



Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church ELCA

CHURCH OFFICE CONTACT:

Church office: 815-845-2061

READINGS for Sunday October 4, 2020.

Isaiah 5:1-7

Arising in the eighth-century BCE and warning about the imminent military defeat of Israel and Judah, the first book of Isaiah includes a condemnation of Judah in the ironic form of a love song. Hebrew tradition includes poetic descriptions of the relationship between God and the people both as a marriage and of a tended vineyard. According to the monotheism of the exilic period, there is one powerful God: thus any hardships experienced by the chosen people must issue from God and can be best understood as punishment. The vineyard will have to be destroyed because the very roots of the plants are faulty.

Philippians 3:4b-14

In this passage Paul again argues that the regulations of Torah are not salvific: rather, it is faith in Christ, who died and is raised, that saves. The passage includes Paul's short autobiography. Paul again emphasizes God's action: his making Christ his own follows upon Christ having already made him God's own. The Greek noun gently translated as "rubbish" actually means "shit." Biblical translations have sometimes sacrificed linguistic accuracy so as to accommodate perceived sensibilities.

Matthew 21:33-46

The focus of the evangelist Matthew on the Jewish Christian communities is evident in this harsh parable-become-allegory. That Jesus himself would have re-used the traditional imagery of Israel as a vineyard is likely. But in the gospels, the rejection experienced by the prophets of the past is made parallel to the death of Jesus, who is depicted as the landowner's son. The details in verse 33 mean to recall Isaiah 5. The quotation from Psalm 118:22-23 summarizes the psalm's theme that God is praised for giving victory to Israel; yet the gospels alter the reference of "the stone" from the historic Israel to Jesus himself. Matthew has added the condemnation in verse 43 to Mark's version of the parable.

SCRIPTURE VERSE for OCTOBER

"Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His steadfast love endures forever!"

1 Chronicles 16:34



PASTOR JIM'S CONTACT INFORMATION:

His phone number is (563) 599-2096 and his email address is: jamespmehrtretter@gmail.com

PRAYER MINISTRY



- Steven & Jodi Swanson & Family (our missionary family)
- All those who have been affected by Covid-19
- All Essential workers
- Law Enforcement Officers
- Those suffering from racism
- Mary Hesselbacher
- Gail Israel
- Thomas Mosbo
- Dorothy Bohnsack
- Paul & Karron Mills
- Paul Hesselbacher
- Janice McKee (Kay Hesselbacher's friend)
- Roxann Krull (Paul Mills' daughter)
- Michael Lorento (Larry & Sue's neighbor)
- Dean Mysliwicz (Israel niece's husband)
- Ken Reinert (Israel's nephew)
- Liam Vogt (Joe & Kirstin Ehrler Vogt son)
- Kate Redfearn (Russ & Brittney's daughter)
- JoAnn Hesselbacher
- Juliette Schmidt
- Kendall Smith (Hansen's granddaughter)
- Janice Bradley (Ladora Williams' daughter)
- Liam Petelle (Edie's grandson)
- Rich Schelke
- Ali Krug (Jim & Babette's daughter-in-law)
- Caroline Krug (Jim & Babette's granddaughter)
- World Leaders & Peace in the World
- Men & Women serving our country

Weekly Giving – September 27, 2020

General Giving	\$2,300.00
Noisy Change giving	\$ 59.65
Mission Giving	\$360.00
Total	\$2,719.65



18th Sunday after Pentecost Message & Lessons – October 4, 2020



SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH
536 E. Schapville Road
Scales Mound, IL 61075
815-845-2061

Dear Friends in Christ,

This year has been a most challenging, and at times frustrating, year. We started the year with having “normal” indoor services and looking forward to what lay ahead. Unfortunately for all of us, regardless of where we live on this earth, a global pandemic struck and ultimately changed how we currently live. For several weeks we did not have any type of in-person services. Eventually we were able to adjust and hold outdoor services with limited attendance at each service, wearing a mask, and maintaining physical distancing.

With the approaching cooler and unpredictable weather, followed by winter, it is now time to reopen the doors and hold services indoors at our church. Your church council and Pastor have been working hard over the past months to understand COVID19, and how to minimize any risk with holding indoor services. The following page provides the protocol to follow with indoor services, and as you will see, for those who wish to continue with an outdoor service that will still be offered.

We recognize there may be questions, and in fact encourage questions from anyone who may have them. Also please understand that this is a fluid document, one that can change as more is discovered with COVID or as we discover better and more efficient ways of holding services.

Our ultimate goal is to provide the safest environment to attend services in our church. We will not waver in our commitment to safety. We do however need your help in following the procedures outlined. If there is a suggestion on how to make our worship services safer, we obviously are open to suggestions.

Peace with Christ,

Your church council members: Bill Gehrts, Jen Anderson, Samantha Hendren, Sue Cording, Leigh Stoewer, Mark Hesselbacher, and Pastor Jim Mehlretter.

INDOOR SERVICES RESUME OCTOBER 11, 2020

- Masks must be worn when attending services, whether they be indoors or outdoors.
- Masks must be properly worn, covering both the nose and mouth.
- If someone forgets their personal mask, single use disposable masks will be available.
- For indoor services, bulletins will be obtained in the Narthex (if services are upstairs) or in the hallway by the elevator (if services are held downstairs).

- Communion will be obtained when entering the church for services and held till the appropriate time for consumption.
- Sanitizer stations will be placed in various locations within the church.
- Services will be rotated to various locations within the church. One service will be in the pews on the left side of the sanctuary, another in the pews on the right side of the sanctuary, another in the gathering center (bring your own chairs), and another in the basement (bring your own chairs).
- For those attending services in the sanctuary, seating will start at the front of the church and move rearward. When services are over, those seated in the rear will exit first with those in the front exiting last.
- If desired, an outdoor service will be available however it would be at a time designated by the Pastor.
- During the service, attendees will remain seated.
- There will be no singing during services.
- There will be no parishioner readers during the services.
- Organ music will be pre-recorded.
- The number of people attending a service will continue with the current levels (10-15), however we expect as people become accustomed to being back indoors the total number may increase, still keeping the total under 20 people for a service.
- Physical distancing must be maintained, whether the service is being held in the sanctuary, gathering center, downstairs, or outdoors.
- If you are not feeling well, have symptoms of COVID, or have knowingly been exposed to someone with COVID, we ask that you do not attend services.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

C **Amen.**

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

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P 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.

P 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.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 5:1-7

¹Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard:

My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.

²He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines;

he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it;

he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes.

³And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard.

⁴What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it?

When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes?

⁵And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge,

and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.

⁶I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with

briers and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

⁷For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness,

but heard a cry!

PSALM: Psalm 80:7-15

⁷Restore us, O | God of hosts;

let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.

⁸**You have brought a vine | out of Egypt;**

you cast out the nations and | planted it.

⁹You cleared the | ground for it;

it took root and | filled the land.

¹⁰**The mountains were covered | by its shadow**

and the towering cedar trees | by its boughs. R

¹¹You stretched out its tendrils | to the sea

and its branches | to the river.

¹²**Why have you broken | down its wall,**

so that all who pass by pluck | off its grapes?

¹³The wild boar of the forest has | ravaged it,

and the beasts of the field have | grazed upon it.

¹⁴**Turn now, O | God of hosts,**

look | down from heaven;

¹⁵behold and | tend this vine;

preserve what your right | hand has planted. **R**

SECOND READING: Philippians 3:4b-14

[Paul writes:] ^{4b}If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my

own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:33-46

[Jesus said to the people:] ³³“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. ³⁴When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ ³⁹So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” ⁴¹They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.”

⁴²Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures:

‘The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord’s doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes’?

⁴³Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. ⁴⁴The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”

⁴⁵When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

A brief silence.

- Holy God, you call us to work for peace and justice in your vineyard. Refresh the church with your life, that we may bear fruit through work and service. Lord, in your mercy,
C hear our prayer.
- Thank you for the abundant harvest of the earth. Bless and care for those whose hands bring the fruits of the earth to the tables of all who hunger. May we be inspired by your servants who cared deeply for your creation (*especially Francis of Assisi, whom we commemorate today*). Lord, in your mercy,
C hear our prayer.
- Curb the impulses of greed and pride that lead us to take advantage of others. Grant that world leaders (*especially*) seek the fruits of the kingdom for the good and welfare of all people. Lord, in your mercy,
C hear our prayer.
- Sustain all who suffer with the promise of new life. Assured of your presence, heal our pain and suffering, and equip us to embrace all bodies aching for wholeness of mind, body, and soul. We call to mind those who are struggling today (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,
C hear our prayer.
- We pray for all managers in our community and for all who seek employment. Give hope and a future to those who lack meaningful work, those who have been marginalized or abused in the workplace, and those who desire new opportunities. Lord, in your mercy,
C hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

- Thank you for the saints who teach us to live faithfully in your vineyard (*especially Theodor Fliedner, renewer of society*). May our chorus join theirs until our labor is complete. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P 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.

LORD'S PRAYER

P Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit; let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

BLESSING

P Mothering God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.

C Amen.

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C Thanks be to God.

Sundays and Seasons v.20200325.1254
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Weekly Announcements

ELCA CONFERENCE MEETING

The Zoom ELCA Conference Meeting for Monday, October 5th has been cancelled.

BOOK CLUB

Book Club has discussed to continue with Zoom meetings for a while longer at the new time of 1p.m. Thank you!

The book that we have decided on for Oct.27 at 1p.m. is "The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek" by Kim Michele Richardson. Please join us next month. Thank you.

PAST COUNCIL MINUTES & FINANCIAL REPORTS

If you would like to receive any past Church Council Meeting Minutes and Financial Reports that didn't get sent out during the shutdown of the church because of the pandemic, please let Pastor Jim or Babette know. We will make sure you receive a copy.

ANNUAL STEAK FRY

The canceling of the Annual Steak Fry is an unfortunate turn of events as there are several very worthwhile food pantries that rely on the proceeds of this event.

In lieu of having an actual steak fry at church, we are promoting a "virtual steak fry". With this we are asking that, if possible, please provide a donation to the church with a designation of "steak fry" or "food pantry". Any donations will be held until early October and at that time the monies will be distributed to the food pantries noted. Once distributed, there will be an article in the weekly newsletter advising of the distributions and amounts.

A sincere thank you for consideration to help those in need during these difficult times we are in.

In Peace, please stay healthy and safe, Your Church Council

GIVING WHILE WE ARE CLOSED

Thank you to all who have been faithfully sending your giving to the church during our shut down. Please consider continuing your weekly offering by mailing it to the church office at 536 E Schapville Rd, Scales Mound, IL 61075, or arranging for online banking.

Please stay safe and healthy, Church Council

DEAR FRIENDS,

I hope your fall is going well, and you are able to take some time to be in God's amazing creation.

This is just a reminder that seven-session Book Study via the Zoom Platform, on the book *Rooted & Rising: Voices of Courage in a Time of Climate Crisis*, edited by Leah D. Schade and Margaret Bullitt-Jonas will begin a week from today, Tuesday October 6, via Zoom, at 7 p.m.

The Creation Care Team, a sub-committee of the Northern Illinois Synod Social Ministry Committee is offering this book study and facilitating it. After the first session on October 6, there will be addition sessions each Tuesday evening through Tuesday, November 17. Some exciting news is that one of the co-editors, Dr. Leah Schade will be part of the final session on November 17!

For more information and to register for the Book Study, please click on this link: [Register for the "Rooted and Rising" Book Study here.](#) There is no cost to participate, although participants will need to buy the book which is available from the usual book sellers. It is available as an e-book and either via hardcover or paperback.

If you have any questions, please contact Becky Keller at bfkeller@yahoo.com.

"God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31)

Peace,
Deacon Cheryl Erdmann (she/her/hers)
Northern Illinois Synod, ELCA

Upcoming Commemorations (from Sundays and Seasons)

- **Francis of Assisi, renewer of the church, died 1226 -- Sunday, October 4, 2020**

Born into the family of a wealthy merchant, Francis gave up his inheritance to serve poor people. He formed the Order of Friars Minor (called Franciscans), who took on poverty and the task of preaching "using words if necessary." Francis had a spirit of gratitude for all of God's creation.

- **Theodor Fliedner, renewer of society, died 1864 -- Sunday, October 4, 2020**

Fliedner helped to bring about a revival of the ministry of deaconesses among Lutherans. He was influenced in this by Moravian deaconesses he had met. The motherhouse he founded in Kaiserswerth, Germany, inspired many around the world to take up this ministry.

- **William Tyndale, translator, martyr, died 1536 -- Tuesday, October 6, 2020**

Tyndale was ordained a priest in England, and wished to translate the Bible into English. He was opposed in this by King Henry VIII, causing him to flee to Germany. He completed the New Testament in 1525, but before he could finish the Old Testament, he was tried for heresy and burned at the stake.

- **Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, pastor in North America, died 1787 -- Wednesday, October 7, 2020**

Divided Lutherans in America asked leaders in Europe to send someone who could take charge and unite their work. Muhlenberg was sent, and was effective in organizing the American Lutherans. Among other accomplishments, his liturgical principles became the basis for the Common Service of 1888.

- **Massie L. Kennard, renewer of the church, died 1996 (TFF) -- Saturday, October 10, 2020**

A native of Chicago, Kennard was a major figure in supporting and working toward ethnic and racial inclusiveness in the former Lutheran Church in America. Ordained in 1958, he served in positions including Director for Minority Concerns of the Division for Mission in North America.