

An Advent Lutheran Church Jubilee 2026 Celebration Devotion

PENTECOST—The Great Green Growing Season

By Pastor Debra Loudin-McCann

(Former Director of Music Ministries at Advent and ministerial daughter of the congregation.)

*“For the Fruit of All Creation, Thanks be to God.
for the gifts of every nation, thanks be to God;
for the **ploughing, sowing, reaping, silent growth** while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safe-keeping, thanks be to God.*

*For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God;
for the good we all inherit, thanks be to God;
for the wonders that astound us, for the truths that still confound us,
most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.”*

Words by Fred Pratt Green © 1970 Hope Publishing Company



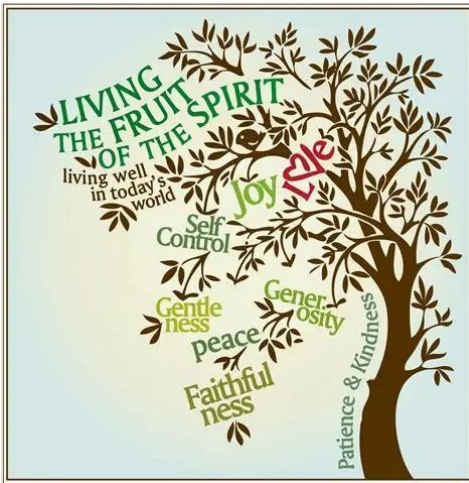
The Summer season is almost over, or at least it should be! The cycle of seasons, of endings and beginnings moves round. Vacations are over and school days begin again. Harvest time is soon. This long string of Sundays after Pentecost and The Ascension is known on the liturgical calendar as “*Ordinary Time*,” the time when there are no particular high feasts or holidays in the church. Some call it “*Common Time*” This is the time when we read through the parables and narratives of Jesus’ life and ministry. These are the stories that instruct us on what the message of Jesus - The Gospel, the Good News of the coming Kingdom of Heaven, Kingdom of God - is meant to be and how we are to live in light of this Good News. This is when we learn what it means to follow Jesus, to be His disciple, to walk as a Child of the Light, to be salt of the earth and leaven in the lump of dough that will become bread to feed a spiritually starving world. I like to think of this time as a time when the church focuses on how we grow as Christians, grow in knowledge, wisdom and faith so we can fulfill our purpose as God’s servants and messengers. The color of the season is green to signify growth. This is then

“The Great Green Growing Season of the Church.”

Have you ever watched a fast forward video of a plant growing? It’s fascinating to see the change from seed to seedling to leafy plant, then a blossom, and finally (perhaps) the fruit. Well ... growing as Christians is NOT like that! Most growing takes place at a much slower, almost indiscernible pace. Plants take weeks, months, and even years to come to maturity and bear fruit. And it can take a



lot of work and care before we can see the “*fruits*” of our labor. And while we may not be able to see it happening, the growing is going on all along. That is how it is with us. We grow from infants feeding on the Word of God first in simple ways like saying bedtime prayers and grace at the family table, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School. Then comes Confirmation class, New Member classes, Adult Sunday School and Bible Study. Our faith and understanding continue to grow in worship, hearing together the proclamation of the Word in scripture. Liturgy and song.

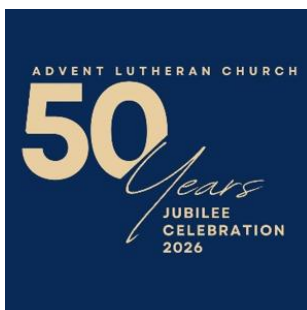


It makes me smile to think that we call it church “planting” when a new congregation begins its life. The Holy Spirit plants the seed of an idea in someone’s mind. The idea is nurtured by prayer and sometimes watered by tears of struggle. The sower sows the seed and the laborers work the field, season by season, but it is God who brings the growing. It is God who directs the Harvest. The fruits are enjoyed by the laborers and by the world. How do we measure how much growth has happened in this field of God’s planting we call Advent Lutheran Church? What are the fruits that have been produced? As I remember and reflect on these questions, I feel such joy, and such gratitude. Just look around – look at this community, the elders who have worked so long and faithfully and

have seen so much change and growth; the cradle Lutherans and the rookies new to the tradition, the youth who have been raised up and become the next generation of workers who will quickly enough become the next sage elders. And so it goes, and goes on, ... and on. “... *ploughing, sowing, reaping, silent growth while we are sleeping.*” These are the fruits of all this growth, the *Fruits of the Spirit*

"... the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control; against such things there is no law". ~ Galatians 5:22-23

Today, a daughter of the congregation, **Rev. Lauren Dow Wegner**, is preaching. She is but one of several homegrown pastors with roots at Advent. There are parents with their children in the pews who were themselves children in those same pews seemingly not so long ago. There have been and will be babies baptized in the same place where their parents were baptized here before them. There will be musicians singing and playing worship music who first learned some of that music as members of children’s choirs, and handbell choirs, and youth ensembles; kids from Advent Youth Groups through the years who now are volunteers, and leaders, and so much more. What Beautiful, Blessed, Bountiful fruit has been grown here – sown here, nurtured, fed, and maybe pruned now and then, always as a labor of Love. What a harvest reaped for the sake of the world, and to the glory of God. And every Sunday a feast is spread, a Feast of Grace, Mercy and unconditional Love. So, Beloveds, let’s all gather together at the table we call *Eucharist - Thanksgiving*, and wonder at the abundance of God’s Great Green Growing Season. Fifty years on and this Feast continues, helping us grow, as week by week we are fertilized by the Bread and the Wine and The Word. We hungrily take it in, like rain after a hot, dry, thirsty summer; Bread from Heaven and Living Water ... and we grow.



*"We plow the fields and scatter the good seed on the land,
But it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand.
He sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes and the sunshine, and soft refreshing rain.
All good gifts around us are sent from heav'n above;
Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord for all His love."*

~ Matthias Claudius, Lutheran Pastor 1782