

4th Sunday
after Pentecost
June 27-
July 3, 2022

SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 5:1-4

THEME: Christ Provides Ministers to Proclaim His Word

SONG: CW21 901 /CW93 469 O Christians, Haste

VISUAL: Martin Luther College apparel, items, publications, whatever you can find (maybe even an MLC diploma or call certificate if you can find it!)

OBJECT LESSON

Ask if the students know where most of our pastors and teachers go to school to become pastors and teachers. (Some might know!) Show off your "MLC swag." Explain the purpose of MLC and why we need properly trained pastors and teachers.

BIBLE TRUTH

40 days after he rose from the dead, Jesus ascended back into heaven. But before he left, he gave one final command to his followers: to tell the whole world the good news that their sins are forgiven through faith in the Savior. That mission started with the apostles, and it spread from there. As more and more people came to faith, the apostles began starting Christian churches. Soon it became clear that more people were needed to lead those churches and tell many others about Jesus. Read 1 Peter 5:1-4.

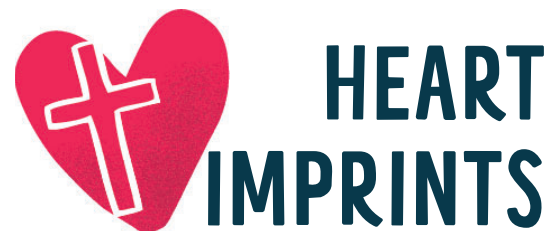
DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

Today, God calls many pastors and teachers to be "shepherds of God's flock." Many times in the Bible we are called sheep, and Jesus is our Good Shepherd. But since Jesus is no longer visibly on earth with us, we need other people to teach us about him. God provides workers who preach his Word and baptize and distribute Holy Communion. Through the Word and sacraments, God strengthens our faith. These pastors and teachers put in the hard work because they love their Savior and they want many more people to believe in him.

God has given wonderful gifts to our church and school by providing us with faithful pastors and teachers. Have you ever stopped to thank your pastor or teacher for sharing God's Word with you? If you see them around today, say thank you! I'm sure they will appreciate hearing it. More importantly, thank God for your pastors and teachers. Thank God every day for the people who share his Word. Did you ever think that you could do that someday? Maybe one day God could use you to share his word with other people! Maybe one day you could be a pastor or teacher.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of your Word. Thank you for the pastors and teachers who share that Word with us every day. Help us to always appreciate their work among us. Lead many more people to enter the public ministry and share your Word with many more people. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



5th Sunday
after Pentecost
July 4-
July 10, 2022

SCRIPTURE: Galatians 5:22-25

THEME: Focused Love Finds a Neighbor Rather than Avoiding One

SONG: CW21 768 /CW93 521 Lord of all Nations, Grant Me Grace

VISUAL: Bowl of fake fruit with each fruit of the Spirit written on it (or a picture on a screen if you can't acquire fake fruit)

OBJECT LESSON

Show the students your bowl of fruit (or picture). Talk up how good the fruit is – juicy, nourishing, perfectly ripe, etc. They may start getting excited and want to try some (they may even ask!). Play up that you like it so much you couldn't possibly share it with them. You want to keep it all to yourself.

BIBLE TRUTH

It may not have seemed very kind of me to not share this fruit with you. But this is how many people in this world act toward one another, sadly. God wants us to be different than the people of this world. The Holy Spirit has created faith in our hearts. Because we have faith, we are called God's children. God wants us to live according to his will. How are we supposed to live as children of God? Read Galatians 5:22-25.

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

Pull out each fruit (or show each picture) with a "fruit of the Spirit" written on it. Explain what each "fruit" means for us as we live our lives for God:

- **Love** — God has shown selfless love to us by forgiving our sins. We ought to show selfless love to one another.
- **Joy** — Because we are forgiven through Jesus, we have joy in knowing heaven is ours. We should show that joy in everything that we do.
- **Peace** — This is true peace, peace between God and us. Our sin no longer separates us from God. He is our dear Father, and we are his children. We can reflect that peace in how we talk and act in our relationships with others.
- **Patience** — God is patient with us, because

we sin every day. He forgives us our sins. We should be patient with one another and forgive each other.

- **Kindness** — God has been kind to us; he forgave our sins! We should be kind to one another.
- **Goodness** — We see God's goodness in creating our world, taking care of us, and saving us. God's goodness should shine through our lives to all that we meet.
- **Faithfulness** — God is faithful to us. He keeps all of his promises. We show our faithfulness to God by going out of our way to serve and help others, like the Good Samaritan in Jesus' parable.
- **Gentleness** — In all our dealings with other people, we should be gentle and understanding. God does not treat us as our sins deserve; we should show that same gentleness to others.
- **Self-control** — Since we have been redeemed by Jesus, we should try to control our sinful urges, especially in the way we treat other people--parents, teachers, classmates, friends, brothers and sisters. Thankfully God will help us to do this, as he has promised to do.

PRAYER

Dear Lord, you have shown such love, patience, and kindness to us. It is difficult for us to show that same kind of love, patience, and kindness to others. We know that you are with us, and that you lead us with your Word. Continue to be with us as we strive to show your love, patience, and kindness to others in our thoughts, words, and actions. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

6th Sunday
after Pentecost
July 11-
July 17, 2022

SCRIPTURE: Luke 10:38-42

THEME: Focused Worship Seeks Service from Jesus More than Service for Jesus

SONG: CW21 633 Speak, O Lord

VISUAL: A selfie stick (if you can get one); photos from Instagram or Snap Chat; large poster board and markers

OBJECT LESSON

Ask the students if they know what a selfie is. (I guarantee the majority of them will.) Why do people post selfies online? Most often, it seems, they want to show off where they are, what they're doing, or who they're with. Even if the picture isn't a selfie, a lot of people still like to show what they're doing or where they're going online. It's almost like they want everyone to see what they're doing and give them credit for it.

BIBLE TRUTH

Jesus came to visit his friends Mary and Martha. Read Luke 10:38-42. Martha was busy preparing food, while Mary was listening to Jesus teach. Both women were serving Jesus in their own way. But who was truly serving Jesus in the best way possible at that moment? That's the lesson Jesus wanted to teach.

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

Most likely, Jesus was not traveling alone. Let's do some math. (Add things up on the poster board with the marker.) How many disciples did Jesus have? (Students should answer 12.) We learn from the Bible that there was a group of women that followed Jesus around, too. Let's say that maybe 5 women were traveling with Jesus this time. Mary and Martha also had a brother - what was his name? (Students should answer Lazarus.) Maybe he was invited, too. And now let's add Mary, Martha, and Jesus - how many people altogether is this? ($12+5+1+3=21$) That's a lot of people to cook for! And Martha seems to be doing all the work herself. She got so upset that she even asked Jesus if he cared that she was doing all the work!

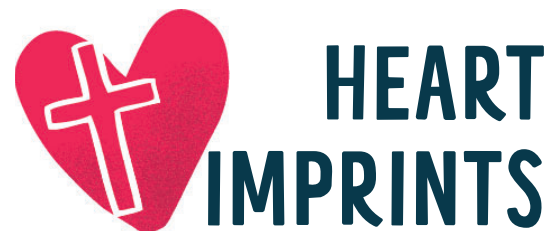
It almost sounds like Martha wanted Jesus to notice how she was serving him. We can't see inside Martha's heart to know what she was truly feeling, so all we have to go on is her words. She seems upset at Mary, but also upset at Jesus. Martha felt

she was doing all these things for Jesus, that maybe she should get some recognition. Do we feel like that sometimes? I'm sure we like our hard work getting noticed. But doesn't that seem a bit selfish? Doesn't that seem like we are just wanting attention sometimes?

It's not wrong to do things for Jesus. He wants us to serve him with our lives, of course. But we need to ask ourselves, is this the best way to serve Jesus right now? Jesus doesn't want us to worry about our work getting attention. Sometimes he just wants us to slow down and listen to him. He has important things to say to us in his Word. He wants us to know that he loves us; that he has taken our sins away; that we have a home in heaven waiting for us. Truly worshiping Jesus means looking for all the ways Jesus comes to us with his blessings. Truly worshiping Jesus means taking some time to sit at his feet and listen to what he has to say to us. The most important thing in worship is that Jesus serves us with his Word and gives us forgiveness and peace and strengthens our faith. Because faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ (Romans 10:17). And by faith we have eternal life in Jesus.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, we are worried and upset about many things. Help us instead to focus on the one thing that is needed for our spiritual good. Help us take time out of our day to quietly listen to you and your Word. Help us encourage others in our family to also quietly listen, so that our faith may be strengthened in you. In your name we pray. Amen.



7th Sunday
after Pentecost
July 18-
July 24, 2022

SCRIPTURE: 1 Timothy 2:1-7

THEME: Focused Prayer Claims What God Wants for Us, Not What We Want from Him

SONG: CW21 725 Hear Us, Father, When We Pray

VISUAL: "Old-school" phone book (if you can find one); cell phone

OBJECT LESSON

Hold up the phone book and ask the students if they know what it is. (Some might, some might not.) Explain what people would use the phone book to do. If you need something or want something, you would look up the phone number in the book and call it. What do we do if we want to find something we need or want today? (Most kids might say, "Use the internet," or "Google it.")

BIBLE TRUTH

What do we do if we need or want something from God? (Students will hopefully answer, "Pray.") Why do we turn to God in prayer? Do we just do it when we want something? What exactly is the purpose for praying to God? Read 1 Timothy 2:1-7.

If you listen to what our reading says, for whom do we pray? Are we praying for ourselves? Is that what God wants? God wants us to pray for other people. God wants us to put others before ourselves. Paul says that "this is good, and pleases God...who wants all people to be saved." Prayer is a way for us to talk to God about others and ask God to bless them, too.

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

Is it wrong to pray for things for ourselves? Of course not! But we should always ask ourselves, "What is the reason I'm asking for this?" Sometimes it can be very easy for the devil to tempt us to selfishly pray for things for ourselves. The devil loves to turn gifts from God into stumbling blocks for our faith. We may think we're doing what God wants when

we pray, but if we're only praying for things for ourselves, we're actually being selfish.

In our prayers, God wants us to speak to him. But when we pray, we should always follow Jesus' example for us. When Jesus prayed to his heavenly father in the Garden of Gethsemane, he prayed, "Not my will, but your will be done." As children of God, we should always desire that God's will is done before our own will. God's will is good and perfect; our will is tainted by sin. In our prayers, we should put the needs of others before our own desires. If we do that, we can show our faith in God and our trust that he will still provide for our needs, even if we don't ask for them.

PRAYER

(Today may be a good day to ask the students to pray a silent prayer for someone in their own lives. Encourage them to offer up a petition for a friend, a family member, a classmate, or anyone else that they know.)



**HEART
IMPRINTS**

8th Sunday
after Pentecost
July 25-
July 31, 2022

SCRIPTURE: Luke 12:13-21

THEME: Focused Living Properly Values Earthly Wealth

SONG: CW21 820/ CW93 441 O God, Our Help in Ages Past

VISUAL: Some of your personal favorite possessions

OBJECT LESSON

Ask the students about some of their favorite things at home. Maybe even ask some of the teachers, too! Show your favorite items that you brought along. What makes something a favorite item? Does it represent something we really enjoy, like a sports team or a favorite show? Does it have sentimental value, like a souvenir from a trip or something that belonged to a grandparent? What is it that makes something special?

BIBLE TRUTH

In our Bible reading today, Jesus tells a parable about a man who had a lot of favorite things. In fact, he had so many things that he decided to build a bigger house to hold all of his things! Read Luke 12:13-21.

What was the man's attitude about his possessions? It seems like he loved all of his possessions more than he loved God. In the end, what happened to the man? He died, and he had to leave all his possessions behind.

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

It's not a sin to have favorite things at home. In fact, everything we have is a blessing that God has given to us. But what does the First Commandment say? (Students should be able to answer.) Remember how Martin Luther explained it? (Maybe upper graders could answer this.)

We should never put those blessings ahead of God in our hearts or minds. Instead, we should use every opportunity we have to praise and thank God for giving us these blessings in the first place. God has given us everything we need for our bodies and for our lives. He has also given us many things that we don't need. (Be honest – how many of you need a video game system at home? But I'm sure you have one anyway!)

The reality is that we put those blessings ahead of God all the time. Like the rich man in Jesus' parable, our focus is on the stuff we have. Jesus says we need to be "rich toward God." In other words, we need to focus on the most important treasure of the gospel where God forgives our sins of greed because Jesus died for us. Let's keep the treasure of Jesus and the gospel as the proper focus of our lives.

PRAYER

Dear Lord, thank you for the many, many blessings you have given to us. We are not worthy of all the mercies you have shown us. Forgive us for the times we have failed to put you first in our lives and instead have made our earthly possessions our priority. Help us to always put you first in our lives. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

