

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

~Matthew 11:28, 30

# St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – July 9, 2023 420 Beaver St., PO Box 411

Mars, PA 16046-0411 www.stjohnchurchmars.org

Phone: 724-625-1830 email: office@stjohnchurchmars.org

Rev. Katie McNeal, Presiding Minister Maizy Fisher, Director of Music Ministries We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning! Know that you are welcome here just as you are.

If you are looking for a church to call home, why not consider making this one your own? If this is your first time visiting us, please fill out the visitor information card stapled to your bulletin.

Everything you need to follow worship can be found in this bulletin. As you are comfortable, please rise when there is an \* and join in the congregational responses, noted in **bold**.

All songs are marked with numbers. The red book in the pew has all the songs. Look for the large number in the upper corner of the page to find the correct song.

During the time of **Peace**, you are invited to turn to those around you and offer a word of peace. We suggest a handshake and saying, "Peace be with you." You are also welcomed to offer another gesture of peace (wave, fist-bump, smile, etc.). Hand sanitizer is available in each pew. At the time of **Offering**, you are invited to share a gift as you are comfortable. You may also place any updates to our ongoing prayer list using the yellow cards in the pews and placing them in the offering plates.

At the time of **Holy Communion**, all are welcome to come forward via the center aisle, receive the elements, and return via the side aisles. We begin at the front of the right side, commune all on the right side, then we will invite the left side forward. When you come forward, you may receive the bread from the pastor, then pre-filled cups with wine or grape juice from the assisting minister. You may consume the elements after receiving them then place the empty cup in the tray held by the acolyte. Those who do not receive Holy Communion are welcome to come forward for a blessing.

If you need a restroom, restrooms are located on the bottom floor at the far side of the building from the elevator. Restrooms may be accessed either via the stairs in the rear of the sanctuary, the stairs by the Greeting Area, or the elevator.

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to fill out the blue prayer request forms located in each pew. The cards will be collected during our hymn of the day, and prayers will be offered during the prayers of intercession.

### **PRELUDE**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## \*GATHERING SONG Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling (ELW 608)



### \*GREETING

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

### \*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who greets us in this and every season, whose word never fails, whose promise is sure.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of our neighbors.

Merciful God,

we confess that we have sinned.
We have hurt our community.
We have squandered your blessings.
We have hoarded your bounty.
In the name of Jesus,
forgive us and grant us your mercy.
Silence is kept for reflection.

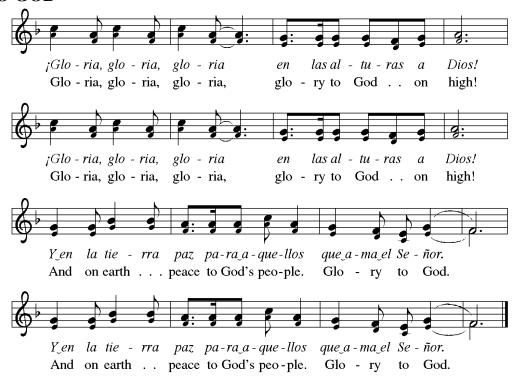
Righteous God,

we confess that we have sinned.
We have failed to be honest.
We have lacked the courage to speak.
We have spoken falsely.
In the name of Jesus,
forgive us and grant us your mercy.
Silence is kept for reflection.

God is a cup of cold water when we thirst.
God offers boundless grace when we fail.
In God's goodness, we are free to claim the gift of God's mercy: we are freed and forgiven in the name of 中 Jesus Christ.

Amen.

### \*GLORY TO GOD



### \*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

### FIRST READING: Zechariah 9:9-12

A reading from Zechariah.

<sup>9</sup>Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!

Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!

Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he,

humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

<sup>10</sup>He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim

and the war-horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off,

and he shall command peace to the nations;

his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

<sup>11</sup>As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,

I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.

<sup>12</sup>Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double.

The word of the Lord.

### Thanks be to God.

### **PSALM: Psalm 145:8-14**

<sup>8</sup>The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

<sup>9</sup>LORD, you are good to all, and your compassion is over all your works.

- <sup>10</sup>All your works shall praise you, O LORD, and your faithful ones shall bless you.
- <sup>11</sup>They shall tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your power,
- <sup>12</sup>that all people may know of your power and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.
- <sup>13</sup>Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; your dominion endures throughout all ages. You, LORD, are faithful in all your words, and loving in all your works.
- <sup>14</sup>The Lord upholds all those who fall and lifts up those who are bowed down.

### SECOND READING: Romans 7:15-25a

A reading from Romans.

<sup>15</sup>I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. <sup>16</sup>Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. <sup>17</sup>But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. <sup>18</sup>For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. <sup>19</sup>For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. <sup>20</sup>Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

<sup>21</sup>So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. <sup>22</sup>For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, <sup>23</sup>but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. <sup>24</sup>Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? <sup>25a</sup>Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

### \*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



\*GOSPEL READING: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus spoke to the crowd saying:] <sup>16</sup>"To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

<sup>17</sup> We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;

we wailed, and you did not mourn.'

<sup>18</sup>For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon'; <sup>19</sup>the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

<sup>25</sup>At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; <sup>26</sup>yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. <sup>27</sup>All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

<sup>28</sup>"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

### CHILDREN'S SERMON

### **SERMON**

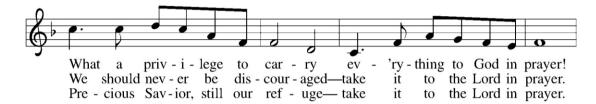
### GRADUATE RECOGNITION AND BLESSING

### \*HYMN OF THE DAY What a Friend We Have in Jesus (ELW 742)

(Blue prayer cards are collected)



- What a friend we have in Je sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
- 2 Have we tri als and temp ta tions? Is there trou-ble an y where?
- 3 Are we weak and heav-y lad en, cum bered with a load of care?





Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit; oh, what need-less pain we bear—Can we find a friend so faith - ful who will all our sor-rows share? Do your friends de-spise, for-sake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.



all be-cause we do not car - ry ev-'ry-thing to God in prayer! Je - sus knows our ev-'ry weak - ness—take it to the Lord in prayer. In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a so-lace there.

### \*APOSTLES' CREED

Let us confess our faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.\* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### \*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's abundant mercy, let us offer our prayers for a world in need. *A brief silence for reflection* 

God of the covenant, you call ministers to proclaim your gospel of grace throughout the world. Inspire pastors, deacons, church musicians, and all ministers of your word as they carry out your work. Hear us, O God.

# Your mercy is great.

God of all creation, you reveal your goodness through all you have made. Prosper the work of conservation organizations, botanical gardens, zoos, and wildlife sanctuaries. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.** 

God of the nations, you desire that all the peoples of the world live in peace. Guide government leaders at all levels to work for justice, mercy, and reconciliation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.** 

God of compassion, you bring healing to those who are sick, consolation to those who are grieving, and well-being to those who are distraught. Send skilled caregivers to all in need especially Jeff, Bob, Geneva, Cherry, Winnie, Henry, Harry, Roy, Ellen, Ruth, Sally, Katie, Debi, those on our prayer list, and all whom we remember aloud or in our hearts. Make your presence known among all who suffer. Hear us, O God.

# Your mercy is great.

God of rejoicing, you have brought us together this day to worship around word and sacrament. Encourage children in their learning and growing and watch over those who are absent today. Lead us all to places of renewal and refreshment. Hear us, O God.

# Your mercy is great.

God of all faithfulness, through the witness of the faithful departed you reveal love in action. Embolden us by their example to build up the beloved community in all the contexts we encounter. Hear us, O God.

# Your mercy is great.

We pray, O God, for your everlasting presence, trusting that you hear our prayers, spoken and unspoken. We lift the prayers on the hearts and minds of this congregation this day (*blue prayer cards are read*). Receive our prayers and answer us, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.** 

### \*PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

# And also with you.

Let us share Christ's peace with one another.

## **OFFERING**

# OFFERTORY HYMN We've Come This Far by Faith (ELW 633)

\*Rise on verse 2



### \*OFFERING PRAYER

God of field and forest, sea and sky, you are the giver of all good things. Sustain us with these gifts of your creation, and multiply your graciousness in us, that the world may be fed with your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.** 

### \*GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, to explain God's love, to show it and share it, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

### **Amen**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray,

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen

### \*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good. Come, for all is now ready.

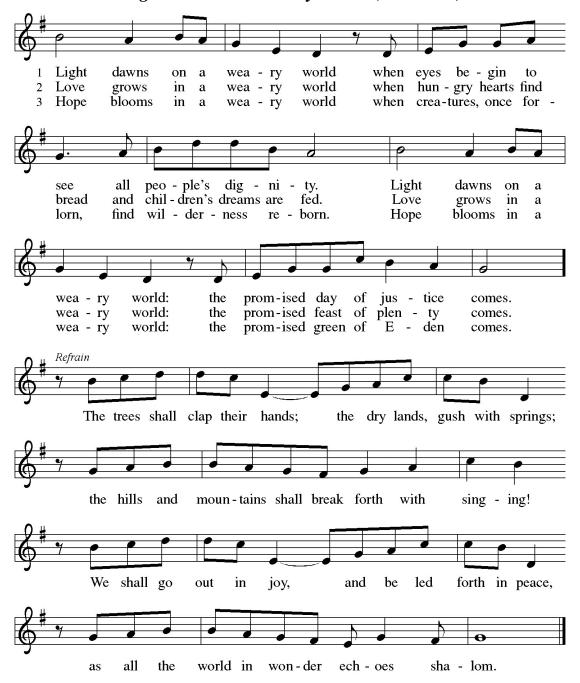
### **DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION**

Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life, and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. In response to Jesus' invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine of communion. Those who do not receive the elements of bread and wine are invited to come forward for a blessing. Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available.

# **COMMUNION SONG** Lamb of God



### COMMUNION HYMN Light Dawns on a Weary World (ELW 726)



### \*POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and preserve you in grace. **Amen** 

### \*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

We thank you, generous God, for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table. Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.** 

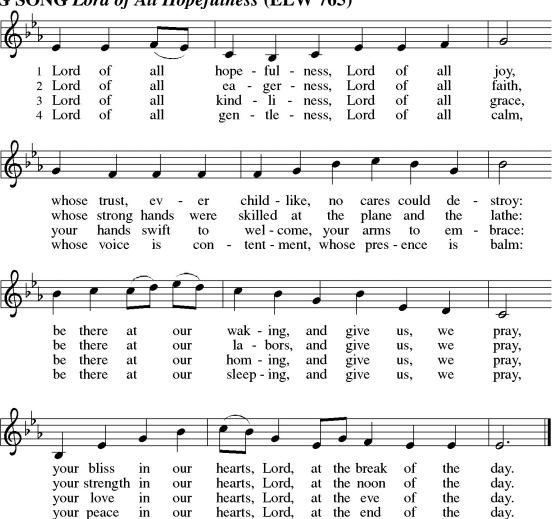
### \*BLESSING OF VACTION BIBLE SCHOOL

### \*BLESSING

The God who calls across the cosmos and speaks in the smallest seed, bless, keep, and sustain you + now and to the end of the age.

### Amen.

\*SENDING SONG Lord of All Hopefulness (ELW 765)



### \*DISMISSAL

[Jesus said,] "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation."

Mark 16:15

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

### **POSTLUDE**

Assisting in worship today:

**Assisting Minister: Kelly Greb** 

Acolyte: Ava Niklewicz

Usher: Greeters:

Offering: Anna Kramer and Nathan Kramer

**Attendance Last Week: 38** 

# Notes for the day's texts:

Today's gospel reading contains iconic words from Jesus: "Come to me all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light (Matt. 11:28-30)." Jesus offers a yoke to tired listeners and tells them that a yoke will give them rest. The yoke as a means to rest was a strange idea for the disciples. A voke as a means to rest ought to sound strange to us, as well. The early hearers of this biblical passage would have known a yoke to be a means of engaging the energy of oxen as heavy lifters in the enterprise of farming. Yokes are still employed in our world and they are still a burden and a way of harnessing animal's hard work, especially in places where people don't have access to the internal combustion engine. The first ancient readers or hearers of Matthew also viewed a yoke as a symbol of obedience to God's law and wisdom. Generally, our instinct is to resist yokes and laws, or at least not immediately connect them with the idea of freedom. Through the image of the yoke, however, Jesus invites us to think of God's law and wisdom as a means to surrender, give way, and accept something graceful and positive—rest, ease, lightness. Jesus reframes the idea of a yoke by telling us that a yoke will help us grow as disciples. The gospel links humility to freedom.

# **Today's Music**

Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling. Text: Will L. Thompson, 1847-1909, Music: Will L. Thompson. Public Domain. What a Friend We Have in Jesus. Text: Joseph Scriven, 1820-1886, Music: Charles C. Converse, 1832-1918. Public Domain. We've Come This Far by Faith. Text: Albert A. Goodson, 1933-2003, Music: Albert A. Goodson. Manna Music, Inc.. Light Dawns on a Weary World. Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953, Music: William P. Rowan, b. 1951. GIA Publications, Inc. Lord of All Hopefulness. Text: Jan Struther, 1901-1953, Music: Irish traditional. Oxford University Press (New York) / Public Domain

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# **Next Week's Readings**

Isaiah 55:10-13 The growth of the word to accomplish God's purpose Psalm 65:1-13 Your paths overflow with plenty Romans 8:1-11 Live according to the Spirit Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 The parable of the sower and the seed