

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
229 South Broad Street
Jersey Shore, PA 17740
570-398-1676

Sunday, October 1, 2023

18th Sunday after Pentecost



Children's Church will meet upstairs in the youth Sunday School room at end of the hallway at 9:30 a.m. Please take your child there before worship begins.

Introduction to the day

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.

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRELUDE

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be God, the one who forms us,

✠ Jesus who bears the cross,

the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

Amen.

Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Steadfast and faithful God,

you have revealed the ways of justice,

yet we fail to follow you.

We are overwhelmed

by the world's violence and suffering.

We are afraid to risk what we have

for the sake of others.

For the harm we have caused,

known and unknown, forgive us.

For the unjust demands we place on others

and your creation, forgive us.

For the ways we turn away

from you and our neighbor, forgive us.

**Lead us back to you
and set us on the right path;
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

Beloved in Christ,
God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.
God's compassion is beyond compare.
In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.
In † Christ, you are already and always forgiven. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG: *God Is Here* 526

GREETING

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

C: And also, with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE: *Jesus, Name Above All Names* (repeat twice)

**Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Savior, glorious Lord,
Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: 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.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

L: A reading from Ezekiel

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"? ³As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know 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? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

L Let us read the Psalm responsively by verse

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.

L: A reading from Philippians

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,

⁷but 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,
¹⁰so 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; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION p.142

Alleluia Lord to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, Alleluia.

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32

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.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON : *Actions Speak Louder than Words*

The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Oh, that the Lord Would Guide My Ways* 772

HOLY BAPTISM p.227 in the front of the hymnal

Eli Sumner Bowes, son of Todd and Casey Bowes

Levi Marshall Bowes, son of Lee Bowes and Danielle Duck

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

We put our trust in you as we pray for the church. Give bishops, pastors, deacons, and teachers the gifts of wisdom and discernment. Be with them in bold truth and faithful witness. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Lead us in your truth as we pray for creation. Empower us to look to the interests of others as we make choices that impact the environment. Summon us to be advocates for healthy waterways, habitats, and air. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Lead us in justice as we pray for those in government, the military, and other positions of authority (*local and national leaders may be named*). Give them humble and willing hearts, looking to the needs of others. We pray also for our enemies. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Trusting your goodness, we pray for all caregivers and people who are sick or suffering in any way (*especially*). Give them encouragement and consolation in your presence. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Teach us your paths as we pray for this congregation. Be at work in us and unite us in your love as we labor together for the sake of the gospel. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Creator God, we uplift the ministry of Lutheran World Federation who works together with Lutherans church bodies around the world to live out their vision of being liberated by God's grace and living and working together for justice and peace in a reconciled world. Grant them and each of us wisdom to help live that out. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: We give thanks for all the saints who died secure in the knowledge of salvation. Keep us fearless in our faith and certain of your resurrection. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

P: Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

CHOIR ANTHEM *Love is Surrender*

A TIME OF SILENT MEDITATION

The assembly stands.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: God of power, God of plenty, all things belong to you.

We bring your gifts to the table, that all might be fed.

Form us into the body of your Beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING P.144 *(in the beginning of the hymnal)*

Dialogue

Holy Holy Holy

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Words of Institution

THE LORD'S PRAYER P 145 *(in the beginning of the hymnal)*

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Jesus invites you to this table.

Come, eat and live.

COMMUNION

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and each person may respond **Amen.**

Communion Song *Lamb of God You Take Away p.146*

SONG AFTER COMMUNION *Jesus, Remember Me*

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word,
Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts.

Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet,
where none are left out and all are satisfied.

In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

SENDING SONG: *Savior, Again to Your Dear Name* 534

DISMISSAL P: Go in peace. God is at work in you.

C: Thanks be to God

Announcements

We welcome our visitors and ask that you sign a Visitor Attendance and Holy Communion Card that is located in the pew rack. We ask that cards be returned via the offering plate during the receiving of the offering. We practice “open Communion” here at St. John meaning that all who believe in the “real presence” of Christ are welcomed to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We offer two choices for Holy Communion, wine or grape juice. Those worshipers desiring grape juice are asked at the communion rail to place their right hand over their heart after receiving “The Body of Christ.”

Remember in prayer: Rowan Aldridge, Jim Allen, Christine and Dave Barner, Linda Caris, Agnes Cryder, Don & Helen Delaney, Mary Ellen Dougherty, Joanne Fisher, Dawn Fryer, Dina George, Barb Hoffman, Mick Miller, Bob Moriarity (Geisinger) Elsie Parks in Haven Place, Cora Pelletier, Shane Snyder, and all of our shut-ins.

We also remember in prayer Family Promise; Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton – ELCA; Bishop Craig A. Miller - USS; for our Companion Synods in Liberia and Ansbach-Wurzburg, Germany, and for peace in Ukraine.

We pray for the safety of our military troops around the world including Mark Baier, Isaac Boring, Jade Cordrey, Ben Cramer, Trevor and Nehemiah Eberhart, Patrick Hamlin, Paul Laidacker, Steven Moore, Maddison Myers, Tyler O’Neal, Adam Shaffer, Jeremy and Haley Naugle Sorrell, Richie Speicher, Aaron Stabley, Paul St. James, Kevin Titus, and Jenna White. We also lift up in prayer their families who strive to keep a normalcy in the family and continue on often with added stress.

Thanks to this weeks’ helpers: Lector –Kathy Brundick; Assisting Ministers—Ron Brundick, Ken Dougherty; Children’s Church – Molly Hollick; Head Usher –Shelby Rice; Teller –Deb Heydrich; Bulletin Sponsor – Sue Willits.

Next week’s helpers: Lector –Darlene Bilby; Assisting Ministers—Bill Ely and Ken Dougherty; Children’s Church –Pan Wehler; Head Usher –Shelby Rice; Teller –Deb Heydrich; Bulletin Sponsor – Sue Willits; Flowers-- Aucker.

The flowers are to the glory of God and in honor of Mary Ellen and Ken Dougherty’s birthday by the Yosts.

The Sanctuary Candle in October is in honor of family birthdays by Agnus Cryder.

The Lutheran Church Women’s Prayer Chain is a vital ministry of St. John Lutheran. Anyone in need of prayers is asked to contact any of the following persons:

Gloria Ely – 570-873-3597 Joyce Braucht - 570-398-2852

This bulletin and more can be found on our church website: www.stjl.org.

NURSERY We will be starting to man the nurse for families that need this service. We are in need of someone to man the nurse on the first and fifth Sundays of the month. The rest of the Sundays are taken. If you willing to work those Sundays, please contact Carol Yost 570-295-6335. Thank you!

Youth Group is meeting Sunday, October 15 after worship in the to go to Carpenter's farm for a hayride and to pick pumpkins. Come join us!

OCTOBER FELLOWSHIP TIME. Who wants to participate in the October 22 Chili cook off? Please talk to a council person. Cookers of Chili are needed!

2023 Lycoming County CROP Walk The annual CROP Walk to support world Hunger is coming soon. October 8, registration and walk begins at 1 pm in front of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 142 Market St, Williamsport. Walkers can walk 3, 6, or 9 miles on the River Walk. This is our 45th Walk, and to date, we raised over 1 million dollars to help stop hunger! Last year we raised almost \$9,000. 25% of that went to the New Love Center. Help us raise funds to support hunger needs here in our communities. More information can be found at www.crophungerwalk.org/williamsportpa

Seafarer's Bags are due November 1 (It's fast approaching!) The bags, list, and directions are on the table in the office. Our very own Pastor Martha McCracken was on the board of Seafarer's International and served as their president.

Calendar

Sunday, October 1, 2023 18th Sunday after Pentecost
8:30 A.M. Adult Sunday School
9:30 a.m. Worship Service with Children's Church
Monday, October 2, 2023 10:00 a.m. Bible Study
Tuesday, October 3, 2023 6:00 p.m. Council
Wednesday, October 4, 2023 6:30 Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, October 8, 2023 19th Sunday after Pentecost
8:30 A.M. Adult Sunday School
9:30 a.m. Worship Service with Children's Church
1:00 p.m. Blessing of the Animals
2:00 p.m. Catechism

