

"...If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it."

Mark 8: 34-35

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church 17th Sunday after Pentecost – September 15, 2024

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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 worshiping at St. John, 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. Envelopes are available in the pews if you prefer. Online gifts may be made using the QR code below:



You may also offer updates to our ongoing prayer list using the yellow cards in the pews and placing them in the offering plates. **Visitor information cards** and member attendance cards (attached to the front of the bulletin) may also be placed in the offering plates.

As Lutherans, we believe Christ is truly present in the elements of the Lord's Supper. At the time of **Holy Communion**, all baptized individuals 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 (gluten free wafers are available), then prefilled 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.

A **playroom** is available downstairs for children who need a break from the worship service. This room is by the elevator on the lower level. Children are also welcome to utilize the books and puzzles available in the Greeting Area on the top level by 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

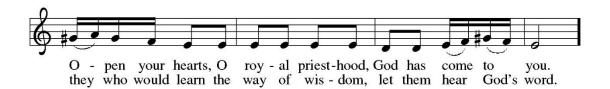
GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

*GATHERING SONG Open Your Ears, O Faithful People (ELW 519)

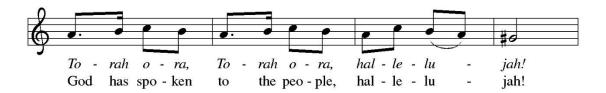


- O pen your ears, O faith-ful peo-ple, o pen your ears and hear God's word.
- 2 They who have ears to hear the mes-sage, they who have ears, now let them hear;











*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, \pm one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin and come to God for healing.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us.

We confess that we have honored you with our lips, but have harmed our neighbors with our tongues.

The cravings at war within us cause conflicts and disputes.

In our desire to be first

we make distinctions among ourselves.

We place the needs of the poor and the suffering last.

In your great mercy, forgive us our sins.

Draw near to us with grace in time of need, and turn us to follow in the way of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

God promises to forgive our iniquity and to remember our sin no more. By grace you have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, the source of eternal healing, your sins are forgiven.

Amen.

*Canticle of Praise Glory to God





*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O God, through suffering and rejection you bring forth our salvation, and by the glory of the cross you transform our lives. Grant that for the sake of the gospel we may turn from the lure of evil, take up our cross, and follow your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

PREESENTATION OF NEW BIBLES

When these children were baptized, loving adults promised to "bring them to the word of God and the holy supper, teach them the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, place in their hands the holy scriptures, and nurture them in faith and prayer." In our support of their faith, we now place in their hands the Bible that they will use in Sunday School this year, a version that helps them know the holy scriptures more and more as they grow and learn and enter a new chapter of their faith formation.

I invite our presenters to bring the Bibles forward at this time.

And repeat after me:

Receive this Bible.

Hear God's word with us.

Learn and tell its stories.

Discover its mysteries.

Honor its commandments.

Rejoice in its good news.

May God's life-giving word

inspire you and make you wise.

Students, I invite you to repeat after me:

We receive these Bibles with our hands, our hearts, and our minds.

Together, let us lift up these children and their new Bibles!

We rejoice in this step in your journey with God. We pray God will guide you, your family, and us

as you use this Holy Bible in your home,

in your Sunday School classes, and in our worship.

We will learn together and grow in our love for God's Word.

HYMN God's Word Is Our Great Heritage (ELW 509)









FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-9a

A reading from Isaiah.

⁴The Lord GoD has given me the tongue of a teacher,

that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word.

Morning by morning he wakens—

wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught.

⁵The Lord GOD has opened my ear,

and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward.

⁶I gave my back to those who struck me,

and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;

I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

⁷The Lord GoD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced;

therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame;

⁸he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me.

^{9a}It is the Lord GOD who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 116:1-9

Read responsively – congregation reads bold printed verses

¹I love the LORD, who has heard my voice, and listened to my supplication,

²for the LORD has given ear to me whenever I called.

³The cords of death entangled me; the anguish of the grave came upon me; I came to grief and sorrow.

⁴Then I called upon the name of the LORD:

"O LORD, I pray you, save my life."

⁵Gracious is the LORD and righteous; our God is full of compassion.

⁶The LORD watches over the innocent;

I was brought low, and God saved me.

⁷Turn again to your rest, O my soul. for the LORD has dealt well with you.

⁸For you have rescued my life from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling;

⁹I will walk in the presence of the LORD in the land | of the living.

SECOND READING: James 3:1-12

A reading from James.

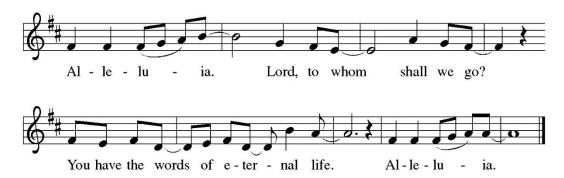
¹Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. ²For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. ³If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. ⁴Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. ⁵So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits.

How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! ⁶And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. ⁷For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, ⁸but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. ¹¹Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? ¹²Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



*GOSPEL READING: Mark 8:27-38

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁷Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" ²⁸And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." ²⁹He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." ³⁰And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

³¹Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY Oh Jesus, I Have Promised (ELW 810)

(Blue prayer cards are collected)



fol -

low, my

mas - ter

and

my

friend.

*APOSTLES' CREED

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

oh, give me grace to

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

Drawn together in the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray with confidence for the church, God's good creation, and all who are in need. *A brief silence*.

We pray for the church throughout the world. Form us into communities of forgiveness and grace. Help us to notice where you are calling us into new relationships, and give us courage to embrace the uncomfortable and unfamiliar. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for the earth and all its inhabitants. Protect lands at risk of wildfire and heal dying forests. Where fire brings destruction, raise up new growth. Guide us in tending precarious ecosystems. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for those who govern nations, tribes, and cities. Open them to the cries of people in need. Direct them in shaping policies that prioritize the health and well-being of all who struggle with hunger and housing insecurity. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for all who are ill, who are lonely or anxious, and who grieve, especially Bob, Geneva, Cherry, Winnie, Henry, Harry, Ellen, Ruth, Sally, Katie, Debi, Anne, Karen, Nan, those on our prayer list, all whom we remember in our hearts and all who suffer in any way. Draw them close to you and soothe them with the promise of your enduring love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for teachers, professors, librarians, school administrators, staff, and all who support the education of young people. Sustain them as they shape learning communities, rooted in equity and authenticity. We pray for children of all ages in their learning. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We remember our beloved dead, who with the great cloud of witnesses bear witness to your saving grace. Accompany us in our pilgrimage of faith, that we too place our hope and trust in you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We entrust these and all our prayers to you, holy God, and those on the hearts and minds of this congregation this day (*blue prayer cards are read*). Receive these and the prayers for which we do not yet have words into your holy keeping in the name of your beloved child, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

*PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Let us share Christ's peace with one another.

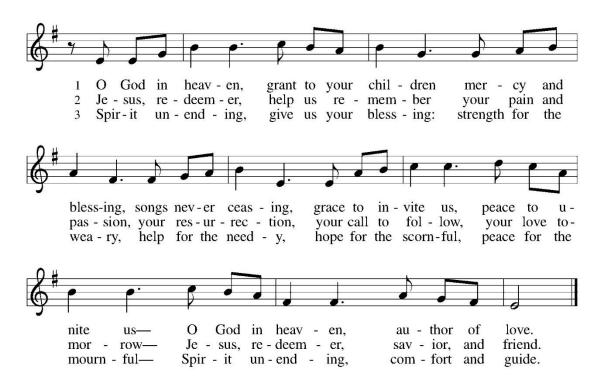
MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN O God in Heaven (ELW 748)

Rise on 3rd verse



*OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.
Blessed are you, O God,
source of every gift of your creation.
By these gifts and with our lives,
help us to serve one another and all in need,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

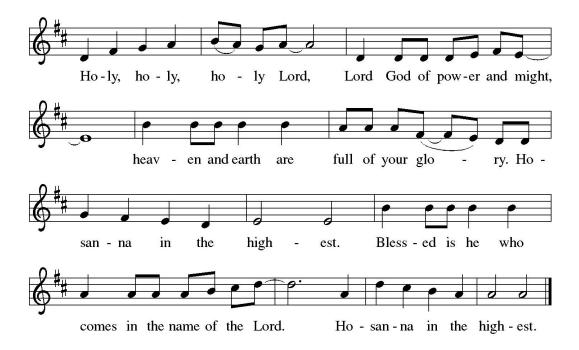
Lift up your hearts.

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, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Holy God, you alone are holy, you alone are God.

The universe declares your praise:

Beyond the stars; beneath the sea; within each cell; with every breath.

We praise you, O God.

Generations bless your faithfulness:

Through the water; by night and day; across the wilderness; out of exile; into the future.

We bless you, O God.

We give thanks for your dear Son: At the heart of human life; near to those who suffer; beside the sinner; among the poor; with us now.

We thank you, O God.

In the night in which he was betrayed, 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 his love for us on the way, at the table, and to the end, we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We pray for the gift of your Spirit:

In our gathering; within this meal; among your people; throughout the world.

Blessing, praise, and thanks to you, holy God,

Through Christ Jesus, by your Spirit, in your church, without end.

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

Jesus welcomes you to this table. Come, here is your God.

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

Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available upon request. Communion may also be brought back to the pews for those who are unable to come forward.

COMMUNION SONG Lamb of God



DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN We Eat the Bread of Teaching (ELW 518)



COMMUNION HYMN Around You, O Lord Jesus (ELW 468)



*POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

Holy God, you have welcomed us to this meal and fed us with dignity at your table.

Send us now to welcome others and to be at peace with one another, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

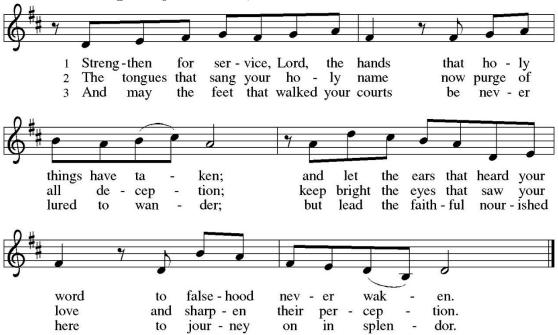
*BLESSING

God all mighty,
God most merciful,
God of grace

+ bless you, keep you, and give you peace.

Amen.

*SENDING SONG Strengthen for Service, Lord (ELW 497)



*DISMISSAL

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord say, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?'

And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'"

Isaiah 6:8

Go in peace. Follow Jesus.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

The flowers on the altar today were provided by Cherry and Mike Sauers in belated celebration of their 60th Wedding Anniversary (July 25th).

Assisting in worship today:

Assisting Minister: Keith C

Acolyte: Nathan K

Ushers: Greeters:

Offering: Jules K and Abby C

Attendance last week: 60 + 5 zoom

Notes for the day's texts:

Three weeks ago we heard Peter's confession of faith as told in John's gospel. This week we hear Mark's version, when Peter says, "You are the Messiah." In John, the stumbling block is Jesus' invitation to eat his flesh, given for the life of the world. In Mark too the scandal has to do with Jesus' words about his own coming death, and here Peter himself stumbles over Jesus' words. But Jesus is anointed (the meaning of *messiah*) in Mark only on the way to the cross (14:3); so we are anointed in baptism with the sign of the cross.

Today's Music

Open Your Ears, O Faithful People. Text: Hasidic traditional; Willard F. Jabusch, b. 1930, English version, Music: Hasidic tune. OCP (Oregon Catholic Press /)Public Domain / Augsburg Fortress.

God's Word Is Our Great Heritage. Text: Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783–1872; tr. Ole G. Belsheim, 1861–1925, alt.,

Music: Martin Luther, 1483–1546. Public Domain.

Oh Jesus I Have Promised. Text: John E. Bode, 1816-1874, alt., Music: Neuvermehrtes Gesangbuch, Meiningen, 1693. Public Domain.

O God in Heaven. Text: Daniel T. Niles, 1908-1970, alt., Music: Ilonggo (Philippines) traditional, adapt. Elena G. Maquiso, 1961-2005. I-to Loh / Public Domain.

We Eat the Bread of Teaching. Text: Omer Westendorf, 1916–1997, Music: Jerry Ray Brubaker, b. 1946. World Library Publications, a divisioin of GIA Publications, Inc.

Around You, O Lord Jesus. Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. composite, Music: H. Thomissön, Den danske Psalmebog, 1569. Augsburg Fortress / Public Domain.

Strengthen for Service, Lord. Text: Syriac Liturgy of Malabar; tr. composite, Music: Robert A. Hobby, b. 1962. Public Domain / Augsburg Fortress.

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Next Week's Readings

Jeremiah 11:18-20 *The prophet like a lamb led to slaughter*Psalm 54 *God is my helper; it is the Lord who sustains my life*James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a *The wisdom from above*Mark 9:30-37 *Prediction of the passion*