**A black and white image of rocks

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**14th Sunday after Pentecost**

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by doing so you will heap burning coals on his head.” *Romans 12:20*

**AS WE GATHER**

When the Bible speaks of “enemies,” the language typically is not very pleasant. Positive thoughts and joyful emotions are not the natural responses to these discussions. At first glance, Romans 12:20 is one such passage. Paul points out that when we show love and kindness toward those who have done us wrong, we “heap burning coals” on their heads. Quite the mental picture! But wait! Look more closely! This kind of “head coaled” is actually a good thing! Along with every rebel who engages in warfare with God, we, too, deserve the heat of His wrath. Our sin merits His anger. Yet in Christ Jesus, the “coal” that has touched our lips and atoned for our rebellion is nothing less than the precious blood of Christ, by whose cross God converts His enemies to friends and gives them new life in His presence. If God loves us like this in Jesus, when we take up our cross to follow Him, we will love others, even our enemies. Why? It is because of the “head coaled” we have—the one by which enemies are loved and evil is overcome because our God is so very good.

**PSALM** 26

**+ PREPARATION +**

**INVOCATION**

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

**People: Amen.**

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION** *Jeremiah 15:20b*

Pastor: Since we are gathered to delight ourselves in the Word of God and to assemble as one family around His Table, let us with repentant hearts confess our sins before our heavenly Father, seeking His forgiveness in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

*We pause for a moment of silent prayer and confession.*

Pastor: O Lord our God, hear us as we pray:

**People: We confess that we have not walked in Your faithfulness, turning away from You when we should be turning toward You.**

Pastor: Father, forgive us.

**People: Our love has not been genuine. We have not overcome evil with good.**

Pastor: Have mercy upon us, Lord Jesus.

**People: The grace You tell us to share with both our friends and our enemies is the mercy we also need.**

Pastor: Renew us, Spirit of truth.

**People: Remove our transgressions from us so that we may live as those who have been called by Your name, delighting in Your goodness to us in Christ. Amen.**

Pastor: “I am with you to save you and deliver you,” declares the Lord. Through Jesus Christ—crucified, risen, and coming again—you have been delivered from your enemies of sin, death, and the devil. Keep His saving, steadfast love before your eyes and walk by faith in His promises. As one called to be your pastor and commissioned by Jesus to deliver the delight of His Word, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

**+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +**

**HYMN** *“Son of God, Eternal Savior”* (*LSB* 842)

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

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** Jeremiah 15:15-21 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**GRADUAL** *(bulletin insert, below Collect of the Day)*

**EPISTLE** Romans 12:9-21 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**HOLY GOSPEL** Matthew 16:21-28 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

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

**HYMN** *“Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus”* (*LSB* 531)

**SERMON “*Love Enemies?”***

# RETURNING OF OUR FIRST FRUITS

# PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

*(after each petition):* Pastor: Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

**LORD’S PRAYER, SUNG** (*LSB*,front inside cover)

**+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +**

**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.*

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**PEACE OF THE LORD**

**DISTRIBUTION**

*“Your Table I Approach”* (*LSB* 628)

**POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Let us pray. O God the Father, the source of all goodness, who in perfect love sent Your only-begotten Son into this world to save and deliver us, we delight in the mercy we have unworthily received. We praise You for the sacred sharing of Jesus’ body and blood and for the victory over the enemies of death and the grave that You offer to all who trust in Him. As we have received, so may we give, extending to others the grace the whole world needs; 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** *“Lord, Whose Love through Humble Service”* (*LSB* 848)

**FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH**

Rev. Curt Hoover, Rev. Alebachew Teshome,

Rev. Craig Fiebiger, Rev. Doug DeWitt

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**All are welcome …**

**… Christ is honored.**