

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

L) Lord in Your Mercy

C) Hear our Prayer

SHARING THE PEACE

OFFERING/OFFERING SONG "For The Beauty Of The Earth" ELW #879 v. 1-2

For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies,
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies:

Refrain : Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.

For the wonder of each hour of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light: *Refrain*

HOLY COMMUNION (Continuous)

- ✚ Words of Institution & Lord's Prayer
- ✚ Distribution of the Sacrament
- ✚ Communion Blessing

RURAL LIFE LITANY

○ Lord, you have given us the gift of land.

May we ever protect and preserve it, as good stewards.

○ Lord, you have given us the gift of water and air.

May we keep it pure and safe, as care takers for the next generation.

○ Lord, you have given us the gift of plants and trees, birds and animals.

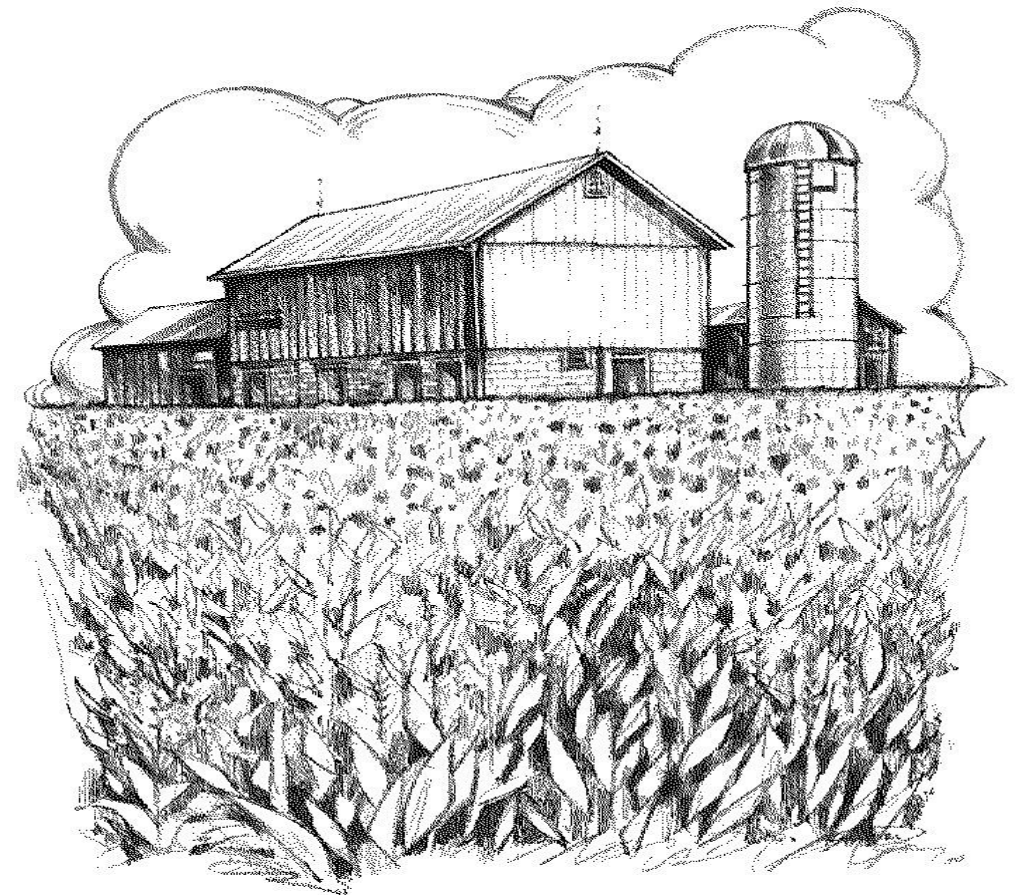
May we ever use, protect and preserve them, with good stewardship.

○ Lord, you have given us the gift of seed and livestock, fields and equipment.

May we never lose sight of all these as gifts from you, O God, for the sake of all your people.

○ Lord, protect all who work the fields, raise the livestock, provide business and mechanic support, lead in small town and rural life settings, teach in our schools, provide medical care and volunteer in our communities.

May we reflect your never-failing love and acts of mercy in our everyday living. Amen.



Benton & Willow Creek Lutheran Churches

Rural Life Sunday

May 5th, 2024

Interim Pastor: Kent Stillson

Organists: Lisa Rave (Willow Creek), Kari Vosburg (Benton)

"The Thanksgiving and Blessing of Soil, Seed, Animals and Equipment"

PRELUDE
WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

HONORING OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADERS

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather on the prairie where generations of faithful people have stood to thank God for his faithfulness, to admit our total dependence on God's mercy, and to Celebrate the gift of Seed, Soil, Water, Animals, and Sower – Each a gift from God's Almighty hand. (from Psalm 89)

All) I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations. I declare that your steadfast love is established for ever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

Let the heavens praise your wonders, O Lord, your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones. For who in the skies can be compared to the Lord?

All) Who among the heavenly beings is like the Lord, a God feared in the council of the holy ones, great and awesome above all that are around him? O Lord God of hosts, who is as mighty as you, O Lord? Your faithfulness surrounds you.

OPENING HYMN: "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" ELW #733vs. 1&2
Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father; there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not; as thou hast been, thou forever wilt be.

Refrain: Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see; all I have needed thy hand hath provided; great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest, sun, moon, and stars in their courses above join with all nature in manifold witness to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.
Refrain

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON

1 Corinthians 3: 5-9

⁵What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive

wages according to the labor of each. ⁹For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

GOSPEL SONG "Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil" ELW # 512

Lord, let my heart be good soil, open to the seed of your word.
Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is understood.
When my heart is hard, break the stone away.
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.

GOSPEL READING: **Matthew 13: 1-9**

¹That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ²Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹Let anyone with ears listen!"

L) Word of God, Word of Life. **All) Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

"The Foolish Sower"

SONG OF THE DAY

"God of the Harvest"

Words and music by Larry Olson & Karol Baer ©2003 Dakota Road Music CCLI # 1616198

CHORUS: You are God of the seed, God of the soil, God of the hope, God of the toil.
You are God of the rain, God of the sun, God of the harvest with blessings for ev'ryone

1. From the fields and the gardens come your blessed gifts of life.
Colors blossom, vines are dancing, roots uplifted with our thanks. Chorus
2. From the womb of all creation springs the fruit, the living light
Grace abundant, mercy flowing, nourishing and bringing life. Chorus

BRIDGE: Where there is hunger, where there is need, may we share your bounty, may we always see.