

Liturgy for July 12, 2020– Pentecost 6

Gathering Words ~ based on Isaiah 55:10-13

Jim & Francis Bonk

A: You pour your rain everywhere; you shine your sunrays on everything.

B: On rocky ground, among thistles, and on good soil.

Live-giving God, we sing your praises!

A: You feed. You nourish. You bring about new sprouts.

B: You give seed to the birds, bread to the eater. There is enough for all.

Your abundant love, O God, we cannot fathom.

A: Rain your life-giving seed on us today.

B: Do not let our lives run empty.

Come Spirit, fill us with joy and song. Lead us forth into your peace.

Opening Prayer

Jim & Francis Bonk

Most generous God,
You lavish your love upon all your people and our vast universe
With no thought to who deserves it,
And no guarantee that it will be returned.

Forgive us when we ration out our love and gifts,
Wanting to be efficient, we decide who is deserving, who is worthy.
Taking and using all that we wanted,
We get rid of everything that stood our way.

Teach us to be less wasteful: in our sharing of earth's resources,
In our giving of ourselves.
Give us eyes to see through the lens of your goodness and love,
A will to sow our gifts of substance, love and action with abandon.

Help us to rejoice in the harvest,
Where and when it comes in. Amen.

Opening Hymn

There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit

GTG 408

Prayer of Illumination

Dr. Eniko Ferenczy

Scripture Reading

Matthew 13: 1-9

13 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. 2 Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. 3 Then he

told them many things in parables, saying: “A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9 Whoever has ears, let them hear.”

Sermon

Sowing with Extravagance

Prayer of the people

Jim & Francis Bonk

God of extravagant love,
We give you thanks for all the good gifts you have showered upon us:
In creation, in each other, and especially in Jesus,
Whose stories help us to see the world differently;
Who showed us what such love looks like,
Who had an eye and a heart for those case by the wayside,
On the hard paths, on rocky place and thorny fields.
So we pray for those weary of walking down hard paths, feeling trapped by circumstances—all
of us, whose lives are disrupted by the pandemic with no relief in sight, longing for:

- friends to play, eat ice cream, enjoy a summer splash
 - a touch, an embrace
- get on an airplane, go to the cinema or a concert without worry about the virus.

- We pray for the rocky places in our lives and in the world:
- where we settle for shallow understanding and relationships that benefit us,
 - where we give in to misleading, deceitful stories about certain people, countries, cultures and religions.

- We pray for the thorny fields in our lives and your world:
- where we value wealth more than people
 - where we worship idols of safety and security for ourselves, letting the breath be choked out of others by our greed, our sense of superiority, our privilege.

We rejoice that despite all that threatens to silence your Good News,
it still resounds through all creation.
We give thanks for your abundant, life-giving grace and mercy that pour freely every morning.
May the seeds of your hope nestle in the cracks of despairing hearts.
Do not let our communities become inhospitable places for your presence, worn down,
yet unwilling to leave what we know.
Give us courage and eyes to recognize what chokes life out.
Empower us to cut down the thistles of our individual and collective lives.
Help us to join in your work of sowing and cultivating your seeds of life.

May the good fruit we bear bring solace to the lonely, restore the dignity of the ostracized,
empower the silenced, and lift up the downtrodden.
May our daily scattering of the Good News open our eyes to your new heaven and new earth in
places that we deemed rocky, deemed unredeemable.

In your holy name we pray. Amen.

Invitation to Offering

Dr. Eniko Ferenczy

Closing Hymn

We Will Go Out with Joy

GTG 539

Benediction

Dr. Eniko Ferenczy