

## WHAT LUTHERANS BELIEVE

**THE BIBLE** – We believe that EVERY word in the Bible is inspired by God, and therefore the whole Bible is the true, unalterable Word of God, clearly teaching the way of salvation. (2Ti. 3:15-17).

**GOD** – We believe that God is ONE (Dt. 6:4) and that He has revealed Himself in three distinct Persons (Mt. 3:13-17), the Father, our Creator and Preserver; the Son, Jesus, Who is both God and Man, and our only Saviour; the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts and enables us to live a God-pleasing life.

**MAN** – We believe that God created man with body and soul, in His image, but man of his own free will lost this image through sin. (Gn. 1:27; 2:7; 3.)

**SIN** – “Sin is the transgression of the Law.” (1Jn 3:4). There are two kinds of sin: original (inherited) sin (Ps. 51:5) and actual sin (sin in thought, word and deed) (Mt. 15:19). Man is subject to death and eternal damnation by reason of the guilt that attaches to sin.

**REDEMPTION** – We believe that God out of pure love and mercy redeemed mankind from sin through the all-sufficient sacrifice of His only Son, Jesus, and His resurrection shows that God was satisfied with the work of Christ. (Jn 3:16; 1Jn 2:2; Ro. 4:25).

**FAITH** – We believe that the sinner must personally receive the merits of Jesus for salvation and trust that, “Jesus died for me.” (Jn 17:3; Ja 1:21; Ps. 31:14).

**THE CHURCH** – We believe that the church, established by Christ is the whole number of believers in Christ, for only believers are members of the church. Jesus Christ is its one and only foundation (Ep. 2:19-22). The church is found wherever the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ’s institution.

**SACRAMENTS** – We believe that Christ instituted two sacraments, and when Baptism is administered to infants and adults, according to the command of Christ, God offers His grace and forgiveness of sins (Acts 22:16). In the Lord’s Supper communicants receive in, with and under the bread and wine also Christ’s body and blood. Communicants believing this word of promise receive this for the forgiveness of sins (1Co. 11:24-25).

**SECOND COMING OF CHRIST** – We believe that Christ will return visibly to earth (Acts 1:11) on the Last Day (Mk. 13:32) to judge the world (Acts 10:42). The believers will go to heaven, to be with God forever (1Th. 4:13-18). The unbelievers will go to hell, eternally separated from God (Mt. 25:32, 46).

**RESURRECTION** – We believe that on the Last Day believers in Christ will rise from the dead, their souls reunited with their earthly bodies and glorified by Christ (Jn 14:19; 17:24).

# Fourth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 6B) June 16, 2024

## INTROIT

*Psalm 92:12-15; Antiphon: Psalm 92:1*

*It is good to give thanks to the LORD,  
to sing praises to your name, O Most High.  
The righteous flourish like the palm tree  
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.  
They are planted in the house of the LORD;  
they flourish in the courts of our God.  
They still bear fruit in old age;  
they are ever full of sap and green,  
to declare that the LORD is upright;  
he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.*

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*It is good to give thanks to the LORD,  
to sing praises to your name, O Most High*

## COLLECT OF THE DAY

**P** *Blessed Lord, since you have caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning, grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*

**C** *♪[Amen]♪*

## GRADUAL

*Psalm 145:3, 5b, 6b*

*Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised,  
and his greatness is unsearchable.  
On your wondrous works, I will meditate.  
and I will declare your greatness.*

## RESPONSE FOR PRAYERS

*After each petition:*

**P** *Lord, in Your mercy,*

**C** **hear our prayer.**

## **Ezekiel 17:22-24 (ESV)**

<sup>22</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: “I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of the cedar and will set it out. I will break off from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain. <sup>23</sup> On the mountain height of Israel will I plant it, that it may bear branches and produce fruit and become a noble cedar. And under it will dwell every kind of bird; in the shade of its branches birds of every sort will nest. <sup>24</sup> And all the trees of the field shall know that I am the LORD; I bring low the high tree, and make high the low tree, dry up the green tree, and make the dry tree flourish. I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it.”

## **2 Corinthians 5:1-17 (ESV)**

For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. <sup>2</sup>For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, <sup>3</sup> if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. <sup>4</sup>For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. <sup>5</sup>He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

<sup>6</sup> So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, <sup>7</sup> for we walk by faith, not by sight. <sup>8</sup> Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be

away from the body and at home with the Lord. <sup>9</sup> So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. <sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

<sup>11</sup> Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience. <sup>12</sup> We are not commending ourselves to you again but giving you cause to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast about outward appearance and not about what is in the heart. <sup>13</sup> For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. <sup>14</sup> For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; <sup>15</sup> and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

<sup>16</sup> From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. <sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

## **Mark 4:26-34 (ESV)**

<sup>26</sup> [Jesus] said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. <sup>27</sup> He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. <sup>28</sup> The earth produces by itself, first the

blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. <sup>29</sup> But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”

<sup>30</sup> And he said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? <sup>31</sup> It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, <sup>32</sup> yet when it is

sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

<sup>33</sup> With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. <sup>34</sup> He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.

## THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (PROPER 6 B)

Ezekiel 17:22–24

2 Corinthians 5:1–10 (11–17)

Mark 4:26–34

### *The Cross of Christ Is the Tree of Life, Which Bears Abundant Fruit after Its Own Kind*

The Parables of our Lord convey the mysteries of the Kingdom of God to those who are “*able to hear it*,” that is, “*to His own disciples*,” who are catechized to fear, love and trust in Him by faith (Mark 4:33–34). He “*scatters seed on the ground*,” which “*sprouts and grows*” unto life, even as “*He sleeps and rises*” (Mark 4:26–27). “*On the mountain heights of Israel*,” He plants a young and tender twig, and it becomes “*a noble cedar*.” Indeed, His own Cross becomes the Tree of Life, under which “*every kind of bird*” will dwell, and in which “*birds of every sort will nest*” (Ezek 17:22–25). His Cross is our resting place, even while now in mortal bodies, we “*groan, being burdened*” (2 Cor 5:1–4). Yet faith we live for God in Christ, who for our sake “*died and was raised*” (2 Cor 5:15). We know that, in His resurrected body, “*we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*” (2 Cor 5:1).

### *Next Week's Readings from God's Word:*

June 23 (Proper 7): Pentecost 5 (Series B):

Job 38:1-11, Psalm 124, 2 Corinthians 6:1-13, Mark 4:35-41