

Sunday, July 12, 2020

Proper 10, Year A, VI after Pentecost

Introduction

God's word is like the rain that waters the earth and brings forth vegetation. It is also like the sower who scatters seed indiscriminately. Our lives are like seeds sown in the earth. Even from what appears to be little, dormant, or dead, God promises a harvest. At the Lord's table we are fed with the bread of life, that we may bear fruit in the world.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 55:10-13

God's word to Israel's exiles is as sure and effective as never-failing precipitation. Their return to the Holy Land in a new exodus is cheered on by singing mountains and by trees that clap their hands.

¹⁰For 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.

The Word of the LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD.

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

In Matthew's gospel, both Jesus and his disciples "sow the seed" of God's word by proclaiming the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near." Now, in a memorable parable, Jesus explains why this good news produces different results in those who hear.

GLORY TO YOU, O LORD.

¹That 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 the path, 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 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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST.

Prayers of Intercession

When I say, "Hear us, O God," you respond, "**Your mercy is great.**"

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

A brief silence is held as we gather our prayers.

Gracious God, your Word has been sown in many ways and places. We pray for missionaries and newly planted congregations around the world and for the ways you

place your Word in our hearts to speak, to live and to do. Inspire us by the witness of others as we seek to share our faith.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of all Creation, the mountains and hills burst into song and the trees and fields clap their hands in praise. We pray for the birds and animals who make their home in the trees, and for lands stripped bare by deforestation. Empower us to use what you have given, sustainably.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Reigning God, we pray for our nation's leaders. *pause*

Bridge the chasms that divide us in our nation and guide authorities to a deep and lasting peace.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Abiding God, care for all who are in need.

For those without economic security, provide sustenance.

For those who are doubting, renew faith.

For those who are worrying, provide release.

For those who are struggling, ease burdens.

For those in fear, give hope.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Renewing God, revive your Church in this place. Nourish and nurture the seeds you have planted, that we might grow as disciples. Replace what has been depleted.

Sustain our ministries in this time of stress and strain, and show us the path to faithful service and growth.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for the offerings we bring.

Our ordinary gifts seem small when we stand in your presence. Multiply the gifts we are able to offer to make them abundant, not merely enough, that you may be seen through us.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Hear now the prayers of our hearts as we offer them before you both silently and aloud:

Silence for the prayers of people's hearts

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Eternal God, we give thanks for the lives of all who have died, remembering before you Donna Plawa and George Townsend who have died recently, all who have been lost to Covid-19, and loved ones we name before you in the silence of our hearts

pause

Comfort us in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection.
Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Blessing

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

God, the creator, + Jesus, the Christ,
and the Holy Spirit, the comforter,
bless you and keep you in eternal love.

Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

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Prayers adapted by Interim Pastor Janet S. Peterman

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