

BERN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
820 West Leesport Road, Leesport, PA 19533

Name above all names

Worthy of all praise

My heart will sing

**HOW
GREAT
IS OUR
GOD!**

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Sunday, August 14, 2022 — 10:00 a.m.

INTRODUCTION

The word of God is a refining fire. Jesus is the great divide in human history. He invites our undivided attention and devotion. Today in worship we are surrounded by a great “cloud of witnesses.” In the word and in holy communion we are invited yet again to look to Jesus, “the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.”

PRESERVICE MUSIC

PRELUDE “All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name” -Gilbert Martin

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(*) Please stand as you are able.

LBW (green hymnal) WOV (blue hymnal)

GATHERING

*** CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for reflection.

P: Most merciful God,

C: **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

*** GATHERING HYMN**

“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

LBW #526

*** APOSTOLIC GREETING**

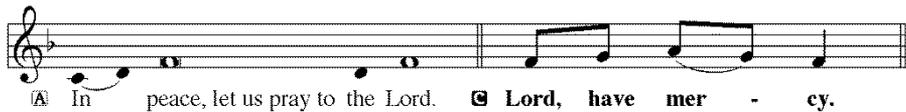
P: The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

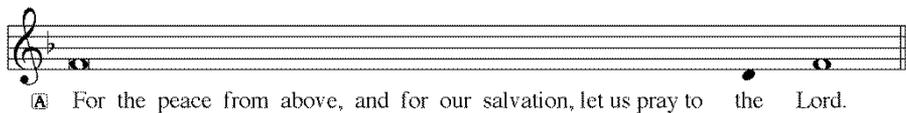


PSALM 104:1

* KYRIE



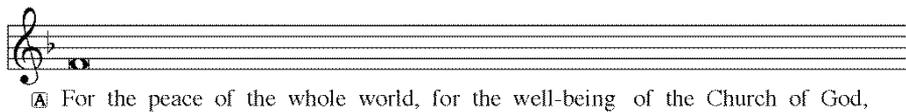
A In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **C** Lord, have mer - cy.



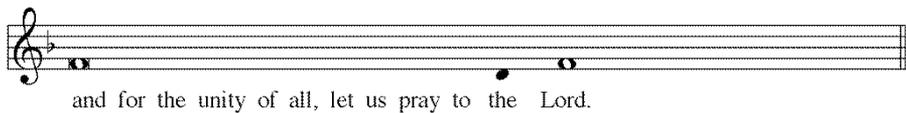
A For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



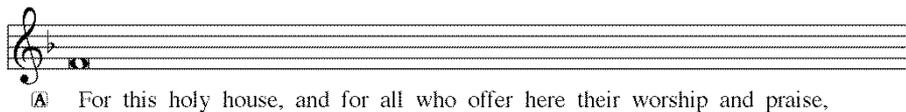
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



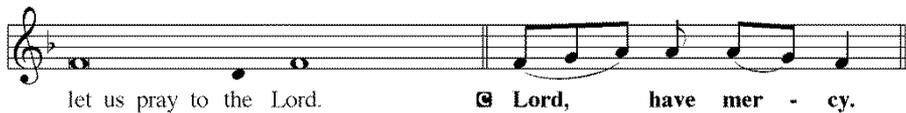
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



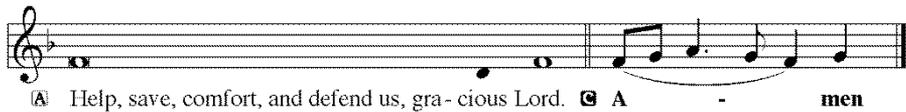
C Lord, have mer - cy.



A For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

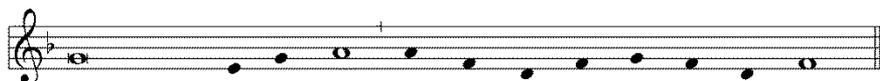


let us pray to the Lord. **C** Lord, have mer - cy.



A Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra-cious Lord. **C** A - men

* HYMN OF PRAISE



♩ Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his peo - ple on earth.



♩ Lord God, heav - en - ly king, al - might - y God and Fa - ther:



We wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



You are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men



*** PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us pray together.

C: **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.**

WORD

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 23:23-29

Because Jeremiah preaches the unpopular message of God's judgment, he suffers rejection. Today's reading distinguishes between the true prophet, like Jeremiah, who speaks God's word, and the false prophet who misleads the people through dreams. One is like wheat; the other like worthless straw.

²³Am I a God near by, says the LORD, and not a God far off?

²⁴Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? says the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the LORD. ²⁵I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, "I have dreamed, I have dreamed!" ²⁶How long? Will the hearts of the prophets ever turn back—those who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart?

²⁷They 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. ²⁸Let 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. ²⁹Is not my word like fire, says the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?

P: Word of God, word of life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 82:1-8 (*read responsively*)

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.**

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.**

SECOND READING: Hebrews 11:29—12:2

The author of Hebrews presents us with rich stories of faith. In a long list of biblical heroes, we find examples of trust in God that enabled them to face the trials of life faithfully. In addition to this “cloud of witnesses,” we have Jesus, the perfect model of faithful endurance.

²⁹By 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. ³⁰By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. ³¹By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

³²And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—³³who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put

foreign armies to flight. ³⁵Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷They 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—³⁸of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

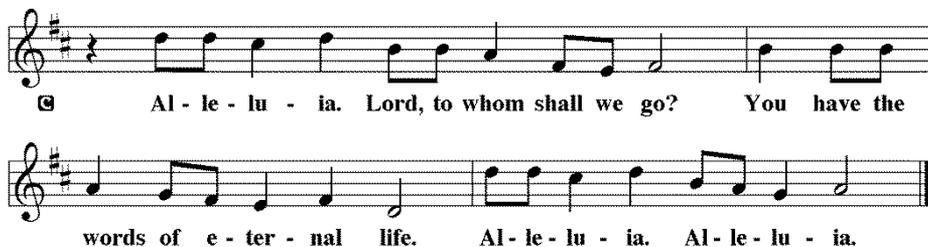
³⁹Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

^{12:1}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, ²looking 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.

P: Word of God, word of life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

*** GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

*** GOSPEL: Luke 12:49-56**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twelfth chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.** (*sung*)

Jesus delivers harsh words about the purifying and potentially divisive effects of obedience to God's call. The way of the cross often leads followers to encounter hostility and rejection, even from those they love.

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

⁵⁴He 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. ⁵⁵And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, ‘There will be scorching heat’; and it happens. ⁵⁶You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.** (*sung*)

SERMON – Pastor Kenneth Gould

Silence for Meditation

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Let Justice Flow like Streams”

WOV #763

* APOSTLES' CREED

P: God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, let us confess our faith:

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 INTERCESSION

P: Trusting in God's extraordinary love, let us come near to the Holy One in prayer.

A brief silence.

P: Arise, O God, and sustain your church. We pray for all who dedicate their lives to serving your people. Renew our commitment to our siblings in faith around the globe, and bless the work of our ecumenical and interfaith partners. Merciful God,

C: **receive our prayer.**

P: Arise, O God, and sustain your creation. We pray for all places in need of rain, so that they may receive the fruits of the earth for their benefit and for your praise. We pray for all places affected by natural disasters. Transform the devastation of floods and fires into fertile ground for new life and growth. Fill heaven and earth with your life-giving Spirit. Merciful God,

C: **receive our prayer.**

P: Arise, O God, and sustain the nations. We pray for all elected officials. Kindle in them a desire to administer your justice. Strengthen their resolve to defend those who are vulnerable and to stand publicly against all forms of oppression. Merciful God,

C: **receive our prayer.**

P: Arise, O God, and sustain those who are oppressed. We pray for people harmed by racist discrimination, ableist discrimination, and all people discriminated against based on their gender identity or sexual orientation. Rescue us from all systems that degrade our fellow human beings. Merciful God,

C: **receive our prayer.**

P: Arise, O God, and sustain this assembly. We pray for this community, celebrating with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep. We pray especially for Barbara, Tim, Jane, Myra, Bob, Ruth, and all those we name in our hearts or aloud... In our joy and in our tears, be near us. Merciful God,

C: **receive our prayer.**

P: Surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, we remember the saints who have gone before us. May we run with perseverance the race set before us until we find our rest in you. Merciful God,

C: **receive our prayer.**

P: Receive the prayers of your children, merciful God, and hold us forever in your steadfast love; through Jesus Christ, our holy Wisdom.

C: **Amen.**

* **SHARING OF THE PEACE** (American Sign Language)

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us share a sign of that peace with one another.

MEAL

* **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

* **THE PREFACE**

P: It is indeed right and salutary...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

* **THE SANCTUS**



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



Heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho - san - na.



Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

* **THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**

LBW, page 70

* **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as our Lord Jesus taught us:

C: **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

* **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P: In Christ's presence there is fullness of joy.
Come to the banquet.

* **THE AGNUS DEI**

☩ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

* POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: **Amen.**

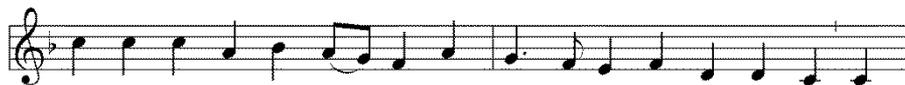
* POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



☩ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - jice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re - calls his prom - is - es and leads his peo - ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

* POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

P: Let us pray. Life-giving God, through this meal you have bandaged our wounds and fed us with your mercy. Now send us forth to live for others, both friend and stranger, that all may come to know your love. This we pray in the name of Jesus.

C: **Amen.**

SENDING

* BLESSING

P: The God of peace, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you, comfort you, and show you the path of life this day and always.

C: **Amen.**

* **SENDING HYMN**

“My God, How Wonderful Thou Art”

LBW #524

* **DISMISSAL**

P: Go in peace. Love your neighbor.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

* **POSTLUDE**

Fantasia on “Webb”

-Franklin Ritter

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COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS UPDATE:

UPDATED WORSHIP GUIDELINES: If you choose, face masks are no longer required in our building during worship. We respect the decision of those individuals who wish to continue masking. They are encouraged to take the precautions they feel are necessary to protect their health.

SANCTUARY SEATING: For your convenience and comfort the sanctuary now has open seating. The pews on the **RIGHT** side will remain taped for those who wish to continue to remain physically distant during worship.

CONTACTLESS OFFERING is being practiced. You may place your offering in the plate near the door of the sanctuary; give on-line; or through the mail. Thank you for giving generously as an act of worship and an expression of the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity and faithfulness. Thank you.

WELCOME to all who have gathered here for worship this morning! If you are a visitor to Bern, please sign the guest book in the narthex or fill out the yellow card in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate. We rejoice in the opportunity to worship our Lord together!

WE WELCOME TO THE LORD’S TABLE all the baptized. We believe that Jesus Christ, our risen Lord, is present in the bread and wine as God’s gracious gift to us. For those who prefer it, grape juice is available in the pre-filled glasses in the trays at the front of the center aisle. Contactless elements are available from the Greeter when you receive your bulletin or in the tray at the front of the aisle. Please notify an usher if there is a need for the pastor to bring communion to the pew. Children who do not yet commune are invited to come forward to receive a blessing.

OFFICE HOURS:

Church Phone: 610-374-4343

Church Email: bernlutheranchurch@gmail.com

Secretary Korinne: Tuesday–8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday–12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Thursday–8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Members: Barbara Speicher, Tim Moyer, Jane Schaeffer, Myra Bernhart, Bob Frey, and Ruth Keeney

Family and Friends: Courtney Davis, Giselle Davis, Joanne King, Tim Brown, Robin Brown, Matt DeLeon, Family and friends of Gary Bleecher, Family and friends of Jerry Martin, Judy Claycomb, Marcia Stoudt, Pastor Joyce Seip, Peter and wife, Bill and Joan Carpenter, Arthur W. Zimmerman, Natalie, Linda M., Charles Trophe, Michael and Troy, Bob Stoner, Ashley, Philip Triantis, Mike, Peggy Deemer, Joe & Karen Young, Ryder Knechtle and family, Brian, Jamie Hey, Glenn Jones, Kailey, Renee Fullmer, Patrick, Susan, Owen Hey, Joyce, Rev. Fred Foerster, Brenda Frey, Lesley Wegman, and St. Mark Lutheran Church in Birdsboro and Pastor Jim Farnsworth

(If you would like to add anyone to our prayer list, please contact Korinne in the church office. Please also notify her of anyone that could be removed.)

INCOME TOWARDS EXPENSES: 8/7/2022 = \$3,631.00

ATTENDANCE: 8/7/2022 = 39

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS AND SPONSORS:

ORGANIST: Jane Battaglieri

OPENER: Pat Yocum

LECTOR: Donna Marks

GREETER: Nancy Malandra

BULLETINS: Given to the Glory of God by Barry and Terri Shurr.

CELEBRATIONS THIS WEEK:

BIRTHDAYS: 14–Audrey Henderson, 16–Bonnie Schlappich,

17–Aiden Angstadt, 18–Janna Kneeream,

19–Ryan Wagner, 20–Mitzi Cote, 20–Toni Sweitzer

THANK YOU to Pastor Kenneth Gould for leading us in worship this morning and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

WHAT'S ON THE CALENDAR THIS WEEK:

Sunday, August 14

- Worship, 10:00 a.m.
- Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
- Supply Pastor, Kenneth Gould

Monday, August 15

- Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, August 16

- Witman's Cleaning, 12:00 p.m.
- Berks Quilters Guild, 3:30 p.m.

Friday, August 19

- Frog Pond, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Saturday, August 20

- Epler's UCC Peach Festival, 3:00-7:00 p.m.

Sunday, August 21

- Worship, 10:00 a.m.
- Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
- Supply Pastor, Kenneth Gould
- Hat Sunday
- Social Hall Rental for Bair Family Reunion

COUNCIL MEMBERS – Please remember to pick up your packet in your mailbox to review before our council meeting on **Monday, August 15, at 7:00 p.m.**

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING – Please plan to stay after our worship service this morning for a Special Congregational Meeting to discuss and vote on the remediation of the sink hole and water retention issues we have been having. Your input is welcome and all voting members of Bern Lutheran Church are needed to be present in order to conduct the business of the church.

HAT SUNDAY – Attention ladies (and gentlemen)! Next **Sunday, August 21**, is Hat Sunday. So put on your best chapeau and join us for church (gloves and parasols are optional).

PASTOR GARY RARICK has agreed to continue on as our Designated Pastor. We are very grateful for his willingness to serve our congregation. If you would need pastoral care, you can contact Pastor Gary at 610-401-1545 or email him at pastorrarick@gmail.com.

FREE COMMUNITY MEAL – Salem Belleman’s Church, 3730 Belleman’s Church Road, Mohrsville, will be holding a free drive-thru community meal on **Tuesday, August 16, from 5:30-6:30 p.m.**

EPLER’S UCC PEACH FESTIVAL – We are invited to join Epler’s UCC, 1151 West Leesport Road, for their annual Peach Festival on **Saturday, August 20, from 3:00-7:00 p.m.** Performance by “Sweet Life Music” from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Basket raffle at 6:00 p.m. Food all day! Held rain or shine. For more information, please check out Epler’s website at www.eplerschurch.org or their Facebook page.

A DIVISION THAT BRINGS PEACE

Today's word is difficult to hear, but all too obvious at the same time. The message of God's governance among us, which lifts up the lowly and challenges the mighty, brings division. The good news bring division because some welcome it with exuberant joy, since it is the only good news they hear, and some resist it because it is a profound challenge to human assumptions about God, the world, and us.

We might be surprised to hear Jesus say he has not come to bring peace, but division. This is because he insists on a gospel of peace for everyone, not just a few. The division Jesus speaks of is not the goal, but it is the inevitable outcome of insisting that everyone is included in God's family. Division and conflict are the price he is willing to pay if that's what it takes to usher in a world of true peace rooted in God's mercy. Jesus paid that price when he was crucified for his faithfulness to God's welcoming way.

The church continues the ministry of Jesus when it enters into the fray of lifting up people the world deems unwelcome or lowly. Who is excluded or marginalized in your community? Why is this so? Does your church mirror this exclusion and marginalization, or does it transcend it with a welcome to those very persons left out elsewhere? What division has this faithfulness to the gospel caused?

The most wonderful witness the church gives, and the most divisive thing it does, is declare forgiveness to every repentant heart in Christ's name: the excluded and the exclusive, the lowly and the mighty. The most beautiful inbreaking of the governance of God is when humble persons gather around Christ's table, open their hands to receive bread and wine, and deeply embrace their own welcome and their neighbor's welcome at the very same table. In that sacramental moment, the peace that led to division turns into complete peace.