

**Martin Luther Chapel – Pennsauken, NJ**  
**Second Sunday After Pentecost - 23 July 2019**

Color: Green

Propers: 7

Divine Service: I

Proper Preface: Common

**Sermon Text:**            *Luke 8: 26 - 39*

**Sermon Title:**            Witnesses to our countrymen

My brothers and sisters in Christ, our Good Shepherd

 **gathers** us at His feet this morning,

 **teaching** us the truth about the

† tragedy of those enslaved and under the savage tyranny of  
Satan

† and the joy of those free and under the love and grace of  
God in Himself.

 **He speaks plainly and clearly** that you and I,

 His disciples –

 children of the Most High God,

 would know and see clearly the reality of the spiritual conflict

 raging for the souls of men, women and children

 that has eternal consequences

 but is veiled by time and space.

 **Jesus taught** earlier that the Gospel is cast upon:

 hard hearts from which Satan snatches God's Word;

 shallow hearts that are unable to bear it amidst the trials and  
afflictions of this temporal and physical life;

 hearts bound up by the seduction and vain glory of this physical  
world that allow it to be choked;

 and good hearts within which the Word of God produces abundant  
harvests.

 **He then taught:**

 taught faith in Him

† must not be hidden within the physical walls of a church  
building

† but must shine forth into the darkness

 and the true – the eternal - family is

† not of the will of man or the flesh

† but the will of God where His children are **conceived by the  
power of the Holy Spirit.**

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 God then put:

 **The truth, the wisdom, and the validity** of His teaching  
 **into action** when Christ and His disciples **sailed from** Galilee  
across the sea **to the land** of the Gerasenes.

† Their craft was engulfed by a tempest that

‡ overwhelmed the skills and knowledge of His  
“fishermen”

‡ and threatened to sink it.

† The grievous fact is that Jesus slept

‡ soundly and peacefully in the boat should have comforted  
and given them strength,

‡ yet it had so little impact on those that had

 sat at His feet for **His teachings**

 and had observed **His miraculous delivery** of people  
from the consequences of sin -

 sickness

 and demonic possession.

† They woke Him with a rebuke, “Master, Master, we are  
perishing?”

 The God/Man arose again and

 rebuked the storm, stilling it with the spoken Word

 and then rebuked His slow and dull disciples with the spoken  
Word,

† stilling their unbelief

† with the command to believe in Him for their deliverance from

‡ the dark forces

‡ that threatened to choke out their

 physical

 and spiritual lives.

 They were slow to understand that

 His **preaching, teaching and miracles**

† had **purpose for both**

‡ the temporal, physical life they saw, heard, felt, smelled,  
and tasted with their senses

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✠ and the spiritual that can only seen, heard, felt, smelled and tasted with true faith.

✠ His words and deeds were  
✠ not for their sole benefit,  
✠ to be hidden under a jar,  
✠ but to be proclaimed to all.

Jesus alone was **prepared for the event** that sprung upon them when their boat touched the shore.

✠ He cast off  
✠ the madness of destructive weather  
✠ and the frail faith of His disciples  
✠ to **cast out**  
✠ the naked hatred,  
✠ the gross savagery  
✠ and the merciless oppression  
✠ of a demonic host that sought to  
✠ terrorize, subjugate and destroy  
✠ the Gentiles called the Gerasenes.

✠ The Messiah **stepped ashore** that day **fully aware** this unclean spirit had imprisoned  
✠ both the man and his neighbors in  
✠ fear, chaos, lawlessness and indecency  
✠ for a long time.

✠ The evil spirit tried to seize the advantage  
✠ with an unholy rebuke: “What have you to do with me?”  
✠ but was forced into an involuntary confession of the truth:  
✠ “Jesus, Son of the Most High God”  
✠ and “I beg You not to torment me.”

✠ The Prince of Peace’s conversation with any unclean spirit is located only here in St. Luke’s Gospel –  
✠ **a demand** the cursed spirit  
✠ not only **come out** of the man  
✠ but **identify** itself.

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 The Holy One of God  
 is neither impressed nor distracted  
 by the unholy one's claim of numerical superiority  
 but **further exposes**  
† his malice, destructiveness, and power  
† by **allowing it** to enter the nearby herd of 2,000 pigs (Mark 5: 13).

 No longer able to  
 choke off hope from the man and his countrymen,  
 it chokes off the life of 2,000 swine  
† by plunging them into the dark and deadly waters of the sea  
† that Christ had **earlier rebuked.**

Christ had **liberated the man** from

 the shame of nakedness and clothed him **with the true faith,**  
 involuntary demonic strength that  
 broke free from physical chains  
 while keeping him bound in the power of the devil  
 and **gave him** true strength in the knowledge that Jesus was  
† his redeemer that would  
† **lead him and keep him**  
‡ steadfast in the  
 one  
 true  
 faith,

 and the heartless madness that seized and controlled his  
 thoughts, words and deeds  
 and **restored to him**  
† a clean heart  
† and a right spirit that desired to remain  
‡ in the sight and hearing of Jesus'  
 **preaching,**  
 **teaching**  
 **and works.**

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Yet, Jesus’

 **casting out** the of chaos of tempest and unclean spirits  
 with **God spoken words** fell on the stone-hard ground  
† of the Gerasenes’ hearts  
† that feared and refused the One who could  
† **deliver them** from all that shackled them to the tombs of  
‡ earthly wealth,  
‡ temporal power and position,  
‡ flawed reason and strength –  
‡ their obstinate unbelief resulted in  
 His **turning away** from them  
 and **embarking again**  
 into the boat  
 with His disciples  
 to **travel back** to the Galilean shore.

 They were unmoved and uninterested that the one who  
 had terrorized them  
 and thwarted their best efforts to establish peace  
 begged the Lord to go with Him.

 Jesus **compassionately and graciously** tells the man to “  
 go,  
 and make disciples of his countrymen,  
 telling them of God’s good work done for him.”

 He was a faithful disciple  
 for his Lord and God  
 for he did  
† go,  
† told them all Jesus had done,  
† and made disciples for Jesus.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, our God **calls us** to  
 arise with Him  
 and go into the chaos of

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† this fallen and dying world  
† that values the perishable wealth of  
‡ possessions,  
‡ position,  
‡ and comfort

✠ and declare the **mighty works of God**,  
✠ that hearing the Gospel they would believe  
† in **Jesus as their Savior**,  
† He **liberates them from**  
‡ sin, death and the power of the devil  
‡ with the **forgiveness He won** for all mankind on the cross,  
† and receive **true and eternal life in Him**  
‡ here in time  
‡ and there in eternity  
✠ in our **heavenly Father's house**  
✠ and at **His table**.

✠ He assures you and me that

✠ He **sent one He had freed** from the cruel oppression of the evil one – father, mother, brother, sister, neighbor, friend to us and freed us,

✠ **giving us the right** to be called children of the Most High God and

✠ now He **sends us to tell our countrymen** of God's mighty works in us.

✠ He **commands us**

✠ to be attentive to His words and works for

† they **strengthen our faith** in Him

† by the power of the Holy Spirit,

✠ **preparing us**

† to withstand the sudden pouncing of

‡ spiritual tempests

‡ and physical afflictions,

† for the **joyous work** of

‡ **proclaiming** the Gospel,

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✠ **making** disciples  
✠ and God's delivery through the **baptism**  
✠ those who abide among the tombs of worldly  
    ✠ wealth  
    ✠ and fortune,

✠ and **rebuking**  
    ✠ the chaos and tyranny of the evil one  
    ✠ with the **name of the Son of the Most High God.**

✠ He, thus, **advances** the Kingdom of God **over and against** the kingdom of the evil one

✠ **through** our witness to our countrymen

✠ until the last day when He

✠ **receives us** into His **eternal peace and glory**

✠ and **casts Satan and all unbelievers** into eternal suffering and shame.

Amen and Amen