



**Redeemer Lutheran Church of Leisure World and
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Worship and Discipleship by Margo Geesing
“And Life Goes On”

Welcome to the Time after Pentecost Season. We are coming into the period of the Church year where we just go along. There are no really great celebrations or times of preparation. This is the time of doing. It is the time of everyday living and the Gospels reflect this. Jesus addresses some big concepts but in a simple, understandable manner. The Gospels are reflecting the idea of the everyday continuation of a life in faith.

June 2, 2024 – Second Sunday after Pentecost Mark 2:23—3:6

In this Gospel lesson Jesus addresses the concept of spirit vs letter of the law. The Pharisees, especially, were focused on fulfilling the letter of the law. Saying the right prayers at the right time of the day. Being seen giving their tithe to the Synagogue. Watching what others were doing to make sure the others were doing the “right” thing. Following the rituals in their correct form. They thought that this was pleasing to God. In this case, keeping the Sabbath holy by doing NO work. Their way of thinking was that if they did everything correctly and followed the letter of the law, they were in good with God. Jesus did not quite follow the law to the letter. Jesus focused on the spirit of the law. What God actually wanted. Yes, keep God’s holy day, well, holy. Doing something good for another, even if it was “work”, is keeping the spirit of the law. As an example, Elizabeth, who is almost three, was told by her mom that she was not to stand on the dining room table. Being the climber that she is, mom turns around and Elizabeth is back on the table... Typical parent / child conversation ensues, her answer: I’m kneeling on the table, not standing. This is true. So, now the rule changes: no standing or kneeling on the table. Then she tries sitting on the table. Newest rule: no body parts except hands and arms are allowed on ANY of the tables. Elizabeth was following the letter of the rule. Mom really wanted her to follow the spirit of the rule. God is like Christina, he wants us to follow the spirit of the law over the letter of the law: but still, follow the law.

June 9, 2024 – Third Sunday after Pentecost Mark 3:20-35

Sin and grace. Jesus and Satan. Good and Evil. Light and darkness. Possession by an evil spirit or the Holy Spirit. Life and death. These are all opposites. In the realm of God these things cannot co-exist in the same place. Good, light, grace, live, Holy Spirit, and Jesus always conquers evil, darkness, sin, death, evil spirits, and Satan. It is in humanity where God has given us free will that things get muddy. Through our own choices we have mixed these supernatural opposites. We sin but we also have grace to bring us back to God. We are working towards doing good but sometimes evil creeps in. We are a light to the world but within each of us there are little points of darkness. While we were reborn in baptism with the

Holy Spirit we sometimes listen to the evil spirits. We live with the knowledge that at some point our bodies will die. We say we live for Jesus but sometimes we are tempted by Satan and actually give into the evil, worldly, lazy, comfortable, selfish, power hungry, wealth for wealth's sake, hedonistic temptations. Jesus is aware of these conflicts within the human being and so when he is sitting there with people and calling them his brothers and sisters and mother; we can also participate in that familial life with him, just do the will of the Father; just like him!

June 16, 2024 – Fourth Sunday after Pentecost Mark 4:26-34

This Sunday's Gospel is about the everyday miracle of life. And it's so fitting that it is also Father's Day. Frequently we are all like the seed scatterer, totally unaware of time passing and what happens when we aren't looking. There are so many songs just about this idea that life just happens: Kenny Chesney's "Don't Blink"; Harry Chapin's "Cat's in the Cradle"; Trace Adkins' "You're Gonna Miss This"; Darius Rucker "This". Jesus is trying to call attention to those everyday miracles that we take for granted. The amazing gifts that God sends to us every day. A beautiful sunrise or sunset. Bird song in the trees. A cool breeze on a hot day. Plants growing. The world turning. It is also a reminder to each of us; and especially to those of us who are so very busy all the time; to stop and take a breath. The world will continue turning, the Service will happen, you do not have to do everything for everybody all the time. This is an invitation by your loving Father to take a rest. To become rooted or re-rooted in the grace and love of the creative God that has: created the beautiful blue sky; the moist brown ground; the strong green plants; the red, yellow, blue, orange, and purple fruits and vegetable to nourish your body; and the calming words of life in his Holy Bible. Take a moment to: STOP. LOOK. LISTEN. to the miracles of life you are surrounded by, and, maybe, take an extra moment and thank God for this gift of life he has given to you.

June 23, 2024 – Fifth Sunday after Pentecost Mark 4:35-41

Jesus just can't catch a break in this Sunday's Gospel! He has been preaching, teaching, and healing and just wants a few moments to stop and rest. So, he gets his friends together to go out in the boat. This way people, maybe, will let him to get a little alone time. Nope. He finally fell asleep in the boat. His Daddy was looking out for him and sent a little storm to rock him to sleep and keep the other people away. He gets woken up by his friends [personally, I blame Peter] because they are panicking over the storm. I'm never sure if he's telling the storm "Peace! Be still!" or his friends. I know, the Gospel says he's talking to the storm but ... He does rebuke his followers asking them, "Why are you afraid? Have you so little faith?". This reminds me about times when I was in a panic about whatever. I can almost picture Jesus sitting there in heaven shaking his head at me saying, "Why are you afraid? Have you so little faith?". We have all heard that God will never give you a cross that you cannot carry; with his help and grace. I know that sometimes we are challenged just so we will remember to turn to him for his help.

June 30, 2024 – Sixth Sunday after Pentecost Mark 5:21-43

The final week of June we have a Gospel lesson of faith and healing through touch. This is another case of Jesus going away from the letter of the law. Both of these stories go against the laws of cleanness for the Jewish people. Interaction with bleeding or dead bodies was considered unclean. Jesus did not let these “rules” stop him from healing them. The bleeding woman touched Jesus’s garments and was healed. She had faith and trust. Jesus was not even aware of what she was doing. Jesus touched Jarius’s daughter and she came to life. We get to share in the divine touch of healing. Remember the cooling touch of a parent’s hand on a child’s fevered head; holding hands with a loved one; the steadying hands for a wobbly gait and revel in the miracle of being touched and touching as a way of healing.