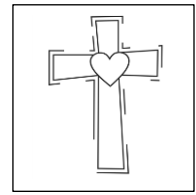


Perley Lutheran Parish  
June 28th  
Lectionary 13



## Welcome and Announcements

- HUGE thank you to the 21 volunteers who came to help with the Covid Food Assistance Disbursement on Monday. We supplied 61 families with three boxes of food each. We also had a lot of fun doing it!
- Devotions happening on Wednesday evenings at 7pm – Where's Michele is going well – don't forget to send in your guesses on where she is at – [perleyparish@gmail.com](mailto:perleyparish@gmail.com) or 218-861-6541 or text/call Michele at 701-261-0998  
[mjenson001@luthersem.edu](mailto:mjenson001@luthersem.edu)
- **IMPORTANT – Congregational Meetings will be held at each congregation on Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the church parking lots. Bring a chair to distance yourself and learn the recommendations of the Call Committee regarding a Pastor for the Perley Parish. A vote will be taken that evening so please make every attempt to be present.**
- We continue to monitor the COVID crisis and watch for implementation of our Re-Opening Plan
- Continue to send in your offerings
- Keep in touch – if you need something please reach out
- Invite friends to watch!

## Confession and Forgiveness:

Blessed be the holy Trinity, +one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation, to generation. Amen

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin

Reconciling God,

**We confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives. We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts. We fail to believe that you provide enough for all. We abuse your good creation for our own benefit. We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us. We sin in thought, word, and deed. By your grace, forgive us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness in life. Amen**

Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through +Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

Prayer of the Day

**O God, you direct our lives by your grace, and your words of justice and mercy reshape the world. Mold us into a people who welcome your word and serve one another, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Psalm 89:1-4. 15-18 (Read Responsively)

I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations. **I declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.** You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to my servant David: **'I will establish your descendants forever and build your throne for all generations.'**" **Happy are the people who know the festal shout, who walk, O LORD, in the light of your countenance;** they exult in your name all day long and extol your righteousness. **For you are the glory of their strength; by your favor, our horn is exalted.** For our shield belongs to the LORD, our king to the Holy One of Israel.

First Reading Jeremiah 28:5-9

Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of the LORD; and the prophet Jeremiah said, "Amen! May the LORD do so; may the LORD fulfill the words that you have prophesied and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the LORD, and all the exiles. But listen now to this word that I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes true, then it will be known that the LORD has truly sent the prophet."

Holy Gospel according to Matthew 10:40-42, **Glory to you O Lord**

"Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward."

The Gospel of our Lord, **Praise to you, O Christ**

### **Children's Message**

(supplies – picture of a welcome mat, welcome home sign, statue of liberty picture, picture of the red carpet)

Welcome, children of God!

I want to talk about that word today: "welcome". What do you think it means? (*Allow responses.*) You've probably heard the word plenty of times before. You might have seen it around town lately, with banners like this (*hold up a sign or picture of one, if you have one*), "Welcome Back!"

Restaurants and stores that have been closed are eager to welcome people back to do business. Or maybe someone you love has travelled, and when they return, you make a sign that says "welcome home." Perhaps you have a mat like this (*demonstrate if available*) in front of your house, that says "welcome."

Maybe you've seen celebrities on TV being welcomed with a big red carpet! The dictionary defines the word as a "friendly greeting", or as someone or something that is "gladly received." When we welcome others, we communicate to them that they are valued and that we are glad to see or be with them.

Sometimes, though, these types of signs and words can be a little deceiving. We might say "welcome," but only receive people under certain conditions. These signs around town might welcome people back into stores...but only if you're wearing a mask, and you haven't been sick in recent months. The doormat might say "welcome"....but not if you smell bad, or if you're trying to sell something or tell something. You know, even in our nation's history, we see a lot of mixed message welcomes. For example, do you recognize this? (*Hold up picture of the Statue of Liberty*)

It's called the Statue of Liberty. It stands in the harbor outside New York, right by a place called Ellis Island. The statue is a symbol of freedom, and it even has a poem on it welcoming people who are tired and yearn to be free. It was the first thing that immigrants saw when they moved to the United States from other countries. But they would pass through this processing place called Ellis Island, where they were screened, and sometimes sent back home, if they didn't have good health, or plans, or enough money. Even if they made it through, these immigrants were often treated poorly by other people. Sometimes Americans refused to give them jobs or food or a place to stay. I wish that were ancient history, but it still happens.

Some people do not want to welcome others who aren't like them. Unfortunately, this can even happen in churches. We might say we welcome everyone, but if people look a certain way, they might be treated negatively or feel cast out.

This is not what Jesus wanted. To be sure, we need to make sure that we stay safe. We can't just throw open the doors of our houses to anyone who might walk in and do something evil. We do want to wear masks and make sure we're feeling healthy for the sake of other people. And we need to monitor the situation of our country and population.

However, we are called to communicate to others that they are gladly received. Jesus told people that when we receive and welcome others, it's like we are welcoming Him, and welcoming "the One who sent Him." Well, that would of course be God Himself! He said that we will receive blessing for welcoming others, whoever they are. Jesus had a reputation for welcoming people who might otherwise be looked down on. He demonstrated love for children, even though kids in that time were not too valued. He went to people who were sick and hurting, outcasts of society and those who had done wrong. Jesus cared for them and loved them. He welcomed them into God's family.

We can rejoice in this, because we know that He welcomes us. He loved us enough to die for us, allowing us to be a welcome part of the Kingdom of Heaven. His arms are wide open for us to rush into in blessed embrace. We also know that He wants us to welcome others. Now, we might not be able to give out hugs just yet, with current concerns...but we can still invite people to church, and give them a hearty wave and welcome when they come.

If we can't welcome folks into our homes, maybe we can send cards and calls. We can remind others that they are valued and loved. And, of course, the best thing we can do is pray! Ask God to bring people into His family, and give thanks for helping us to be part of that process. Why don't we say a word of prayer right now?

### **Children's Prayer Moment**

Dear God,  
Thank you for welcoming us into your family  
We know that you value and care for all people  
Help us to be welcoming to others  
And to demonstrate your love to those in our lives  
Thank you for your love  
We love you, God!  
In Jesus name, Amen!

### **Message:**

Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

I love this passage – it's one of my favorite Gospel passages as it's one of those readings that always inspires me and one that I try to remind myself of and live in as much as possible. I don't know if you've ever heard the term "servant evangelist" or not. I honestly hadn't until I started doing some reading for my message. Essentially what "servant evangelism" means is

the showing of the love of God through our own caring and loving actions toward others. In other words – it's in doing for others as God would do for us. It can be something small and seemingly insignificant to you but may mean the world to someone else or it can be something extreme or extravagant so all can see. In our Gospel today it's about providing a cup of water.

Of course this passage isn't really about a cup of water, sharing a drink with someone, but rather about sharing ourselves, living a life as a Christian, living in relationship with our neighbors and with God. Jesus is talking about us being humble, being giving and sharing a piece of ourselves with others. Let's look at this a bit more.

I don't know about you but when I do for others it really makes me feel good. It's not about doing something for someone because I am better than them, I have more than them or anything like that – it's about knowing that whatever I may have done has helped someone in some way.

One of my all-time favorite movies is called "Pay it Forward". It's got great actors and actresses in it and has a wonderful story about a young boy named Trevor. Trevor lives in a family that is far from normal or perfect- he is being raised by single mom who works two jobs and drinks far too much. One of Trevor's teacher assigns a project to his social studies course – all students are to create and put into an action a plan that will change the world for the better. Trevor devises a plan that is based on a networking of people doing good deeds. He calls his plan "pay it forward" and the premise is that the person who has something good done for them must do something for three others – rather than re-paying the good deed they received.

The story goes on with how those "good deeds" received by one gets given to three others and how through all of the drama that is going on in Trevor's life – the paying it forward comes full-circle and because I will not wreck it for those who haven't seen the movie – I will just say that there is tears in my eyes every single time I get to the end of this movie.

I know that I have been the one in the drive up who left an extra \$20 for the next car or two to get a treat on my payment in hopes that they too will keep the gesture going and pay it forward sometime. I have also been the recipient of someone doing that for me and it's such a wonderful feeling to be a part of caring for one another. It's really a fun and easy way to share that "cup of water" that Jesus is talking about it in this passage.

There was a story or more an example of a dilemma that one may encounter and a question on how we should respond. It goes like this:

Consider you are driving down the road in your car on a windy and stormy evening. As you pass by a bus stop, you see that there three people seated in this rainy, windy spot. The first person you notice is an older woman who looks gravely ill – like she's not going to be around much less alive for much longer. The next person you see is an old friend of years who at one-

time actually saved your life. Finally, the last person sitting there is your soul-mate, the man or woman that you have been waiting and dreaming about your whole life.

Here's the dilemma – you have a two-seater – and you know that there is only one seat that is open – which one of these three are you going to pick up and give a ride?

You could pick up the older woman – she is really sick and you should save her life. Then again, you owe your friend as they saved you once so you should really return the favor, right?? But what about the final person there – the person you were meant to live your life with – how can you pass by that person? It really is a dilemma isn't it? All three of these persons are worthy of a ride, worthy of your care and worthy of a chance to get out of the storm. Believe it or not, there is an answer that may make you feel better about the decision.

What if, you give the keys to your dear friend (that repays the favor of his life-saving) and ask them to take the older woman (who clearly needs to be taken somewhere for medical care) and that leaves you to hang out with the person of your dreams while the two of you wait for the bus. HA HA – sounds good doesn't it? What it takes is taking a look outside of the box – the norm or the expected.

That's where our passage is trying to take us. Jesus is pushing us all to do the small things – share a cup of water – to show God's love at work. For this passage it's a cup of water, in other passage it is Jesus washing the feet of his disciples and telling them to go out and love and serve others. Even those small and simple things, those little acts of kindness, can touch and transform a life.

Little and simple acts of kindness – done with love – can also change the world, like Trevor was trying to do in the movie I mentioned. Our passage says *“whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”* Think about how Jesus came to us – the Son of God didn't show up with a grand display of trumpets blasting or anything extravagant – he came as a baby in a manger in a stable. He touched all of those he met exactly at the point they needed in their lives; to heal, to comfort, to provide and to change their lives. He came to give His life for ours, to take away our sins and to change this world. That's what God wants of us – to change the world and to do as God has done.

It's important for us, however, to remember that this is not about us and the good deeds we are doing. We've talked about this many times – we can't earn our way into heaven. Our good deeds don't give us a one-track ticket to the pearly gates. We get into heaven not by what we do but by what Christ has done in and for us. The power that we receive by living our lives in love towards God and others is God working in our hearts and in our hands.

As I mentioned last Wednesday in our mid-week devotion, we should “just say it” when it comes to telling people we care for that we love them and for this passage we should “just do it”. Sharing God in simple and practical ways – giving a drink to those who are thirsty, or a

meal to those that hunger, or a prayer for those who need strength, or an ear for those who need someone to listen, or a ride to someone who shouldn't be out in the rainy storm and so many, many other ways is a call to simply just do it. Remember though why we do it.

Remember that our actions are God working through us and that even when those acts are small and simple you can discover the great life of sharing Jesus in and for the lives of others. Let's get out there and do it and pay it forward! Amen

Hymn of the Day: Amazing Grace

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see.

The Lord has promised good to me; His Word my hope secures.  
He will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.

Apostles Creed

***I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian/catholic Church, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen***

Prayers of the people: (Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great**)

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

God of companionship, we look to you for encouragement that we can live in and have relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Bless our conversations. Shape our shared goals and future and give us hearts eager to join in a celebrating shout of praise. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great**

God of abundance, you make your creation thrive and grow to provide all that we need. Inspire us to care for our environment and be attuned to where the earth is crying out. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great**

Protecting God, we have created divisions you will not own. In places of conflict – be it from safe practices because of COVID or from racial disparity. God of mercy, your grace is poured out for all. Inspire authorities and politicians to act with compassion. Teach us to overcome fear with hope, meet hate with love, and welcome one another as we would welcome you. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great**

God of care, accompany all who are in deepest need. Comfort those who are sick, lonely or struggling. Heal those within our congregations and friends of our members like Alana and Jeff and Kirk and all those that join us through streaming who are in need of peace and healing. We ask that you be with those that we now name in our hearts as well..... Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great**

God of community, we give thanks for this congregation. Give us passion to embrace your mission and the vision to recognize when you are leading us. Teach us how live more faithfully and fully with each other. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great**

Receive these prayers, O God, and be with us now as we say the prayer that Jesus taught to us....

Lord's Prayer

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.

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

Blessing:

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

God, the creator, +Jesus the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the comforter, bless you and keep you in eternal love.

Amen

Sending Hymn: This is My Father's World #554 Vs.1 & 3

This is my Father's world, and to my list'ning ears, all nature sings, and round me rings the music of the spheres.

This is my Father's world; I rest me in the thought of rocks and trees, of skies and seas; His had the wonders wrought.

This is my Father's world; Oh let me not forget that through the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet.

This is my Father's world; Why should my heart be sad? The Lord is king, let the heavens ring, God reigns, let the earth be glad!

**Dismissal:**

Go in peace. Christ is with you. **Thanks be to God.**

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Welcome





# "Welcome!"

"He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me." Matthew 10:40 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 10:40-42



R B Q S L O S E K X F S D E O  
W A T E R Q N Y Y T S A I V S  
D A M K N Q H W B M H Y S H M  
L I T T L E P P H F I A C I C  
X T R U T H H B S O R V I J L  
R T R E W A R D J F I I P V C  
R N C G O N E S K X G Q L R W  
H G G N Q Z M H Z B H E E E R  
Y D I E A G R R R W T T D C X  
G I T V U N G U J Z E L J E H  
T H B X E T Y F Z H O T U I C  
J E W E J S H O P C U I K V U  
J P L M Q Q F O N V S L B E P  
Q U E L E R R A U E S H Q S T  
R V S M O P H J S Q A N I U R

RIGHTEOUS  
WATER  
RECEIVES  
REWARD

LOSE  
PROPHET  
DISCIPLE  
TELL

TRUTH  
ONES  
COLD  
CUP

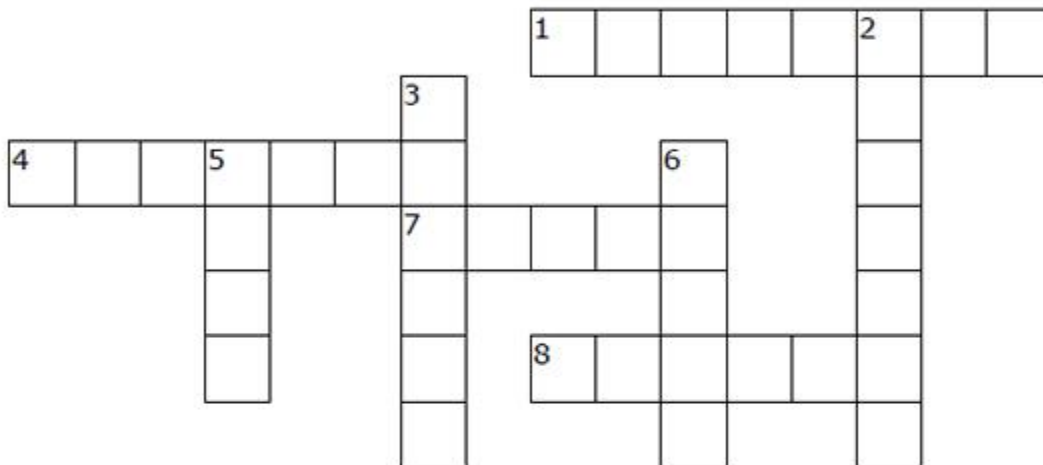
ANYONE  
WHO  
GIVES  
LITTLE

Crossword

# "Welcome!"

"He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me." Matthew 10:40 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 10:40-42



**ACROSS**

- 1. A follower of Jesus
- 4. To gladly receive someone into your own house
- 7. An odorless, colorless, tasteless liquid; H2O
- 8. Small; not large

**DOWN**

- 2. A person who speaks for God
- 3. Recognition of someone's good behavior
- 5. The opposite of hot; having a very low temperature
- 6. A fact that has been proven

PROPHET	TRUTH	DISCIPLE	COLD
LITTLE	WELCOME	REWARD	WATER