

**First Lutheran Church – ELCA**  
**Worship Bulletin: 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
*November 14, 2021*

**GATHERING MUSIC**

**WELCOME (pastor)**

**BLESSING OF THE OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD BOXES**

**OPENING SONG (praise style): “Come and Fill Me Up (BOB 39)**

I can feel You flowin’ through me.  
Holy Spirit, come and fill me up,  
come and fill me up.

Love and mercy fill my senses.  
I am thirsty for Your presence, Lord;  
come and fill me up.

Lord, let Your mercy wash away all of my sin.  
Fill me completely with Your love once again.  
I need You. I want You. I love Your presence.  
I need You. I want You. I love Your presence.

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**OPENING PRAYER**

**Rock of Salvation, you give children to the barren and strength to the feeble; you exalt the poor and lift up the needy We praise your holy name from morning to night, yet we build walls that separate us: from you, from one another, from the world, even from ourselves.**

**We place stumbling blocks in the way of goodness and truth. We are led astray by promises of earthy treasure. We confess our fallibility and seek solace in the mother of our joy. Teach us to pray and praise without pause, confessing hope ceaselessly.**

**Guide us in our efforts to encourage one another, to work together for good in the world, and to prepare for the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**CALL TO WORSHIP (Based on Psalm) 16**

L: Come! Rejoice! For we are in the presence of the Holy One.

**P: We turn our eyes and hearts toward the Light of Love.**

L: Be glad and rest secure in the Eternal One.

**P: We delight in gathering as the Family of Faith.**

L: Arise to worship God with gladness.

**P: Together, we will sing our praises!**

**SONG (based on Psalm): “Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil” (ELW 512/W&P 52)**

Lord, let my heart be good soil,  
open to the seed of your word.  
Lord, let my heart be good soil,  
where love can grow and peace is understood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone away.  
When my heart is cold, warm it with the day.  
When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.  
Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart,  
Lord, let my heart be good soil.

**SCRIPTURE READING (no OT; no liturgy/responses): Hebrews 10:11-14, 19-25**

*Images of worship and sacrifice are used throughout Hebrews to highlight what Christ has uniquely accomplished through his death. Because we have received forgiveness through Christ’s death, we live with sincere hearts by trusting in God’s promises and encouraging love and good works from each other.*

<sup>11</sup>Every priest stands day after day at his service, offering again and again the same sacrifices that can never take away sins. <sup>12</sup>But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, “he sat down at the right hand of God,” <sup>13</sup>and since then has been waiting “until his enemies would be made a footstool for his feet.” <sup>14</sup>For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. <sup>19</sup>Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup>by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), <sup>21</sup>and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup>let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup>Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup>And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup>not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

**CHILDREN’S MESSAGE**

[https://sermons4kids.com/who\\_can\\_you\\_believe.htm](https://sermons4kids.com/who_can_you_believe.htm)

**CHILDREN’S SONG (related to message): “The B I B L E” Song**

**GOSPEL READING (no liturgy/responses): Mark 13: 1-8**

*In the last week of his life, Jesus warned his disciples concerning trials that were to come upon them and upon the world. He exhorts the listener: Do not be alarmed.*

<sup>1</sup>As [Jesus] came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!” <sup>2</sup>Then Jesus asked him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.” <sup>3</sup>When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, <sup>4</sup>“Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?” <sup>5</sup>Then Jesus began to say to them, “Beware that no one leads you astray. <sup>6</sup>Many will come in my name and say, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray. <sup>7</sup>When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. <sup>8</sup>For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.”

### **MESSAGE (pastor)**

I was listening to a podcast about this Sunday’s text and one of the teachers was relaying how, whenever his mother would say to him, “Stop provoking him…” it was usually in a very stern tone because he was, in fact, bothering his younger brother. Now, I, on the other hand, was the younger sibling, but also a master of provocation. You know the things. When your sibling draws an imaginary line down the seat of the car and say, “Don’t cross,” so you put an object over, but “you” didn’t cross. Or you put one finger over just to see what happens. (When we got a family van, the lines were re-drawn to being between the seats, but opportunities for provocation between the seats remained). Borrowing something without asking. Tagging around when she had friends over. Oh, the opportunities to provoke my sister were endless and the situation was surely mutual. I’m guessing most of us with siblings or are raising siblings know the feeling.

For us, the word “provoke” usually means something negative. Usually, like with siblings, bothering or bugging someone until they explode or retaliate. But, in today’s passage from Hebrews we hear the following, “Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup>And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup>not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

“Provoke one another to love and good deeds.” Now that is a very different sense of provocation. Positive and life-giving to be sure. Likewise, when we think of faith practices and spiritual disciplines, we tend to think of prayer, studying the Bible, worship and service, but provoking one another to love and good deeds. That probably doesn’t make it on most of our lists of “what does living the Christian life look like.”

And, yet, today’s passage from Hebrews reminds us that we are called to loving, supporting, correcting and encouraging each other to live out our Christian callings. With the same intensity and energy as we used to or currently bug our siblings- we are called to helping each other live out our callings. We come together in worship, prayer and service in order to support each other in discipleship.

The book of Hebrews was written by an unknown author to an audience that clearly had a good working knowledge of the Old Testament. It’s called Letter to the Hebrews, probably for this reason, though it was written to a community of second-generation Greek-speaking Christians, though some may have come from Jewish backgrounds. The church receiving this letter was clearly experiencing persecution and even imprisonment because of their faith in Jesus. This suffering was so intense, that many were walking away from the Christian faith altogether. In this letter, the author compares Jesus to many people and elements of the Old Testament but shows how Jesus is better than all of these other messengers, traditions and people. The author shows how Jesus and God are inseparable and that Jesus’ willing sacrifice is greater than all others because He is perfect and He offered himself. The book highlights that God’s covenant is made perfect in Christ who is the embodiment of God’s New Covenant with the people. In short, the author of Hebrews is encouraging people not to reject Jesus. The main point isn’t that people should be *afraid* to reject

Jesus but, rather, that Jesus is so awesome that it would be foolish to do so. In this section of Hebrews, the author encourages them to help each other hold fast to their faith and their community despite the opposition they are encountering because Jesus is worth it. Therefore, they are called to meeting together, encouraging each other and provoking each other to good deeds.

Though most of us are not experiencing hardships that are as intense as this early Christian community, all of us have our own struggles. These struggles can lead us away from following God's callings for us. When feeling insecure, we can, instead of provoking one another to good deeds, subtly or not so subtly tear each other down. When pressed for time and under stress, we forget to stop and take the time to encourage or correct someone who could use our words and presence.

This week, each day, I encourage you to think, "How can I provoke those around me to love and good deeds?" Parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles... is there some way you can help your child display generosity and kindness? Teachers and counselors, are there ways you can help your students live in peace and practice forgiveness? Are there people we work with or associate with whom we can help show greater character or compassion?

As much as you pray, sing and discern, this week... Provoke. May God use our intentionality to strengthen our communities and lead us into a new way of life. Amen.

**SONG (familiar): "When the Poor Ones" (ELW 725)**

When the poor ones, who have nothing, still are giving;  
when the thirsty pass the cup, water to share;  
when the wounded offer others strength and healing:

We see God, here by our side, walking our way;  
we see God, here by our side, walking our way.

When compassion gives the suffering consolation;  
when expecting brings to birth hope that was lost;  
when we choose love, not the hatred all around us:

We see God, here by our side, walking our way;  
we see God, here by our side, walking our way.

When our spirits, like a chalice, brim with gladness;  
when our voices, full and clear, sing out the truth;  
when our longings, free from envy, seek the humble:

We see God, here by our side, walking our way;  
we see God, here by our side, walking our way.

When the goodness poured from heaven fills our dwellings;  
when the nations work to change war into peace;  
when the stranger is accepted as our neighbor:

We see God, here by our side, walking our way;  
we see God, here by our side, walking our way.

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**You, O God, are supreme and holy. You create our world and give us life. Your purpose overarches everything we do. You have always been with us. You are God.**

**You, O God, are infinitely generous, good beyond all measure. You came to us before we came to you. You have revealed and proved your love for us in Jesus Christ, who lived and died and rose again. You are with us now. You are God.**

**You, O God, are Holy Spirit. You empower us to be your gospel in the world. You reconcile and heal; you overcome death. You are our God. We worship you.**

A New Zealand Prayer Book

**OFFERING/SPECIAL MUSIC (requests/new music): “Here I Am to Worship” (Tim Hughes)**

Light of the world  
You stepped down into darkness  
Open my eyes let me see  
Beauty that made this heart adore You  
Hope of a life spent with You

Here I am to worship  
Here I am to bow down  
Here I am to say that You’re my God

You’re altogether, lovely  
Altogether, worthy  
Altogether, wonderful to me

King of all days,  
Oh so highly exalted  
Glorious in heaven, above  
Humbly You came, to the earth You created  
All for love’s sake became poor

Here I am to worship  
Here I am to bow down  
Here I am to say that You’re my God

You’re altogether, lovely  
Altogether, worthy  
Altogether, wonderful to me

I’ll never know, how much it cost  
To see my sin, upon that cross

**OFFERING PRAYER (Season after Pentecost B, TFF)**

**Generous God, all good gifts come from your gracious hand. We offer you these, the harvest of our time and labor. Make us wise stewards of all your gifts, that your name may be exalted in all the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Eternal God, you hold firm amid the changes of this world. Hear us now as we pray for the church, the world, and everyone in need.

God our creator, you show us the path of life. Bless faithful people everywhere with humility as they extend compassion to those who have experienced harm in religious spaces. Cultivate healthy congregations that tell of and enact your reconciling love. God, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

God our constant, you love our universe from beginning to end. As the seasons change, protect animals that migrate and hibernate. Bring them safely to a sheltered place and a more abundant season. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our ruler, you write your law on human minds and hearts. Give wisdom to all elected leaders and officials to govern with insight and compassion. Make them mindful of the well-being of all people so that your world will flourish. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our stronghold, you are present amid disaster. We pray for those affected by natural disasters (*recent natural disasters may be named*). Come to the aid of all survivors of earthquakes, famines, floods, hurricanes, and wildfires, and the first responders who support them. Calm their fear, supply their need, and be the solid ground beneath their feet. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our guide, you are greater than we can imagine. Surround congregations with your expansive inclusion. Be present in the midst of disagreements, differences, and questions. Unite people of diverse viewpoints in the love of Christ. God, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

God our beginning and our end, your beloved people shine like the brightness of the sky. We thank you for the lives of all who rest in your eternal mercy, from famous saints to the people we have loved. Assure us of your resurrection promise. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God, we remember and pray for those who are sick or suffering in any way. We especially remember...  
**Members:** Don Grant, Todd Poppema, Dave Livingston, Linda Towne, Al Luing, Janice Berger, Sandy Rogers, Todd Hallstrom, Charlene Wachter, Marilyn Frisch, Julie & Denny Christensen, Dianne Sanderson, Betty Nelson; **Members in Nursing Homes:** Albert Mattisen, Bobbie Elvin, Sandra Marsh; **Members in Care Facilities:** Fred Wietzema, Bob Dieter, Joan Doeden, Jean Bender; **Family Members & Friends:** Arlene (Fern Burmeister's sister), Butch Zeiner (Valerie Veen's brother), Maverick Thalberg (Fern Burmeister's great-grandson), Josh Hansen (Mary Ingenthron's son), Lee Morrison (Terry Morrison's son), Henrietta Lais, Tom Morgan (Sandy Randall's dad), Brad Martens (Valerie Veen's son); **Our service men and women and Love INC**

God our hope and strength, we entrust to you all for whom we pray. Remain with us always, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

#### **LORD'S PRAYER (trad.)**

**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.**

**BLESSING (Nathan Nettleton; [laughingbird.net](http://laughingbird.net))**

Go out in peace, for the Lord has heard your prayers. Do not allow anyone to lead you astray but hold fast to the hope you have claimed. Continue to meet together, encouraging and provoking one another to put love into action. And may God be your rock of strength;  
May Christ Jesus usher you into the presence of God; and may the Holy Spirit write the laws of life on your hearts.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord, **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

**SENDING SONG (praise style): “Go in Peace and Serve the Lord” (W&P 46; 2x)**

Go in peace and serve the Lord.  
God is calling you today.  
Go and tell gospel news ev’rywhere.  
God in peace and serve the Lord.  
God is calling you today  
to bring truth and love to ev’ry nation.

Go in peace and serve the Lord.  
God is calling you today.  
Go and tell gospel news ev’rywhere.  
God in peace and serve the Lord.  
God is calling you today  
to bring truth and love to ev’ry nation.

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

“**Encounter**” the ecumenical youth group for grades 7 and up is on Sunday nights. We meet at Hy-Vee where attendees are able to snack on food and have a soda or Starbuck beverage. Friends are invited to come to this gathering of fun. Activities begin at 6:30 pm and end around 8:00 pm.

**Worship & Music Team** is looking for new members for our team. We meet on the second Monday of the month at 6:00 pm. If you are interested, please contact Diana White.



**Poinsettias will be used at our Christmas services.** If you would like to order one in memory or in honor of a loved one, contact the church office at 376-6148. Please indicate if you will be picking them up after the Christmas Day Service or if you will leave them here to be delivered to the shut-ins or nursing homes. Please leave the name of the person or persons you are giving one for. The cost of a poinsettia will be \$10. **The deadline to have your order in is Friday, December 3.** Thank you!



**The Community Thanksgiving Meal** will not be held this year.

**Ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve Service** will be held on Wednesday, November 24, 2021 at 7:00 pm at United Methodist Church. United Methodist has invited First Lutheran and Westminster Presbyterian Church for our annual Thanksgiving service. Everyone is invited — bring a friend. Pie fest to follow.

**FELC SCHEDULE FOR November 15 – 21, 2021**

Monday - 15

**9:00AM**

**BULLETIN DEADLINE**

Tuesday - 16	7:00AM 2:00PM 6:00PM 7:00PM	Early Risers Bible Study GriefShare Finance Team Church Council
Wednesday - 17	3:20PM 5:15PM 6:00PM 6:30PM 6:30PM 7:30PM	KFC Meal Worship Confirmation Sanctuary Choir Youth Group
Thursday – 18	9:30AM	Hannah Circle
Friday - 19	8:00PM	Pastor’s Sabbath Day Youth Lock-In Starts
Saturday – 20	8:00AM 9:30-11:30AM	Youth Lock-In Ends Holiday GriefShare
Sunday - 21	9:00AM 10:00AM 6:30-800PM	Worship/Communion – Christ the King Sunday School “Encounter” MS & HS Youth @ Hy-Vee





When you are grieving a loved one's death, the holiday season can be especially painful.

Our Surviving the Holidays seminar helps participants discover:

- How to deal with emotions
- What to do about traditions
- Helpful tips for surviving social events
- How to find hope for the future

Please join us for this encouraging seminar on

**Saturday, November 20, 2021**

**9:30—11:30 am**

**First Lutheran Church**

**1200 4th Avenue**

**Worthington, MN 56187**

**To register call 507-376-6148.**