



# St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



## *The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost*

*June 25, 2023      10:30 Service of the Word*

When we think of parables we usually think of them coming from Jesus. But of course he isn't the only person to ever use parables. In today's gospel reading we'll hear a parable from John the Baptist. It illustrates his relationship with Jesus, and why John considers it an honor to be in a secondary role to Jesus. May our lives be filled with the same honor.

*Welcome to worship today!*

If you are visiting with us we invite you to sign the Guest Book in the back of the sanctuary.

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

# † GATHERING †

## Prelude and Announcements

### Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, who greets us in this and every season, whose word never fails, whose promise is sure.

**C: Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of our neighbors.  
Merciful God,

**C: we confess that we have sinned.**

**We have hurt our community.**

**We have squandered your blessings.**

**We have hoarded your bounty.**

**In the name of Jesus,**

**forgive us and grant us mercy.**

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P: Righteous God,

**C: we confess that we have sinned.**

**We have failed to be honest.**

**We have lacked the courage to speak.**

**We have spoken falsely.**

**In the name of Jesus,**

**forgive us and grant us mercy.**

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P: God is a cup of cold water when we thirst.

God offers boundless grace when we fail.

Claim the gift of God's mercy:

you are freed and forgiven in the name of Jesus the Christ.

**C: Amen**

### Gathering Hymn Day by Day

*(For music see Hymn 790 in the Red Hymnal)*

- 1. Day by day, your mercies, Lord, attend me,  
bringing comfort to my anxious soul.  
Day by day, the blessings, Lord, you send me  
draw me nearer to my heav'nly goal.  
Love divine, beyond all mortal measure,  
brings to naught the burdens of my quest;  
Savior, lead me to the home I treasure,**

where at last I'll find eternal rest.

2. **Day by day, I know you will provide me  
strength to serve and wisdom to obey;  
I will seek your loving will to guide me  
o'er the paths I struggle day by day.  
I will fear no evil of the morrow,  
I will trust in your enduring grace.  
Savior, help me bear life's pain and sorrow  
till in glory I behold your face.**
3. **Oh, what joy to know that you are near me  
when my burdens grow too great to bear;  
oh, what joy to know that you will hear me  
when I come, O Lord, to you in prayer.  
Day by day, no matter what betide me,  
you will hold me ever in your hand.  
Savior, with your presence here to guide me,  
I will reach at last the promised land.**

Text: Caroline Sandell Berg, 1832-1903; tr. Robert Leaf, 1936-2005, copyright 1992 Augsburg Fortress. Music: Oskar Ahnfelt, 1813-1882

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 you 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...

O God of creation, eternal majesty, you preside over land and sea, sunshine and storm. By your strength pilot us, by your power preserve

us, by your wisdom instruct us, and by your hand protect us, through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

† WORD †

First Reading Hosea 2:16-20

B: <sup>16</sup>On that day, says the LORD, you will call me, ‘My husband’, and no longer will you call me, ‘My Baal’. <sup>17</sup>For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be mentioned by name no more. <sup>18</sup>I will make for you a covenant on that day with the wild animals, the birds of the air, and the creeping things of the ground; and I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land; and I will make you lie down in safety. <sup>19</sup>And I will take you for my wife for ever; I will take you for my wife in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy. <sup>20</sup>I will take you for my wife in faithfulness; and you shall know the LORD.

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

**C: Thanks be to God.**

Scripture Poetry Psalm 30 (read responsively)

D: I give you high praise,  
for you, Lord raised me up  
above my gloating enemy.

**C: Lord, how I begged you,  
and you, God, healed me.**

D: You pulled me from the pit,  
brought me back from Sheol.

**C: Celebrate, all you saints,  
praise this awesome God,**

D: whose anger passes quickly,  
whose mercy lasts a lifetime-  
as laughter fills a day  
after one brief night of tears.

**C: When all was going well,  
I thought I could never fall;**

D: with God’s powerful blessing,  
I would stand like a mountain!  
Then you hid your face;  
I shook with fear!

**C: I cried out, “Lord, Lord!”**

**I begged, I pleaded:**

D: “What good is my blood to you?  
Why push me down the pit?  
Can dead bones praise you,  
recount your unbroken love?”

**C: Listen to me, O God,  
turn and help me now.”**

D: You changed my anguish  
Into this joyful dance,  
pulled off my sackcloth,  
gave me bright new robes,

**C: that my life might sing your glory,  
never silent in your praise.  
For ever I will thank you,  
O Lord my God.**

Second Reading Galatians 1:6-12

E: [Paul writes] I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— <sup>7</sup>not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. <sup>8</sup>But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed! <sup>9</sup>As we have said before, so now I repeat, if anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed!

10 Am I now seeking human approval, or God’s approval? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still pleasing people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

11 For I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin; <sup>12</sup>for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

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

**C: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation (John 3:31)

**C: Alleluia. The One who comes from heaven is above all. Alleluia.**

Gospel Reading John 3:22-36

*The gospel is announced:*

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter.

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

After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he spent some time there with them and baptized. <sup>23</sup>John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim because water was abundant there; and people kept coming and were being baptized— <sup>24</sup>John, of course, had not yet been thrown into prison.

Now a discussion about purification arose between John's disciples and a Jew. <sup>26</sup>They came to John and said to him, 'Rabbi, the one who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you testified, here he is baptizing, and all are going to him.' <sup>27</sup>John answered, 'No one can receive anything except what has been given from heaven. <sup>28</sup>You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, "I am not the Messiah, but I have been sent ahead of him." <sup>29</sup>He who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. For this reason my joy has been fulfilled. <sup>30</sup>He must increase, but I must decrease.'

The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from heaven is above all. <sup>32</sup>He testifies to what he has seen and heard, yet no one accepts his testimony. <sup>33</sup>Whoever has accepted his testimony has certified this, that God is true. <sup>34</sup>He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. <sup>35</sup>The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands. <sup>36</sup>Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but must endure God's wrath.

*After the reading:*

P: The gospel of the Lord

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

Children's Sermon

Sermon

*Hymn of the Day* How Firm a Foundation  
(For music see Hymn 796 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **How firm a foundation, O saints of the Lord,  
is laid for your faith in Christ Jesus, the Word!  
What more can he say than to you he has said  
who unto the Savior for refuge have fled?**
2. **“Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dismayed,  
for I am your God and will still give you aid;  
I’ll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,  
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.”**
3. **“When through fi’ry trials your pathway shall lie,  
my grace, all sufficient, shall be your supply.  
The flames shall not hurt you; I only design  
your dross to consume and your gold to refine.”**
4. **“Throughout all their lifetime my people shall prove  
my sov’ reign, eternal, unchangeable love;  
and then, when gray hairs shall their temples adorn,  
like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne.”**

Text: J. Rippon, *A Selection of Hymns*, 1787, alt. Music: Early American

*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.**

E: Build yourselves up on your most holy faith;

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

E: Keep yourselves in the love of God;

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

E: 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)

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.

*The pastor will begin the prayer with a petition and then invites the congregation to add additional petitions and thanksgivings. Please conclude your petition with:* Lord in your mercy,

*The congregation will respond:* **Hear our prayer.**

*The pastor concludes the prayer:*

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

**C: Amen.**

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 ✠

Special Music



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:

**C: Blessed are you, O God, 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.**

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 God who calls across the cosmos  
and speaks in the smallest seed  
bless, keep, and sustain you  
now and to the end of the age.

**C: Amen.**

*Sending Hymn* Lead On, O King Eternal  
(For music see Hymn 805 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **Lead on, O King eternal!**  
The day of march has come;  
henceforth in fields of conquest  
your tents will be our home.  
Through days of preparation  
your grace has made us strong;  
and now, O King eternal,  
we lift our battle song.
  
2. **Lead on, O King eternal,**  
till sin's fierce war shall cease,  
and holiness shall whisper  
the sweet amen of peace;  
for not with swords loud clashing,  
nor roll of stirring drums,  
but deeds of love and mercy  
the heav'nly kingdom comes.
  
3. **Lead on, O King eternal;**  
we follow, not with fears,  
for gladness breaks like morning  
where'er your face appears.  
Your cross is lifted o're us;  
we journey in its light;  
the crown awaits the conquest;  
lead on, O God of might!

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: God's Work. Our Hands.



**Worship assistants TODAY:**

Greeters and Ushers Tom and Carol Urbanic

Acolyte

Counters Michele Myers and Helen Crown

Coffee Hour

**Worship assistants for next Sunday, July 2**

Greeters and Ushers Gary Wood

Acolyte

Counters Bruce and Connie Stevenson

Coffee Hour

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