



*“They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.”*

*Mark 7: 32-34*

**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**16<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – September 8, 2024**  
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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! You are welcome here 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. Please join in the congregational responses, noted in **bold**. Throughout the service, you may stand or sit as is comfortable for you. At the time of **Offering**, you are invited to share a gift. 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 receive the elements. 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 receive 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 we prepare ourselves for worship, you are invited to help prepare our space for worship. Help to gather items together and prepare for our service activity.*

## **PRELUDE and ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **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**

### **AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM**

Let us pray. Merciful God, we thank you that you have made us your own by water and the Word in baptism. You have called us to yourself, enlightened us with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished us in the community of faith. Uphold us in the gifts and promises of baptism, and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth. We ask this in the name of Christ.

**Amen.**

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church. Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God? **We renounce them.**

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God? **We renounce them.**

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God? **We renounce them.**

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**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.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

You have made profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:

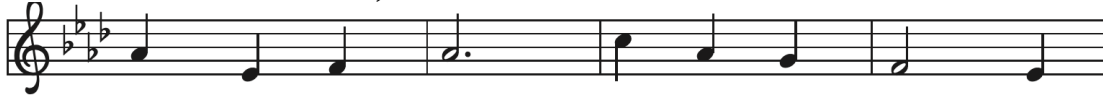
to live among God's faithful people,  
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,  
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ  
through word and deed,  
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,  
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

**We do, and We ask God to help and guide us.**

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in us the gifts of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, and the spirit of joy in your presence. Grant that we may use them to bear witness to Christ in lives that are built on faith and love. Make us ready to live the gospel and eager to do your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

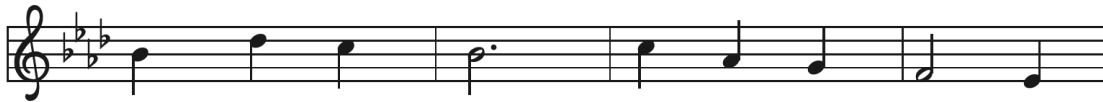
## GATHERING SONG *God's Work, Our Hands*



1 God's work, our hands: work - ing to - geth - er,  
 2 God's work, our feet: trav - 'ling to - geth - er,  
 3 God's work, our voice: sing - ing to - geth - er,  
 4 God is at work in and a - round us:



build - ing a fu - ture, re - pair - ing the world,  
 fol - low - ing Je - sus to plac - es un - known,  
 prais - ing, pro - claim - ing to all who will hear,  
 seed - lings are sprout - ing and bread's on the rise!



rais - ing up homes, plant - ing new gar - dens,  
 walk - ing as friends, march - ing for free - dom,  
 pray - ing for peace, shout - ing for jus - tice,  
 Washed and set free, hum - bled and hon - ored,



feed - ing the hun - gry and shelt - 'ring the cold.  
 run - ning the race with God's fu - ture the goal.  
 claim - ing God's love for the lost and the least.  
 gift - ed by grace, we re - spond in God's love.



Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,  
 Bless, God, our feet as we fol - low your way,  
 Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,  
 Bless, God, our lives as we an - swer your call,



shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.  
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.  
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.  
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.

## **SCRIPTURE READING: James 2:1-17**

A reading from James.

<sup>1</sup>My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? <sup>2</sup>For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, <sup>3</sup>and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," <sup>4</sup>have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? <sup>5</sup>Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? <sup>6</sup>But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? <sup>7</sup>Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

<sup>8</sup>You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>9</sup>But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. <sup>10</sup>For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. <sup>11</sup>For the one who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. <sup>12</sup>So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. <sup>13</sup>For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

<sup>14</sup>What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? <sup>15</sup>If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, <sup>16</sup>and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? <sup>17</sup>So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

## **GOSPEL READING: Mark 7:24-37**

The holy gospel according to Mark.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>24</sup>[Jesus] set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice,<sup>25</sup> but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. <sup>26</sup>Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. <sup>27</sup>He said to her, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” <sup>28</sup>But she answered him, “Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” <sup>29</sup>Then he said to her, “For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.” <sup>30</sup>So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

<sup>31</sup>Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. <sup>32</sup>They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. <sup>33</sup>He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. <sup>34</sup>Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” <sup>35</sup>And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. <sup>36</sup>Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. <sup>37</sup>They were astounded beyond measure, saying, “He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Trusting God at work in and among us, we raise our hearts and voices in prayer for the needs of the world. *A brief silence for reflection*

For your work in the church, we give thanks. Plant and tend relationships among faith communities, both ecumenical and interfaith, that in faithful listening, speech, and action, our hands work to bear fruit for the sake of all in need. For your work in our neighborhoods, towns and cities, we give thanks. Guide our common life together so that children, youth and adults of all ages flourish. Teach us to listen attentively to our neighbors, that any new endeavors consider those who may be left out or underserved. God of wisdom, we pray,  
**hear us when we call.**

For your work in creation, we give thanks. Sustain peoples and places affected by climate change, ecological devastation and natural disasters. Prosper the work of creation-care ministries, that our hands work to lovingly care for the earth. For your work among the nations, we give thanks. Direct leaders in paths of honest service, that both their words and actions are carried out on behalf of those whom they serve. God of life, we pray,  
**hear us when we call.**

For your work in places of need, we give thanks. Sustain all who are wearied by unemployment or lack of adequate food or housing, that we advocate for relief and just policy. Bring healing to all who are sick through the skillful hands and compassionate hearts of physicians, nurses, therapists and caregivers. Bring wholeness to those who suffer in any way, 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. God of restoration, we pray,  
**hear us when we call.**

For your work in this worshiping community, we give thanks. Bless the service project of this day and throughout the year. Foster deeper connections among those who serve and a spirit of accompaniment as we work alongside those in our community. Strengthen our faith, that we trust God moving in and among us. God of love, we pray,  
**hear us when we call.**

Receive these and all our prayers, gracious God. We pray in the name of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## REFLECTION

### OFFERING and PREPARATION OF SERVICE

We are called to proclaim the good news:

**God is at work!**

This good news is not left in some history long ago or a place far away:

**God is at work in the world still today!**

In us and through us, God is glorified in our work. When we offer a helping hand, God is praised. When we share of our abundance, God is known in the world.

**God is at work in us!**

In our service today and in our daily lives, let us live out what God has called us to in baptism.

**God is at work through our hands!**

### OFFERTORY HYMN *God, Bless the Hands* (ACS 1022)



1 God, bless the hands stretched out in love through floods be - low and  
2 Bring com - fort to the hearts that mourn, left bro - ken, emp - tied  
3 O God, our strength and ref - uge sure, our hope while storms of



storms a - bove; they search and res - cue, com - fort, calm, give  
by the storm. Give hope to those in deep - est grief; em -  
life en - dure: teach us to live in har - mo - ny with



shel - ter, of - fer heal - ing balm. Oh, guard them by your  
pow - er us to bring re - lief. To you, O God, we  
earth and riv - er, sky and sea, pre - serv - ing wa - ters,



stead - fast hand; reach out in love to help us stand.  
raise our hands. Save us, we pray, from sink - ing sands.  
air, and lands as ho - ly work for hu - man hands.

### OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. **Holy God, giver of all good things, receive the gifts we bring, fruit of the earth and the work of human hands, that they may be used to your purposes for life and love in the world. Amen.**

### INVITATION TO SERVICE

“But be doers of the word and not merely hearers.” *James 1:22a*



## **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.**

Honor, praise, glory and thanksgiving to you, God, our loving Creator.

In the beginning you reached your hands into the earth and formed humanity in your own image. You breathed into us your own breath of love and gave us hearts and hands and voices to live your loving purpose in the world.

Throughout the history of your people, you never abandoned us, but brought us into community with one another and with you, and guided us through your prophets. With endless patience and love, you called to us time and again to return to life with you.

In the fulfillment of all things, you came to us in Jesus, born into a human family, raised in a hometown, who gathered around himself a community formed by your love, and yearned to gather all people under the loving wings of a mother hen.

Sitting at dinner with friends and knowing one among them would break the bonds of love, 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.

In the same way 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 sins. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Trusting in his promise to be among us whenever we gather in his name, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

Send your Spirit upon this meal, the body and blood of Jesus, that we overflow with your selfless love. Turn us to face our neighbors, that by us and through us your love may be known in the world.

All honor and praise and glory to you, God of creative, dirty hands, God of holy, wounded hands, God who strengthens and guides our hands, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us 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!

### **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 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 receive a blessing.*

*Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available upon request.*

### **COMMUNION SONG *Lamb of God***

The image shows the musical notation for the Communion Song 'Lamb of God'. It consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is written on a treble clef. The lyrics are: 'Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.' The music features several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above a bracket) over the words 'a-way' and 'mer-cy'.

## COMMUNION HYMN *By Your Hand You Feed Your People* (ELW 469)



- 1 By your hand you feed your peo - ple, food of an - gels, heav-en's bread.
- 2 In this meal we taste your sweet-ness, bread for hun - ger, wine of peace.
- 3 Send us now with faith and cour - age to the hun - gry, lost, be - reaved.



For these gifts we did not la - bor, by your grace have we been fed:  
Ho - ly word and ho - ly wis - dom sat - is - fy our deep - est needs.  
In our liv - ing and our dy - ing, we be - come what we re - ceive:



Christ's own bod - y, blessed and bro - ken, cup o'er - flow - ing, life out - poured,



giv - en as a liv - ing to - ken of your world re - deemed, re - stored.

## COMMUNION HYMN *LET US BREAK BREAD TOGETHER* (ELW 471)



- 1 Let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees;
- 2 Let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees;
- 3 Let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees;



let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees.  
let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees.  
let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees.



When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing



sun, O Lord, have mer - cy on me.

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

Holy Jesus, in this meal you have fed and nourished us to work in your beloved world. Send us now, filled with yourself and strengthened by your Spirit to live your love for others. **Amen.**

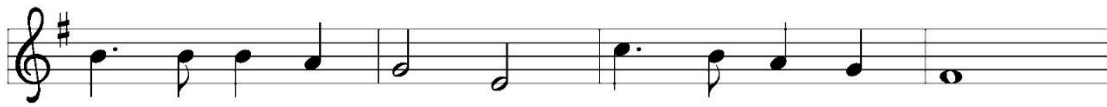
## BLESSING OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SPACE AND LEADERS

### BENEDICTION

God who sets forth the law of love, Jesus who fulfills the law for you,  
and the Spirit through whom you are called to love, + bless you this day,  
that you may be God's hands and heart and voice at work in the world.

**Amen.**

### SENDING SONG *On Our Way Rejoicing* (ELW 537)



1 On our way re - joic - ing glad - ly let us go.  
2 Un - to God the Fa - ther joy - ful songs we sing;



Christ our Lord has con - quered; van - quished is the foe.  
un - to God the Sav - ior thank - ful hearts we bring;



Christ with - out, our safe - ty; Christ with - in, our joy;  
un - to God the Spir - it bow we and a - dore,



who, if we be faith - ful, can our hope de - stroy?  
on our way re - joic - ing now and ev - er - more.

*Refrain*



On our way re - joic - ing; as we for - ward move,



hear - ken to our prais - es, O blest God of love!

## **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**

*As you leave, you are invited to help move the kits to the basement as we prepare to send them to those in need.*

**Today's altar flowers are in gratitude for beautiful September days  
by Dave and Cindy Knauff.**

**Assisting in worship today:**

**Assisting Minister: Keith C**

**Acolyte: Abby C**

**Usher:**

**Greeters:**

**Offering: Luca K and Eva K**

**Notes for the day's texts:**

Again and again throughout biblical history, God is partial to caring for the poor, the weak, and the outcast. Which is why, perhaps, Jesus' response to the Syrophenician woman takes us by surprise: "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs" (Mark 7:27).

The Syrophenician woman acts in faith. She engages Jesus with what she believes to be true about him: that through him God's mercy will extend even to her. Despite the distinctions that separate them (including race, gender, and religion), she believes Jesus is a Savior who has the power to heal all people and that she, although not a Jew, is a member of the household of God.

The second reading, from James, reminds hearers then and now that the Christian community's actions are to be shaped by God's partiality. God has chosen the poor to be rich in faith. While the world values the rich, the poor are God's own treasure, made honored guests and royal heirs through baptism. The community is called to a partiality based on God's values, not the world's.

Like streams breaking forth in the desert, the waters of baptism surprise us with mercy in unexpected places. Baptized into Christ's death and resurrection, the Spirit fills us with faith—a faith active in showing mercy that knows no limits.

**Today's Music**

*God's Work, Our Hands.* Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954, Music: David N. Johnson, 1922–1987. Augsburg Fortress.

*God, Bless the Hands.* Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950, Music: John B. Dykes, 1823–1876. GIA Publications, Inc.

*By Your Hand You Feed Your People.* Text: Susan R. Briehl, b. 1952, Music: Marty Haugen, b. 1950. GIA Publications, Inc.

*Let Us Break Bread Together.* Text: African American spiritual, Music: African American spiritual. Public Domain.

*On Our Way Rejoicing.* Text: John S. B. Monsell, 1811–1875, alt., Music: Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879. Public Domain.

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**Next Week's Readings**

Isaiah 50:5-9a *The servant is vindicated by God*

Psalms 116:1-9 *I will walk in the presence of the Lord*

James 3:1-12 *Dangers of the unbridled tongue*

Mark 8:27-38 *Peter's confession of faith*