



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



The 9th Sunday After Pentecost

July 26, 2026

10:30 Service of the Word

Apostasy is the desertion of one's religion. Not surprisingly, the Bible's authors want people to hold onto their faith forever. In today's reading from Hebrews we find the topic coming up and warnings about the consequences. But as is also always the case, Hebrews calls people to see God's gracious and loving nature.

Welcome to worship today!

If you are visiting St. John's we invite you to sign the Guest Book in the back of the sanctuary.

Large print bulletins are available on the usher's stand.

The Zoom feed for this service is shown in the nursery.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the Holy Trinity, one God,
whose mercy endures forever.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Merciful God,

C: we confess to you all our sins.

Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves.

In your mercy, call us back to you.

Your yoke is easy and your burden is light.

Restore us to dwell in your peace.

In Christ's name we pray,

Amen.

P: Jesus says, "Come to me,
all who are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest."

In the name of God,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

Your sins are forgiven.

Rest in God's love.

C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn Beautiful Savior

(Music for this may be found as Hymn 838 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **Beautiful Savior, King of creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I'd love thee, truly I'd serve thee,
light of my soul, my joy, my crown.**
2. **Fair are the meadows, fair are the woodlands,
robed in flow'rs of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,
he makes our sorrowing spirit sing.**

3. **Fair is the sunshine, fair is the moonlight,
bright the sparkling stars on high;
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer
than all the angels in the sky.**

4. **Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, Praise, adoration,
now and forevermore be thine!**

Text: Gesangbuch, Munster, 1677; tr. Joseph A. Seiss, Music: Silesian fold tune 1842

Greeting (2 Corinthians 13:13)

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

C: And also with you.

Gathering Dialog (Deuteronomy 26, 11, 8)

A: You are the treasured people of the Lord,

C: a people holy to the Lord our God.

A: Keep the words of the Lord in your heart; teach them to your children.

**C: Talk about them when you are at home and when you are away,
when you lie down and when you rise.**

A: One does not live by bread alone,

C: but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

Glorious God, your generosity waters the world with goodness, and you cover creation with abundance. Awaken in us a hunger for the food that satisfies both body and spirit, and with this food fill all the starving world; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

✠ WORD ✠

First Reading 2 Corinthians 4:1-6

B: Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. ²We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the

conscience of everyone in the sight of God. ³And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. ⁶For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness', who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Scripture Poetry Psalm 37:1-11 (*read responsively*)

D: No need to fret over sinners
or to envy wrongdoers.

**C: They wither like grass,
they wilt like young plants.**

D: Trust God and do good,
settle down and be at peace.

**C: Delight in the Lord
who satisfies your heart.**

D: Give your life to the Lord.
Trust God to act on your behalf,

**C: to make your integrity shine forth
and your justice bright as noon.**

D: Be still, wait for the Lord.
Waste no energy fretting
about the success of evil schemers.

**C: Stop your ranting and raving,
for anger begets nothing but harm.**

D: Wrongdoers will be exiled,
but those who wait for God will possess the land.

**C: Soon the wicked shall vanish,
you will search and not find them;
but the poor will own the land
and enjoy wealth and peace.**

Second Reading Hebrews 5:11-6:12

E: About this we have much to say that is hard to explain, since you have become dull in understanding. ¹²For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic elements of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food; ¹³for everyone who lives

on milk, being still an infant, is unskilled in the word of righteousness. ¹⁴But solid food is for the mature, for those whose faculties have been trained by practice to distinguish good from evil. Therefore let us go on towards perfection, leaving behind the basic teaching about Christ, and not laying again the foundation: repentance from dead works and faith towards God, ²instruction about baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement. ³And we will do this, if God permits. ⁴For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶and then have fallen away, since on their own they are crucifying again the Son of God and are holding him up to contempt. ⁷Ground that drinks up the rain falling on it repeatedly, and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. ⁸But if it produces thorns and thistles, it is worthless and on the verge of being cursed; its end is to be burned over.

Even though we speak in this way, beloved, we are confident of better things in your case, things that belong to salvation. ¹⁰For God is not unjust; he will not overlook your work and the love that you showed for his sake in serving the saints, as you still do. ¹¹And we want each one of you to show the same diligence, so as to realize the full assurance of hope to the very end, ¹²so that you may not become sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (John 15:8)

C: Alleluia. Jesus said, “My Father in glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.” Alleluia.

Gospel Reading John 15:1-8

The gospel is announced:

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 15th chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

[Jesus said] ‘I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because

apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

After the reading:

P: The gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day For the Beauty of the Earth
(For music see Hymn 879 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **For the beauty of the earth,
for the beauty of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies:**

Refrain **Christ, our God, to thee we raise
this our sacrifice of praise.**

2. **For the wonder of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flow'r,
sun and moon and stars of light:** *Refrain*

3. **For the joy of ear and eye,
for the heart and mind's delight,
for the mystic harmony
linking sense to sound and sight:** *Refrain*

4. **For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth and friends above;
for all gentle thoughts and mild:** *Refrain*

5. For each perfect gift of thine,
peace on earth and joy in heav'n;
for thyself, best gift divine,
to our world so freely giv'n: *Refrain*

Text: Folliott S. Pierpoint, 1835-1917, alt. Music: Conrad Kocher, 1786-1872

Response to the Word

P: In Christ you have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

C: We believe in him and are marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.

P: Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**C: 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.**

A: Build yourselves up on your most holy faith;

C: pray in the Holy Spirit. *(Jude 20)*

A: Keep yourselves in the love of God;

C: look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. (*Jude 21*)

A: If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:

**C: Everything old has passed away;
behold, everything has become new!** *(2 Corinthians 5:17)*

Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us share that peace with one another.

The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

✠ THANKSGIVING ✠

Offertory and Gathering of Prayers and Offerings

You are invited to write a prayer concern on the small blank slip of paper in your worship bulletin. This slip will be collected by the ushers in the offering plates. The concerns raised will be prayed for later in the service.

Hymn of Thanksgiving

Lord Let My Heart Be Good Soil

For music turn to Hymn 713 in the Blue Hymnal

Lord, let my heart be good soil,

open to the seed of your Word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil,

where love can grow and peace is understood.

When my heart is hard,

break the stone away.

When my heart is cold,

warm it with the day.

When my heart is lost,

lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart,

Lord, let my heart,

Lord, let my heart be good soil.

Text and music: Handt Hanson, b. 1950, Copyright 1985 Prince of Peace Publishing/Changing Church, Inc.

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray: Blessed are you, O God,

C: ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

P: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

Issues raised by the congregation are lifted in prayer.

The prayer concludes:

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C: 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.**

✠ SENDING ✠

Blessing

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

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

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn We Praise You, O God

(For music see Hymn 870 in the Red Hymnal)

- 1. We praise you, O God, our redeemer, creator;
in grateful devotion our tribute we bring.
We lay it before you; we kneel and adore you;
we bless your holy name; glad praises we sing.**
- 2. We worship you, God of our fathers and mothers;**

**through trial and tempest our guide you have been.
When perils o’ertake us, you will not forsake us,
and with your help, O Lord, our struggles we win.**

- 3. With voices united our praises we offer
and gladly our songs of thanksgiving we raise.
With you, Lord, beside us, your strong arm will guide us.
To you, our great redeemer, forever be praise!**

Text: Julia C. Cory, 1882-1963. Music: A Valerius, *Nederlandisch Gedenckclanck*, 1626

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: God’s Work. Our Hands.

GOT MILK? STILL? Anyone who lives
lives on milk is still an infant. **He 5:13**



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Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers	Linda Flood
Acolyte	Alyssa Young
Counters	John and Linda Thompson
Coffee Hour	

Worship assistants for next Sunday, August 2

Greeters and Ushers	Janice Lockwood
Acolyte	Charlotte Stroup
Altar Care	Gary Boisseau
Communion Assistant	
Counters	Bill and Katy Stimmel
Coffee Hour	

Scripture readings from the *New Revised Standard Version Bible* copyright 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States. Psalm from *The Psalter* copyright 1994, Liturgical Training Publications.

St. John's Lutheran Church

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Dongwon Shin, Pianist