

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

Sunday, November 19, 2023

25th 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

Our readings during November speak of the end times. Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the LORD will be filled with wrath and distress. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread, and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRELUDE

GATHERING

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

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved.

Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy One,

we confess that we are not awake for you.

We are not faithful in using your gifts.

We forget the least of our siblings.

We do not see your beautiful image in one another.

**We are infected by sin
that divides your beloved community.**

**Open our hearts to your coming,
open our eyes to see you in our neighbor,
open our hands to serve your creation.**

Amen.

Beloved, we are God's children,
and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us.

Through † Jesus you are forgiven,

by Jesus you are welcome,
in Jesus you are called to rejoice!
Let us live in the promises prepared for us
from the foundation of the world.
Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light* 815

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: *O Christ Be Our Light* 715

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, 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 Zephaniah

FIRST READING: *Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18*

Zephaniah (like the prophet Amos in last week's first reading) presents the day of the LORD as one of judgment and wrath. Descriptions of the last day in the New Testament include details taken from Old Testament accounts of the day of the LORD.

⁷Be silent before the Lord GOD!

For the day of the LORD is at hand;
the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,
he has consecrated his guests.

¹²At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the people
who rest complacently on their dregs,
those who say in their hearts,
"The LORD will not do good,
nor will he do harm."

¹³Their wealth shall be plundered,
and their houses laid waste.
Though they build houses,
they shall not inhabit them;
though they plant vineyards,
they shall not drink wine from them.

¹⁴The great day of the LORD is near,
near and hastening fast;
the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter,
the warrior cries aloud there.

¹⁵That day will be a day of wrath,
a day of distress and anguish,
a day of ruin and devastation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness,
¹⁶a day of trumpet blast and battle cry
against the fortified cities
and against the lofty battlements.

¹⁷I will bring such distress upon people
that they shall walk like the blind;
because they have sinned against the LORD,
their blood shall be poured out like dust,
and their flesh like dung.

¹⁸Neither their silver nor their gold
will be able to save them
on the day of the LORD's wrath;
in the fire of his passion
the whole earth shall be consumed;
for a full, a terrible end
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

L Let us read the Psalm responsively by verse

Psalm: Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12

¹Lord, you have been our refuge
from one generation to another.

²**Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the earth were born,
from age to age you are God.**

³You turn us back to the dust and say,
"Turn back, O children of earth."

⁴**For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past
and like a watch in the night;**

⁵you sweep them away like a dream,
they fade away suddenly like the grass:

⁶**in the morning it is green and flourishes;
in the evening it is dried up and withered.**

⁷For we are consumed by your anger;
we are afraid because of your wrath.

⁸**Our iniquities you have let before you,**

and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.

[⁹When you are angry, all our days are gone;
we bring our years to an end like a sigh.

¹⁰**The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength even eighty;
yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow, for they pass away quickly and we are gone.**

¹¹Who regards the power of your wrath?
Who rightly fears your indignation?

] ¹²**So teach us to number our days
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.**

L: A reading from First Thessalonians

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Though we do not know and cannot calculate the day of Christ's return, we live faithfully in the here and now as we anticipate the day when we will be given eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

¹Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! ⁴But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; ⁵for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. ⁶So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; ⁷for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

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 25:14-30

Jesus tells a parable about his second coming, indicating that it is not sufficient merely to maintain things as they are. Those who await his return should make good use of the gifts that God has provided them.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹⁴"For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the one

who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' ²¹His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²²And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' ²³His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' ²⁶But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return, I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY: *God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending 678*

APOSTLES CREED (*p. 105 at the beginning of the hymnal*)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: Let us turn our hearts to God, our breath and life, as we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, you give talents and gifts to all your people, and you equip the church to serve. Turn us from fear and self-serving ways, that we use our talents to glorify you and encourage our neighbor. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You have been our dwelling place from one generation to another. Sustain the life of the planet; protect farmlands and harvests. Direct all people in wise stewardship of all the earth's resources. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You call us to honesty and integrity. Instill these values in the hearts of all nations and their leaders (*leaders may be named*). Free any who are oppressed, expose all corruption, and bring redemption to victims of injustice. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart. Where there is sickness or sorrow, bring healing, and where there is loneliness, reveal your love in community. We remember before you (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: We pray for the faith formation ministries of our church. Give to all children, youth, and adults who study your word the breastplate of faith and love. Shape us by your love and show us how to encourage one another. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Gracious and everlasting Lord, we commend you today the work and ministry of Global Health Ministries as it reaches out to strengthen the health services at Lutheran hospitals and clinics in 31 less developed countries around the world. We pray that its in-gathering of medical supplies and equipment here in America and sent overseas, in shipping containers, plus the training of healthcare personnel overseas will significantly contribute to the health and well-being of your children who have historically been overlooked and underserved by us. Forgive us for this sin of abdication and make us more mindful and supportive of ways to mitigate the wrongs of the past. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: Gracious God, you are faithful in all generations. For the promise of life and rest and for the witness of those who have died in faith (*especially*) we praise your goodness. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: We offer our spoken prayers and those held in our hearts trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

The assembly is seated.

CHOIR ANTHEM *Simple Gifts*

A TIME OF SILENT MEDITATION

The assembly stands.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant.
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: There is a place for you at the banquet.
Come and feast at Jesus' table.

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: Lord Jesus, in this simple meal you have set a banquet.
Sustain us on the journey, strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children,
and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on the way. **Amen.**

SENDING

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

BLESSING May the God of all creation,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved,
who strengthens us for service,
give you reason to rejoice and be glad!
The blessing of God,
Sovereign, † Savior, and Spirit,
be with you today and always.
Amen.

SENDING SONG: *On Our Way Rejoicing 537*

DISMISSAL P: Beloved of God,
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

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, Agnes Cryder, Don Delaney, Helen Delaney, Mary Ellen Dougherty, Joanne Fisher, Dawn Fryer, Dina George, Dawn Hauser, Barb Hoffman, Myrtle Long, Mick Miller, Bob Moriarity, Penny Parks-Dean, Cora Pelletier, 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 and Israel.

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.

Special thanks to this weeks’ helpers: Lector –Shane Snyder; Assisting Ministers --Karen Aucker and Gary Johnson; Head Usher –Dawn McCloskey; Teller – Shane Snyder; Bulletin Sponsor – Sue Willits; Children's Church --Cathy Eisner.

Next week’s helpers: Lector –Deb Heydrich; Assisting Ministers—Joyce Braucht and Carl Schaefer; Head Usher –Dawn McCloskey; Teller – Shane Snyder; Bulletin Sponsor – Sue Willits; Children's Church --Holly Dittmar; Flowers -- Molly Hollick.

The flowers are to the glory of God and in loving memory of Nancy Aldridge by her family.

The Sanctuary Candle in November is in memory of my father by Sue Willits.

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.

WOMEN OF THE CHURCH is meeting this Sunday, **November 19 in the Chapel.**

Ever have thoughts of being a missionary? Of serving in a ministry in another country for a short time period? We welcome all of our Middle School and High School Youth to join us on **Sunday, November 19** for lunch and a presentation by Claire Weisner who served as a Young Adult in Global Missions in Argentina/Uruguay. Claire is from Trinity Lutheran, Milton, and will speak about her experiences providing ministry in two other countries. I’m sure there will be room if adults would like to join us.

CHRISTMAS EVE at 10 o'clock there is a half hour of **special music**. If you would like to perform and share your talent, please see organist Becky Ward.

Calendar

Sunday, November 19, 2023 25th Sunday after Pentecost

8:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School

9:30 a.m. Worship Service with Children's Church

10:30 a.m. Women of the Church Meeting in the Chapel

11:00 a.m. Young Adult Global Missionary Claire Weisner in the Sunday School room

Monday, November 20, 2023

10:00 a.m. Bible Study

6:00 p.m. Christian Ed Meeting

7:00 p.m. Youth Planning Meeting

Wednesday, November 15, 2023

7:00 p.m. Thanksgiving Service at Antes Fort Methodist

Sunday, November 26, 2023 26th Sunday after Pentecost

Christ the King Sunday

8:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School

9:30 a.m. Worship Service

10:30 a.m. Congregation Meeting

1:00 p.m. Nippenose Worship



Just a reminder of upcoming events:

Thank you to everyone who donated food to Harvest Home. Special Thanks to Colonel Lisa Harbach for her very powerful presentation on November 12.

Nov. 19 – After worship, 11:00 am, Claire Weisner, from Trinity Lutheran, Milton, will share her experiences as a Young Adult in Global Mission during her year in Argentina and Uruguay. Learn how you can be a missionary for a year. Please join us in the big Sunday School room. Brunch will be provided.

The Women of St. John will be meeting in the Chapel for their meeting after worship.

Nov. 26 – Annual Congregation Meeting following worship to elect council members, synod delegates, Trinity Endowment members, Mission Support, and the 2024 budget.

Dec. 3 – Youth and young at heart make Gingerbread houses after worship in the Sunday School room.

Dec. 9 – Women of St. John Annual Bazaar. Starting at 9 am. Youth leave for Christmas at Hershey Park at 2:00 pm.

Dec. 17 – Children’s Christmas Program and Congregation Christmas Dinner after worship. Youth go Christmas Caroling at 5:00 p.m.

December 24 - Celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas

9:30 a.m. Advent Worship at St. John Lutheran

4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship at St. John Lutheran

7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship at St. James Lutheran

10:00 p.m. Special Music at St. John Lutheran

10:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship at St. John Lutheran

Let us pack the church on Christmas Eve! Invite everyone you encounter to join us at one of the Christmas Eve Services.

Youth desiring to go to Camp Mt. Luther for the annual Grow in the Snow Synod Youth Event March 8 & 9, see Pastor Aucker to register. This is for Middle School and High School Youth.

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH- The Upper Susquehanna Synod is offering to send High School youth to Winterfest in Lancaster January 5-7. Winterfest gathers 200 youth from Central Pennsylvania together for worship, spiritual formation, and fellowship. There will be live music, bouncy houses, worship services and plenty of opportunities to grow in your faith. If you’re interested in participating, please email cml@campmountluther.org by December 1st.

The angel tree kids will be on the Christmas tree in the tower today and the gifts need to be back to the church on Sunday, December 3rd. Any questions see Lynette Yost or Carol Yost.