



Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church ELCA

READINGS for Sunday June 28, 2020.

Jeremiah 28:5-9

In another of Jeremiah's adventures (see Lectionary 12), he had donned an oxen yoke as a sign of the Babylonian domination of Judah. In this passage, Jeremiah denounced Hananiah as a false prophet who was speaking easy and welcome words about divine blessing and the end of the exile. Jeremiah warned that words about peace might not be the word of God.

Romans 6:12-23

Continuing through his letter to the church in Rome and writing in the Greco-Roman culture that assumed a slave economy in which most people served those placed above them, Paul employed the metaphor of slavery to describe the powerful domination of sin. Paradoxically, freedom in Christ is also slavery to God.

Matthew 10:40-42

In a time of disagreement as to which traveling preachers ought to have authority in the church, Matthew, using the Old Testament designation of "prophet," claimed that the legitimate teachers bear the authority of the name of Jesus and embody the power of God. This passage, the conclusion of Matthew's second discourse, follows last week's words about taking up the cross: thus "the reward" of which Matthew speaks is ambiguous.



SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION

We will be highlighting a verse(s) here for memorization that captures the main idea of the month's scriptures – June verse: *"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."* Psalm 46:1.

PASTOR JIM'S CONTACT INFORMATION

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

Weekly Giving – June 21, 2020

General Giving	\$2,001.25
Mission Giving	205.00
Total	\$2,206.25

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
- Gerald Gerlach
- Janice McKee (Kay Hesselbacher's friend)
- Roxann Krull (Paul Mills' daughter)
- West Bowen (Paul & Karron Mills' grandson)
- Michael Lorento (Larry & Sue's neighbor)
- Sheri Mysliwicz (Israel's niece)
- Dean Mysliwicz (Israel niece's husband)
- Ken Reinert (Israel' nephew)
- Liam Vogt (Joe & Kirstin Ehrler Vogt son)
- Kate Redfearn (Russ & Brittney's daughter)
- JoAnn Hesselbacher
- Juliette Schmidt
- Kendall Smith (Hansen's granddaughter)
- Gabe Hilby (Heim girl's classmate)
- Janice Bradley (Ladora Williams' daughter)
- Paul Hesselbacher
- Liam Petelle (Edie's grandson)
- Rich Schelke
- Caroline Krug (Jim & Babette's granddaughter)
- World Leaders & Peace in the World
- Men & Women serving our country

Message & Lessons – June 28, 2020

LINK TO HEAR PASTOR'S MESSAGE: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDq8Z08Ui7I>

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Our readings for this Fourth Sunday after Pentecost come from Jeremiah the 28th chapter verses 5 through 9, Romans the sixth chapter verses 12 through 23, and Matthew the tenth chapter verses 40 through 42.

My message will focus on Matthew the tenth chapter verses 40 to 42. If you'd like to pause for a moment and read those verses, that would be great, and I'll return with my message.

As I thought about our Gospel passage for today and the idea of welcome, I was very enthusiastic about preaching about it. The idea of hospitality and both welcoming people and being welcomed are something that I think is so important in our lives. I think it takes on a special meaning now during this challenging time. I would like to begin though with a brief story that talks a little bit about welcoming and being welcomed.

When I was in seminary, now quite a few years ago, we were sent out on internship, the whole class, and each of us was assigned a particular location to go and serve the church. Some of us went to parishes in the state of Iowa, but really, we went all over the country. My particular assignment was to serve a parish halftime in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and then the other half of my time was spent in the pastoral care department at St. Luke's Hospital also in Cedar Rapids. It was a wonderful assignment. I felt welcomed by the church and the relationships that I built with my fellow staff members at the hospital were wonderful and lasted for years and years and some endure even today.

We are called in our Gospel passage for today to welcome others but also for us to be sent. I certainly was sent to my locations in Cedar Rapids as were my classmates, and I know they too were welcomed as they went to the various churches that they served.

However, one of the interesting things that happened at the end of the internship was that my wife and I and, at that time, our very little daughter hosted everyone back here at our home in Dubuque following internship, and everybody came it seemed. The yard was full of people and many small children. The street was filled with cars, and we were happy to welcome everybody back for the final year of seminary. It was a time of telling stories, of hearing about the wonderful things that happened on internship. One fella even was assigned to New Orleans, and he brought back beads for everyone. Some of them were stuck in the trees at our home after that welcome home party for some time until I finally took them down.

We know what it feels like to be welcomed, and we know what it feels like to welcome other people.

What a wonderful opportunity that we have. It might be through a formal assignment in ministry like I just described or the very informal call to ministry that each of us have where we are called to go out and share the good news of Jesus Christ with those who might be around us.

Now the church that I presently serve, Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in Schapville, has a wonderful tradition going back, I guess, generations of welcoming missionaries back to their church. Missionaries, who have went out to share the good news of Jesus Christ to distant lands, would then come back. They would come back to the congregations that served them and cared for them and made it possible for them to do their work in far-off distant lands. The missionaries came back from places that the people that were welcoming them home from could hardly even imagine. It's my understanding that they loved to hear the stories. They loved to hear, I'm sure, the words of welcome that those missionaries brought from the people that they served. What a wonderful tradition! How many times I've heard the stories of those missionary visits in rural Illinois.

Each of us, as I mentioned earlier, are called to welcome others. We're called to step out of our comfort zone sometimes. We step out both in our efforts to reach out to people and in the hope that they welcome us with the message of Jesus Christ. There are some people that it is easy to welcome. I would encourage us to look for a way to welcome those who might surprise us with the way that they interpret the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Might we also step out in confidence and in hope, sharing with our deepest commitment and our deepest thought how we interpret that wonderful gift of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel of Jesus Christ asks us to do things that challenge some people. It's a word sometimes that makes people think twice. It changes what they typically do. It reminds us to care for those who are most vulnerable.

Our Gospel passage talks about sharing a cup of water. Sharing a cup of water is a great gift, but we are called to do more, to share equally the abundance of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, share the abundance of creation. Might we also welcome those who bring that message and might we receive a warm and kind welcome as we step out and share that powerful message with honesty, with hope. We trust that Jesus Christ is guiding both our message and also guiding the welcome that we are receiving because we are messengers of Jesus Christ.

We're called to share His message faithfully. We are called to ask people to follow Him in all that they do.

Now, I told about that story of that get-together after internship. What a wonderful time that was for us to get together. Might we in the days and weeks to come find ways to have equally pleasant gatherings but yet still follow the rules and the good guidance that this particular time has for us. It will take all of our creativity to welcome others in this challenging time. Who would have thought of not offering one's hand for a handshake as being a way to welcome one another and for one to feel comfortable? Who would have ever thought that? We are indeed in a different time. But that call for welcome, that call to welcome others is one that we will work together to determine what that looks like. All of us have enjoyed welcoming others into our church buildings. Right now at least we're finding ways to welcome people into our worship services outdoors with careful structure, so that we don't have too many people. That also, in its own way, is a kind and warm welcome. Might we find ways to welcome people that help them to feel comfortable, help them to feel at ease, help them to feel encouraged and safe in a time that is so challenging. Amen.

Pastor Jim

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, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation.

C Amen.

P Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P Reconciling God,

C **we confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives.**

We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts. We fail to believe that you provide enough for all. We abuse your good creation for our own benefit. We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us.

We sin in thought, word, and deed. By your grace, forgive us; through your love, renew us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.

P Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through ☩ Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, you direct our lives by your grace, and your words of justice and mercy reshape the world. Mold us into a people who welcome your word and serve one another, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

FIRST READING: JEREMIAH 28:5-9

⁵The prophet Jeremiah spoke to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of the LORD; ⁶and the prophet Jeremiah said, "Amen! May the LORD do so; may the LORD fulfill the words that you have prophesied, and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the LORD, and all the exiles. ⁷But listen now to this word that I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. ⁸The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. ⁹As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes true, then it will be known that the LORD has truly sent the prophet."

PSALM: PSALM 89:1-4, 15-18

¹Your love, O LORD, forever | will I sing;

from age to age my mouth will pro- | claim your faithfulness.

²**For I am persuaded that your steadfast love is established forever;
you have set your faithfulness firmly in the heavens.**

³“I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn an oath to David my servant:

⁴**‘I will establish your line forever,
and preserve your throne for all generations.’ ” R**

¹⁵Happy are the people who know the festal shout!
They walk, O LORD, in the light of your presence.

¹⁶**They rejoice daily in your name;
they are jubilant in your righteousness.**

¹⁷For you are the glory of their strength,
and by your favor our might is exalted.

¹⁸**Truly, our shield belongs to the LORD;
our king to the Holy One of Israel. R**

SECOND READING: ROMANS 6:12-23

¹²Do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. ¹³No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. ¹⁴For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, ¹⁸and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.

²⁰When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. ²²But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. ²³For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 10:40-42

[Jesus said to the twelve:] ⁴⁰“Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. ⁴¹Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; ⁴²and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORSHIP SERVICE UPDATE

You will be receiving a call to see if you would like to schedule your service for Sunday or the week following. You can also contact me (Pastor Jim) at (563) 599-2096. Everyone has been very gracious in this process. If weather affects a service, it will not be rescheduled due to the frequency of services.

Reminder: Please accept a reminder that masks are required at all our outdoor services if you leave your car. Uniform compliance is necessary for everyone to feel comfortable participating in our outdoor services.

Thank you for your understanding and action on this matter. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Pastor Jim

NOISY CHANGE SUNDAY – TODAY -- JUNE 28TH

We are going to do Noisy Change Services again today, **Sunday, June 28th** and at each of the services for that week. So bring your change that you may have been saving up since February. There will be a container to put your change in at each of the church services. This will go to help stock health clinics in third world countries. Thank you.

BOOK CLUB

The Shepherd of the Hills Book Club will discussing American Dirt by Jeanine Cummins via Zoom. **American Dirt** tells the story of Lydia Quixano Pérez, a middle-class Mexican bookseller who flees Acapulco with 8-year-old son, Luca, after a drug cartel violently attacks a quinceañera (a celebration of a girl's 15th birthday) she's attending, killing her journalist husband who earlier had profiled the cartel leader, Javier. Jan 22, 2020." (BuzzFeed News). This 2020 Oprah's Book Club novel is a thriller that is filled with suspense. All are welcome to join our Zoom discussion. To obtain the Zoom address & password, please contact Pam Ohms at pamelaohms@gmail.com.

LUTHERAN OUTDOOR MINISTRIES NEWS

Are you looking for a get-away in a peaceful, natural setting? Consider Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center at Oregon, Illinois, with its 640 beautiful acres in the Rock River Valley. Our church supports this camping/retreat area, and it may be just what you need to bring the family and share some meaningful time together. Accommodations range from hotel quality cabins to tent or RV camp sites. They are open and ready to welcome guests within the restrictions of Illinois State Requirements. Google their website or call them at 815-732-2220.

The LOMC Mission Statement says it all: The purpose of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center (LOMC) is to be the Church in outdoor settings, nurturing Christian faith and providing experiences connecting the Word of God with the World of God.



FACE MASK MAKERS



The Galena Midwest Medical Hospital, Galena Assistant Living and Provena Nursing Home in Freeport are in need of homemade face masks. If you would like to help, contact Pam Ohms at 815.275.2345 or pamelaohms@gmail.com. Pam & Steve have washed fabric & elastic cut-to-size ready to share in plastic bags of 10, 20, or more at her home at 3633 N Rawlins Rd, Galena. Be sure to call/email 1st so she can put a bag on her front porch with your name on it. You may drop the finished masks off at the hospital with your name & address on the bag .or on Pam's front porch (with name/address), & she'll deliver. Thank you to those of you who have already shared your sewing skills and made hundreds of masks!

REQUEST FROM SOCIAL MINISTRY

The **Elizabeth Food Pantry** has been in contact with the SOTH Social Ministry Committee. Usage of the pantry has increased to 24 families and 19 singles in the month of May. Norma Schwartz, Food Pantry Director, says help is needed to maintain adequate supplies for the growing food need in the Elizabeth/Scales Mound area. As we renew our worship services with multiple outdoor worship times, we encourage you to consider donations to the Elizabeth Food Pantry. Items in the shopping cart in the Narthex of the church will be picked up on Sunday afternoons to deliver to the Food Pantry. Please donate only non-perishable items. Norma Schwartz has suggested items popular with clients are the following: big beef stew, chicken and dumplings, Manwich, corn beef hash, sausage and gravy, and pork and beans. You may also add anything else along these lines, and please consider personal care items, too, such as soap, shampoo, deodorant, toilet paper, laundry and dish washing products.

On **Sunday, July 5**, everyone is encouraged to bring fresh produce which could be unrefrigerated for 2 to 3 days. If you have an abundance of garden vegetables, they are welcome. Also consider melons and seasonal fruits. Food pantry clients love fresh produce, and, with your generosity, they will have the opportunity to select their favorites on Monday, July 6th.

When worshipers are encouraged not to enter the church, the shopping cart will be pulled into the parking lot area for each church service and will be put back inside the church after worship. If and when we can safely enter the church, the shopping cart will remain in the narthex for your gifts of food. Also consider cash gifts, which can be included in your church envelope. The Food Pantry has access to discounted food and can sometimes make your cash go further than when you buy the items yourself.

The **Mop Shop**, which our church supports with cleaning supplies in October each year, is also serving increasing numbers of clients. If you wish to donate to the Mop Shop, please list it on your envelope with the amount of the donation you wish to make.

Thank you for helping our neighbors in need.

GIVING WHILE WE ARE CLOSED

Thank you to all who have been faithfully sending your giving to the church during our shut down. While services may not be held during this troubling time, our expenses for operation of the church do not stop. 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

JULY BIRTHDAYS		ANNIVERSARIES	
Deb Ehrler	7/01	Joanne Lancaster	7/21
Todd Turner	7/01	Leslie Wills	7/21
Coral Mosbo	7/02	Nathan Wills	7/21
Wayne Hickman	7/03	Jacob Hesselbacher	7/22
Ryder Montgomery	7/05	Katie Mehlretter	7/22
Linda Gerlach	7/07	Jan Schultz	7/24
Vern Redfearn (93)	7/07	Brooke Brown	7/25
Karron Mills	7/08	Faith Morhardt	7/25
Allen Hendren	7/09	Jim Stoewer	7/25
Janet Williams	7/10	Rich Folks	7/27
Brenda Werner	7/11	Ali Krug	7/27
Korbin Winter	7/11	Ashley Anderson	7/28
Laura Hillman	7/12	Mel Ehrler	7/28
Leigh Stoewer	7/12	Tom Frey	7/28
Barb Hansen	7/14	Christian Morhardt	7/28
Eva Koehn	7/15	Fern Andersen	7/31
Archer Wooden	7/15	Nikki Hesselbacher	7/31
Teresa Hesselbacher	7/20		
		Jason & Missie Hesselbacher	7/02
		Cory & Kim Anderson	7/04
		Nathan & Kellie Wills	7/15
		Joe & Jen Heim	7/16
		Mel & Deb Ehrler	7/22
		Ron & Jan Schultz	7/22
		Jim & Laura Hillman	7/24

Theological Reflection

Current Event

In November 2019, many Christian leaders in the US, including ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, took part in **Golden Rule 2020**, a nationwide effort to “emphasize Christian teachings about dignity, respect, and the need for civility in our political discussions.” The hope was to provide a powerful response to the vitriolic partisanship and violence that so infected our legislative bodies and streets in recent years. But Lutheran pastor and author Lenny Duncan felt **quite otherwise**: “Nothing, I repeat nothing,” he deadpans, “has ever changed for black and brown peoples, woman, or queer folx in this country with civility,” and to insist otherwise was to make the lives of the most vulnerable even harder. Golden Rule 2020 isn’t a false prophecy—a theme in this week’s Jeremiah reading—but it may function that way, crying “Peace! Peace!” when there is no peace (Jer. 6:14).

Theological Reflection

It is good that Paul reminds us of the “natural limitations” of words like *slavery* and *obedience* in theological discourse (Rom. 6:19). They were just as shocking in Paul’s day as ours and can still get you into quite a pickle if used carelessly. A man blithely preaching on obedience and slavery to God is likely to get told off by a woman or two—same thing with any white person using such rhetoric with people of color. Obedience under chattel slavery is imposed through violence and terror. What is clear from Paul, though, is that slavery and obedience to God are chosen and embraced via faith. Consequently, the decision to choose being a slave to faith, as opposed to remaining a slave to the world, is a breathtaking act of resistance and rebellion.

(from Sundays & Seasons)