****

**6th Sunday after Pentecost**

“To keep me from being too elated by the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from being too elated.” *2nd Corinthians 12:7*

**AS WE GATHER**

When Israel was in exile, God called Ezekiel to speak for Him to tell the truth to Israel. The Lord made no promises about results, but at least the people would recognize that a prophet had been among them. After His hometown did not believe His Messiahship, Jesus still sent out the Twelve to the surrounding towns. Not only did He instruct them about what to do or say, He also prepared them for rejection and how to respond to it. Now it is our turn, as we are called to tell others the truth about sin and grace. But we might think we are not up to the task. Here, Paul is our model, for he was well aware of his limitations, including his thorn in the flesh. Rather than keep silent, he spoke and wrote, confident that God’s power was made perfect in weakness. Our worship today is a reminder that above all else, the truth reveals God’s great love for us in Christ.

**PSALM** 119:41-48

**INVOCATION, CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

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

**People: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Pastor: Your people, O God, were a rebellious people in Ezekiel’s day.

**People: We, too, have rebelled against Your good and gracious will. We have sinned against You in thoughts, words, and action. Forgive us and open our ears to Your promises.**

Pastor: In great love, God sends His word of mercy and forgiveness. Now He uses Word and Sacrament and one another to assure us of the grace that is readily available to us. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

**HYMN** *“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”* (*LSB* 809)

**COLLECT OF THE DAY** *(bulletin insert)*

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** Ezekiel 2:1-5 *(bulletin insert)*

**GRADUAL** *(bulletin insert)*

**EPISTLE** 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 *(bulletin insert)*

**HOLY GOSPEL** Mark 6:1-13 *(bulletin insert)*

**HYMN** *“How Firm a Foundation”* (*LSB* 728)

**SERMON “*Thorns”***

# THE NICENE CREED *(LSB*,back inside cover)

# PRAYER OF THE CHURCH and LORD’S PRAYER

**Divine Service and the Close Fellowship of Holy Communion**

*Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise. The gifts include the Holy Supper in which we receive His true body and blood to eat and drink. Those welcome to the table acknowledge the real presence of the body and blood of Christ, confess their own sinfulness, and in true faith wish to receive the forgiveness and strength promised through this Holy Sacrament, as* ***instructed*** *… and* ***in unity of faith*** *… with God’s people here in this congregation. It is our sincerest desire that you join in the intimacy of this fellowship. However,* ***if you are not, yet, an instructed and confirmed member-in-good-standing of a congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, please visit with the pastor about such a fellowship before communing****. If you wish to come forward for a blessing, you are welcome to join us at the rail to receive such. Please cross your arms in front of you to indicate that desire.*

**DISTRIBUTION**

 *“Before You, Lord, We Bow”* (*LSB* 966)

**POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Let us pray. O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### BENEDICTION

**HYMN** *“God Bless Our Native Land”* (*LSB* 965)