

“The Power of the Word”

Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23



Ascension Lutheran Church

“A Church for Families, a Family for Everyone”

July 16, 2023

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER THE PENTECOST

Sunday July 16, 2023

Welcome to all who are attending our service today. We are glad you are with us! To all guests and visitors, we especially extend our hands of friendship. May God bless the worship time for each one of you. Please come again!

NURSERY AVAILABLE We have an unstaffed nursery for your convenience and privacy. The nursery has audio and video so you may hear and see the worship service while attending to your child.

Holy Communion is celebrated at the 8:30 service on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, and at the 11:00 service on the 2nd and 4th Sundays.

For those wishing to commune at the Lords Table with us today:

The Lutheran practice of close Communion attempts to prevent a person from eating and drinking judgment on himself (1 Corinthians 11:23–30). Thus, attendance at the Lords Supper implies a four-level commitment to Christ. We believe that communicants must: (1) be baptized Christians; (2) accept the real presence of Christs body in the bread and His blood in the wine; (3) confess and repent of ones sins and trust that God offers complete forgiveness of those sins in this Sacrament; and (4) share oneness of faith, doctrine and practice among those who commune. Those wishing to commune with us today who have not done so previously, please see the pastor or an elder before the service begins. (*Grape juice is available for those who do not drink alcohol, and gluten-free wafers are available upon request.*)

Para aquellos que desean participar en la Santa Cena con nosotros hoy: *La práctica luterana de la comunión intenta evitar que una persona coma y beba el juicio de Dios sobre sí mismo (1 Corintios 11:23–30). Por lo tanto, la asistencia a la Cena del Señor implica un compromiso de cuatro niveles con Cristo. Creemos que los comulgantes deben: (1) ser bautizados como cristianos; (2) aceptar la presencia real del cuerpo de Cristo en el pan y Su sangre en el vino; (3) confesar y arrepentirse de sus pecados y confiar en que Dios ofrece el perdón completo de esos pecados en este Sacramento; y (4) compartir la unidad de fe, doctrina y práctica entre los que comulgan. Aquellos que desean comulgan con nosotros hoy que no lo han hecho anteriormente, por favor vean al pastor o un anciano antes de que comience el servicio. (El jugo de uva está disponible para aquellos que no beben alcohol, y hostias libres de gluten están disponibles bajo petición.)*

+ PREPARATION +

THEME: “The Sower Knows . . .”

As We Gather: Though you may be familiar with Jesus’ parable of the sower, you may be surprised to hear that you do not really know it yet! That’s because on the one hand, the Word of God does not change. Yet on the other hand, we need to keep hearing it again and again, because our circumstances are constantly changing. The parable of the sower tells of this mystery. The seed is God’s Word, God’s work of planting repentance and faith in ears who hear. We may think of the various kinds of soil Jesus mentions to be various sorts of people. Actually, however, He is describing each individual in their changing circumstances. There are times when we are “good soil,” that is, we understand God’s Word and take comfort in it. There are other times, however, when we either cannot or will not hear it. Sometimes we become hard paths, rocky or distracted by worries or fears. For this reason, God never ceases planting, speaking, and growing faith in the heart, and we return repeatedly to continue hearing, reading, learning, and receiving God’s Word because He never gives up on you.

Prelude

Welcome

Speak, O Lord, Your Servant Listens

- 1 Speak, O Lord, Your servant listens,
Let Your Word to me come near;
Newborn life and spirit give me,
Let each promise still my fear.
Death’s dread pow’r, its inward strife,
Wars against Your Word of life;
Fill me, Lord, with love’s strong fervor
That I cling to You forever!
- 2 Oh, what blessing to be near You
And to listen to Your voice;
Let me ever love and hear You,
Let Your Word be now my choice!
Many hardened sinners, Lord,
Flee in terror at Your Word;
But to all who feel sin’s burden
You give words of peace and pardon.

- 3 Lord, Your words are waters living
 When my thirsting spirit pleads.
 Lord, Your words are bread life-giving;
 On Your words my spirit feeds.
 Lord, Your words will be my light
 Through death's cold and dreary night;
 Yes, they are my sword prevailing
 And my cup of joy unailing!
- 4 As I pray, dear Jesus, hear me;
 Let Your words in me take root.
 May Your Spirit e'er be near me
 That I bear abundant fruit.
 May I daily sing Your praise,
 From my heart glad anthems raise,
 Till my highest praise is given
 In the endless joy of heaven.

Speak, O Lord, Your Servant Listens, Text: Anna Sophia von Hessen-Darmstadt, 1638–83; (sts. 1–3): tr. George A. T. Rygh, 1860–1942, alt.; (st. 4): tr. Christian Worship, 1993, Text: Public domain

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Confession and Absolution

- P** In that divine hope, let us confess our sins to God our Father.
- C** **Merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You by not letting You have Your way with us. We have become deaf to Your Word. Because of our weak love for You and for our neighbor, we have become fruitless trees deserving only Your judgment. Therefore, we return to You today asking Your forgiveness and for the strengthening of our faith and love. By Your Word, restore us and renew us for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**
- P** Fruitful trees, the Spirit's sowing: upon this, your confession, I by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word announce the grace of God to you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Salutation

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** And also with you.

Prayer Of The Day

- P** Let us pray.

Lord God, by the power of Your Word alone, You created everything out of nothing, and You have caused us to be drawn to You in hope. Open our ears and our hearts to hear and believe Your Word this day anew that we may grow by Your grace in the faith and the love that are in Christ Jesus, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

- C** Amen.

Sharing The Peace of the Lord

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you all.
- C** And also with you.

+ THE WORD +

Old Testament

Isaiah 55:10-13 (ESV)

¹⁰For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there but water the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,

giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
¹¹so shall My word be that goes out from My mouth;
it shall not return to Me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

¹²For you shall go out in joy
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall break forth into singing,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

¹³Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;
and it shall make a name for the LORD,
an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

- L** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

Epistle

Romans 8:12-17 (ESV)

¹²So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Lambs' Lesson

Pr. Jim Sprengle

Holy Gospel

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 (ESV)

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the thirteenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ²And great crowds gathered about Him, so that He got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And He told them many things in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, ⁶but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹He who has ears, let him hear...

¹⁸Hear then the parable of the sower: ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. ²⁰As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy,

²¹yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. ²²As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. ²³As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Prayer/Love in Action Requests Gathered

Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast

- 1 Almighty God, Your Word is cast
Like seed into the ground;
Now let the dew of heav'n descend
And righteous fruits abound.
- 2 Let not the sly satanic foe
This holy seed remove,
But give it root in ev'ry heart
To bring forth fruits of love.
- 3 Let not the world's deceitful cares
The rising plant destroy,
But let it yield a hundredfold
The fruits of peace and joy.
- 4 So when the precious seed is sown,
Life-giving grace bestow
That all whose souls the truth receive
Its saving pow'r may know.

Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast, Text: John Cawood, 1775–1852, alt., Text: Public domain

Sermon
THE POWER OF THE WORD

Pr. Jim Sprengle
Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23

In God The Father I Believe

(tune: Kingsfold)

In God the Father I believe, Almighty Lord of all
Who made the heavens and the earth: His name be praised in awe.
And I believe in Jesus Christ, The Father's only Son;
Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Of virgin Mary born.

Who suffered when He stood condemned By Pontius Pilate's code;
Was crucified, was dead, As He Himself had long foretold.
Our Lord was buried in a tomb, Descended into hell,
But on the third day He arose Again on earth to dwell.

Ascending into heaven above He sits at God's right hand;
From there He shall return to judge The living and the dead.
In God the Spirit I believe, Who guides a holy church;
The universal body that Victorious shall emerge.

I do believe that all the saints Must now commune in love,
And that, redeemed by Jesus' blood, Our sins are pardoned us.
And at life's end, my body frail, Upraised from earthly strife,
Is resurrected and renewed In everlasting life!

"In God the Father I Believe", by Frank DeVries. © 1975, CRC Publications.

Tithes and Offerings

(Our offerings are made as an act of worship, given in loving response to all that God has graciously given us, both materially and spiritually.)

Prayer of the Church

P Let us pray.

We praise You, O God, we acknowledge You to be the Lord. All the earth worships You, our Creator and Redeemer. By Your mighty Word, all things live and move and have their being. We praise You for Your creation. But with even greater praise, we give thanks for Your re-creating Word by which You have conquered sin and death, restoring earth's beauty and eternal life to all who believe. Cause Your Word to be received and believed by all people, giving everyone Your new life through faith in Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P For the glorious company of the apostles, the fellowship of the prophets, and the evangelists of Your Gospel, we give You thanks. Give conviction and strength to all today whom You have called and ordained to proclaim Your Word to this generation and bring forth the fruits of faith and love in all those renewed by Your Word and Spirit. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P God bless our native land with freedom and wisdom to acknowledge Your Holy Word as the only sure foundation of governance in line with Your grace, wisdom, and will. Raise servant leaders to guard, guide, and protect all citizens of our country in the way of Your truth. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P As You promise Your own healing peace and comfort for Your people, so surround all who suffer any need, sickness, or adversity...Grant that their faith never fails and their prayers never cease. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P We give You thanks, O Lord, for the blessings being celebrated this week...Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

C **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.**

(11:00am service, please turn to page 12 for the benediction.)

+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +

**We believe in the real presence of the body and
blood of Christ in Holy Communion.**

Here our Lord offers us the forgiveness of all our sins.

*(Grape juice is available in the center of the trays for those who do
not drink alcohol, and gluten-free wafers are available upon request.)*

Preface

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Words of Institution

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **Amen.**

+ DISTRIBUTION HYMNS +

Word Of God, Come Down On Earth

- 1 Word of God, come down on earth,
Living rain from heav'n descending;
Touch our hearts and bring to birth
Faith and hope and love unending.
Word almighty, we revere You;
Word made flesh, we long to hear You.
- 2 Word eternal, throned on high,
Word that brought to life creation,
Word that came from heav'n to die,
Crucified for our salvation,
Saving Word, the world restoring,
Speak to us, Your love outpouring.

- 3 Word that caused blind eyes to see,
 Speak and heal our mortal blindness;
 Deaf we are: our healer be;
 Loose our tongues to tell Your kindness.
 Be our Word in pity spoken,
 Heal the world, by sin now broken.
- 4 Word that speaks God's tender love,
 One with God beyond all telling,
 Word that sends us from above,
 God the Spirit, with us dwelling,
 Word of truth, to all truth lead us;
 Word of life, with one bread feed us.

Word Of God, Come Down On Earth, Text: James Quinn, 1919–2010,
 Text: © 1969 OCP Publications. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110004673

Sent Forth by God's Blessing

- 1 Sent forth by God's blessing,
 Our true faith confessing,
 The people of God from His dwelling take leave.
 The Supper is ended.
 O now be extended
 The fruits of this service in all who believe.
 The seed of His teaching,
 Receptive souls reaching,
 Shall blossom in action for God and for all.
 His grace did invite us,
 His love shall unite us
 To work for God's kingdom and answer His call.
- 2 With praise and thanksgiving
 To God ever-living,
 The tasks of our ev'ryday life we will face.
 Our faith ever sharing,
 In love ever caring,
 Embracing His children of each tribe and race.
 With Your feast You feed us,
 With Your light now lead us;
 Unite us as one in this life that we share.
 Then may all the living
 With praise and thanksgiving
 Give honor to Christ and His name that we bear.

Sent Forth by God's Blessing, Text: Omer E. Westendorf, 1916–97, alt.
 Text: © 1964 World Library Publications. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110004673

Post-Communion Thanksgiving

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant to Your Church Your Holy Spirit and the wisdom that comes down from above, that Your Word may not be bound but have free course and be preached to the joy and edifying of Christ's holy people, that in steadfast faith we may serve You and in the confession of Your name may abide to the end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen.

Announcements

(See the FYI in the back of the Bulletin for more information.)

Almighty Father, Bless the Word

1 Almighty Father, bless the Word
Which through Your grace we now have heard.
Oh, may the precious seed take root,
Spring up, and bear abundant fruit!

2 We praise You for the means of grace
As homeward now our steps we trace.
Grant, Lord, that we who worshiped here
May all at last in heav'n appear.

△ 3 Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen!

Almighty Father, Bless the Word, Text (sts. 1–2): Church Poetry, 1823, Philadelphia, alt.; (st. 3): Thomas Ken, 1637–1711, Text: Public domain

*Thank you to Harold and Sue Lewis for the lovely Altar flowers,
in honor of their wedding anniversary.*

Acknowledgments

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series A, Quarter 3.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

JULY 16, 2023

† FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY AND CHURCH POTLUCK

There will be **ONE** worship service at 10:30am on August 20, followed by a potluck lunch in the Community Room. Fried and grilled chicken, drinks, and dinnerware will be provided. The sign-up sheet is posted in the Narthex if you would like to bring your favorite main, side, salad, or dessert. Make sure it serves 8 to 10 people.

Can you help with setup or cleanup? You can let us know by signing up in the space provided.

Join us! It's a great opportunity to invite your friends and family for a time of worship, good food and fellowship!

† THANKS, FROM KARLA DEAL

Dear Ascension Family, thank you for your prayers, cards, support and outpouring of love over the past months. God has blessed my cancer treatments and procedures. They are complete and we're praying for a healthy future. Your Sister in Christ, Karla Deal

† MILESTONES - SUN., JULY 16 - SAT., JULY 22

BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS:

Katie Nelson	July 17	Ginny Whitney	July 17
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BIRTHDAYS

Greg Zahm	July 16	Natalie Wentela	July 20
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WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:

None

† PRAYER NEEDS?

Contact the church office with any requests, please e-mail: office@alcportland.org or call 503-665-8821 Monday through Friday 9am to 3pm.

† PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR:

The Family of Rich Zahursky, The Brown Family, Carolyn Barendse, Gina Kreps, Kevin McInaney, Alma Bangs, Judy Blubaum, Robert (Virginia Jacobs' Brother), Cindy Linnemann, Brian Laxton, Karla Deal, Mike Fogarty, Emily Kohnke (member of the Webber Family), Mike Hatley, Lorraine Haggard, Esperanza Gutierrez, Kim Laxton, Antonia Martinez (mother of Esperanza Gutierrez), *Barbara Schrader, *Larry Hart. *Home Bound.

† PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY:

Michael Williamson, Air Force, Reserve — Texas (grandson of Rebecca Williamson);
Jamie Wong-Lopez, Marines — Annapolis MD (nephew of Kevin and Merci McInaney);
Clayton Wright, Air Force — (grandson of Virginia Jacobs);
Colton Wright, Navy — (grandson of Virginia Jacobs);
Tyler Young, Navy — Deployed (nephew of Karen Arronson).

EVENTS THIS WEEK – SUN., JULY 16 - SAT., JULY 22

Sunday, July 16	8:30am	Worship with Communion
	9:45am	Education Hour
	11:00am	Worship
	5:00pm	Worship in Spanish
	6:00pm	Online Worship Posted
Tuesday, July 18	6:00pm	3:10 Group
Wednesday, July 19	2:00pm	Crafting Get-Together
	6:00pm	C-101 week 8
Thursday, July 20	6:00pm	Praise Team
Friday, July 21	6:30pm	Noche Familiar

EVENTS NEXT WEEK – SUN., JULY 23 - SAT., JULY 29

Sunday, July 23	8:30am	Worship
	9:45am	Education Hour
	11:00am	Worship with Communion
	5:00pm	Worship in Spanish with Comm.
	6:00pm	Online Worship Posted
Tuesday, July 25		Newsletter Items Due
Wednesday, July 26	2:00pm	Crafting Get-Together
	6:00pm	C-101 week 9
Thursday, July 27	6:00pm	Praise Team
Friday, July 28	6:30pm	Noche Familiar

ASSISTING IN SERVICE TODAY, JULY 16, 2023

	8:30am	11:00am
Elder:	Dave Oswald	Dan Parshall
Acolytes:		Jaden Mundo
Ushers:	Stan Chapulis Bob Rekdahl Randy Schroeder	Jonathan Mundo Joshua Mundo
	NEEDED	
Audio/Visual:	Stan Chapulis	Laura Potter
PowerPoint:	Debbie Rekdahl	John Hazen
Greeters:	Norma Dillon Jean Dillon	Esperanza Gutierrez Margaret Hubbard
Readers:	Michele Sprengle	J.E. Knox
Altar Guild:	Both Services	Jan Oswald
Flowers:	Both Services	Sue Lewis
Counters:	Both Services	Dave and Jan Oswald

ASSISTING IN SERVICE SUNDAY, JULY 23, 2023

	8:30am	11:00am
Elder:	Bruce Blubaum	NEEDED
Acolytes:		
Ushers:	Stan Chapulis Jim Eckart	Marcus Young Matthias McInaney Eric Kreps Evan Kreps
Audio/Visual:	Stan Chapulis	NEEDED
PowerPoint:	Michele Sprengle	Rebecca Williamson
Greeters:	NEEDED	Riki Neagle
Readers:	Jim Eckart	Carlyn Staudt
Altar Guild:	Both Services	Karen Zahursky
Flowers:	Both Services	McInaney
Counters:	Both Services	Bob and Elaina Ritchie

Ascension Lutheran Church

1440 SE 182nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97233

Church: 503-665-8821 · Web Site: www.alcportland.org

Church Office Hours: Monday–Friday 9am to 3pm

Our Mission Statement:

~Go and Share Jesus Christ~

Our Vision Statement:

“Take part...Join Jesus on His mission.”

The members of Ascension Lutheran Church are committed to being God’s witnesses in Gresham, and in all of Portland and the Northwest, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8):

With the universal Christian Church, we believe, teach and respond to the love of the Triune God—the Father, Creator of all that exists; the Son Jesus Christ, Who left His home in Heaven to become flesh and blood, to suffer and die for the sins of all peoples of the world, and Who rose from the grave, victorious over sin, death and the devil, that we too might live with Him in Heaven; and the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts in Christ Jesus through God’s Word and Sacrament. The three Persons of the Holy Trinity are one God, co-equal and co-eternal. The core teachings of our faith from the Lutheran perspective can be summarized in three short phrases: Grace alone, Scripture alone, Faith alone.

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