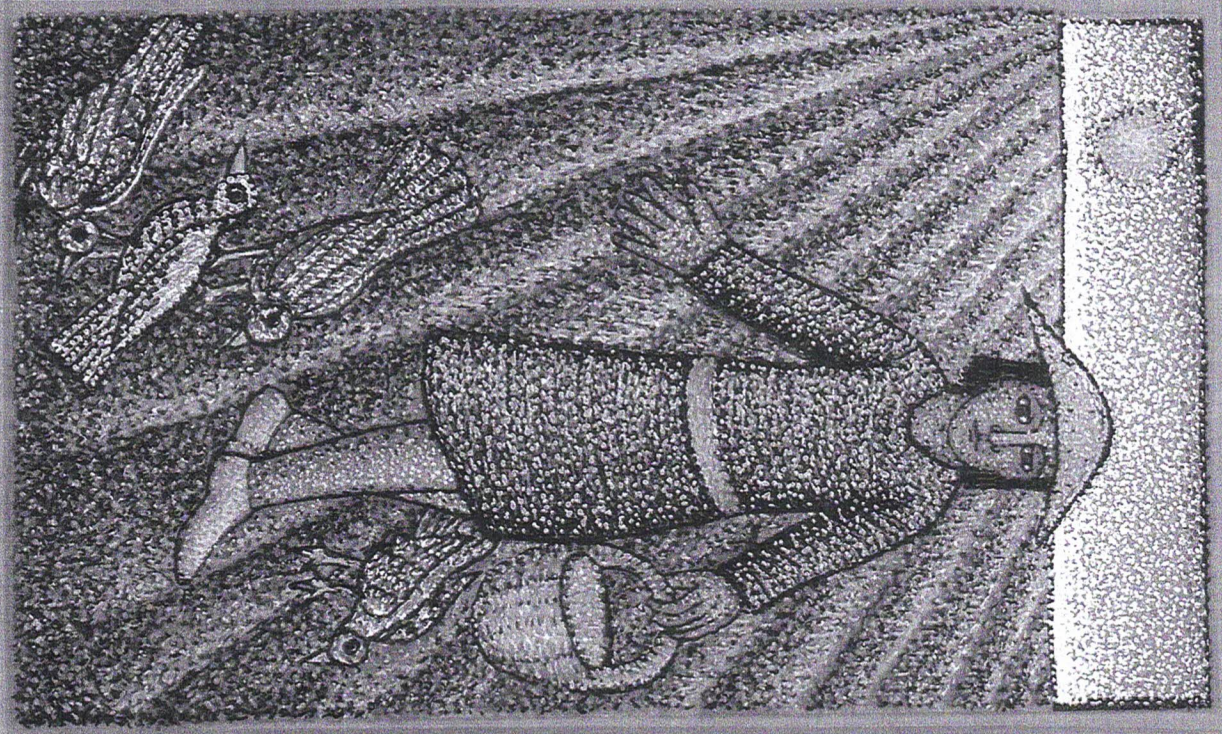


A sower went out to sow

MATTHEW 13:3



FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:10-13

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered 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 succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

¹²For you shall go out in joy,
and be led back in peace;

the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song,
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 be to the Lord for a memorial,
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

Psalms 65:1-8] 9-13**SECOND READING: Romans 8:1-11**

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ²Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow." ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell on rocky ground, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, 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 brought forth

Taking Root

Jesus makes it clear that merely speaking or receiving the good news of the kingdom of God is not always sufficient. Through preaching, Bible study, and worship God's word is planted in our hearts. But many things can get in the way of the word taking root, growing, and producing fruit.

The church is often tempted to do whatever it takes to bring in as many people, and as quickly as possible for the sake of increasing numbers. This is sometimes done through shallowness: appealing to popular trends, preaching an easy message that requires no repentance or sacrifice, or depending on the charisma of the messenger more than the substance of the message.

In his parable of the sowing of seeds, Jesus emphasizes that it takes understanding and depth for God's word to take root, to endure struggles, and to be sustained long enough to bear fruit. Shallowness only makes room for a quick growth that doesn't last.

In the church, what makes for depth that allows God's word to take root and last in our lives? Often it means connecting God's word to the deep, personal needs we bring. Is the Bible a book about things that happened a long time ago, or does it speak God's word for our lives today? Do we listen only to the parts of God's word that sound easy and make us feel good, or do we wrestle with messages of repentance and calls to seek justice?

Martin Luther taught the church that God's word comes to us as law and gospel. We don't get to choose which one we want to hear. We always get both. Both knowing we need God's mercy and hearing that God's mercy is a gift for us through Christ bring God's word deep into our hearts, where it takes root and lives. This is what it means to understand God's word with depth.

Gospel, continued

grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹Let anyone with ears listen!"

¹⁸"Hear 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 is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on 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 such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately 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 lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

Next Sunday's Readings: Isaiah 44:6-8 or Wisdom 12:13, 16-19; Psalm 86:11-17; Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43.

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Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran Church

A Congregation of the Evangelical

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WELCOME GUESTS

We invite you to sign our guest book and/or complete a visitor card to help us remember you. Please let us know if we can serve you in any way. Everyone is welcome to Holy Communion at Shepherd of the Lakes. Come forward as ushers direct, receive the wafer in your hand and move to the wine which is served in individual portions. We offer grape juice as an alternative to wine. Gluten-free wafers are also available at your request from communion servers when you partake.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Empowered by the power of the Holy Spirit and rooted in the Good News of Jesus Christ, we are a loving community that follows Jesus & seeks to hear the Word of God and practice it in our daily lives.

Recorded Services: All Saturday services at Shepherd of the Lakes are recorded and put on YouTube, usually by 9 AM Sunday morning. Go to the Church website at shepherdofthelakeschurch.org and look for the  symbol. Click on this symbol to take you to the Church's YouTube site.

Giving Report July 1, 2020		Attendance
General		225 00
Food Pantry		
Frederick House		
Building Fund		25 00
Weekend Backpack Program		
Total		250 00

Giving Report July 5, 2020		Attendance
General		2341 00
Caritas		25 00
Food Pantry		10 00
Frederick House		25 00
Weekend Backpack Program		20 00
Building Fund		30 00
Total		2451 00

Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 6 PM

Worship services:

Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran Church is now holding two worship services each week - on **Saturday at 5:30 p.m.** and **Sunday at 9:00 a.m.**

Outdoor Services: Sunday 9:00 (Weather Permitting)

July 26, 2020
August 16, 2020
August 30, 2020

Children's bulletins are available in the narthex. These have been designed to assist children in worship. Each page is based on the Gospel lesson.

PRAYER REQUESTS



(Please note: "Current issue" listings remain in the bulletin for three weeks and then are removed unless instructions are received to move that listing to the "ongoing health issues" list.)

Pray for those dealing with current issues:

Continue to pray for those in the world affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Pray for our world leaders, church leaders, and Shepherd of the Lakes leaders so that they may help to meet the needs of those they serve as we move forward in these everchanging times.

Pray for those with ongoing health issues: Ray Burlingame-Goff, Carolyn, Carson Petersohn, Scott Stephens, John Dyke, Adrienne, and Jerry Kehl.

Pray for those serving in the Armed Forces: Jeff Hammer, Brian Kriek, Adam & Brittany Recob, Brooks Maines, Will Schmidt, Sgt. Keara Kangas, Alex Bauer, Jared Mann, Noah Storasli, and Zachary Raatz.

Pray for those in nursing homes or homebound: Ramona Schaeffel, Mel & Barb Harvey, Elisabeth Jacobsen, and Elsie Turner.

Pray for the family of:

Bea Baccus who passed on last weekend.

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Please email Bill Wendorf at pastor@SOTLsayner.com or Jean Maines at secretary@SOTLsayner.com if you would like to be included on the prayer chain list. Prayer requests are sent out via email. Those who are enrolled and do not have email are called via the telephone.

If anyone is interested in being the contact person for the prayer chain, please contact Bill Wendorf or Sharon Geist.