

"... Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's."

~Matthew 22:21

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church 21st Sunday after Pentecost – October 22, 2023

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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. 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.

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 (gluten free wafers are available), 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 and ANNOUNCEMENTS

*GATHERING SONG Lift Every Voice and Sing (ELW 841)



*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Let us pray: 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





*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 45:1-7

A reading from Isaiah.

¹Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped

to subdue nations before him and strip kings of their robes,

to open doors before him—and the gates shall not be closed:

²I will go before you and level the mountains,

I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron,

³I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places,

so that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name.

⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen,

I call you by your name,

I surname you, though you do not know me.

⁵I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides me there is no god.

I arm you, though you do not know me,

⁶so that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other.

⁷I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe; I the LORD do all these things.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 96:1-13

- ¹Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.
- ²Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.
- ³Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.
- ⁴For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods.
- ⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.
- ⁶Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.
- ⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD honor and power.
- ⁸Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.
- ⁹Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the earth.
- ¹⁰Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king! The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity."
- ¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
 - let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.
- ¹²Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD, for you come to judge the earth.
- ¹³You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

A reading from 1 Thessalonians.

¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



*GOSPEL READING: Matthew 22:15-22

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" ²¹They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." ²²When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON





*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*

Faithful God, your Spirit enlivens the church in the world and binds all believers into the body of Christ. Equip us for the work of faith and give us hearts for the labor of love. God of grace, hear our prayer.

Creating God, the sea roars, the earth rejoices, and the heavens are glad at the wonder of all you have made. Bless the work of ecologists and conservationists and all those who safeguard the riches of creation. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Sovereign God, your rule and authority is over the cosmos. As you once worked through the ruler Cyrus for the good of your people, accomplish your purposes through the work of elected leaders and public servants. Guide them with your wisdom and compassion. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Caring God, your arms enfold all who are lonely, oppressed, despairing, sick, and suffering 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. Pour out your abundant mercy on all whom this world has neglected, abandoned, and forgotten, so that they may know your joy. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Almighty God, all our life belongs to you. When earthly idols threaten to lead your church astray, remind us that you alone are the source of our eternal hope. Direct the work of church treasurers, councils, and all who manage financial matters. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Everlasting God, the saints of every age have sung your praise and shared your word. We give you thanks for their witness and pray that we may join them as citizens of your unending kingdom. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Gracious God, remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of 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

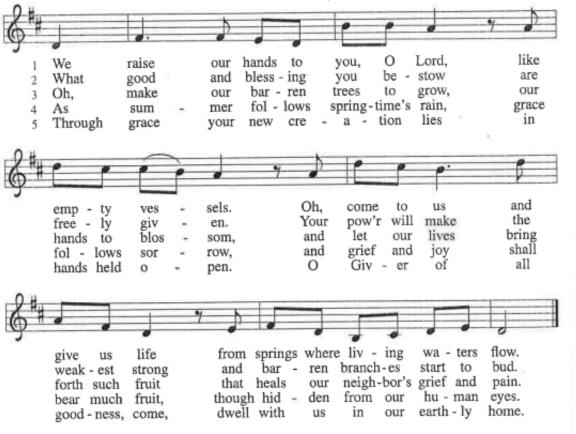
The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Let us share Christ's peace with one another.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN We Raise Our Hands to You, O Lord (ELW 690) rise on 5th vs.



*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.

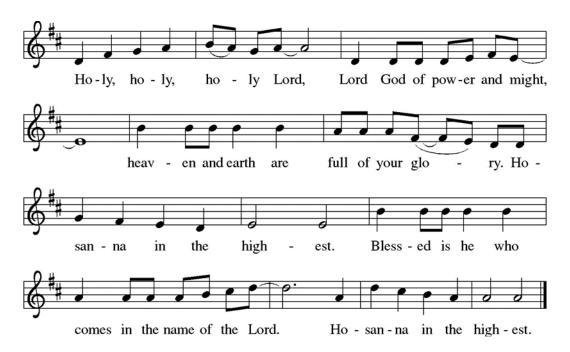
Lift up your hearts.

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

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

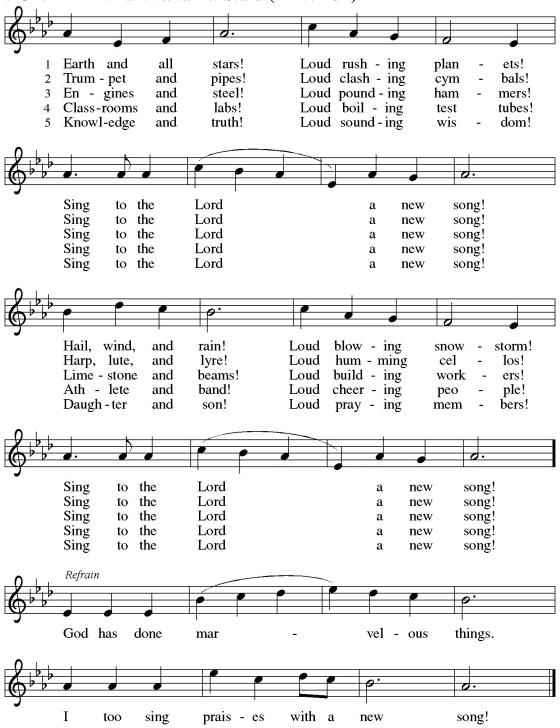
DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

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 Earth and All Stars (ELW 731)



*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.

*SENDING SONG God of Grace and God of Glory (ELW 705)



*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. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

The flowers on the altar today are from Kim and Reed Richards in honor of their 20th Anniversary and in celebration of all October birthdays and anniversaries.

Assisting in worship today:

Assisting Minister: Denise Hager

Acolyte: Ava N

Young Reader: Carissa M

Usher: Greeters:

Offering: Anna K and Nathan K

Notes for the day's texts:

Say the word stewardship in some congregations and people are protectively guarding their wallets faster than you can say "pledge card!" Unfortunately, too often we associate stewardship exclusively with issues of money. The good news is that God has little interest in our wallets. God wants our whole lives, wallets and all! Nevertheless, this week is prime time for stewardship campaigns in congregations around the country. The stewardship theme is reflected in our announcements, our prayers, our songs, and our readings. Today's gospel provides an ideal time to reflect on stewardship of all sorts—time, talent, and financial treasures.

The Pharisees approach Jesus in a thinly veiled attempt to trap him on issues of financial obligations to the Roman government. Their question of Jesus, simplified to the extreme, is "who gets your wallet?" If Jesus answered one way, he would be guilty of treason. If he answered the other way, he would have been considered guilty of heresy in the eyes of the religious leaders. Jesus responds by issuing a challenge of his own—give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and give to God what belongs to God. This statement challenges us to ponder: if God created the world and everything in it, what doesn't belong to God? God wants a whole lot more than just your wallet. God wants your life, wallet and all!

Today's Music

Lift Every Voice and Sing. Text: James W. Johnson, 1871-1938, Music: J. Rosamond Johnson, 1873-1954. Public Domain. God Is Here. Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000, Music: Cyril V. Taylor, 1907–1991. Hope Publishing Company (ASCAP). We Raise Our Hands to You, O Lord. Text: Svein Ellingsen, b. 1929; tr. Hedwig T. Durnbaugh, b. 1929, Music: Trond Kverno, b. 1945. Augsburg Fortress / Norsk Musikforlag.

Earth and All Stars. Text: Herbert F. Brokering, 1926-2009, Music: David N. Johnson, 1922-1987. Augsburg Fortress. God of Grace and God of Glory. Text: Harry E. Fosdick, 1878-1969, Music: John Hughes, 1873-1932. Public Domain. Liturgy words and music taken from SundaysandSeasons.com Copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

Next Week's Readings

Jeremiah 31:31-34 I will write my law in their hearts, says the Lord
Psalm 46 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold
Romans 3:19-28 Justified by God's grace as a gift
John 8:31-36 Jesus says, Continue in my word and you will know the truth