

St. John and Bethesda Lutheran Churches

17th Sunday after Pentecost

ELW Service of the Word Setting Ten

Sunday, September 27, 2020

Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

GATHERING

WELCOME

*Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting. Psalm 25:6*

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, the fountain of living water,
the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,
we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God,

**for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters
and by your Word you created the world,
calling forth life in which you took delight.**

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.

Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.

At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

**By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons,
making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.**

**We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,
and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.**

Shower us with your Spirit,

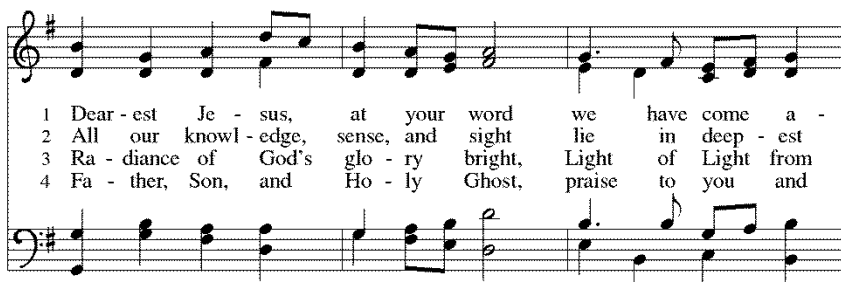
and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

**To you be given honor and praise
through Jesus Christ our Lord**

in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG *Dearest Jesus, at Your Word* (ELW 520)



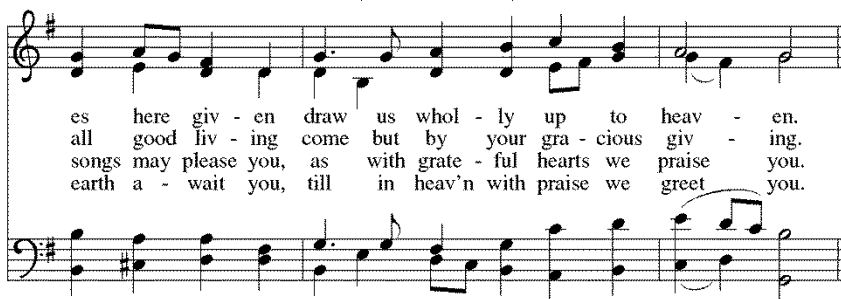
1 Dear - est Je - sus, at your word we have come a -
2 All our knowl - edge, sense, and sight lie in deep - est
3 Ra - dianc - e of God's glo - ry bright, Light of Light from
4 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost, praise to you and



gain to hear you; let our thoughts and hearts be stirred
dark - ness shroud - ed till your Spir - it breaks the night,
God pro - ceed - ing, Je - sus, send your bless - ed light;
ad - o - ra - tion! Grant us what we need the most:



and in glow - ing faith be near you as the prom - is -
fill - ing us with light un - cloud - ed. All good thoughts and
help our hear - ing, speak - ing, heed - ing, that our prayers and
all your gos - pel's con - so - la - tion while we here on



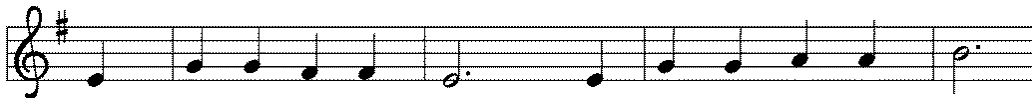
es here giv - en draw us whol - ly up to heav - en.
all good liv - ing come but by your gra - cious giv - ing.
songs may please you, as with grate - ful hearts we praise you.
earth a - wait you, till in heav'n with praise we greet you.

GREETING

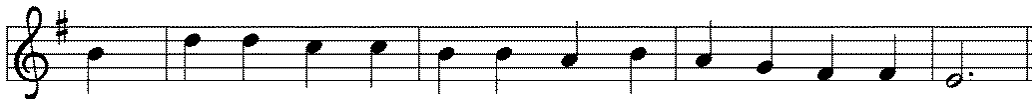
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE



- 1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
- 2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
- 3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

CANTICLE OF PRAISE



- 1 Come, let us join our cheer - ful songs with an - gels round the throne;
- 2 "Wor - thy the Lamb that died," they cry, "to be ex - alt - ed thus!"
- 3 Je - sus is wor - thy to re - ceive hon - or and pow'r di - vine;
- 4 Let all cre - a - tion join in one to bless the sa - cred name



ten thou - sand thou - sand are their tongues, but all their joys are one.
"Wor - thy the Lamb," our lips re - ply, "for he was slain for us!"
and bless - ings, more than we can give, be, Lord, for - ev - er thine.
of God who sits up - on the throne, and to a - dore the Lamb.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. God of love, giver of life, **you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

WORD

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

¹The word of the LORD came to me: ²What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? ³**As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel.** ⁴**Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.**

²⁵Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³²**For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.**

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 25:1-9

¹To you, O LORD,
I lift up my soul.

²**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

³Let none who look to you be put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

⁴**Show me your ways, O LORD,
and teach me your paths.**

⁵Lead me in your truth and teach me,

for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all | the day long.

⁶**Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.**

⁷Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.

⁸**You are gracious and upright, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

⁹You lead the lowly in justice
and teach the lowly your way.

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1-13

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

¹If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: **be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.** ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, **but in humility regard others as better than yourselves.** ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, **but to the interests of others.** ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,

⁷**but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.**

And being found in human form,

⁸he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,

¹⁰**so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,**

¹¹and every tongue should confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;
¹³**for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.**

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

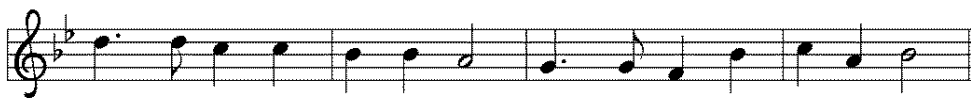
GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

²³When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, **“By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?”** ²⁴Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘**From heaven,**’ he will say to us, ‘**Why then did you not believe him?**’ ²⁶But if we say, ‘**Of human origin,**’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷So they answered Jesus, **“We do not know.”** And he said to

them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “**The first.**” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

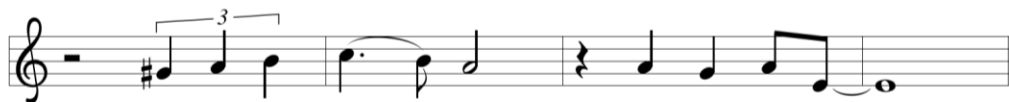
HYMN OF THE DAY *Change My Heart, O God* (ELW 801)



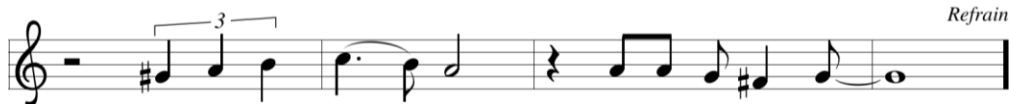
Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.



Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.



You are the pot - ter; I am the clay.



Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

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

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

In all the world, give your church unity. Inspire all the baptized with the mind of Christ. Where the church is powerful and where it struggles, shape us with humility and obedience so that your love may be at work in us. Bless Presley Jean and her parents and fill their home with love and faith. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Your Son took on all of bodily life in our world, even to death. Preserve and keep your creation, O God. Mend and redeem places that are polluted and damaged, so that all of creation confesses you as Lord. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Turn the nations toward life. Where our ways are unfair, give us new hearts and new spirits. Where sin permeates our cultures and institutions, change our minds and teach us to trust your authority. Give us the courage to listen beyond what we want to hear as we discern the people we need to lead our country. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Our lives are yours, O God. Relieve the suffering of those who are ill in body, mind, or spirit. Defend the lives and welfare of children who are abused or neglected, hungry or exploited, bullied or lonely. Provide quality and compassionate care amidst very complex challenges at the local Nursing Homes. Today we bring before you our sisters and

brothers *at* Bethesda: Lisa Johnson, Lenyce Lawrence, Wes Moffatt, Gary and Diane Kalskett and *at* St. John: Audrey Androy, Davie Vander Kolk, Grant Gorham, Jim Berka, Jane and Dennis Schrauth (Susie Schultz's sister and brother-in-law), Pat DeLong (Morgan Wadsworth's friend), Vince Motto (Pastor Chip's cousin) and Pam Odland (Morgan Wadsworth's aunt) and those we name in our hearts. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Turn this congregation away from our own interests toward the interests of others. Fill us with your compassion and sympathy. Bless ministries of care in our community, make us into signs of your mercy and justice for our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Thank you for those who have gone into the kingdom ahead of us—tax collectors and prostitutes, likely and unlikely, obedient and slow to learn. By their witness, teach us to confess Jesus Christ as Lord in life and in death. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

RESPONSE

OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God of all creation, **all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,**

**your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.**

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

SENDING SONG *Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises* (ELW 535)

Refrain – sung twice each time

Ha - le - lu - ya! Pe - lo tsa ro - na, di tha -
Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your prais - es, all our

bi - le ka - o - fe - la. Ha - le - lu - ya! Pe - lo tsa
hearts are filled with glad - ness. Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your

ro - na, di tha - bi - le ka - o - fe - la.
prais - es, all our hearts are filled with glad - ness.

End

1 Christ the Lord to us said: I am wine, I am bread,
 2 Now he sends us all out, strong in faith, free of doubt,

Repeat stanza, then sing refrain

I am wine, I am bread, give to all who thirst and hun - ger.
 strong in faith, free of doubt. Tell to all the joy - ful gos - pel.

Text: South African; tr. *Freedom Is Coming*, 1984
 Music: HALELUYA! PELO TSA RONA, South African; arr. *Freedom Is Coming*
 English text and arr. © 1984 Utryck, admin. Walton Music Corp.

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DISMISSAL

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood,
 and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father,
 to him be glory and power for ever and ever! (*Revelation 1:5b-6*)

Amen.

I Believe in You

Today's gospel questions what it means to believe in something. Belief can be exhibited by actions or in words, but true belief is displayed when the two contradict each other. We may say we do not believe in monsters under our bed. However, if upon hearing a noise underneath us at night, we clutch the blanket a little tighter around us, do we still claim to not believe in monsters? Believing in something or someone does more than affect our mind. It influences our behavior. It informs our actions and changes our character.



Believing in Jesus is not a cognitive experience alone. If it were, we'd be like the second son who professes to do the will of the father, but doesn't. Rather, our actions are the mirrors of our belief, reflecting our faith outward. This is why worship is structured to rehearse our patterns of behavior for the world. In worship, we gather to practice accountability, interdependence, passing the peace, and turning toward God. Our faith shapes us to live in the world according to God's principles of justice, mercy, and kindness.

When we believe in something, we give authority to it, whether the belief is spoken or enacted. This is why the words "I believe in you" before a feat of courage are often so powerfully effective. Knowing that someone believes in you bestows authority and strength. It moves you from thought to action, making it possible to boldly live into whatever is believed of you.

God believes in you. This does not mean there is a divine being out there who merely believes that you exist. This is not a passive form of believing. God believes in you and gives you authority to live boldly as a disciple of Jesus. Just as Jesus' authority came from God, so does your authority to do what you have been sent to do. "You can do it," God encourages. "I believe in you!"

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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WELCOME

Welcome to Bethesda Lutheran & St. John Lutheran Churches.
We are glad you joined us for worship this morning.
Please join us for worship again soon!

This Week at St. John

Today 10:30 AM – Worship
Wed. Pastor's at St. John
Thurs. Pastor's at Bethesda
Sun. 10:30 AM – Worship

THANKS TO THOSE WHO HELPED WITH THE SERVICE THIS MORNING

Greeters:
Ushers:
Reader: Helen Miller
Acolyte:
Organist: Damon Hopkins

Next Sunday, 10:30 AM, October 4, 2020



Greeters:
Ushers:
Readers:
Acolyte:
Organist: Damon Hopkins

Attendance & Offering

Sept. 20th Attendance 20
Envelope offering \$0.00
Loose offering \$0.00

In order to meet the proposed budget for the church year, we need a weekly offering of approximately \$1600. Thanks.

Birthdays This Week

 **Today (9/27)** Jason Bendgen
 **Sat (10/3)** Ron Holst

THIS WEEK AT BETHESDA

Today 8:45 AM – Worship with Communion
Wednesday Pastor @ St. John
Thursday Pastor @ Bethesda
Sunday 8:45 AM – Worship

THANKS TO THOSE WHO HELPED WITH THE SERVICE THIS MORNING

Reader
Sharon Lee

Organist
Deb Lauritsen

NEXT SUNDAY (OCTOBER 4, 2020)

Reader
Sheila Lindsey

Organist
Deb Lauritsen

Worship Leader
Russell Stanislav

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

Sunday 9/27 Neal Hutzell

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**St. John is holding their Fall Dinner Drive Through
Sunday, October 11
11am – 1pm
BETHESDA WORSHIP WILL BE AT 10:30 THAT DAY**

Our Long-Term Prayers

Each week we lift up each other in prayer. Sometimes the need for prayer continues for extended periods of time. As a church family, we care about those long-term needs. Please continue to keep these individuals and families in your prayers as they deal with long term illnesses and life changes. Also, please Pastor Chip and the office updated so the congregation knows when extra prayers are needed.

- ✝ Audrey Gorham
- ✝ Sam and Diane Jacobs
- ✝ Russ Miller (Leonard and Helen Miller's nephew)
- ✝ Joel Berka
- ✝ Tate Manahl (Morgan and Kyle's nephew)
- ✝ Arlene Eisermann (Ron Holst's Sister)
- ✝ Cheryl Rath (Tom Heistand's sister)
- ✝ Vince Motto (Pastor Chip's Cousin)
- ✝ Inga Hansen
- ✝ Lisa Johnson
- ✝ Lenyce Lawrence
- ✝ Wes Moffatt
- ✝ Gary and Diane Kalskett
- ✝ **Grant Gorham address:**

Grant Gorham
3333 Burnet Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45229-3026

Grant has been hospitalized.
Your prayers are especially needed at this time.