

**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**Sunday, August 30, 2020**  
*13<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost*

**Introduction to the day**

*The prophet Jeremiah speaks of the incurable wound of his suffering yet finds in God's words the delight of his heart. When Peter doesn't grasp Jesus' words about suffering, Jesus tells the disciples they will find their lives in losing them. Such sacrificial love is described by Paul when he urges us to associate with the lowly and not repay evil with evil. In worship we gather as a community that we might offer ourselves for the sake of our suffering world.*

**SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS**

**PRELUDE**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P: In the name of the Father,  
and of the ✙ Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C: Amen.**

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**C: Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P: Gracious God,  
**C: have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins.  
As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority,  
I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins,  
In the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C: Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG *Blest Be the Tie That Binds* (ELW 656)**  
(hum or sing softly with mask on)

1 Blest be the tie that binds  
our hearts in Christian love;  
the unity of heart and mind  
is like to that above.

2 Before our Father's throne  
we pour our ardent prayers;  
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,  
our comforts and our cares.

3 We share our mutual woes,  
our mutual burdens bear,  
and often for each other flows  
the sympathizing tear.

4 From sorrow, toil, and pain,  
and sin we shall be free;  
and perfect love and friendship reign  
through all eternity.

**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.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray.

**C: O God, we thank you for your Son, who chose the path of suffering for the sake of the world. Humble us by his example, point us to the path of obedience, and give us strength to follow your commands, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**WORD**

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

**FIRST READING: Jeremiah 15:15-21**

L: A reading from Jeremiah.

*Jeremiah's delight in the word of the LORD is contradicted by the heaviness of God's hand upon him and God's seeming unfaithfulness. God's tough love to Jeremiah says that if he repents, he will be allowed to continue in his strenuous ministry. Jeremiah is strengthened by the simple words, "I am with you."*

<sup>15</sup>O LORD, you know;  
remember me and visit me,  
and bring down retribution for me on my persecutors.

In your forbearance do not take me away;  
know that on your account I suffer insult.

<sup>16</sup>Your words were found, and I ate them,  
and your words became to me a joy  
and the delight of my heart;

for I am called by your name,  
O LORD, God of hosts.

<sup>17</sup>I did not sit in the company of merrymakers,  
nor did I rejoice;  
under the weight of your hand I sat alone,  
for you had filled me with indignation.

<sup>18</sup>Why is my pain unceasing,  
my wound incurable,  
refusing to be healed?

Truly, you are to me like a deceitful brook,  
like waters that fail.

<sup>19</sup>Therefore thus says the LORD:

If you turn back, I will take you back,  
and you shall stand before me.

If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless,  
you shall serve as my mouth.

It is they who will turn to you,  
not you who will turn to them.

<sup>20</sup>And I will make you to this people  
a fortified wall of bronze;  
they will fight against you,  
but they shall not prevail over you,

for I am with you  
to save you and deliver you,  
says the LORD.

<sup>21</sup>I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked,  
and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM 26:1-8 read responsively**

<sup>1</sup>Give judgment for me, O LORD, for I have lived with integrity;

I have trusted in the LORD and have not faltered.

<sup>2</sup>**Test me, O LORD, and try me;  
examine my heart and my mind.**

<sup>3</sup>For your steadfast love is before my eyes;  
I have walked faithfully with you.

<sup>4</sup>**I have not sat with the worthless,  
nor do I consort with the deceitful.**

<sup>5</sup>I have hated the company of evildoers;  
I will not sit down with the wicked.

<sup>6</sup>**I will wash my hands in innocence, O LORD,  
that I may go in procession round your altar,**

<sup>7</sup>singing aloud a song of thanksgiving  
and recounting all your wonderful deeds.

<sup>8</sup>**LORD, I love the house in which you dwell  
and the place where your glory abides.**

**SECOND READING: Romans 12:9-21**

L: A reading from Romans.

*Paul presents benchmarks for faithful relationships with Christians and non-Christians. Love is the unflagging standard of our behavior. When we encounter evil, we do not resort to its tactics but seek to overcome it with good. While Christians cannot control the actions and attitudes of others, we seek to live at peace with all people.*

<sup>9</sup>Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; <sup>10</sup>love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. <sup>11</sup>Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. <sup>13</sup>Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

<sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. <sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. <sup>19</sup>Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." <sup>20</sup>No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." <sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life.**

**Alleluia. Alleluia.**

## **GOSPEL: Matthew 16:21-28**

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

*After Peter confesses that Jesus is “the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (16:16), Jesus reveals the ultimate purpose of his ministry. These words prove hard to accept, even for a disciple whom Jesus has called a “rock.”*

<sup>21</sup>From that time on, [after Peter confessed that Jesus was the Messiah,] Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. <sup>22</sup>And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” <sup>23</sup>But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

<sup>24</sup>Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup>For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. <sup>26</sup>For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?

<sup>27</sup>“For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. <sup>28</sup>Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **SERMON**

*Silence for meditation*

## **HYMN OF THE DAY *Lift High the Cross* (ELW 660)**

(Hum or sing softly with mask on)

Refrain

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim  
till all the world adore his sacred name.

1 Come, Christians, follow where our captain trod,  
our king victorious, Christ, the Son of God. Refrain

2 All newborn servants of the Crucified  
bear on their brows the seal of him who died. Refrain

3 O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,  
as thou hast promised, draw us all to thee. Refrain

4 So shall our song of triumph ever be:  
praise to the Crucified for victory! Refrain

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

**A:** Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

**A:** God of faithfulness, you bid your people to follow Jesus. Set the mind of your church on divine things. Grant us trust in you, that we lose our lives for the sake of Christ and thereby discover joy in life through him. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**A:** God of wonder, the earth is yours and all that is in it. Heal your creation and give us eyes to see the world as you do. As the seasons change, pattern the rhythm of our lives in harmony with all creation. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**A:** God of all nations, you call us to live peaceably with all. Give us ears to hear one another, even those we name as enemies. Fill all leaders with mercy and understanding, that they advocate and genuinely care for those who are poor and most vulnerable in their communities. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**A:** God of salvation, you promise to deliver us. Give those who suffer a strong sense of your presence and love. Accompany those who are uncertain, raise the spirits of those who are despairing, and heal the sick (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: God of community, you call us to rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, and persevere in prayer. Make our congregation a workshop of your love. When we quarrel, bring reconciliation. Help us overcome evil with good. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: God of all grace, you give us everlasting life. In love we recall your holy ones who now live in your undying light (*especially*). In our remembering, give us a foretaste of the feast to come. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

P: In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## **THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Please come forward to receive the “body of Christ” by holding out your hands in a cup like fashion as far as you can. The Pastor will drop the wafer into your hand, saying “the body of Christ given for you,” and you respond “Amen,” then go to the left or right and receive the “blood of Christ” from a pre-filled glass. The glasses will be separated so you don’t touch one another. Take the glass and the communion assistant standing in the choir loft will say, “the blood of Christ shed for you.” There will be a separate tray of glasses with grape juice for those who prefer grape juice.

P: The Great Thanksgiving and The Words of Institution

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

## **Blessing of Students and Teachers**

A: God is the source of all wisdom and knowledge. Let us ask him to bless those who seek to learn and their teachers.

**C: Lord, hear our prayer.**

A: For students (as they begin this new school year), that the Spirit of God may grant them the gifts of wisdom and understanding, let us pray to the Lord.

**C: Lord, hear our prayer.**

A: For teachers, that they may share their knowledge with gentleness, patience, and concern for their students, let us pray to the Lord.

**C: Lord, hear our prayer.**

A: For those who seek knowledge of the things of this world, that they may always pursue God's wisdom, let us pray to the Lord.

**C: Lord, hear our prayer.**

A: For parents, the first teachers of their children, that their faith and love may be an example to us always, let us pray to the Lord.

**C: Lord, hear our prayer.**

### **PRAYER OF BLESSING**

*With hands extended over the students and teachers, the celebrant says immediately:*

P: Lord our God, in your wisdom and love you surround us with the mysteries of the universe. In times long past you sent us your prophets to teach your laws and to bear witness to your undying love. You sent us your Son to teach us by word and example that true wisdom comes from you alone. Send your Spirit upon these students and their teachers and fill them with your wisdom and blessings. Grant that during this academic year they may devote themselves to their studies and share what they have learned from others. Grant this through Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**



## **Blessing of Young Drivers**

Lord of our journeys,  
Today we mark and celebrate a significant moment  
In the lives of these young people.  
As they prepare to assume the responsibility of drivers,  
We ask you to gift them with wisdom  
To make good choices as they navigate the roads they travel.  
Provide them with safe passage as they make each journey.  
Bless them with a clear mind  
That they may steer away from any danger  
They may encounter along the way.  
And let them know of the hope they provide us  
as they take this next step into maturity.  
We ask all these things,  
In the name of God who travels with us  
Throughout all our journeys.  
**AMEN.**

**Dismissal**

**Postlude**

*Please leave your offering in the offertory plate located at each exit of the church.*

**With the decrease in attendance during the pandemic, Council made the decision to continue with one service in September at 9:00 a.m., so that we may worship together.**

## ***Announcements***

Remember in prayer: Rowen Aldridge, Luke Antolick, Bob Braucht, Dawn Hauser, Ralph Lehman, Caleb Leone, David Mitchell, Bob and Phyllis Moriarity, Kathy Neal, Rev. Donald and Ruth Nice, Jack Rishel, Joann Rishel, Jane Shaffer, Brenda Traxler, Jillian Waldman, and all of our shut-ins; the safety of our military troops around the world (Mark Baier, Jade Cordrey, Paul Laidacker, Kenny Leitch, Maddison Myers, Tyler O’Neal, Adam Shaffer, Aaron Stabley, Paul St. James, Jenna White); Family Promise and the homeless in our counties. Bishop Eaton, our Presiding Bishop; and Bishop Collins, Bishop of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. For our Companion Synod in Liberia and Ansbach-Wurzburg, Germany; our sister church, St. Wunibald in Heidenheim, Germany and for the New Love Center as it seeks to build a new food hub.

The altar flowers this morning are given to the Glory of God and in honor of Gloria and Dean Ely 61<sup>st</sup> Wedding Anniversary. Congratulations!! Love, your children, and church family.

Special Thanks to this week’s helpers: Lectors –Pam Wehler; Assisting Ministers -Karen Aucker Gary Johnson; Acolyte –; Communion Assistants-; Head Usher -Kaye Long; Tellers-Betty Allen; Bulletin sponsor -; Bread Sponsor –.

Next week’s helpers: Lectors –Kathy Brundick; Assisting Ministers -Deb Heydrich; Acolyte –; Communion Assistants -; Head Usher -Betty Allen; Tellers-Kaye Long; Bulletin sponsor -; Bread Sponsor –.

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

Sarah Davidson - 570-398-0659

Joyce Braucht - 570-398-2852

### **Sunday School**

The Christian Education Committee is sending a recommendation to Council to fore go the start of Sunday school until further notice. Adult Sunday school books for the Fall are available in the Big Sunday school room. We are working on distributing Sunday School lessons for the children, more details and information will be available soon.

**“Grab-a-Tab”** - The youth of St. John would like to ask for donations of little tabs from beverage, soup and dessert cans. It doesn’t matter what color the tab, just grab them and deliver them to the church office. This project will benefit the Ronald McDonald House of Danville. “Grab-a-Tab” program allows people of all ages to join in the effort of providing a “Home-away-from-Home” to children with cancer or other serious illnesses and their families.

### **Giving Plus+**

St. John Lutheran is offering a new way to support the ministries of St. John. Now you can download the “Giving Plus+” app from your app store for your cell phone. This feature is also available on our web site. Enter your email, make up a password, and walk through the choices to give the church an electronic donation by check or debit/credit card. People were asking if they could give electronically by debit/credit card. Now this feature is available. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Aucker

**Give+ Text:** Simply send a text message to 570-865-1101 with the amount you would like to contribute (example: 25). Within a few minutes, you'll be sent a text with a link to register. Click on the link and enter your cardholder name and credit or debit card information. Once your registration is complete, you will receive a text verification and a receipt of your donation via email.

### **Christmas-at-Sea**

Would you like to bring joy to seafarers who will not be home with their families for Christmas? Our port chaplains deliver satchels filled with gifts to the seafarers they meet in port in the weeks prior to Christmas. Later, on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, when the ship is in the middle of the ocean, the captain will hold a celebration, and all the crew will open their satchels, each containing:

- One sweatshirt – hooded or unhooded (size L-XL)
- Three pairs of socks – thermal or white gym
- One casual pullover T-shirt (size M-L)
- One can of nuts or bar of chocolate, and
- A Christmas card from you.

We invite you to participate in a memory of Pastor Martha McCracken by purchasing the items needed for a Christmas Seafarer's bag. Bags are available in the office. Please return by Nov. 5. for many years Pastor McCracken was President of Seafarers Ministry.

### **Hunger in the Time of COVID-19: Life for Today and Hope for Tomorrow**

Rick Steves, guidebook author and travel TV host; the Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); and the Rev. Shelley Bryan Wee, bishop of the ELCA Northwest Washington Synod, invite you to an online benefit- the first of its kind- for ELCA World Hunger. **Our goal is to raise \$250,000 to confront hunger in the time of COVID-19. When: Thursday, September 24, 8:00 p.m. Where: Zoom virtual event.**

We are in a historic moment, facing a once-in-a-century pandemic and a global change in hunger unlike anything we have seen in our lifetimes. Domestically and internationally, hunger is increasing at alarming rates. At this event, you will learn about the unique ways ELCA World Hunger is responding. Our hosts will also discuss the ongoing root causes of hunger and poverty addressed in Rick Steves' recent special *Hunger and Hope: Lessons From Ethiopia and Guatemala*. And you will hear from ELCA World Hunger partners on the front lines of the current hunger crisis, who will tell you firsthand how your gifts make a difference.

We are called by God to share hope in this time of challenge. Join us to face this global hunger crisis head-on and to continue moving toward a just world where all are fed.

### **Sight and Sound**

Sight and Sound in Lancaster will be making the show "Queen Esther" available for viewing on their website, [sight&soundTV.com](http://sight&soundTV.com), on Friday, September 4 at 7:00 p.m. A pre-show will be offered at 6:30 p.m. If you would like to view this dramatic presentation on the book of Esther, check it out or find someone with internet access and a large screen. Cost is \$25. Invite your friends and neighbors to join you.

## THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

Sunday, August 30, 2020

*13<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost*

*Blessing of Students and Teachers*

*Blessing of the Keys*

9:00 a.m. Nave Worship Service

7:00 p.m. AA meeting

Monday, August 31, 2020

Tuesday, September 1, 2020

8:00 a.m. NLC Board meeting

2:00 p.m. Communion at Manor Care

7:00 p.m. Council meeting

7:00 p.m. A.A. and N. A. meetings

Wednesday, September 2, 2020

10:00 a.m. Community Prayer at Trinity Episcopal

Pastor at Continuing Education Class

Thursday, September 3, 2020

Pastor at Continuing Education Class

Friday, September 4, 2020

Pastor at Continuing Education Class

Saturday, September 5, 2020

Sunday, September 6, 2020

*14<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost*

9:00 a.m. Nave Worship Service

7:00 p.m. AA meeting

I TOTALLY GET PETER.  
WHO WANTS SOMEONE  
AS NICE AS JESUS TO  
GO THROUGH ALL  
THAT?



WWW.AGNUSDAY.ORG

IT'S A PARADOX. WE WANT  
TO HONOR JESUS, BUT  
WHEN WE TRY TO DENY  
HIS SUFFERING,  
IT'S ACTUALLY  
AN OFFENCE!



I GUESS IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE  
THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD, YOU'VE  
GOT TO BE A LITTLE HEADSTRONG!



MATTHEW 16:21-28



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