

"But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

~Matthew 14:30-31

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

11th Sunday after Pentecost – August 13, 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 When Peace Like a River (ELW 785)



*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
But if we confess our sins,
God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Most merciful God.

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ.

By grace we have been saved.

In the name of 士 Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven.

May almighty God strengthen us through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in our hearts through faith.

Amen.

Freed and forgiven in Christ, let us sing our praises before God!

*GLORY TO GOD Refrain Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and to God's peo-ple on earth. peace might-y God and Fa-ther, 1 Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry. Refrain Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God the in high - est, and to God's peo-ple on earth. peace 2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, God, sin of the world: Lamb of you take a - way the you are seat - ed at the right have on mer - cy us;

hand of the Fa - ther:

re

ceive

our

prayer.



*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O God our defender, storms rage around and within us and cause us to be afraid. Rescue your people from despair, deliver your sons and daughters from fear, and preserve us in the faith of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: 1 Kings 19:9-18

A reading from 1 Kings.

⁹At [Horeb, the mount of God,][Elijah] came to a cave, and spent the night there.

Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁰He answered, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

¹¹He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; ¹² and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. ¹³When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁴He answered, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." ¹⁵Then the LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. ¹⁶Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel; and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. ¹⁷Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill; and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill. ¹⁸Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 85:8-13

⁸I will listen to what the LORD God is saying;

for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

⁹Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you, that your glory may dwell in our land.

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

¹¹Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

¹²The LORD will indeed grant prosperity, and our land will yield its increase.

¹³Righteousness shall go before the LORD and shall prepare for God a pathway.

SECOND READING: Romans 10:5-15

A reading from Romans.

⁵Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that "the person who does these things will live by them." ⁶But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷"or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸But what does it say?

"The word is near you,

on your lips and in your heart"

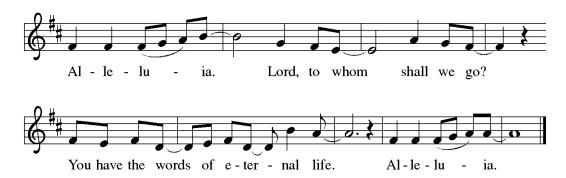
(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. ¹¹The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." ¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. ¹³For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

¹⁴But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? ¹⁵And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



*GOSPEL READING: Matthew 14:22-33

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²²[Jesus] made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side [of the Sea of Galilee], while he dismissed the crowds. ²³And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. ²⁵And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. ²⁶But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. ²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."

²⁸Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." ²⁹He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. ³⁰But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" ³¹Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" ³²When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." The gospel of the Lord.

The gospel of the Lord.

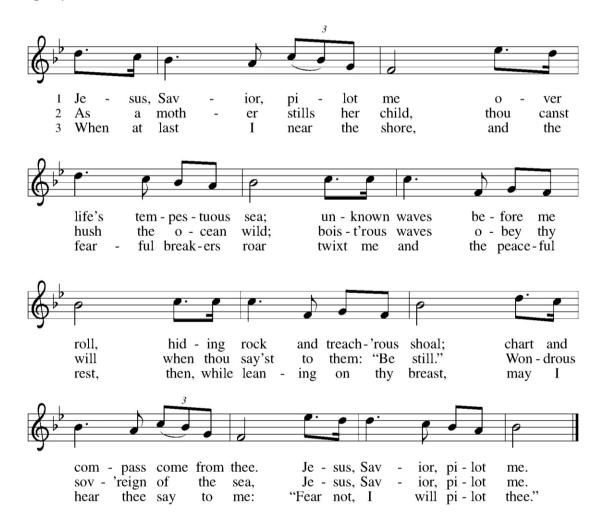
Praise to you, O Christ

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me (ELW 755)

(Blue prayer cards are collected)



*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 grace and faith, your faithfulness is never-ending, and your righteousness becomes ours through Christ Jesus. Send the church to proclaim the gospel both near and far, in church buildings and on street corners, in person and through digital means. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of sky and sea, the plants, animals, mountains, and plains proclaim your glory. Prosper the work of ecologists as they teach us new ways to care for the environment. Bring relief to areas recovering from natural disasters. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of peace and justice, you call us to live as your beloved community throughout the world. Instill in local, regional, national, and global political and civic leaders a desire to work for the well-being of all people. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of care and compassion, you bring assurance when we are afraid. Bring calm to any who are anxious or fearful. Bless the work of therapists, nurses, and other health care providers. Comfort all who grieve and soothe any who are sick especially 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. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of wonder, you accompany us in both joys and sorrows. We pray for children and teachers preparing for a new school year. Make your presence known in our work and play, in lively conversation and in quiet rest. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of new life, you send people to renew both church and society. We give you thanks for their lives of faithful service as examples of following your call. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We know you hear our prayers, spoken and silent, and we lift before you now the prayers on the hearts of this congregation today (*blue prayer cards are read*). Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray in the name of the one who reconciled all creation to himself, Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

*EXCHANGE OF 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 What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine (ELW 774)

*Rise on 3rd verse



*OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you,

O Lord our God, maker of all things.

Through your goodness you have blessed us and called us your own.

In your grace, we offer ourselves to your service

and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

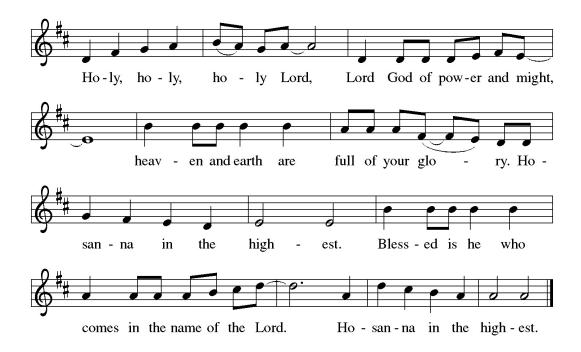
Lift up your hearts.

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:



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.

With this bread and cup we remember your Son,
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
We remember his life lived for others,
and his death and resurrection, which renews the face of the earth.
We await his coming,
when, with the world made perfect through your wisdom,
all our sins and sorrows will be no more.

Enfold in your arms all who share this holy food. Nurture in us the fruits of the Spirit, that we may be a living tree, sharing your bounty with all the world. **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

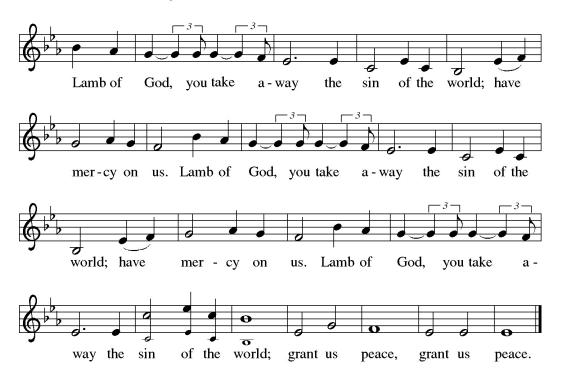
*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the banquet, 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.

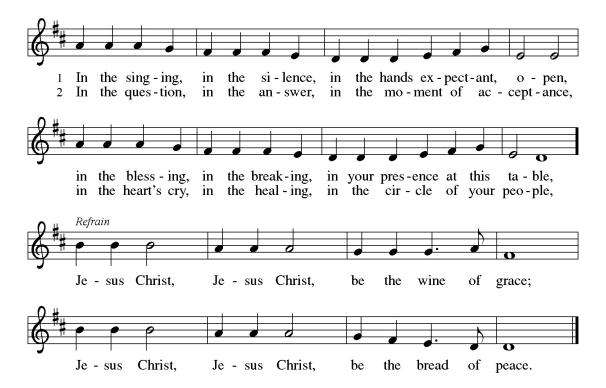
COMMUNION SONG Lamb of God



COMMUNION HYMN Now the Silence (ELW 460)



COMMUNION HYMN In the Singing (ELW 466)



*POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

*BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

Amen.

*BLESSING OF A NEW SEMESTER

Those who are going to college, apprenticeships, or other learning endeavors beyond high school this fall are invited forward to receive a blessing.

We give thanks for the gift of learning and pray for God's guidance in the educational journeys of these people.

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims its maker's handiwork.

Teach us your ways, O God.

Take knowledge rather than gold, for all that you may desire cannot compare with wisdom. **Teach us your ways, O God.**

Know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Teach us your ways, O God.

People of St. John, as their home congregation, do you promise to support these people, take an interest in their futures, be with them in their celebration and sadness, and welcome them whenever they return to St John?

In God's love, we support them.

Do you promise to faithfully pray for these people, placing their future into God's loving hands as they continue to learn and grow and make their choices?

In God's love, we pray for them.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Eternal God, bless all schools, colleges, and universities, especially those attended by these young people: Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Marist College, Slippery Rock University, and the University of Dayton, that they may be lively places

for sound learning, new discovery, and the pursuit of wisdom.

Bless these students as they embark on the educational journey before them.

Grant them wisdom in the decisions they make,

faith in your abiding presence,

and strength and courage as they continue to explore the opportunities before them.

Help them to study diligently and to grow in all that is good.

Grant that those who teach and those who learn

may find you to be the source of all faith, hope, love, and truth,

and may they live to the praise of your glory both now and forever.

Amen.

*SENDING SONG Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me (ELW 767)



*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 to love and serve the Lord

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Today's altar flowers are in dedication to the glory of God by Cindy and Dave Knauff.

Assisting in worship today:

Assisting Minister: Jonathan Ciora

Acolyte:

Young Reader:

Usher:

Greeters: Missy Kramer

Offering:

Attendance Last Week: 45 + 3 zoom

Notes for the day's texts:

Elijah finds the presence of God not in earthquake, wind, or fire, but in the sound of sheer silence. When the disciples face a great storm on the sea, they cry out with fear. The wind blows us powerfully, frighteningly, making even familiar places seem strange, stirring up the water to obscure our vision and make our journey fearful and slow. Jesus says: "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." In a world filled with noise and empty words, God comes to us as stillness and silence, even to the point that wind ceases (Matt. 14:32). Today Jesus comes to us in our drowning panic, responding to our "Lord, save me" with a quick response. The little faith of Peter (and our little faith) is not only a chiding to "do better" in our faith lives and respond with discipline, but it offers forgiveness: even when we risk and screw up anyway,

God's hand is there to reach out and catch us.

Jesus walked out upon the water and helped Peter in his fear to return to the boat's safety and security. Jesus gives powerful reassurance and the gift of presence. God is not distant from our fears, but close to keep us safe. In comforting words of scripture and in the refreshing bread and cup of the eucharist, God grants us peace and sends us forth to be a sign of God's presence to others.

Today's Music

When Peace Like a River. Text: Horatio G. Spafford, 1828-1888, Music: Philip P. Bliss, 1838-1876. Public Domain. Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me. Text: Edward Hopper, 1818-1888, Music: John Edgar Gould, 1822-1875. Public Domain. What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine. Text: Elisha A. Hoffman, 1839-1929, Music: Anthony J. Showalter, 1858-1924. Public Domain / Augsburg Fortress.

Now the Silence. Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1919-2008, Music: Carl F. Schalk, 1929-2021. Hope Publishing Company (ASCAP). In the Singing. Text: Shirley Erena Murray, b. 1931, Music: Carlton R. Young, b. 1926. Hope Publishing Company (ASCAP). Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me. Text: Julie von Hausmann, 1825-1901; tr. Lutheran Book of Worship, Music: Friedrich Silcher, 1789-1860. Augsburg Fortress / Public Domain.

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Next Week's Readings

Isiah 56:1, 6-8 A house of prayer for all peoples Psalm 67 Let all the peoples praise you, O God Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32 God's mercy to all, Jew and Gentile Matthew 15:[10-20] 21-28 The healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter