

**Redeemer Lutheran Church of Leisure World
and
St. Theodore of Canterbury Episcopal Church
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***Holy Communion Service
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 1, 2024***

PRELUDE

played by organist

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN

LBW [Green Book] # 415

“God of Grace and God of Glory”

GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

C **Amen.**

P Let us confess our sin and come to God for healing.

Silence is kept for reflection.

C Gracious God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we have honored you with our lips, but have harmed our neighbors with our tongues. The cravings at war within us cause conflicts and disputes. In our desire to be first we make distinctions among ourselves. We place the needs of the poor and the suffering last. In your great mercy, forgive us our sins. Draw near to us with grace in time of need, and turn us to follow in the way of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

P God promises to forgive our iniquity and to remember our sin no more. By grace you have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, the source of eternal healing, your sins are forgiven.

C **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

C O God our strength, without you we are weak and wayward creatures. Protect us from all dangers that attack us from the outside, and cleanse us from all evil that arises from within ourselves, that we may be preserved through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WE HEAR GOD’S HOLY WORD PROCLAIMED

INTRODUCTION

Jesus protests against human customs being given the weight of divine law, while the essence of God's law is ignored. True uncleanness comes not from external things, but from the intentions of the human heart. Last week Jesus told us "the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (John 6:63). Now James says God has given us birth by the word of truth. We who were washed in the word when we were born in the font return to it every Sunday to ask God to create in us clean hearts.

The First Lesson is from Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

The Israelites believed the law was a divine gift that provided guidelines for living out the covenant. Moses commands the people to obey the law and to neither add to nor subtract from it. The Israelites are also to teach the law to their children and their children's children.

¹So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. ²You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the LORD your God with which I am charging you. ⁶You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the

peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!" ⁷For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is whenever we call to him? ⁸And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today?

⁹But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children.

The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 15

LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle? (Ps. 15:1)

¹LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle?

Who may abide upon your holy hill?

²Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,
who speak the truth from their heart;

³they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

⁴In their sight the wicked are rejected,
but they honor those who fear the LORD.

They have sworn upon their health
and do not take back their word.

⁵They do not give their money in hope of gain,
nor do they take bribes against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

Congregation: Please stand for the Gospel Acclamation and the Gospel reading, if you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

(Congregation stands and sings “Alleluia” following the Second Reading.)

The Gospel Lesson is from Mark chapter 7 verses 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Mark's gospel depicts Jesus as challenging traditional ways in which religious people determine what is pure or impure. For Jesus, the observance of religious practices cannot become a substitute for godly words or deeds that spring from a faithful heart.

¹Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus, ²they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. ³(For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; ⁴and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) ⁵So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" ⁶He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

"This people honors me with their lips,

but their hearts are far from me;

⁷in vain do they worship me,

teaching human precepts as doctrines.'

⁸You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition."

¹⁴Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile."

²¹For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, ²²adultery, avarice, wickedness,

deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. ²³All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

A Reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

C Praise to you, O Christ

Congregation: Please be seated.

The Second Lesson is from James chapter 1 verses 17-27

The letter of James was intended to provide first-century Christians with instruction in godly behavior. Here Christians are encouraged to listen carefully and to act on what they hear, especially by caring for those least able to care for themselves.

¹ James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the dispersion:

Greetings.

² My brothers and sisters, whenever you face various trials, consider it all joy, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance complete its work, so that you may be complete and whole, lacking in nothing.

⁵ If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. ⁶ But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. ^{7,8} For the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

⁹ Let the brother or sister of humble means boast in having a high position ¹⁰ and the rich in having been humbled, because the rich will disappear like a flower in the field. ¹¹ For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the field; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. It is the same way with the rich; in the midst of a busy life, they will wither away.

¹² Blessed is anyone who endures temptation. Such a one has stood the test and will receive the crown of life that the Lord^[a] has promised to those who love him. ¹³ No one, when tempted, should say, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But one is tempted by one’s own desire, being lured and enticed by it; ¹⁵ then, when desire has conceived, it engenders sin, and sin, when it is fully grown, gives birth to death.

¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ **Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.** ¹⁸ **In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.**

¹⁹ **You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰for your anger does not produce God’s righteousness. ²¹Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.**

²² **But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. ²³For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; ²⁴for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. ²⁵But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.**

²⁶ **If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.**

SERMON

The Rev. Murray D. Finck

*“Facing Trials and Temptation with
Wisdom, Courage, and Faith”*

CHOIR ANTHEM

“Change My Heart, O God”

APOSTLES’ CREED

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

L ... Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

OFFERTORY

“O Master, Let Me Walk With You”

OFFERING PRAYER

P Blessed are you, O God, source of every gift of your creation. Bless this Holy Table as you open your hands and satisfy the desires of all living beings. Bless also these gifts and our lives which we offer to you. Help us to serve one another and all in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

THE LORD'S PRAYER

LBW [Green Book] Page 71

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Jesus welcomes you to this table. Come, here is your God.

Holy Communion Distribution (The Congregation is invited by the ushers to come forward to receive Holy Communion. If you are unable to come to the altar, Holy Communion will be brought to you in the pew. We believe Christ is truly present in, with, and under the bread and wine/juice. Anyone with any questions may speak with the Pastor. The inside circle of glasses contains grape juice.)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

C Holy God, you have welcomed us to this meal and fed us with dignity at your table. Send us now to welcome others and to be at peace with one another, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

P God all mighty, God most merciful + bless you, keep you, and give you peace.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

LBW [Green Book] # 406

"Take My Life, That I May Be"

DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Follow Jesus.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

played by organist

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Interim Pastor: The Rev. Murray D. Finck, Bishop Emeritus

Organist and Choir Director: Sharon Heck

Flowers are given by: *Margo Geesing in Honor of Mike Geesing's Birthday.*

THOSE WHO SERVE TODAY

<i>Presider:</i>	The Rev. Murray D. Finck, Bishop Emeritus
<i>Organist:</i>	Sharon Heck
<i>Holy Communion Assistant</i>	Carmen Leslie
<i>Acolyte</i>	Sylvia Makus
<i>Reader:</i>	Carol Costello
<i>Prayer Leader:</i>	Elaine Lee
<i>Financial Team:</i>	Wendy Alfageme and Doris Weinert

THIS WEEK

Wednesday: 12:00 Noon Bible Study

Sunday: 10:30 a.m. Holy Communion Service

Redeemer Finance: August Offering through August 25

Budgeted Monthly Expense	\$7,308.00
Offering	<u>\$8,272.00</u>
Needed to meet budget	(\$964.00)

We thank you for all your gifts to the Church. Because of your generosity, we have reached our anticipated budget needs for this month.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Barry, Jean, Kathy, Wendy, Beverly, Nancy, Evelyn, Shirlene, Carol, Mickey, Evelyn, Gloria, Christa, Alice, Barbara, Cedric, Lucy, Karen, Kelly, Raymond, Dick, Marilyn, Brian, Carl, Jessica, Carol, Rose, Sandra, Elaine, Carmen, Barbara, Betty, Nancy, Phyllis, Sylvia, Flo, Eileen, Erich, Leslie, Linda, Ronnie, Kay, Violet, Linda, Ron, Collette, Lisa, Patty, Barbara, Joan, Dee, Susan, Kathy, Juanita, Clarence, Debbie, Joan, Doris, Linda, Bruce, Alma, Martha, Marianne, Robert, Laura, Jim, Loretta, Ray, Patty, Delrie, Bill, Betty, Lorna, M. Teresa, Joan, Mike, Frankie, Donna, Ernie, Eileen, Darleen, Sharon, Danuta, Lynne, Ethan, Kurt, Brinly, McCall, Kathy, Nayleen, Nicole, Donald, Maria, Andy, Owen, Tom, Anastasia, Claire, Fran, Chris, Kyle, Michele, Wes, Sam, Kolt, Brigid, Joanna, Dale, Karla, Sands, Gloria, Tom, Rosalia, Wendy, Elaine, Rachel and Mike. Please contact the church to add people to the prayer list.

Please pray for our Bishop David Nagler, (ELCA) and Bishop John Taylor (ECUSA), the victims of the Ukrainian/Russian and Israel/Hamas conflicts, and victims and families of all violence and natural disasters.

Gracious God, none who trust in your Son can be separated from your love. Give to those who live alone peace and contentment in their solitude, hope and fulfillment in their love of you, and joy and companionship in their relations with others; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CHURCH COUNCIL

President Kay Pushman, **Vice-President** Wendy Alfageme,
Secretary Nancy Anderson, **Treasurer** Phyllis Mackey, **Finance**
Chair Doris Weinert

Members at Large, Sandy Langdale, Carmen Leslie, Betty Lucero, Sylvia Makus, and Michael Vanvales

Announcements

- † Welcome to everyone this morning, and especially to our guests and visitors.
- † Please take a moment and fill out the attendance slip found in the rack in the pews. Please place it in the offertory plate. Visitors, especially, are invited to fill out a card found in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate. Thank you!
- † Everyone is invited downstairs to the Fellowship Hall for coffee, treats, and fellowship (we have tea, too!). You are encouraged to continue to wear your name tags at fellowship so we can greet one another by name. The basket will be available downstairs so your name tag can be collected and ready to wear next week.
- † Pastor Gilbert Moore's Celebration of Life is on Saturday, September 14, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. with a reception to follow the memorial service at Redeemer Lutheran Church. We hold Pastor Gil's family, friends, and the many people who knew and loved him in our hearts and prayers. Please, fill out the slip if you are planning on attending, we would like to know how many to plan for.
- † Please let us know if you are having medical issues, so we can offer pastoral care and our prayers during your difficult times. Speak to a member of the Church Council or call the office number: (562) 598-8697.
- † New members will be received into the congregation in September. If you are interested and have not made those intentions known to the pastor or congregational president, Kay Pushman, please do so at your earliest convenience.
- † The elevator is working. Please see Kay Pushman, Wendy Alfageme, or Sylvis Makus to use the elevator, even if you have used it before.
- † Call on Tuesdays, after 5:00 pm, for the Leisure World Bus if you are having issues with it in regard to getting to Church on Sundays. (562) 431-6586 extension 2379.

- † Bible Study will meet on September 4th from noon to about 1:30 p.m. when we will begin a 5-week study titled: *“The Decalogue – The Ten Commandments”* looking in-depth at Commandments. Bishop Murray Finck will be leading the discussion. Please attend: bring friends, your Bible, and your lunch if you wish!
- † *“God’s Work. Our Hands.”* will be taking place on Sunday, September 8th collection time is planned from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. We will again be collecting non-perishable foods to donate to Lutheran Social Services for their food pantry. We are looking for volunteers willing to help with: getting the word out, setting up, collecting food, counting/weighing the food, delivering the food, and clean-up. EVERYONE is encouraged to get a yellow *“God’s Work. Our Hands.”* shirt to wear, especially on September 8th.
- † If you are having a little problem with hearing on Sundays, please remember that there are speakers in the ceiling light fixtures so sitting closer to one of those may help. We are looking into improving the sound system for the Church Sanctuary.
- † The Flower Chart is available for sign-ups in the entryway. One bouquet is \$15.00. Both are \$30.00. Please include any dedication for your flower request when signing up or include a note beforehand if there is a dedication. If you take the flowers in the plastic holders, please return the holders. We try to reuse them and are currently out of them.
- † Printed copies of our current newsletter are available in the entryway. It is online on our website at: www.redeemersealbeach.com. It is sent out via email, if we have your email address. If you are not receiving the newsletter by email, or the midweek communiqué from the pastor, please put your email address on the attendance sheet in the pew pocket and put it in the collection plate, so we can add you or correct the address we have.