

# The Blessing of the Land



# REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

6151 Smith Road, Brook Park, Ohio 44142-2908 • 216.676.5173  
E-mail: [redeemerchurch@rlcbp.com](mailto:redeemerchurch@rlcbp.com) Web Site: [www.rlcbp.com](http://www.rlcbp.com)

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## The Blessing of the Land

### GATHERING

*The congregation gathers on the lawn north of the church. Following the example of Moses in the first scripture reading below, members of the congregation may remove their shoes.*

#### GATHERING HYMN

*Gather Us In*

*ELW 532*

- 1 Here in this place the new light is streaming,  
now is the darkness vanished away;  
see in this space our fears and our dreamings  
brought here to you in the light of this day.  
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,  
gather us in, the blind and the lame;  
call to us now, and we shall awaken,  
we shall arise at the sound of our name.
- 2 We are the young, our lives are a myst'ry,  
we are the old who yearn for your face;  
we have been sung throughout all of hist'ry,  
called to be light to the whole human race.  
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty,  
gather us in, the proud and the strong;  
give us a heart, so meek and so lowly,  
give us the courage to enter the song.
- 3 Here we will take the wine and the water,  
here we will take the bread of new birth,  
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,  
call us anew to be salt for the earth.  
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,  
give us to eat the bread that is you;  
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion  
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

4 Not in the dark of buildings confining,  
not in some heaven, light years away—  
but here in this place the new light is shining,  
now is the kingdom, and now is the day.  
Gather us in and hold us forever,  
gather us in and make us your own;  
gather us in, all peoples together,  
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

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### SUMMER GREETING

**P** Let my mouth be full of your praise,  
**C** **and your glory all the day long.**

**P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Brothers and sisters in Christ: We have come together to seek God's  
blessing as we rededicate this ground.  
**C** **Thanks be to God.**

**P** Let us pray. O God,  
**C** **be with us now and bless us as we rededicate this ground to your  
glory and praise. Grant us faith to know your gracious purpose in all  
things, give us joy in them, and lead us to the building up of your kingdom;  
through you Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and  
the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen**

### WORD

**FIRST READING** Exodus 3:1-6

A reading from Exodus

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

<sup>2</sup>There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. <sup>3</sup>Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." <sup>4</sup>When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." <sup>5</sup>Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which

you are standing is holy ground." <sup>6</sup>He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

**A** The word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

**SECOND READING** Matthew 13:24-30

A reading from Matthew

<sup>24</sup>He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; <sup>25</sup>but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. <sup>26</sup>So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. <sup>27</sup>And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' <sup>28</sup>He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' <sup>29</sup>But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. <sup>30</sup>Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

**A** The word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

**ADDRESS**

**HYMN**

*Now Thank We All Our God*

*ELW 840*

1 Now thank we all our God  
with hearts and hands and voices,  
who wondrous things has done,  
in whom this world rejoices;  
who, from our mothers' arms,  
has blest us on our way  
with countless gifts of love,  
and still is ours today.

2 Oh, may this bounteous God  
through all our life be near us,  
with ever joyful hearts  
and blessed peace to cheer us,  
and keep us all in grace,  
and guide us when perplexed,  
and free us from all harm  
in this world and the next.

3 All praise and thanks to God  
the Father now be given,  
the Son, and Spirit blest,  
who reign in highest heaven,  
the one eternal God,  
whom earth and heav'n adore;  
for thus it was, is now,  
and shall be evermore.

Text: Martin Rinkhart, 1586-1649; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878

## BLESSING

**P** The Lord be with you,  
**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Let us pray. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, king of the universe. You fill the entire world with your presence; your name is to be hallowed through all the earth. Bless all those who have worked or contributed to provide this place that has been set apart for your church. May this continue to be a place where your glory dwells and where your way is revealed in Word and Sacrament. May your gracious blessing descend like the dew from heaven upon this place and upon all who gather here to worship you. You have given us joy in a work begun in your name; may we continue to celebrate your presence in the house of your Church and throughout these grounds, and, in the time to come, praise you forever in our eternal home; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen**

*One or more psalms may be said as grass seed is distributed.*

### **Psalm 65**

Praise is due to you,

O God, in Zion;

**and to you shall vows be performed,**

<sup>2</sup>O you who answer prayer!

**To you all flesh shall come.**

<sup>3</sup>When deeds of iniquity overwhelm us,

**you forgive our transgressions.**

<sup>4</sup>Happy are those whom you choose and bring near

to live in your courts.

**We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house,  
your holy temple.**

<sup>5</sup>By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance,  
O God of our salvation;

**you are the hope of all the ends of the earth  
and of the farthest seas.**

<sup>6</sup>By your strength you established the mountains;  
**you are girded with might.**

<sup>7</sup>You silence the roaring of the seas,  
**the roaring of their waves,  
the tumult of the peoples.**

<sup>8</sup>Those who live at earth's farthest bounds are awed by your signs;  
**you make the gateways of the morning and the evening shout for joy.**

<sup>9</sup>You visit the earth and water it,  
you greatly enrich it;  
**the river of God is full of water;  
you provide the people with grain,  
for so you have prepared it.**

<sup>10</sup>You water its furrows abundantly,  
settling its ridges,  
**softening it with showers,  
and blessing its growth.**

<sup>11</sup>You crown the year with your bounty;  
**your wagon tracks overflow with richness.**

<sup>12</sup>The pastures of the wilderness overflow,  
**the hills gird themselves with joy,**

<sup>13</sup>the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,  
**the valleys deck themselves with grain,  
they shout and sing together for joy.**

## **Psalm 100**

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup>Worship the LORD with gladness;  
**come into his presence with singing.**

<sup>3</sup>Know that the LORD is God.

**It is he that made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.**

<sup>4</sup>Enter his gates with thanksgiving,  
and his courts with praise.

**Give thanks to him, bless his name.**

<sup>5</sup>For the LORD is good;  
**his steadfast love endures forever,  
and his faithfulness to all generations.**

*Members of the congregation scatter grass seed as the minister says:*

**P** With faith in Jesus Christ this work was begun and this ground was broken and planted in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **C Amen.**

**HYMN**                      *We Plow the Fields and Scatter*                      *ELW 681*

1 We plow the fields and scatter  
the good seed on the land,  
but it is fed and watered  
by God's almighty hand,  
who sends the snow in winter,  
the warmth to swell the grain,  
the breezes and the sunshine,  
and soft refreshing rain.

***Refrain***

*All good gifts around us  
are sent from heav'n above.  
We thank you, Lord,  
we thank you, Lord,  
for all your love.*

2 You only are the maker  
of all things near and far.  
You paint the wayside flower,  
you light the evening star.  
The winds and waves obey you,  
by you the birds are fed;  
much more to us, your children,  
you give our daily bread. ***Refrain***

3 We thank you, our creator,  
for all things bright and good,  
the seedtime and the harvest,  
our life, our health, our food.  
No gifts have we to offer  
for all your love imparts,  
but what you most would treasure—  
our humble, thankful hearts. **Refrain**

Text: Matthias Claudius, 1740-1815; tr. Jane M. Campbell, 1817-1878, alt.

**OFFERING** to the RLC Golden Jubilee Mission Project

**SUMMER OFFERING PRAYER**

**P** Let us pray. Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things.

**C** **You have blessed us with your goodness;  
you have given us our selves, our time, and our possessions.  
May these gifts be used in the care and healing of all that you have made,  
for the sake of the one who gave himself for us,  
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen**

**PRAYER**

**PRAYERS** of Intercession

*The Pastor leads the congregation in prayer, concluding each petition with,  
“ we pray to the Lord,”. The assembly responds, “**Lord, hear our prayer.**”*

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**P** Let us pray with confidence in the words our savior gave us.

**C** **Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen**

**SENDING**

## SUMMER BLESSING

**P** Jesus is the vine and we are the branches.

May you be rooted and grounded in his love. **C Amen.**

**P** Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **C Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN *As we Walk in Faith*

1 On this day we sing and give praise  
to the Lord who guides our way.  
He is ever vigilant here  
as we walk in faith.

### **Refrain**

*As we walk in faith, and we trust His grace;  
and in faith we take His hand . . .  
He is here with us.  
He is blessing us as we walk in faith.*

2 Through the years we've grown and we've shared  
Our Redeemer's love and care.  
We are blessed and full of His grace  
As we walk in faith. **Refrain**

3 Praise the Father, Praise to the Son  
And the Spirit, Three in One.,  
This forever still is our song  
As we walk in faith.

### **Refrain**

*As we walk in faith, and we trust His grace;  
and in faith we take His hand . . .  
He is here with us.  
He is blessing us as we walk in faith.*

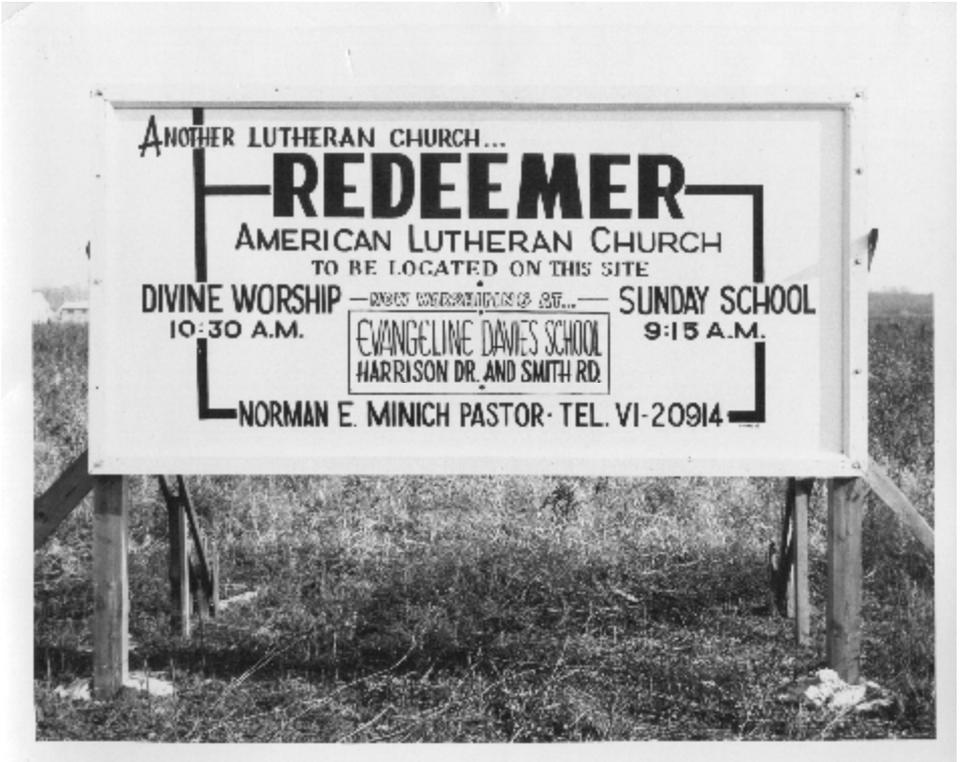
Text and Music by Nancy Schellhase Commissioned for the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of RLC.  
Text and Music © 1983 Nancy Schellhase.

*For I know that  
my redeemer lives,  
and at the last he  
will stand upon the  
earth; . . . Job 19:25*

**IN THE LATE 1950s**, the need for a church in the growing community of Brook Park Village, Ohio, was expressed by many people in answer to a telephone survey. To offer this new community Christian life and fellowship, an application was sent to the Regional Home Missions Committee of the National Lutheran Council to

start a mission church. On August 31, 1957, 5.67 acres of land, on Smith Road at Sylvia Drive, was purchased by The American Lutheran

Church (ALC), Ohio District Mission Board, for \$21,000.00 for the future site of a Lutheran Church. A sign was erected on the vacant field. For over a year, people traveling Smith Road wondered if a church would ever become a reality. Meanwhile, the evangelism committees of neighboring ALC congregations, St. Paul - Berea, Puritas - Cleveland and Divinity - Parma Heights, were busy making calls to people in Brook Park Village. (The American Lutheran Church was a predecessor denomination of RLC's current denomination, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.)



EVERYONE IS INVITED to a picnic dinner following the service. Thanks to the RLC Fellowship Committee for organizing the picnic.

RLC GOLDEN JUBILEE MISSION PROJECT: The Mission Start Fund of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The United States is a major mission field. Build new congregations and strengthen our ministry at the same time. Support our call to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ across this country.

Thanks to Dorothy Wolf and Jane Claycomb for today's mementos.  
Perennial Wildflower Mix - plant in late fall after the ground temp is below 65o - rake the ground in a sunny area, loosen the soil, distribute seeds evenly, mulch lightly with straw or other organic material; keep soil moist until the spring when germination occurs.

Thanks to Karen Parker for leading our singing.