

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

Olaf Roynesdal, Senior Pastor
Shari Duminy, Associate Pastor
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor
Inba Inbarasu, Visitation Pastor

2650 Farnam Street
Omaha, NE 68131-3616
402-341-7761
www.kmlchurch.org

July 11, 2021

9:00 AM

SEVENTH SUNDAY after PENTECOST



When Amos reports his vision of God judging Israel for its mistreatment of the poor, he becomes a threat to the power of the priests and the king. John the Baptist also speaks truth to power, and Herod has him killed. In Herod's fear that Jesus is John returned from the dead, we may hear hope for the oppressed: all the prophets killed through the ages are alive in Jesus. We are called to witness to justice in company with them, and to proclaim God's saving love.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, Father, † Son and Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P God our provider,

C help us we pray.

It is hard to believe there is enough to share.

We question your ways when they differ from our ways.

**We turn to our own understanding
rather than trusting in you.**

We take offense at your teachings and your ways.

Turn us again to you.

Where else can we turn?

Share with us the words of eternal life

and feed us for life in the world. Amen.

P Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, † the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.

C Amen.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Open now thy gates of beauty,
Zion, let me enter there,
where my soul in joyful duty
waits for God who answers prayer.
Oh, how blessed is this place,
filled with solace, light, and grace!</p> <p>2 Gracious God, I come before thee;
come thou also unto me;
where we find thee and adore thee,
there a heav'n on earth must be.
To my heart, oh, enter thou,
let it be thy temple now!</p> | <p>3 Here thy praise is gladly chanted,
here thy seed is duly sown;
let my soul, where it is planted,
bring forth precious sheaves alone,
so that all I hear may be
fruitful unto life in me.</p> <p>4 Thou my faith increase and quicken,
let me keep thy gift divine;
howsoe'er temptations thicken,
may thy word still o'er me shine
as my guiding star through life,
as my comfort in all strife.</p> |
|--|---|

Text: Benjamin Schmolck, 1672-1737;
tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** O God,
- C** from you come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments; and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Amos 7:7-15

Amos is not the kind of prophet attached to temples or royal courts. Rather, he is an ordinary farmer from Judah (the southern kingdom) called by God to speak to Israel (the northern kingdom). God's word of judgment through Amos conflicts with the king's court prophet Amaziah, whom Amos encounters at Bethel.

This is what [the Lord God] showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. ⁸And the Lord said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said,

"See, I am setting a plumb line

in the midst of my people Israel;

I will never again pass them by;

⁹*the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate,*

and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste,

and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

¹⁰Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very center of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. ¹¹For thus Amos has said,

'Jeroboam shall die by the sword,

and Israel must go into exile

away from his land.'"

¹²And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; ¹³but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

¹⁴Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, ¹⁵and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'"

L The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 85:8-13 (*read responsively*)

⁸I will listen to what the LORD God is saying;
for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

⁹**Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell in our land.**

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

¹¹**Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

¹²The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.

¹³**Righteousness shall go before the LORD
and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

SECOND READING

Ephesians 1:3-14

In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made known as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

L The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.



Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.



When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,



warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.



Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

☐ The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark.

☑ Glory to you, O Lord!

HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 6:14-29

As Jesus and his disciples begin to attract attention, Mark recalls the story of John the Baptist's martyrdom. Like John, Jesus and his disciples will also suffer at the hands of those opposed to the gospel of salvation.

King Herod heard of [the disciples' preaching,] for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him."¹⁵ But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old."¹⁶ But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."

¹⁷For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. ¹⁸For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."¹⁹ And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, ²⁰for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. ²¹But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. ²²When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to

the girl, “Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it.”²³ And he solemnly swore to her, “Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom.”²⁴ She went out and said to her mother, “What should I ask for?” She replied, “The head of John the baptizer.”²⁵ Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.”²⁶ The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her.²⁷ Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John’s head. He went and beheaded him in the prison,²⁸ brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother.²⁹ When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

☞ The Gospel of the Lord.

☞ Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

CHILDREN’S BLESSING

SERMON

Pastor Hall

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Faith of Our Fathers”

ELW 813

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Faith of our fathers, living still
in spite of dungeon, fire, and sword.
Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy
whene'er we hear that glorious word.
Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
we will be true to you till death.</p> <p>2 Faith of our mothers, daring faith,
your work for Christ is love revealed,
spreading God's word from pole to pole,
making love known and freedom real.
Faith of our mothers, holy faith,
we will be true to you till death.</p> | <p>3 Faith of our sisters, brothers too,
who still must bear oppression's might,
raising on high, in prisons dark,
the cross of Christ still burning bright.
Faith for today, O living faith,
we will be true to you till death.</p> <p>4 Faith born of God, oh, call us yet,
bind us with all who follow you,
sharing the struggle of your cross
until the world is made anew.
Faith born of God, O living faith,
we will be true to you till death.</p> |
|--|---|

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814-1863, st. 1, alt.;
Joseph R. Alfred, b. 1947, sts. 2-4

Text sts. 2-4 © Joseph R. Alfred, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

- ☐ God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ.
Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.
- ☑ **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 catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

- Response:** ☐ Lord, in your mercy,
☑ **hear our prayer.**

(In our prayers today, during a time of silence, pray for those listed below and for others according to their needs)

Sympathy: to the family and friends of Sandy Chavalier, family of Betty Callies

Illness: Richard Bock, Don Burton, Myrna Carter, Sydney Dietrich, Carol Duncan, Mike Edris, Rodney Edwards, Richard Holzer, Rik Hooper, Renee Johnson, Mark Kidder, Jason Klonglan, Marcie Lafleur, Chris Meyer, Mary Olson, David Penning, Toby Rees, Gary Rodene, Sheri Tipton, John Waterman, Darlene White

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – Amy Dyer, Wyatt Johnson, Josh Kropenske, Michael McNeill, Daniel Milstead, Cody Ray, Sheldon Skovgaard, Michael Vutov, Joel Wosley

Other Prayers: *Those serving in mission* – Rev. Chandran Paul Martin, India; Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson, Tanzania; Rev. Rachel Ringlaben, Argentina; Meghan Brown Saavedra, Mexico; and Dan & Ginny Rath, international translators

Other Prayers: *Seminarians*—Adam Klinker, Katie Larson, Giselle Loucks, Justin Perkins

WE SHARE GOD’S PEACE

- ☐ The peace of Christ be with you always.
- ☑ **And also with you.**

MEAL

(sit)

THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED

Please Support the overall ministry of Kountze Memorial during these difficult times. If you are visiting with us today, please do not feel obligated to participate in this portion of worship. If you would like, use the QR code scanner on your smart phone to give online. If you are able, please mail in your offering or donate on-line. Thank you!



MUSICAL OFFERING

“Amazing Grace”

traditional
Jacob Weiland, *soloist*

THE TABLE IS PREPARED

From Sundays and Seasons.com. ©2021 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS006828. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-705181. New Revised Standard Version Bible, ©1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Evangelical Lutheran Worship ©2006 Augsburg Fortress. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #26828. CCLI License #1511530.

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

“Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful”

ELW 184



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that



we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of



all; u - nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble



with your pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER

P Jesus, Bread of life,

C you have set this table with your very self, and called us to the feast of plenty. Gather what has been sown among us, and strengthen us in this meal. Make us to be what we receive here, your body for the life of the world. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Each staff contains a single melodic line with lyrics underneath. The first staff has two measures, the second and third have two measures each, and the fourth has one measure. The lyrics are: 'The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.', 'Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.', 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.', and 'It is right to give our thanks and praise.'

PREFACE FOR SUNDAYS IN PENTECOST

SANCTUS

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
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 image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Each staff contains a single melodic line with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: 'Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,', 'heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.', 'Ho - san-na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes', and 'in the name of the Lord. Ho - san-na in the high - est.'

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us all to pray:

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 Christ has set the table with more than enough for all.

C Come!

THE DISTRIBUTION

All baptized Christians who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and his Real Presence in, with and under the bread and wine, are welcome to the Lord's Supper. We believe that this is the Lord's table and is he who invites you. So you who are strong in faith, come with gratitude. You feel weak in faith, come to be strengthened. And you who feel you have no faith, come so that the God of steadfast love will touch your heart with hope and joy.

Gluten free bread is available; simply request it.

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, grant us peace.

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

“Christ, the Life of All the Living”

ELW 339

**1 Christ, the life of all the living,
Christ, the death of death, our foe,
Christ, yourself for me once giving
to the darkest depths of woe:
through your suff'ring, death, and merit
life eternal I inherit.
Thousand, thousand thanks are due,
dearest Jesus, unto you.**

**2 You have suffered great affliction
and have borne it patiently,
even death by crucifixion,
fully to atone for me;
for you chose to be tormented
that my doom should be prevented.
Thousand, thousand thanks are due,
dearest Jesus, unto you.**

**3 Then, for all that bought my pardon,
for the sorrows deep and sore,
for the anguish in the garden,
I will thank you evermore;
thank you for the groaning, sighing,
for the bleeding and the dying,
for that last triumphant cry,
praise you evermore on high.**

Text: Ernst Christoph Homburg, 1605-1681;
tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.

- 1** Word of God, come down on earth,
living rain from heav'n descending;
touch our hearts and bring to birth
faith and hope and love unending.
Word almighty, we revere you;
Word made flesh, we long to hear you.
- 2** Word eternal, throned on high,
Word that brought to life creation,
Word that came from heav'n to die,
crucified for our salvation,
saving Word, the world restoring,
speak to us, your love outpouring.
- 3** Word that speaks God's tender love,
one with God beyond all telling,
Word that sends us from above
God the Spirit, with us dwelling,
Word of truth, to all truth lead us;
Word of life, with one bread feed us.

Text: James Quinn, SJ, b. 1919

Text © James Quinn, SJ, Selah Publishing Co., Inc.,
North American agent. www.selahpub.com

(stand)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- P** Jesus, Bread of life,
G we have received from your table more than we could ever ask. As you have
nourished us in this meal, now strengthen us to love the world with your own life. In
your name we pray. Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

- P** The blessing of the Almighty God, Father, † Son and Holy Spirit be upon you now and
forever.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

- 1** Let streams of living justice
flow down upon the earth;
give freedom's light to captives,
let all the poor have worth.
The hungry's hands are pleading,
the workers claim their rights,
the mourners long for laughter,
the blinded seek for sight.
Make liberty a beacon,
strike down the iron pow'r;
abolish ancient vengeance:
proclaim your people's hour.
- 2** For healing of the nations,
for peace that will not end,
for love that makes us lovers,
God grant us grace to mend.
Weave our varied gifts together;
knit our lives as they are spun;
on your loom of time enroll us
till our thread of life is run.
O great weaver of our fabric,
bind church and world in one;
dye our texture with your radiance,
light our colors with your sun.
- 3** Your city's built to music;
we are the stones you seek;
your harmony is language;
we are the words you speak.
Our faith we find in service,
our hope in others' dreams,
our love in hand of neighbor;
our homeland brightly gleams.
Inscribe our hearts with justice;
your way—the path untried;
your truth—the heart of stranger;
your life—the Crucified.

Text: William Whitla, b. 1934
Text © 1989 William Whitla.

DISMISSAL

- P** Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.
G Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

† † †

Special Notice

Reservations not required
Vaccinated—Masks optional
Not vaccinated—Masks required
Please maintain a minimum of 3 feet
between non-family members

You may still join us for Worship on Cox
channel 13 or live streamed at [https://
www.kmlchurch.org/live-streaming/](https://www.kmlchurch.org/live-streaming/)



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org

July 10 & 11, 2021

Kountze Food Pantry

Volunteers Needed:

Mondays, 7:30 - 9 AM, 9 - 11 AM, 11 AM - 1 PM

Fridays, 4 - 7 PM

If you are able to volunteer, please sign up by using
the link below:

<https://form.jotform.com/200834787701155>

We are in great need of toilet paper! We also need new
or like new reusable tote bags (we cannot reuse
plastic grocery sacks), cereal, and full-sized hygiene
products. Please place your donated items in the
shopping cart as you enter for church, in the donation
box in the Fellowship Hall, or in the church office. Your
contributions are greatly appreciated!

Today at Kountze

Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God in honor
of their 71st wedding anniversary given by Bill &
Madaline Christensen

Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God in loving
memory of Robert Ray (2/27/21), father of Richard
Ray

Attendance and Giving

Saturday Attendance: 37

Sunday Attendance: 9:00: 118

Wednesday Attendance: 11

Total: 166

Streaming Attendance: 70

Cox Cable Attendance: 221

Pantry Guests Served: 218 (Friday only. Closed
Monday in observance of July 4.)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 26

Offering:

\$11,049.00 (Regular) \$5,793.12 (Specials)

\$2,189.50 (Debt Reduction)

Coffee Hour

Please feel free to stop for coffee in the Fellowship Hall
following service today. We need volunteers to help
serve coffee and cookies. If you can help, please see
Jim Smejkal (402-341-7761 or jim@kmlchurch.org).

Holy Play

Ages 3 yrs - 6th grade

Sundays through August 29

10:15 - 11:00 AM

Children from 3 years to 6th grade are invited to join
Pastor Shari and the Middle and High School Youth in
the Kountze Green Space each Sunday (June 20 –
August 29). We will be playing games, singing songs,
sharing a snack, and getting to know each other better.
Parents are encouraged to share coffee time with
others or join in the fun!

Congregation Meeting for Elections

Our Regular Election Meeting will be held on

Sunday, August 22nd

10:10 AM in the Fellowship Hall

This year's nominating
committee consists of
Scott Henneman,
Kathe Andersen,
Donald Johnson, Jim
Marcum, Bruce Nissen,
and Liz Pemberton.



The term of Scott Henneman ends and a replacement
is needed. The terms of Mike Jensen, Ann Miller, and
Steve Hinrichs are complete but all are eligible for re-
election. Sarah Penn's term is up on the Endowment
Board and she is eligible for another term.

Persons interested in any of these positions for
themselves or to nominate someone else should
forward name(s) to Pastor Olaf (olaf@kmlchurch.org).

God's steadfast love and faithfulness.

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Mark 6:14-29	The death of John the Baptist
Monday	Amos 7:7-15	Vision of setting a plumb line
Tuesday	Ephesians 1:3-14	Thanksgiving for blessings
Wednesday	Psalms 86:1-17	Save me, Lord
Thursday	Deuteronomy 7:7-11	A chosen people
Friday	Leviticus 26:1-13	Rewards for obedience
Saturday	Psalms 85:8-13	God speaks peace to the people
Sunday	Mark 6:30-34, 53-56	Jesus teaches and heals

taking
faith
home

© 2020 Vibrant Faith Ministries. All rights reserved.
Go to www.vibrantfaithathome.org for more faith-forming activities.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. Psalm 85:10 (NRSV)

A Prayer for the Week:

God of glory and might, guide the rulers of the earth toward justice and mercy for the sake of peace in your world through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, may we see in this food a banquet filled with your love that brings justice and peace to all the earth. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May our God and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you with love and faithfulness. (Psalm 85:10)

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- If you had a magic wand, what would you want to do or have happen?
- We like to have power, but power can be misused and be insensitive to others. Give an example of someone misusing their power.
- Jesus brings a power full of love and faithfulness. Where do you see that power in action?

Read: Mark 6:14-29.

This story of the beheading of John the Baptist at a banquet hosted by King Herod presents an image of contrasts. This story comes between last week's Gospel reading about Jesus' disciples traveling without riches or power of their own and staying with others as guests. The Gospel reading two weeks from now is about Jesus' own banquet of feeding hungry souls on a hillside. Jesus treated the people with compassion like a shepherd caring for the sheep. Earthly powers represented by Herod bend toward corruption, greed, violence, and impulsive actions without thought of consequences. Jesus' rule brings people together in peace, feeds the multitudes out of love, and brings healing and an end to demonic powers. We are reminded that earthly powers and governments are not the rule that wins the day in God's universe. We are called to an ordering of life where *"love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other"* (Psalm 85:10). How does Jesus' power in your life influence your thoughts and actions?

Pray: **Shepherding God, in a world that seeks to dominate and humiliate others, we thank you for your reign of love and faithfulness that will never let us go through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

In our forms of government, local, regional, and national representatives need to hear from us, especially about issues that relate to our moral resolve. How have you voiced your views on current issues?

Psalm 85 talks about peace. Verse 8 states, *"Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts."* Make a list or draw a picture of what brings peace to you. Then, read the verse slowly three times. Pause after each reading and wonder what God may be saying to you today. Close by praying the Lord's Prayer.

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Jeremiah 23:1-6; Psalm 23
Ephesians 2:11-22; Mark 6:30-34, 53-56**