

The Power of God's Word

7th Sunday After Pentecost

July 12, 2026 • Proper 10 A • Ascension Lutheran Church • El Paso, Texas

As We Gather

We tend to undervalue and underestimate the power of words. We say things like "Talk is cheap" or "That's just words." What we mean is that it is easy to say something, but words by themselves don't carry much weight; actions have real value. Sure, we admit that "the pen is mightier than the sword" but then we turn around and declare that "sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me."

And yet, words can be very powerful indeed. I can still remember words of encouragement that certain people told me back in grade school – words which changed my life. And if human words can have such a powerful effect, how much more the Word of God!

God says that he does not speak his Word in vain; it will accomplish its purpose (Isaiah 55:10-13). The Holy Spirit testifies through God's Word that we are God's children (Romans 8:12-17). Some people try to reject God's Word or they fall away from it after a time. But the Word of God always finds some hearts where it can grow and transform peoples' lives. It produces abundant fruit (Matthew 13:1-9. 18-23). God's Word communicates his love and salvation. We can depend on what he says.

Prelude

Words of Welcome

Stand

Sharing God's Peace with One Another

We greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying "Peace be with you" as a sign of our unity and reconciliation in the Holy Spirit. As we are forgiven by God, so we forgive each other. (Matthew 5:22-24; Ephesians 4:1-3)

Opening Hymn: Thy Word is a Lamp Unto My Feet (Amy Grant/Michael W. Smith)

Refrain: Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet

And a light unto my path.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet

And a light unto my path.

1. When I feel afraid, and think I've lose my way,
Still you're there, right beside me.
Nothing will I fear, as long as you are near.
Please be near me to the end. (Refrain)
2. I will not forget your love for me, and yet,
My heart forever is wandering.
Jesus, be my guide, and hold me to your side,
And I will love you to the end. (Refrain)

Invocation

Lutheran Service Book 167

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.** (Matthew 28:19, 18:20)

P If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** (1 John 1:8-9)

Prayer of Confession and Words of Forgiveness

P The Word of God declares that all of us are sinners, that is, we have disobeyed the Lord in many ways. We have not loved God or other people as we should. For this reason, whenever we draw close to God to worship him, it is good for us to acknowledge our failings and receive his forgiveness.

C **Lord God, before you we acknowledge that we have failed to do your will. You have given us your Word; but all too often we don't listen to it or put it into practice. Even when we try to do what is right, hard words still slip out of our mouths, impure thoughts linger in our minds, or we do things that cause hurt. Forgive us, Lord, for Jesus' sake. Change our hearts so that we can live in a way that is more in accordance with your Word. In the name of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

P The Word of God declares that Jesus Christ died for our wrongdoing and rose from the dead to give us a new life, a clean life, eternal life. I have the privilege to announce to you today what the Word of God clearly states: all

of us who trust in Jesus, have our sins, our wrongdoing, forgiven in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

✠ Service of the Word ✠

Psalm 65:1-5

P Praise awaits you, our God, in Zion;

C To you our vows will be fulfilled.

P You who answer prayer,

C To you all people will come.

P When we were overwhelmed by sins,

C You forgave our transgressions.

P Blessed are those you choose and bring near to live in your courts!

C We are filled with the good things of your house, of your holy Temple.

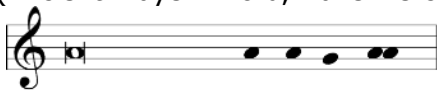
P You answer us with awesome and righteous deeds, God our Savior,

C The hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas.

A Glory be to the Father and to the ✠ Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Kyrie (Ancient Prayer: "Lord, Have Mercy")

Lutheran Service Book 168



A In peace let us pray to the Lord.



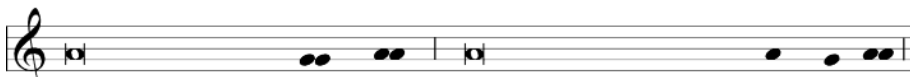
C Lord, have mer - cy.



A For the peace from a-bove and for our sal-va-tion let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



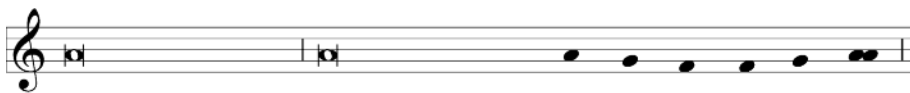
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the uni-ty of all let us pray to the Lord.



G Lord, have mer - cy.



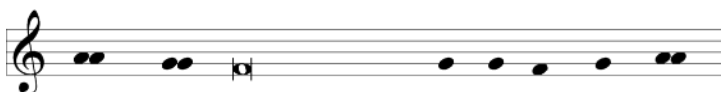
A For this holy house and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise



let us pray to the Lord.



G Lord, have mer - cy.



A Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



G A - men.

Hymn: Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast

Lutheran Service Book 577



1 Al - might - y God, Your Word is cast Like
2 Let not the sly sa - tan - ic foe This
3 Let not the world's de - ceit - ful cares The
4 So when the pre - cious seed is sown, Life -



seed in - to the ground; Now let the dew of
ho - ly seed re - move, But give it root in
ris - ing plant de - stroy, But let it yield a
giv - ing grace be - stow That all whose souls the



heav'n de - scend And righ - teous fruits a - bound.
ev - 'ry heart To bring forth fruits of love.
hun - dred - fold The fruits of peace and joy.
truth re - ceive Its sav - ing pow'r may know.

Text and tune: Public domain

Prayer

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And also with you.**
- P** We pray together:
- C** **Lord God, thank you for your Word. Help us to read it and understand it and put it into practice. Let your Word change our lives, comforting us, forgiving us, and giving us hope. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

Sit

First Reading

Isaiah 55:10-13

(God carries out his plans through the power of his Word.)

[God says:] "As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, ¹¹ so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

¹² "You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

¹³ Instead of the thornbush will grow the juniper, and instead of briars the

myrtle will grow. This will be for the Lord's renown, for an everlasting sign, that will endure forever."

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle Reading

Romans 8:12-17

(By the Spirit we live as children of God.)

Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

¹⁴ For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵ The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Special Music: Holy Spirit

(Bryan Perdue)

Like the rain that feeds the earth gently falls down from the sky,
His Spirit comes to nourish your heart.
As the morning wakes from sleep and the dew on the new grass lies,
His Spirit brings to you a new start.

Like the snow He sent to you forms a blanket for the earth,
His Spirit breathes the Word while you sleep.
Soon the sun from slumber stirs the land, puts forth new birth.
His spirit taught His Word that you speak.

The river flows where Eden starts, Bringing peace throughout God's land,
Flowing through our human hearts, Making way for God's own plan.

Like the river from His throne brings His peace along the way,
His Spirit comes and sets you apart,
Renewing, ever flowing, it restores itself each day.
His Spirit soothes your troubled, aching heart.

Like the Wind that breathes withing leads us through the stormy seas,

His Spirit brings you comfort every day.
From the breath of God who sends His peace on the evening breeze,
His Spirit breathes inside us as we pray.

The river flows where Eden starts,
Bringing peace throughout God's land,
Flowing through our human hearts,
Making way for God's own plan, making way for God's own plan.

Stand

Alleluia and Verse

Lutheran Service Book 173

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

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a common time signature 'C' and contains the melody for 'Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?'. The second staff continues the melody for 'You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.'.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

(The Parable of the Sower: If we continue in the Word we will produce much fruit.)

P The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 13.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. ²Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. ³Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. ⁸Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. ⁹Whoever has ears, let them hear..."

"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: ¹⁹When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. ²⁰The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. ²¹But since they have no root, they last only a

short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. ²² The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. ²³ But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Sit

Children’s Song: The B-I-B-L-E (Little Ones Sing Praise 48, modified)

1. The B-I-B-L-E, yes, that’s the book for me!
I stand alone on the Word of God, the B-I-B-L-E.
2. The B-I-B-L-E, its stories help me see
The love of Jesus, God’s own Son; the B-I-B-L-E.

Story Time

Hymn of the Day: Thy Strong Word

Lutheran Service Book 578



1 Thy strong word did cleave the dark - ness; At Thy
 2 Lo, on those who dwelt in dark - ness, Dark as
 3 Thy strong Word be - speaks us righ - teous; Bright with
 Δ 6 God the Fa - ther, light - cre - a - tor, To Thee



speaking it was done. For creat - ed
 night and deep as death, Broke the light of
 Thine own ho - li - ness, Glo - rious now, we
 laud and hon - or be. To Thee, Light of



light we thank Thee, While Thine or - dered sea - sons run.
 Thy sal - va - tion, Breathed Thine own life - breath - ing breath.
 press toward glo - ry, And our lives our hopes con - fess.
 Light be - got - ten, Praise be sung e - ter - nal - ly.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
Ho - ly Spir - it, light - re - veal - er, Glo - ry,



Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
glo - ry be to Thee. Mor - tals, an - gels,



al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
now and ev - er Praise the ho - ly Trin - i - ty!

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Tune: Public domain

Sermon

Stand

Apostles' Creed (Public Declaration of our Faith)

A I believe in God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting. Amen.

Sit

Offering

The Bible says, "Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts. Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness." (Psalm 96:8-9a, NIV)

Our offerings are part of our worship, part of our response to God's love. We give because Jesus gave everything for us. We give to help share Jesus' love with others.

Stand

Offering Prayer of Dedication

A **Almighty God, thank you for your Word, the message of salvation. Help us to put your Word into practice in our lives. Bless these offerings and use them to proclaim your Word in every part of the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.**

Offertory: God Will Be Our Refuge (Psalm 46)

(Traditional Spanish Song – English Translation Mary Bingle)

1. God will be our refuge, strength and mighty fortress,
Ever-present help in our times of deep distress.
Though the mountains tremble and crumble into dust,
Though earth and seas are shaken, in God we put our trust.
Though earth and seas are shaken, in God we put our trust.

Refrain: Heaven and earth may pass away;
Your Word will never pass away.
No, no, never pass away. No, no, never pass away.

2. Nations rage and bellow, kings and empires totter,
God speaks but a Word and its thunder melts the earth!
Ever-present with us, through depth and height and length,
The Lord remains our refuge, our stronghold, and our strength.
The Lord remains our refuge, our stronghold, and our strength. (Refrain)

Prayer of the Church

P The Bible states that God hears our prayers and that he wants us to place all of our concerns in his hands. God will always help us. If he doesn't take away the problem he will strengthen us to face it. For that reason, we pray with confidence.

Lord, thank you for saving us, for forgiving us, for giving us eternal life and for being with us when we struggle. Help us to love others as you have loved us. Lord, in your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

P Lord, fill us with your Holy Spirit so that our faith may be strong and so that we can walk in your ways without faltering. Lord, in your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

- P** Help us to take advantage of the opportunities you give us to share Jesus' love with others. Lord, in your mercy,
- C** **Hear our prayer.**
- P** Thank you for the many material blessings you have given us. Guide us so that we use them for your glory, for the good of our families and for your mission here on this earth. Lord, in your mercy,
- C** **Hear our prayer.**
- P** Lord, protect your church throughout the world, that we may be bold in our witness and ready to serve others. Strengthen and defend those who are suffering persecution for their faith. Lord, in your mercy,
- C** **Hear our prayer.**
- P** Help those who are sick or hurt or recovering from illness. Have mercy on them and heal them according to your will. Lord, in your mercy,
- C** **Hear our prayer.**
- P** Comfort those who are grieving. Help those who are struggling. Grant us your peace in the midst of trouble and save us from the problems that seem impossible. Lord, in your mercy,
- C** **Hear our prayer.**
- P** Lord, send your Spirit to the hearts and minds of those who are far from you. By your Word of truth, help them to understand and to repent and to come to faith in you. Lord, in your mercy,
- C** **Hear our prayer.**
- P** We thank you, Lord, because we know you hear all of our concerns, even those which are in our hearts which we have not spoken aloud. In Jesus' name.
- C** **Amen.**

Thank the Lord

Lutheran Service Book 181

C Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev-'ry-one what
 He has done. Let ev-'ry-one who seeks the Lord re-
 joice 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.

Closing Prayer

- P** Let us pray.
- C** **Heavenly Father, I give you thanks and praise because you have strengthened my faith and because you have forgiven me through Jesus Christ your Son. Help me now to live a life worthy of you, founded on your Word and full of your love. In Jesus' name. Amen.**

Benediction (2 Corinthians 13:14)

- P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.
- C** **Amen.**

Closing Hymn: On What Has Now Been Sown

Lutheran Service Book 921

1 On what has now been sown Thy bless - ing, Lord, be - stow;
2 To Thee our wants are known, From Thee are all our pow'rs;
3 O grant that each of us, Now met be - fore Thee here,
The pow'r is Thine a - lone To make it sprout and grow. Do Thou
Ac - cept what is Thine own And par - don what is ours. Our prais -
May meet to - geth - er thus When Thou and Thine ap - pear And fol -
in grace the har - vest raise, And Thou a - lone shalt have the praise!
es, Lord, and prayers re - ceive, And to Thy Word a bless - ing give.
low Thee to heav'n, our home. E'en so, a - men, Lord Je - sus, come!

Text and tune: Public domain

Sending

- P** Go in peace. Serve the Lord!
- C** **Thanks be to God!**

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Two from Lutheran Service Book

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Worship Leaders

Pastor: Rev. Richard Schlak
Organist: (Guest organist) Eileen Olmsted
Elder: Andy Barber
Acolyte: Rahel Meraz
Reader: Barbara Lewis
Greeters: Jake & Krissy Miller
Ushers: Team 2
Altar Care: Mielke
Projectionist: Jacob Canada
Sound/Camera: Ron Seiders/Mike Mielke

Prayer Ministry Philippians 4:6-7

Please fill out the blue friendship card or call the church office @ 915-833-1009 to include a prayer request or an update for the prayer list. If you have a prayer request or update for the prayer chain, please e-mail Jan Schlak at oveja6925@aol.com.

The prayer list is no longer included in the bulletin; but a separate sheet of paper that can be picked up alongside of the bulletins in the entrance.

Ascension News and Notes

Altar flowers for today's service are provided by the Werner's in celebration of Anita's birthday!



Both sets of flowers are \$70.

**PLEASE PLACE YOUR CHECK IN THE OFFERING PLATE
OR DROP IT OFF IN THE CHURCH OFFICE.**



July 14 — Ken McLennan

July 14 — Anita Werner

July 16 — Emma Morales

July 16 — Ellie Wagner

July 13 – Joshua & Valerie Fredericksen



(SHORT) Congregational Meeting

July 12th, 2026

Please join us immediately after the worship service.

Voting on the proposed 2026-2027 Preschool Budget

*The following copies are available in the church office to be printed upon request:

Congregation Agenda for July 12th, 2026 meeting

Proposed 2026-2027 Preschool Budget & Registration

Proposed repair cost for the swing gate

Congregation Minutes for prior meeting on Dec. 14, 2025

LADIES NIGHT OUT

All ladies of Ascension are welcome.

July 15th at Como's Italian Restaurant

Located at 4030 N. Mesa St.



Once a month on the 3rd Wednesday @ **6:00 PM** we meet at a restaurant and enjoy food and fellowship. (Dutch treat)

For information call Robin Wiegert at (915) 581-5566
We hope you can join us.




Most currently needed donations:


- Backpacks
- Towels
- Travel-size toiletries
- Razors
- Deoderant



Donations can be left in the clear bin in the fellowship hall labeled "Rescue Mission of El Paso".



Snacks for Adult Bible Study & Sunday School
Sign-up sheet is on the kitchen wall next to counter.



THANK YOU!

July	
5th:	Seiders
12th:	
19th:	Barton-Gandara
26th:	Mielke

August is OPEN!

July Calendar & NEW **Portals of Prayer (July-Sept. 2026)** are both available for pick-up in the **entrance of the church.**

This Week @ Ascension

Sunday (July 12th)

9:00 AM Bible Study
10:00 AM Fellowship
10:30 AM Worship
After service: Congregational meeting/
Voters' Meeting (Preschool Budget)



Monday (July 13th)

Church Office Closed

Tuesday (July 14th)

Wednesday (July 15th)

11:00 AM Sit and Sew (FH)
6:00 PM Ladies' Night Out (**Como's Italian Restaurant**
located at 4030 N. Mesa St.)

Thursday (July 16th)

Friday (July 17th)

Saturday (July 18th)

Ronald McDonald House



Please save the **aluminum pull tabs** from canned drinks and bring them to the kitchen area or the church office. They are used by the Ronald McDonald House to provide a home away from home for hundreds of families with seriously ill children.