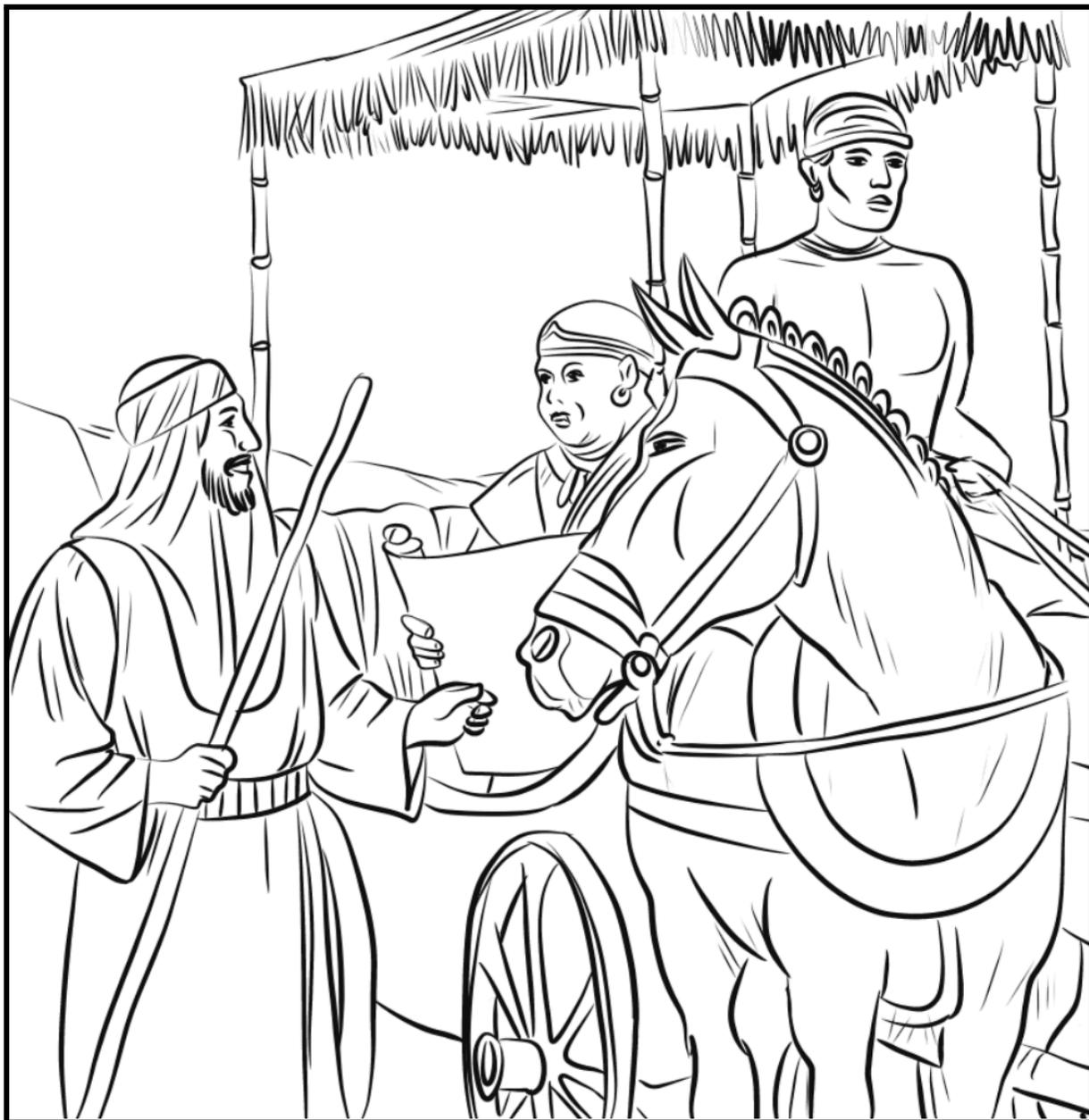




TREE OF LIFE

Christian Fellowship

“for Healing, Obedience, & Peace on Earth” (H.O.P.E.)



Pentecost VI | 13 Jul 2025

“Unless Someone Guides Me”

Acts 8:4-40

✠ The Way of Jesus Liturgy ✠

Invocation

Father, Creator of Heaven and Earth, ♦ **you save us from our selfishness and make us your children through Baptism, Repentance, and Communion.** ♦ Through your Son Jesus, who is your Lamb and Word embodied in flesh, ♦ **we die to Civilization's Way of arrogance, fear, and violence.** ♦ Through your Holy Spirit, who dwells among us and within us, ♦ **we are reborn in Jesus's Way of faith, hope, and love.**

Processional Song — *LSB 644 "The Church's One Foundation"*

- ♫ *The Church's one foundation, is Jesus Christ her Lord. She is his new creation, by water and the word. From heav'n he came and sought her, to be his holy bride. With his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.* ♫
- ♫ *Called out from ev'ry nation, yet one o'er all the earth. The Body of salvation, one Lord, one faith, new birth. One holy name she blesses, on his good word she feeds. And to one hope she presses, while he tends to her needs.* ♫
- ♫ *Because of betraying hearts, the world sees her oppressed. By arguments torn apart, by false teachings distressed. Yet saints their watch are keeping, their cry goes up, "How long?" And soon the night of weeping, will be the dawn of song.* ♫
- ♫ *The Church will never perish, her strong Lord to defend. To guide, sustain, and cherish, is with her to the end. There are those who will hate her, and men want her to fail. Against the constant traitor, she always will prevail.* ♫
- ♫ *Through hatred from the nations, and violence from their wars. She waits the resurrection, of peace for evermore. Till with the vision glorious, her longing eyes are bless'd. And the great Church victorious, will be the Church at rest.* ♫
- ♫ *Yet she on earth has union, with God the three in one. And mystic sweet communion, with those whose rest is won. Oh blessed heav'nly chorus, "Lord, save us by your grace!" That we like saints before us, may see you face to face.* ♫

Pentecost Litany

Jesus has ascended to the Father, ♦ **but he has not left us as orphans.**
He has begun to return as he promised, ♦ **by pouring out his Spirit upon us.**
He dwells among us and all creation ♦ **and he has made us the Body of Christ.**

Prayer of the Day

Jesus says, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there with them."

(the Christ candle is lit to remind us that Jesus is coming among us)

♫ *We are filled with the Spirit, and we follow the Lord, We are filled with the Spirit, and we follow the Lord, And we pray that all creation may one day be restored. And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love, Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.* ♫ (GC2 728)

The Lord Jesus be with you. ♦ **And also with you.** ♦ Let us pray. Heavenly Father, help us to have the humility to be taught and guided to follow your truth. In the name of Jesus, your Son, our Lord. ✠ **Amen.**

† Baptism — The Way of Faith †

Surrendering to the Creator

Jesus says, “If you hold onto your life, ♦ **you will destroy it.** ♦ But if you let go of your life, ♦ **you will save it.** ♦ You must be born again through water and the Spirit ♦ **to enter the Creator’s Kingdom.”** ♦ Father, Son, & Holy Spirit ♦ **I surrender to you all of my † mind, all of my † heart, and all of my † body and † soul.**

(we make the sign of the cross—touching forehead, heart, and shoulders)

Father, into your hands ♦ **I commit my spirit.** ♦ Father, not my will, ♦ **but your will be done.** ♪ *Take my life and all my heart, take my whole soul ev’ry part. Take my mouth and let it be, filled with your truth and mercy. ♪ Take my hands and let them love, with compassion from above. Take my feet and let them go, on the Way that Jesus showed. ♪ Take my money and fam’ly, give me faith and set me free. Take my life and teach me how to love all creation now. ♪ (LSB 783)*

Listening to the Creator

Jesus says, “Come to me, all of you who are tired and burdened. Learn from me and practice my teachings and you will find rest for your souls. Those who listen will live.”

♪ *Listen to what Jesus teaches, listen to him every day. Listen as you walk and follow, listen also as you pray. Listen to him every moment, listen with an open mind. Listen to find peace and patience, listen so you will be kind. ♪ (LSB 770)*

Remembering the Saints & Martyrs — Paulinus of Nola

Father, we give you thanks for the great cloud of saints and witnesses who have gone before us and have embodied the Way of Jesus. Today we remember Paulinus (354-431 AD) who, after being converted to the faith by his wife, left his career as a Roman governor and senator behind to follow Jesus. One of the wealthiest men in the entire world, he sold all of the family estates, became a bishop, and brought the poor and sick into his own home. Paulinus wrote: “We have no right to our possessions; they have been entrusted to us for the good of all. Let us then invest with the Lord what he has given us, for we have nothing that does not come from him: we are dependent upon him for our very existence. What can we regard as our own when we do not even possess ourselves?” Help us learn from his faith and example, † **Amen.**

Chanted Psalm — *Psalm 131*



♪ *O Lord, my heart is not | lifted up;
* my eyes are not | raised too high.
I do not let myself | be anxious
* about things that are | your business.
I have calmed and quieted my | inner being,
* I am like a weaned child with | its mother.
O people of God, hope | in the Lord
* Always trust | in his care. ♪*

Law & Prophets — Isaiah 35:1-10

The Prophets reading comes from Isaiah 35. ♦ **Blessed are the ears that listen.**
We do not live on bread alone, ♦ **but on every word from the Lord.**

Epistle — Romans 4:1-12

The Epistle reading comes from Romans 4. ♦ **Blessed are the ears that listen.**
We do not live on bread alone, ♦ **but on every word from the Lord.**

† Holy Gospel † — Acts 8:26-40

We stand for the word of Jesus. ♪ *We praise our Lord Jesus who comes with healing in his hand. He frees us who are slaves of death, he raises us to stand. He fills us with his love and truth, he gives us all we need. We come to listen now and on his living word to feed.* ♪ (tune: LSB 444)

The holy Gospel comes from Acts 8. ♦ **Blessed are those who listen to Jesus.**
If you have ears to hear, then listen! ♦ **Lord Jesus, help us to practice your Word.**

Message

† Repentance — The Way of Hope †

Confronting Our Past

Jesus says, “I know everything you do. Pay attention and remove the log from your own eye. I have called you out of Civilization. Repent, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!”
(silence for reflection)

For prostituting ourselves with the false lovers of self, family, and nation,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to love you with every thought, word, and deed.**

For trusting the technology and works of human hands, especially money,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to trust in your power alone.**

For being double-minded hypocrites who misrepresent your name,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to obediently live as your children.**

For overworking and oppressing land, animals, and each other,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to live in restful peace with all creation.**

For not respecting those you send to guide us and teach us,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to listen to our fathers and mothers in Christ.**

For being violent to our bodies and your creation,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to love all creation, including our enemies.**

For degrading ourselves and others with our sexuality,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to keep our sexuality within marriage.**

For trying to possess and control your creation,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to share everything we have.**

For not being vulnerable and honest with others,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to be truthful in all situations.**

For competing with others and desiring more than we need,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to be content in all circumstances.**

Father, turn us back to walking in your Spirit. ♪ *Lord Father we have wandered and hidden from your face. Rescue your whole creation with your almighty grace. From trust in wealth and weapons and blindness to your Way, save us and all creation with*

your own hands, we pray. ♪ (LSB 449) Jesus says, “I discipline those I love. If you love your self, family, or nation more than me, you cannot be my disciple. Come out of Civilization, my people, so you will not share in its sicknesses. Not one stone will be left standing, it will all be torn down.” Will you turn away from Civilization’s Way of arrogance, fear, and violence and reaffirm your Baptism into Jesus’s Way of faith, hope, and love? ♦ **Yes, I renounce Civilization’s Way and pledge to follow Jesus.** ♦ Jesus says, “Put your sword away. If you live by the sword, you will die by the sword. But if you forgive others, your heavenly Father will forgive you.” Will you release all debts and grudges that you hold against anyone—including every member of this church? ♦ **Yes, I forgive all those who have hurt me, frustrated me, or owe me anything.** ♦ Jesus says, “Your sins are forgiven. Get up and walk. Go and sin no more.” † **Amen.**

Song of the Day — “*Christ You Made the Blind Man See*” (tune: LSB 419)

- ♪ *Christ, you made the blind man see; with some mud you healed his eyes. So you acted lovingly, bringing health and changing lives. Yet it was a Sabbath Day; rules were all that some folks saw; They were quick to scorn the way you put love before the Law.* ♪
- ♪ *Christ, you came to judge the earth, bringing truth and life and light, Showing humble ones their worth, giving vision, bold and bright. Those who proudly think they see are the ones who often find Though they act quite boastfully, they, in fact, are really blind.* ♪
- ♪ *God, we pray that we will be people filled with light and grace. Show us what we need to see in this culture, time and place: We are called to be your light, telling how you've changed us here. Love can make the darkness bright; faith in you makes all things clear.* ♪

Waiting on the Creator

- ♪ *Our Father, bring your Rule and will to earth. Give what we need for worry-free rebirth. Bring peace among us and forgive us too, as we forgive and love in all we do.*
- ♪ *Protect us from all things that will mislead. Keep us from selfishness, violence, and greed. We place our lives into your hands this day. Teach us to listen and to walk your Way. Amen.* ♪ (LSB 637)

(incense is lit to symbolize our prayers ascending to God and as its smell fills this space we are reminded of his presence among us)

Jesus says, “Learn from the birds. They do not store up for tomorrow and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Do not fear or worry about tomorrow. Seek only your Father’s Kingdom and he will give you everything you need.”

In peace, let us pray to the Lord, ♪ **Lord have mercy.** ♪ Father, set us apart from Civilization in all our thoughts, words, and deeds. Take charge of our lives and all those in authority. Use everything that happens to bring your good judgment and healing upon all creation. *In peace, let us pray to the Lord,* ♪ **Lord have mercy.** ♪ Father, provide for us, protect us, and heal our brokenness. Especially this day we remember Charlene Sargent, John Espino, Cebra Sims, and those we name in our hearts... Father, give us exactly what we need this day and teach us to be content with that. *In peace, let us pray to the Lord,* ♪ **Lord have mercy.** ♪ Father, forgive us and free us from all that enslaves us. Help us to walk away from our anxieties, traumas, and addictions to

Civilization's Way, so we may walk in Jesus's Way. Empower us to love and forgive everyone, even our enemies, in the way you have loved and forgiven us. *In peace, let us pray to the Lord, ♪ Lord have mercy.* ♪ Father, humble us and remind us that we have no strength apart from you. Stay with us in difficult times and save us from our selfishness. Comfort us in the certain hope that all your creation and children will be renewed and raised from the dead. *In peace, let us pray to the Lord, ♪ Lord have mercy.* ♪ Father, help us to let go and surrender everything into your loving hands, trusting that you work all things for the good of those who love you. ♦ **Our Father in Heaven, may your name be holy, may your Kingdom come, and may your will be done—on Earth as in Heaven. Give us this day what we need for today. Forgive us in the same way that we forgive others. Do not abandon us when we are tempted, but pull us away from what is evil. For the Kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours—now and forever. † Amen.**

† Communion — The Way of Love †

Sharing the Lord's Peace

Jesus says, "Make peace with each other ♦ **before you come to the Lord's altar.** By this all people will know that you are my disciples: ♦ **if you love each other.**"

Offering & Musical Offering

Jesus says, "Do not store up things on earth. To be my disciple you must give up everything you own. Sell your possessions and give to the poor." We offer all we have to the Lord, while also offering gifts to support this communion.

Pledge of Allegiance

♪ *We come before you, Lord, to bow. We lay our lives at your feet now. All things are yours, we own nothing! Our lives are in your hands this day. Give what we need, O Lord, we pray. Please protect us, provide for us! Watch over us, ever with us, always love us!* ♪ (LSB 816) Jesus says, "If you pledge your allegiance to me before others, then I will pledge my allegiance to you before my heavenly Father."

♦ **I pledge allegiance to one God, the all-powerful Father, who is the Creator of Heaven and Earth, of all things visible and invisible.**

♦ **I pledge allegiance to one Lord, Jesus Christ, who is God's only Son. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He loved and he suffered. Under Pontius Pilate, he was crucified, died, and was buried. On the third day he was raised from the dead. He ascended to heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. He is coming to judge the living and the dead. His Kingdom will not end.**

♦ **I pledge allegiance to the Holy Spirit, who is the giver of life, the holy universal Church, the communion of saints, the baptism for forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life in the age to come. † Amen.**

Thanksgiving — Εὐχαριστία

Let us give thanks to our Creator! ♦ **It is right to give him thanks and praise!**

Father, we praise and thank you, ♦ **for you provide, protect, love, and renew us and all creation!** ♦ We are grateful for all that you give, especially for... Father, we

thank you for marrying yourself to us and uniting Heaven and Earth, Spirit and Flesh, and Christ and the Church through your Son Jesus! ♪ ***Joyful, joyful we adore you, Creator of all that lives! Earth and heaven praise and thank you, for your love and all you give! Fields and forests, fruit trees and birds, thunderstorms and starry skies, seas and mountains, and grazing herds, praising you who never dies!*** ♪ (LSB 803)

† Words of Our Lord Jesus †

On the night before our Lord Jesus was crucified, he revealed his Way of rescuing all creation from the Way of Civilization. Before supper, Jesus humbly washed the feet of his students and enemies. Jesus said, ♦ **“Follow my example. Love each other, even your enemies, in the same way I have loved you.”** ♦ During supper, Jesus then took the bread and broke it. He gave it to them, saying, “This is my body which is being given for you. Do the same for each other in my memory.” After supper, Jesus then took the cup and gave thanks. He said, “This is my blood which is being shed for you, for the forgiveness of all of your sin. Do the same for each other in my memory.”

♪ ***Oh come Lord Jesus come and dine and give yourself through bread and wine. Feed us so we may have new birth, and bring your rule ov'r all the earth. Come now, come now! Our Lord Jesus and bring your healing love to us!*** ♪ (LSB 357)

Sharing the Bread & Wine

Jesus says, “I am the bread of life. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood is united with me and will be raised from the dead.” As we feed on the Bread of Heaven ♦ **we are made members of Christ’s Body.** ♦ We no longer live for ourselves ♦ **but Christ lives within us.** ♦ We invite all Baptized members of the holy universal Church, who give their undivided allegiance to Jesus and are at peace with their brothers and sisters in Christ, to join us ♦ **as the Creator’s Lamb mysteriously gives himself to us in, with, and under this bread, wine, and communion.** ♪ ***We fall down now before you, Jesus you are the Lord. We lay our crowns before you, and put down all our swords. We give you all of our lives, we will hold nothing back. For you gave us everything, there is nothing we lack. You are the true Lamb of God, you gave your life for all. Teach us now to live like lambs, to trust you as we fall.*** ♪ (LSB 941)

Recessional Song — LSB 583 “**God Has Spoken By His Prophets**”

- ♪ ***God has spoken by His prophets, Spoken His unchanging Word, Each from age to age proclaiming God, the one, the righteous Lord. In the world's despair and turmoil, One firm anchor holds us fast; God is King, His throne eternal, God the first, and God the last.*** ♪
- ♪ ***God has spoken by Christ Jesus, Christ, the everlasting Son, Brightness of the Father's glory, With the Father ever one; Spoken by the Word incarnate, God of God, before time was, Light of light, to earth descending, He reveals our God to us.*** ♪
- ♪ ***God is speaking by His Spirit, Speaking to our hearts again, In the ageless Word declaring His own message, now as then; Through the rise and fall of nations One sure faith yet standing fast, God abides, His Word unchanging, God the first, and God the last.*** ♪

Αγάπη Feast & Text Discussion

Jesus says, “Do you love me? Then feed my sheep.” We now move to our Bible study room to continue devoting ourselves ♦ **“to the Apostles’ teaching, to communion with each other, to the sharing of bread, and to prayer.”**

Sent to “Do the Same in My Memory”

Christ Jesus, you are the Lamb, who has laid down your body and blood for us, ♦ **help us to be lambs who do the same for each other in your memory. † Amen.**

Jesus says, “Go and live this truth: ♦ **The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand! ♦ Heal the sick, raise the dead, ♦ cleanse the unclean, and cast out evil spirits. ♦ Freely you have received from the Creator, ♦ now freely you must give. ♦ I am sending you like lambs among wolves, ♦ but do not fear, take up your cross and follow me.”**

♫ *Give us mouths to sing your glory, hearts your teachings to obey, hands that live your love that fills us, feet to walk your holy Way. Holy Spirit, light-creator, may the truth which you do send, fill our lives with loving mercy and trusting peace without end! ♫ (LSB 578)*

Blessing

Jesus says, “Blessed are you in your poverty and suffering, for you are in the Creator’s Kingdom. Blessed are you in your humility, for you will inherit the earth. Blessed are you when you are merciful and peaceful, for you will find mercy and peace.” † **Amen.**

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- * Faith & Film: “1883” (Jul 14, 28, Aug 4, 18, 25, Sep 1, 8) | “Doubt” (Sep 15, 22)
* Growing in H.O.P.E.: Wednesdays @ DG, 5:30 pm food/fellowship, 6:00 pm study
Soup & Psalms: Jul 16, 30, Aug 6 (potluck), 20, 27
* Annual Church Assembly: July 13, between Liturgy and Agape Feast.

Weekly Calendar July 13 - 20, 2025		
Sun, Jul 13	9:30 am	Liturgy & Αγάπη Feast Acts 8:4-40
Mon, Jul 14	6:00 pm	Faith & Film
Wed, Jul 16	6:00 pm	Soup & Psalms
Sat, Jul 19	7-9 am	Breakfast & Devotion
Sun, Jul 20	9:30 am	Liturgy & Αγάπη Feast Acts 9:1-43

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