

Sept 13/15 2020 Outdoor Service of Word & Prayer

St. John's E. Lutheran Church, Arnprior, and
St. James E. Lutheran Church, Renfrew, Ont.

GATHERING

Welcome Back: Randy Zimmerling (Chair of Council)

A recognition: Lois Rosien (Inreach ministry)

Hymn: Morning has Broken: Anda Sprudz (Soloist) (while Anda sang at the service, the video has a Neil Diamond version due to technical difficulties).

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

Prayer of the Day: O Lord, God, you are an everlasting fountain of forgiveness. Open our hearts to love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

Blessing of the backpacks: teachers, students, and staff.

Blessing of Teachers:

God of wisdom, your Son came among us as a teacher. Send your blessing on all who are engaged in the work of education; give them clearness of vision and freshness of thought, and enable them so to train the hearts and minds of their young students that they may grow in wisdom and be prepared to face the challenges of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing of Backpacks: students

Dear God, as we get ready to start another year in school, we ask your blessing on these backpacks, and especially on these children who will wear them. As they do the very important work of being students, bless them with: eagerness to learn, that their world may grow large; respect for teachers and students, that they may form healthy relationships; love for nature, that they may become caretakers of your creation; happiness when learning is easy and stick-to-it-iveness when it is hard; faith in Jesus as their best teacher and closest friend. We ask that you would protect these, your own children. Watch over them and keep them safe as they travel to and from school. As they learn, help them also to discover the different gifts that you have given each one of them to be used in your work in the

world. As they hear the many voices that will fill their days, help them to listen most carefully for your voice, the one that tells them you will love them always, no matter what. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

WORD

Genesis 50:15-21 Psalm 103:1-18 Romans 15:5-7 Matthew 6:25-34 **Homily: The Lily Pad**

Of all the passages in the New Testament about trust in God, this is probably the most loved one. It has a lovely poetic character.

Jesus' closest disciples abandoned their vocations to be with Him, learn from Him, and share in his work of God's kingdom. They then became dependent on God's providential care as much as the flowers and the birds. They were really dependent on the local hospitality through which God cared for their needs. We are reminded that we too rely on nature to support us. These birds and lilies are powerful symbols of God's care.

During the summer I love seeing water lilies in passing ponds or lake edges. The flowers may be found in all colors except blue. They are needed to balance out the plant and animal life that surrounds them. They need their big leaf pads, as they act like solar panels hitting them with sunlight, which provides energy to the whole plant.

The flowers open up with the sun on them, and then close when the sun goes down. Waterlilies have what is called an evolved adaptation. They have special traits that allow them to live and survive in abnormal conditions or environments.

Now, just so we don't think that these flowers are just another pretty face. Did you know that their flower buds can be cooked or pickled? Seeds from the flowers contain protein and oil and can be ground into flour. Parts of them are edible. Their raw leaves can be chopped and added to soups. Various societies have found medicinal uses for waterlilies. The plant contains gallic and tannic acids used in the pharmaceutical industry. Parts of the lily have been used in poultices, eyewashes, gargles and for a variety of minor ailments such as an upset stomach. And I am NOT suggesting that you try any of these things

Moose are regular users of waterlilies of all the aquatic plants. Sometimes they can be seen standing in ponds slurping water lily pads. They are an important part of a moose diet because they have sodium content higher than wood-ey vegetation and Moose require sodium.

Now let's return to the disciple Paul, whose confidence in God was boundless. He often went hungry and without shelter. What Paul learned from his deprivations was that God was greater than his needs. It is not true that all birds are adequately fed, and that all lilies reach their fullest beauty. Drought and other catastrophes can cut short the lives of both birds and flowers and also of humans who also trust in God.

Water lilies mean many things in different areas of the world, but they have special significance in Buddhism and Hinduism. For these religions, the [water lily symbolizes resurrection](#), because these flowers close up at night and reopen in the morning, similar to a spiritual rebirth. Buddhists also [believe that the water lily represents enlightenment](#) because a beautiful bloom emerges from the dark, dirty mud.

The lesson I learned from the water lily is that to have a productive life one needs to be able to adapt to changing conditions. That way we stay life-filled and are able to help others. In 2020 we live in a society with a frantic pursuit of the necessities of life. Sometimes it is good to just sit and take in a calmer vision of God's bountiful care in the natural world. It invites us to reconsider the relationships that link us humans to other living things.

The wonders of nature are a cause for celebration! Our relationship to a higher being, God, is a joy as he/she knows our needs before we even ask. We can't quickly make daily changes like the water lilies. But we can change our thinking and our ways of adapting to the world around us. Amen.

Let us Pray: *Dear God, draw our eyes, first, to you, that we may be reminded of the abundant life you have promised and provide and, second, to our neighbors, and our community that we may see and respond to their needs. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Hymn: Just a closer walk with thee, Soloist Anda Sprudz

Our Response

The 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 catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the people – *response* “**Hear our prayer**”

Sharing The Peace

The Lord's Prayer

SENDING

BLESSING: Mothering God, Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life. **Amen.**

Hymn: Seek ye first, Soloist Anda Sprudz

Dismissal:

P: Go in peace. God is with you!

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Health & Safety update: Andy Kalnins

Introduction of Visitors: Pastor Norine