

² We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³ remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁶ And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became an example to all the believers in Hinckley and Finlayson and Willow River and Pine City(my interpretation).....1 Thessalonians 1:2, 6-7

Giving thanks this week for all of the disciples of Jesus Christ that have continued to trust and support First Evangelical Church in Hinckley, and around the world. I am full of gratitude and hope that in these times of restrictions, which feel like persecutions heartache, with closures and cancellations, openings and closing, I still see parents and people stepping up to spread the word of God. To preach and teach and be imitators of Jesus Christ.

Let me explain a bit. In these times the last few weeks, we have had to postpone or cancel some activities for the youth and adults at the church due to the Pandemic. Our Confirmation went to Zoom and the kids jumped on for their lessons with parents saying, we can do this, or if they can't, what lessons should we be doing and to get their sermon notes done even if it means watching it on Facebook. This is being an imitator of Jesus Christ and letting the Holy Spirit move through these parents and kids.

Faith In Action had a Safe, masked, social distancing drive through that volunteers got ready to hand out to parents who drove up, waved and went home to do the lessons and fun with their kids to be imitators of Jesus Christ for their kids. The Holy Spirit is still moving through these hard times.

For those worshiping with us online, on Facebook, YouTube, reading it In-Gathering Worship or in the parking lot, reading it from the bulletin, you know that this to may pass because the church is not closed, the love of God is still here, we are disciples of Jesus Christ and called to keep our chin up, trusting in the Holy Spirit as she moves among us. You are being imitators for everyone that you meet and talk to, by standing firm in your faith.

One parent, "Who is trying to be optimistic," which I have heard from more than one parent and other persons, said she thought that there are some things from this Pandemic that we will benefit each other with our actions and the change.

I loved that comment and needed to hear that as the church is a new creation with new people all the time. In these times of great change, do not lose hope.

Thanks for imitating Jesus Christ.

Peace,
Pastor Brenda

+++++



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Pastor Brenda Wicklund

October 18, 2020
20th Sunday after Pentecost

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:
"We are called by God to grow in faith together, sharing Christ's love with each other and our community"



In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

Prelude
Welcome

Joanne Richards

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

C: Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

L: Faithful God,

C: have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

L: God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of ☩ Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world.

C: Amen.

Hymn "God Is Here!"

Red Worship Book 526

- 1 God is here! As we your people meet to offer praise and prayer, may we find in fuller measure what it is in Christ we share. Here, as in the world around us, all our varied skills and arts wait the coming of the Spirit into open minds and hearts.
- 2 Here are symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace; here are table, font, and pulpit; here the cross has central place. Here in honesty of preaching, here in silence, as in speech, here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each.
- 3 Here our children find a welcome in the Shepherd's flock and fold; here as bread and wine are taken, Christ sustains us as of old. Here the servants of the Servant seek in worship to explore what it means in daily living to believe and to adore.
- 4 Lord of all, of church and kingdom, in an age of change and doubt, keep us faithful to the gospel; help us work your purpose out. Here, in this day's dedication, all we have to give, receive; we, who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!

Greeting

Red Worship Book pg. 203

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

C: And also with you.

Kyrie

Red Worship Book pg. 203

C: Have mercy on us, Lord, and hear our solemn prayer. We come to hear your living word; it saves us from despair.

Have mercy on us, Christ, and wash away our sin. Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may begin.

Have mercy on us, Lord, make sin and shame depart. Renew us with your saving pow'r; create in us new hearts!

Prayer of the Day

L: Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

The prophet announces that Cyrus the Persian emperor is the one the LORD has anointed to end Israel's exile. The LORD makes this choice so that the whole world will recognize this LORD as the only God. Persia had a god of light and a god of darkness; the LORD claims sovereignty over both light and darkness.

First Reading: Isaiah 45:1-7

¹Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him—and the gates shall not be closed:

²I will go before you and level the mountains, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron,

³I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name.

⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I surname you, though you do not know me.

⁵I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides me there is no god. I arm you, though you do not know me,

⁶so that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other.

⁷I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe; I the LORD do all these things.

Psalm 96:1-9 (10-13)

L: Sing to the LORD a new song;

C: sing to the LORD, all the earth.

L: Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD;

C: proclaim God's salvation from day to day.

L: Declare God's glory among the nations

C: and God's wonders among all peoples.

L: For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised,

C: more to be feared than all gods.

L: As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;

C: but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.

L: Majesty and magnificence are in your presence;

C: power and splendor are in your sanctuary.

L: Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples,

C: ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

L: Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name;

C: bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.

L: Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness;

C: tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

L: Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king!"

C: The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity."

L: Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;

C: let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

L: Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD,

C: for you come to judge the earth.

L: You will judge the world with righteousness

C: and the peoples with your truth.

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

C: Glory to you, O Lord. (spoken)

Red Worship Book pg. 206

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

Gospel: Matthew 22:15-22

¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" ²¹They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." ²²When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

"The Gospel of Our Lord

C: Praise to you, O Christ. (spoken)

Red Worship Book pg. 206

Sermon

The Flip Of A Coin: Matthew 22:15-22

Pastor Brenda Wicklund

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable to you oh Lord, our Maker and our Redeemer. Amen.

Many times when I was growing up, I had disagreements with my sister. In that, of course is a nice way of saying, we had fights. Now I had fights with my brothers too, but sometimes I had to use them in my disagreement with my sister, so that with two against one, I may rather have power over her with the two of us together.

So working together in our text today are the Pharisees and Herodian's, a most unlikely pair. Working together to entrap or ensnare Jesus. They begin with false praise we believe, "Teacher we know that you are sincere and teach the way of God in accordance with the truth, and show deference to no one. Tell us, then, is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor or not?" Matthew 22:15-16

Jesus was aware of the trap and of their malice. He knew their ploys and even their hearts. "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax. Whose head is on this and whose title? They answered, 'The emperors.' Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." Matthew 22: 18-21

They showed him, no matter if they were Herodian's or Pharisees, they had a coin in their pocket. They had a denarius that had the image of the emperor's head, and the title, "Tiberius Caesar, Son of the Divine Augustus, Augustus." Wow. A graven image which defines not only the one that is standing in front of them as the divine Son of God, but a graven image. In the presence of the Pharisees, either answer he gives would side with one or the other allowing him trouble on each side, yet he gives them the answer it deserves.

They had a coin quickly pulled out of their pocket. They quickly pulled out the coin so that the Herodian's would know they were doing what the law said, albeit they should not have had the coin in the temple according to the Torah. They needed and should pay their taxes and sometimes that goes against what we might believe as a person or walking with Jesus Christ. It does not mean they do not pay, yet this coin in their pocket, if they flip it, is a stark reminder in what they are going to do, because the divine, the Son of God, was right in front of them as they are testing him. They wanted to discredit him and even kill him, and they had a choice. They were standing in at a crossroad.

Give them the coin if it is his, and give God what is God's. Which is everything. "When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away." Matthew 22: 22 Just like that; Jesus shows his strength and knowledge. In the flip of the coin, the coin that said the emperor was "divine" it got everyone thinking about this man sitting in front of him. They were amazed. They were astonished. God amazed them. They left and I would add probably changed forever. They experienced God, no matter what the conversation or what happened the rest of their life, God was present. Maybe they touched this coin or one like it and wondered, "What is God's?"

God is deserving of what he has given to the world and all that he created. Our calling after realizing this, makes us ok with paying our taxes and following laws, yet all of that does not side-step that we have a calling to follow our loving and powerful God and his Son Jesus Christ. Our calling and commitment to that call is to continue in beauty, continue in wholeness, and continue in transforming our lives each day with the help of God, for healing in our communities and our world.

We cannot hide and ignore our call and duty to all things, and especially God. When Jesus Christ dies and suffers on the cross, which by the way is coming up quickly in this story, only to overcome death by rising from the dead, he gave instructions.

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

We cannot hide or wait to spread the news about Jesus Christ and his love, forgiveness, knowledge and action. He said he loved us and would be with us and he needs disciples so we must go out in the world and be in the world, but show people another avenue to take. More now than ever, people need hope.

Be amazed. Look for God sightings this week, this hour, this day. Know you covered in the great and powerful God that continues to love us and protect us, that is the promise. Amen.

Psalm 91:1-2

You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,[a]² will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.”

Special Music “Christ Still Rises”

1. Christ still rises when fear grips our city, when death takes no pity, when much is unknown.

Christ still rises when friends are divided, when joy feels misguided, when we are alone. Christ still rises when churches are shuttered, when praises are muttered, when prayers go unsaid. Christ still rises when peace has all faded, when we are most jaded when faith turns to dread, when faith turns to dread.

2. Christ still rises when we give to neighbors, when we share our labors, when strangers belong. Christ still rises when we come together, when love is our tether, when hope is our song. Christ still rises when grieving is ended, when bodies are mended, when beauty heals pain. Christ still rises when fear has retreated, when death is defeated, and joy will remain, and joy will remain.

Nicene Creed

Red Worship Book pg. 104

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son,* who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

L: With confidence in God’s grace and mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

L: Gracious God, you call us by name and invite us to share your good news. Send your Holy Spirit among preachers, missionaries, and evangelists. We give thanks for the witness of your servant Luke, the evangelist, whom the church commemorates today. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: God of praise, the heavens and all creation declare your salvation. From the rising of the sun to its setting, may the whole universe show forth your goodness. Raise up devoted stewards of all that you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: God of all, may your word of justice sound forth in every place. Restore divided nations and communities with reconciling truth. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: God of light, we pray for those living with pain, illness, isolation, grief, anger, or doubt (*especially*). Join their voices in a new song, assuring them that you call them each by name. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: God of truth, you show no partiality. May your spirit guide the work of justices, magistrates, court officials, and all vocations of the law, that your promise of restoration may be known. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: Living God, as you raised Jesus from the dead, so raise up those who have died in you (*especially*). We give thanks for their witness, confident of your rescuing welcome for all. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: Listen as we call on you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Offering Prayer

L: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. You have set before us these gifts of your good creation. Prepare us for your heavenly banquet, nourish us with this rich food and drink, and send us forth to set tables in the midst of a suffering world, through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

Words of Institution

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Red Worship Book pg. 208

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.

Hymn-

“You Servants of God”

Red Worship Book 825

- 1** You servants of God, your Master proclaim, and publish abroad his wonderful name; the name, all-victorious, of Jesus extol; his kingdom is glorious and rules over all!
- 2** Ascended on high, almighty to save, yet still he is nigh, his presence we have. The great congregation his triumph shall sing, ascribing salvation to Jesus, our king!
- 3** Salvation to God who sits on the throne! Let all cry aloud and honor the Son. The praises of Jesus the angels proclaim, fall down on their faces, and worship the Lamb.
- 4** Then let us adore and give him his right, all glory and pow'r and wisdom and might, all honor and blessing, with angels above, and thanks never ceasing, and infinite love!

Dismissal

Go in peace. Remember the poor.

Thanks be to God.

the worship is ended ... let the service begin...





Prayer Concerns ~ (Names will be on for one month unless requested longer.)

Peter Thorvig, Kay Conway, George and Joan Wells (brother/sister-in-law of Gary and Gail Wells), Eric Mettling (deployed for service), Gracie Edin, Jessica Lindahl, Carol Bostrom, Leigha Ness (Pastor Brenda's great-niece), Bob Pyle (friend of Dave and Kay Kadous) and Barbara Ekberg (sister of Loretta Sprado.)



Welcome to worship! When we come to church, we say thank you to God for all kinds of things. What has God given you that you are thankful for?

Write or draw a thank you note to God.

Give to God what is God's: Matthew 22:15-22

Did you hear in today's gospel? "Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." OK--- what things are God's? Have you ever thought about it?

The Bible begins with an answer to that question. In creation God separated light from darkness. In the light we can see all the things God made.

A fabulous feast

Holy Communion is a feast for all of us—friends and strangers. We share bread, wine, and blessings together at the table (altar), sing songs, and pray.

Our offerings

Worship includes offering gifts of money. These gifts are used to serve God in many ways. A coin in biblical times, called a *denarius*, had a picture of the emperor. What pictures are on the coins you offer to God?



Place coins under this page and rub over the paper with a pencil. Try both sides of the coin. Who do you see?



Thank you, God, for EVERYTHING! Help us share with others. Amen.

This week: Talk about other offerings to God. How does your family serve God each day?

We will be putting one or two of the Confirmands Faith Statements
in the bulletins providing there is room.

Mykenna Jo Johnson

Hello my name is Mykenna Johnson. I have grown up at First Lutheran my whole life. My mom has been youth director at the church since I was a baby and because of that the church is my second home. One thing that stands out to me is being able to grow up with all the church kids and to have those kids as role models and a part of my life. My mom is still close to a lot of them, so I still have them in my life. The church members are my family and have always shown me support, they give me hugs, ask how I am doing and support me in my sports and other activities. They are a huge part of my faith journey by showing me the love of God in community of the church. I learned bible stories, how to pray and many things at VBS, FIA and Sunday school. My mom has let me teach VBS and Sunday School and this year I will be able to be a leader at Faith in Action. I am also on the Lutheran Youth Board and I know being a leader will be a great way to continue to grow my faith. I love doing service projects and helping others like we say its God's work but our hands. Growing up my mom would always go on mission trips and soon my brothers were able to go to. I would hear all the stories about service projects they did, canoes flipping, huge bugs in Texas, the songs they would sing, and many other things and I could not wait to go. Now that I am old enough, I have been on three mission trip and I have loved them all and I really love being on them with my mom. I see God through my mom helping a stranger and encouraging us to do the same with love and not judgement. My faith and my relationship with God have grown because of these experiences, I know how important it is to genuinely pray for people and to be a listening ear. I always try to make sure I treat everyone the way Jesus would. Thank you to My mom, family and the church you all really helped me grow in my faith and its who I am.

Payton Lawrence Lindner

I believe that Jesus is central in my life because he has shown that all things be done with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. For without having Jesus central in my life, these things would not exist. If we live by the spirit then we will be guided by the spirit. I believe that without things and without God, my life would be dull and dark. Though I do not know what my future is and where my life will take me, I know that God does. There is a Bible verse that sticks with me when I think about my future and my faith. The verse I would like to leave you with is Psalm 25:4-5, "Lord show me your ways. Teach me how to follow you. Guide me in your truth. Teach me. You are God my savior. I put my hope in you all day long."

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