

Bethesda and St. John Lutheran Churches

23rd Sunday after Pentecost

ELW Setting Ten Service of the Word

Sunday, November 8, 2020

Today the prophet Amos calls for justice to roll down like waters. Paul urges us to encourage one another with the promised coming of the Lord. Jesus tells the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids. Surrounded by the faithful of every time and place, we celebrate Christ's coming in our midst in the word of life and the feast of victory—the marriage feast of the lamb.

GATHERING

WELCOME

You are my helper and my deliverer; O LORD, do not tarry. (*Psalm 70:5*)

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.

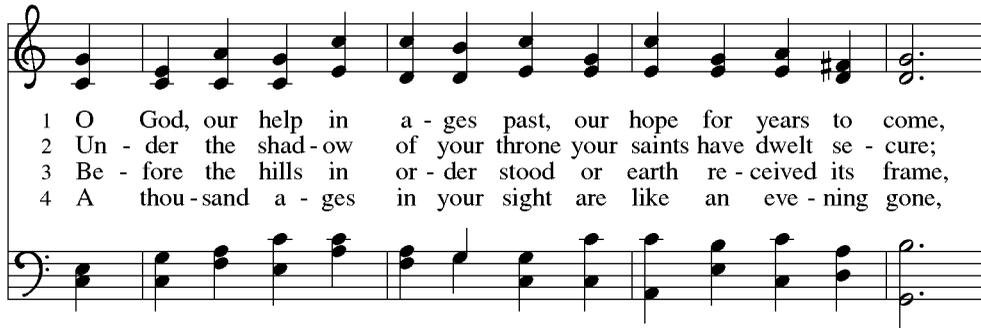
**Shower us with your Spirit,
and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.**

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 *O God, Our Help in Ages Past* (ELW 632)



1 O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,
2 Un - der the shad - ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se - cure;
3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood or earth re - ceived its frame,
4 A thou - sand a - ges in your sight are like an eve - ning gone,



our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:
suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.
from ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same.
short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
bears all our years away;
we fly forgotten, as a dream
dies at the op'ning day.

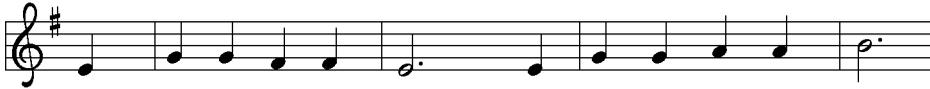
6 O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
still be our guard while troubles last
and our eternal home!

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 (ELW p. 203)



- 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!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O God of justice and love, **you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

WORD

FIRST READING: Amos 5:18-24

In the days of Amos, people thought that the day of the LORD would be a time of great victory, but Amos announced that it would be a day of darkness, not light. He said liturgy is no substitute for obedience. The LORD demands justice and righteousness in the community.

¹⁸Alas for you who desire the day of the LORD!

Why do you want the day of the LORD?

It is darkness, not light;

¹⁹as if someone fled from a lion,

and was met by a bear;

or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall,

and was bitten by a snake.

²⁰Is not the day of the LORD darkness, not light,

and gloom with no brightness in it?

²¹**I hate, I despise your festivals,**

and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

²²Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,

I will not accept them;

and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals

I will not look upon.

²³Take away from me the noise of your songs;
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.

²⁴**But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.**

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 70

Be pleased, O God, to deliver me;

O Lord, make haste to help me.

Let those who seek my life be put to shame and confounded;

let those who take pleasure in my misfortune draw back and be disgraced.

Let those who say to me “Aha!” and gloat over me
turn back because of their shame.

Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;

let those who love your salvation say forever, “Great is the Lord!”

But as for me, I am poor and needy; come to me quickly, O God.

You are my helper and my deliverer; O Lord, do not tarry.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Some of the Thessalonians are worried that dead Christians will be excluded from the resurrection to eternal life when Christ comes again. Paul reassures them with the word of hope that all Christians, living or dead, will be raised into everlasting life with Christ.

¹³We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴**For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died.** ¹⁵For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. ¹⁶For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel’s call and with the sound of God’s trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸**Therefore encourage one another with these words.**

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 25:1-13

Jesus tells a parable about his own second coming, emphasizing the need for readiness at all times.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. **Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.** When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ **But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’** And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ **Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.’”**

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *Thy Word*

Refrain

F C⁷ F B^b C⁷ F B^b F

Thy word is a lamp un-to my feet and a light un-to my path.

C⁷ Gm Dm Am

1 When I feel a - fraid, think I've lost my way,
2 I will not for - get your love for me and yet my

B^b C⁷ B^b/F F C⁷ Gm

still you're there right be - side me, and noth - ing will I fear as
heart for - ev - er is wan - der - ing. Je - sus, be my guide and

Dm Am B^b C⁷ Dm D A C⁷ *Refrain*

long as you are near. Please be near me to the end.
hold me to your side, and I will love you to the end.

Text: Amy Grant, b. 1960

Music: THY WORD, Michael W. Smith, b. 1957; ar. Keith Phillips, b. 1957

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RESPONSE

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.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

Thank you for your faithful and generous support of your congregation.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. **Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

Holy God, rouse us to deep praise as we gather for worship. Enliven our worship with sincere and heartfelt song. Sustain the work of all church musicians and artists who lead us in praise and prayer. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy Creator, surprise and delight us with the beauty of the world you have made. Bless the work of landscapers, architects, and artists whose work invites us into harmonious living with your creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy Judge, let justice roll down like waters over this world. Reign over the courtrooms of every land, in the hearts of those who guard the law and those who stand accused of crimes. Be present in cases where we long for both justice and mercy to prevail. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy Companion, console those who feel lonely or abandoned. Share the hours of those who live and eat alone. Comfort those who have few friends or who struggle with their identity and place in this world. We raise the names of our loved ones and ask for your healing touch. We pray especially for our sisters and brothers at *Bethesda*: Art Holverson, Lenyce Lawrence, Wes Moffatt, Gary and Diane Kalskett and at *St. John*: Jean Dommer, Audrey Androy, Davie Vander Kolk, Grant Gorham, Jim Berka, Pat DeLong, Vince Motto and Pam Odland and those we name in our hearts... Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy Protector, be with all observing Veterans Day. Guard the lives of active duty and retired military personnel. Comfort all who mourn those who have died in the line of duty. Heal the wounds, both physical and mental, experienced by service members. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy and Immortal One, we pray in thanksgiving for the lives of all who have died. Remind us of the frailty and shortness of our own lives and inspire us to use them for the building up of your kingdom. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever. **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

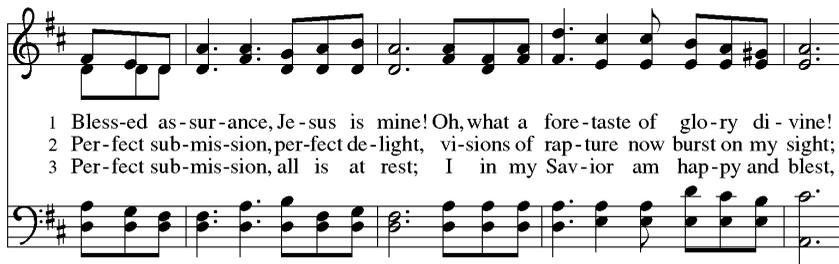
The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

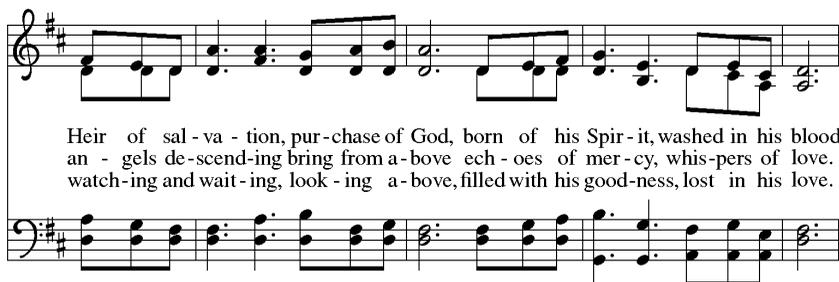
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING SONG *Blessed Assurance* (ELW 638)



1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal - va - tion, pur - chase of God, born of his Spir - it, washed in his blood.
an - gels de - scend - ing bring from a - bove ech - oes of mer - cy, whis - pers of love.
watch - ing and wait - ing, look - ing a - bove, filled with his good - ness, lost in his love.

Refrain



This is my sto - ry, this is my song, prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long:



this is my sto - ry, this is my song, prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

Invitation to Grace

The parable of the ten bridesmaids easily draws our attention to the differences in their levels of preparation. Some have enough oil to welcome the bridegroom; others do not. The ability of each bridesmaid to control her fate finds ready ears in a culture that favors independence and individual effort. Every day we see the consequences—good or bad—of our actions.



The early part of the parable speaks to a commonality among the bridesmaids. As they wait for the bridegroom, all of them become drowsy and fall asleep. Then comes the cry, “Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.” We might hear this as a command. We certainly have commands from God throughout Scripture. However, what if we heard the cry as an invitation?

God’s commands are a gift that invites us to live into the reality of the ever-present and ever-coming kingdom. God does not force or compel us to follow, to be obedient, or to love. It is always framed as an invitation. The psalmists invite us to praise God. God invites the people of Israel into covenantal relationship. Jesus invites all who are weary to come to him and find rest.

If the kingdom of heaven is close to us now, of course our actions will have consequences. Whether we choose to love or hate, share or hoard, work for peace or not—all of these choices impact the people around us. And yet, God’s command that we live into a way of love is not coercive, but rather an invitation to life.

In worship we gather around the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist. Neither is forced; neither is required. Both are invitations to experience what Augustine called visible signs of God’s invisible grace, a gift given for each and every one of us.

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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WELCOME

Welcome to St. John Lutheran Church.
We are glad you joined us for worship this morning! Visitors are asked to sign the guest book in the entry way.
Please join us again for worship 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

Reader: Jay Petersen
Organist: Damon Hopkins

Next Sunday, November 15, 2020

Readers: Carol Holst
Organist: Damon Hopkins

Attendance & Offering

Oct. 11th Attendance 16
Envelope offering \$525.00
Loose offering \$25.00

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

Birthdays This Week

 **Today** (11/8)..... Cody Berens
 **Mon** (11/9)..... Amanda LeFebvre

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
- ✝ Jane and Dennis Schrauth (Suzie Schutlz sister and brother in law)
- ✝ Arlene Eisermann (Ron Holst's Sister)
- ✝ Cheryl Rath (Tom Heistand's sister)
- ✝ Vince Motto (Pastor Chip's Cousin)
- ✝ **Grant Gorham address:**

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

Grant has been hospitalized.

Your prayers are especially needed at this time.

A person wearing a hat and a long coat is walking away from the viewer on a dirt path that stretches into the distance. The path is flanked by green fields. In the far distance, a bright, glowing cross is visible against a hazy, sunlit sky. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a lens flare effect that radiates across the scene. The overall atmosphere is one of hope and guidance.

**Your word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path.**

Psalm 119:105

*And the path of Life
is to be taken
One step at the time!*

*And not one step
the Lord does not know!*