congregation   **Amen.**

## THE SENDING

### BLESSING

Pastor           Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.  
Congregation   **Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN: SENT FORTH BY GOD'S BLESSING #547

*Please follow the cross, turning toward the cross as it passes by your pew. As the cross leads, so Christ leads us out into the community to share Christ's love.*

*All sing.*

### Sent Forth by God's Blessing

1 Sent forth by God's bless - ing, our true faith con - fess - ing,  
2 With praise and thanks - giv - ing to God ev - er - liv - ing,

the peo - ple of God from this dwell - ing take leave.  
the tasks of our ev - 'ry - day life we will face—

The sup - per is end - ed. Oh, now be ex - tend - ed  
our faith ev - er shar - ing, in love ev - er car - ing,

the fruits of this ser - vice in all who be - lieve.  
em - brac - ing God's chil - dren, the whole hu - man race.

The seed of Christ's teach - ing, re - cep - tive souls  
With your feast you feed us, with your light now

reach - ing, shall blos - som in ac - tion for God and for all.  
lead us; u - nite us as one in this life that we share.

Your grace shall in - cite us, your love shall u - nite us  
Then may all the liv - ing with praise and thanks - giv - ing

to work for your king - dom and an - swer your call.  
give hon - or to Christ and his name that we bear.

Text: Omer Westendorf, 1916–1997, alt.

Music: THE ASH GROVE, Welsh folk tune

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## DISMISSAL

Pastor

Congregation

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

# Lutheran Church of the Redeemer

1545 Chain Bridge Road, McLean, VA 22101

Children are welcome in our worship.

Church Phone: 703-356-3346

Email: [Church@redeemermclean.org](mailto:Church@redeemermclean.org)

Hearing help available: We have for your use, personal hearing amplification units available in the narthex. Please refer questions or comments to an usher.

## *Summer Sunday Services*

*July 23 - August 20      9 am - Contemporary Service  
10:30 am - Traditional Service*

Next Sunday's Scripture: Isaiah 55:1-5, Psalm 145:8-9,14-21, Romans 9:1-5 Matthew 14:13-21

### The Greatest of Shrubs

Surely God's kingdom should end up sounding more impressive. Surely God can do better. Providing shelter for birds does sound like something God would do, but why can't the birds nest in a more attractive tree? A mustard seed, at its best, grows into a sort of weedy shrub. The greatest of shrubs is not that great.

Maybe that's the point. Maybe these little stories are supposed to seem a little strange. After all, God's choices often seem that way to us. God does not always value what we value. God likes small, weedy shrubs as much as big, majestic trees.

That is extremely good news for those of us who suspect we have more in common with the shrub than the tree. It is good to know that God loves both! It is good to know that God loves the mustard seeds of this world enough that God sends Jesus to be a mustard seed, to be the living proof that the kingdom of heaven is real. And the kingdom of heaven is here, because Jesus is here. And as we are filled with his Spirit, we also become living signs of that same kingdom.

After all, a God whose kingdom can be compared with something like a mustard seed is probably not going to stop short of using other unlikely things. A God like that might even decide to use people like us. So look around. What do you see? What do you see that surprises you? What do you see that you normally take for granted? What do you see that's alive? The kingdom of heaven is like that. The kingdom of heaven is even like us, right now. The kingdom of heaven may not do what we expect, or even what we want—but one way or another, the kingdom of heaven will grow.

*The flowers are given to the glory of God.*

*Today we are using Settings 3 from the Evangelical Lutheran Worship book.*

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