

This Week at Grace
Sunday, August 19, 2007
The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

INTRODUCTION

The candles that grace our worship seem like gentle lights, but fire is a powerful and purging force. Fire is used to purify molten ore and burn away the dross. In this day's worship, God's word comes among us like raging fire, consuming what is false and leaving behind pure gold.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, judge eternal, you love justice and hate oppression, and you call us to share your zeal for truth. Give us courage to take our stand with all victims of bloodshed and greed, and, following your servants and prophets, to look to the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

FIRST READING *Jeremiah 23:23–29*

Because Jeremiah preaches the unpopular message of God's judgment, he suffers rejection. Today's reading speaks of the mistaken notion that God only sees what is happening in the temple. Rather, Jeremiah points out, God's distance allows for a panoramic view of all the universe, including the lies and deceptions of the false prophets.

²³ Am I a God near by, says the LORD, and not a God far off? ²⁴ Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? says the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the LORD. ²⁵ I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, "I have dreamed, I have dreamed!" ²⁶ How long? Will the hearts of the prophets ever turn back — those who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart? ²⁷ They plan to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, just as their ancestors forgot my name for Baal. ²⁸ Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let the one who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? says the LORD. ²⁹ Is not my word like fire, says the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?

PSALM *Psalm 82*

Arise, O God, and rule the earth. (Ps. 82:8)

¹God stands to charge the divine council assembled,
giving judgment in the midst of the gods:
²"**How long will you judge unjustly,
and show favor to the wicked?**
³Save the weak and the orphan;
defend the humble and needy;
⁴**rescue the weak and the poor;
deliver them from the power of the wicked. R**
⁵They do not know, neither do they understand; they wander about in darkness;
all the foundations of the earth are shaken.
⁶**Now I say to you, 'You are gods,
and all of you children of the Most High;**
⁷nevertheless, you shall die like mortals,
and fall like any prince."
⁸**Arise, O God, and rule the earth,
for you shall take all nations for your own. R**

SECOND READING *Hebrews 11:29—12:2*

The author of Hebrews presents us with a long list of biblical heroes whose exemplary faith enabled them to face the trials of life. In addition to this "cloud of witnesses" we have Jesus, the perfect model of faithful endurance.

Chapter 11

²⁹ By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. ³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. ³¹ By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

³² And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets — ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵ Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented — ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹ Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰ since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

Chapter 12

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us,² looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

GOSPEL *Luke 12:49–56*

Today's gospel contains harsh words concerning the purifying and potentially divisive effects of God's call. People who follow the way of Christ often encounter hostility and rejection, even from those they love.

⁴⁹ I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! ⁵⁰ I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what stress I am under until it is completed! ⁵¹ Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! ⁵² From now on five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; ⁵³ they will be divided:

father against son
and son against father,
mother against daughter
and daughter against mother,
mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law
and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

⁵⁴ He also said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, 'It is going to rain'; and so it happens. ⁵⁵ And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat'; and it happens. ⁵⁶ You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?"

THIS WEEK AT GRACE

TODAY:	8:00a	and 10:00a	Worship Services
	9:00a		Outdoor Coffee Fellowship
MONDAY:	6:30p		Grieving Parents Support Group Meeting
TUESDAY:	9:00a		Staff Meeting
	11:00a		Pastor's Text Study
	4:00p		Lutheran Night at the Twins
WEDNESDAY:	9:30a		Program Staff Meeting
THURSDAY:	6:00a		Early Morning Bible Study

7:00p Thursday Evening Worship Service

FRIDAY: 1:30p ThorneCrest Bible Study

NEXT SUNDAY: 8:00a and 10:00a Worship Services
9:00a Outdoor Coffee Fellowship

MISSIONARY FOR A DAY: [Aug. 19: Given by Pastor Milt & Delores Ost.] [Aug. 19: Sunday School] [Aug. 19: Given by Babe & Lois Brandt.] [Aug. 21: Given by Pastor Todd Walsh.] [Aug. 22: GLCW].

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS our members and friends known to have been hospitalized this past week: Jeanne Jaspersen, Marie Gilbertson. (Rochester), and Marlys Jahnke (Rochester),

PLEASE REMEMBER those needing the continuing prayers of our congregation: Janice Anderson, Larry Bergo, Kathy Diaz, Miff Eglund, Ray & Janet Ewing, Theresa Gamble, Jeanie Godtland, Mike Greiner, Jan Guse, Dan Hagen, Tara Hanson, Edna Herfendal, April Hustoft, Marlys Jahnke, Norman Johnson, Glenn McDaniel, Ethel McGill, Gary Mesch (son-in-law of Dick & Arlyss Haug), Vern Nasby, DeAnna Nelson, LeMoyné Oakland, Lissa Parrish, Bob Richerson (brother of Nancy Greiner), Jackson Schrock (grandson of Vince & Corine Tims), Mark Stevens, LaVon Stewart, Carol Thompson, Lauri Vietrum, Leland Wadding, Mabel Wadding, Sally Witham (mother of Greg Witham), and Eleanor Wolfe.

GREETERS FOR OUR SERVICES this morning are Gerry & Jerry Vogt, and Bob & Muriel Hoeg at 8:00; and Jerry & Gail Rasmussen Joyce Purdy, and Cindy Nguyen at 10:00.

WE JOIN OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS in Christ throughout the SE Minnesota Synod today in praying for St. Olaf Student Congregation in Northfield, Trinity Lutheran in Kiester, and St. Michael Lutheran in Waltham.

FLOWERS TODAY are from the wedding of Laura McKibbin & Bob Ball held here yesterday.

VOLUNTEER ADVOCATE TRAINING: Crime Victim's Crisis Center

The CVCC is searching for women and men, age 16 and older, to attend their next training session. The CVCC provides support and referrals to victims of crime and educates the community about crime victimization. The CVCC assists victims of domestic abuse, sexual abuse and assault, and general crimes such as robbery and stalking. Volunteers allow the CVCC to provide 24-hour assistance to victims of crime. Volunteers provide emotional support, information, and referrals to victims either in person or over the phone. Volunteers also give public presentations and assist in distributing information on crime victimization. This is an excellent opportunity for church members to give back to their community. Training is scheduled to begin **Sept. 4th** at meetings each Tuesday and

Thursday evening from 6:00-9:00p through Oct. 16th. While training is mandatory, it is possible to schedule make-up sessions. Interested persons should contact the CVCC for more information by calling 377-5464.

NEEDED: Teachers for Sunday School and Small Group Leaders for Wednesday Confirmation

For more information, call Jill in the Education Office, 373-6496.

BOOK CLUB will meet in September on Sunday evening, Sept. 9th, 7:00p. (Note the change of day for September only.) The featured book for the month is *Daughters of the Loom* by Tracie Peterson and Judith Miller. Join us for interesting discussion and great fellowship!

BOWLS! BOWLS! BOWLS! The cake pans have been claimed but there are still many bowls in the kitchen above the sink area. They have been there for many months. If they are not claimed by September 1st they will be donated to the Epilepsy Foundation. PLEASE pick up your bowls. Thank you.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT GOOD SAMARITAN:

Today at 2:00p the Good Samaritan Society-Albert Lea will be hosting an Ice Cream and Pie Fundraiser. Proceeds will go toward a new sound system for the dining room.

Tuesday, August 21, the Good Samaritan Society-Albert Lea will be sponsoring a Senior Health Fair at Good Samaritan Society-Hidden Creek. The fair will be open to the public from 1:00-4:00p with representatives from local businesses and organizations that provide services to seniors. There will also be a light lunch served, a drawing for gift certificates to Crescendo Fine Dining and a variety of give-away gifts.

THANK YOU to Grace Lutheran Church and everyone who helped with Shinefest. Without your help and prayers Shinefest would not be a success. Again, thank you and God Bless everyone. Melvin and Ramona Hobbiebrunken.

JEANIE GODTLAND is at home and recuperating. She thanks you for prayers, cards, visits, and gifts of food.

CONGRATULATIONS and God's blessings to William and Christina Conley on the birth of their daughter, Alexia Hope Conley, born August 14, 2007.

GLCW STEWARDSHIP PROJECTS UPDATE:

The World Relief Truck is coming in October. We are still in **dire need** of the following items:

Layettes: Sleepers, receiving blankets; cloth diapers, diaper pins, wash cloths, Ivory soap.

School Kits: 8 1/2" x 11" notebooks of wide ruled paper (150-200 sheets), construction paper, erasers (2 1/2" long), boxes of crayons (8, 16, or 24), rulers, blunt scissors.

Health Kits: Hand towels, wash cloths, bar soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste (5-7 oz.) wide toothed combs, metal nail files OR nail clippers with file attached.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

THANK YOU to everyone who participated in any way with the Relay for Life event last Friday night. It was a great night of fellowship. The event surpassed its goal by raising over \$155,000.00. Thanks to all who walked, who helped to raise money, who donated money and who participated in the fellowship meal. Special thanks to Pat and Bruce Palmer for sharing their motor home. It helped to create a welcoming atmosphere at the Grace campsite. The participation really did support the theme of "Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow".

GIVING AT GRACE:

The Property and Finance Ministry appreciates your generous support. Your faithful stewardship is essential for us to continue to support our ministries at Grace.

	Sunday, Aug. 12th	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Fund Giving	\$ 8265.30	\$ 321,523.30
Budgeted Need	\$ 10,096.00	\$ 323,072.00
Quarters for World Hunger	\$ 42.25	\$ 1,467.75
Stones, Rocks, Boulders Fund	\$ 205.00	

Attendance Last Sunday - 419; Last Year - 419

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Albert Lea, Minnesota
TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
August 19, 2007