



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



The 7th Sunday of Easter *Matthew 23*

May 17, 2026

10:30 Holy Communion

Matthew 23 contains what are perhaps the harshest teachings recorded from Jesus. He gives a series of warnings and predictions of woe for the religious leaders of his day. Christians have wrongfully used this text to attack Jews, but this text is a real challenge to all who seek status and 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.

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

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Gathering Hymn Goodness is Stronger than Evil
(For harmonization see Hymn 721 in the Red Hymnal)

**Goodness is stronger than evil;
love is stronger than hate;
light is stronger than darkness;
life is stronger than death;
vict'ry is ours,
vict'ry is ours,
through God who loves us.
Vict'ry is ours,
vict'ry is ours,
through God who loves us.**

Text: From *An African Prayer Book*, Desmond Tutu, b. 1931, copyright 1995 Desmond Tutu, admin. Random House, Inc. and Lynn C. Franklin Associates, Ltd. Music: John L. Bell, b. 1949, copyright 1996 Iona Community, Admin. GIA Publications, Inc.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P: Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb!

C: Amen.

P: Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Water is poured into the baptismal font as we continue.

P: Merciful God,
you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come.
You lead us beside still waters.

We thank you for the waters of creation:
morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves.

We thank you for Lake Ontario, the Finger Lakes, and the Erie Canal; all
of whose waters made our region flourish.

Blessed are you.

C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.

P: Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness
who accompanies us on our journeys.

We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection.

We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow.

Blessed are you.

C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.

P: Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows.

Break down barriers that divide us.

Fill us with the breath of new life to share the gospel.

Blessed are you.

C: You guide us to the springs of the water of life.

P: Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism,
and for making us a new creation.

We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise
now and forever.

C: Amen.

Hymn of Praise I Am the Resurrection and the Life

(For music turn to Hymn 16 in the Songbook binder)

Chorus

**I am the resurrection and the life
all who believe in Me will never die
I am the resurrection and the life
all who believe in Me will live a new life.**

1. I have come to bring the truth

**I have come to bring you life
if you believe then you shall live.**

Chorus

2. In My word all men will come to know

**it is love which makes the spirit grow
if you believe then you shall live.**

Chorus

3. Keep in mind the things that I have said

**remember Me in the breaking of the bread
if you believe then you shall live.**

Chorus

Text and music: Ray Repp, CCLI #9189, Copyright 1967 K & R Music Publishing

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

Almighty God, your Son came into the world to free us all from sin and death. Breathe upon us the power of your Spirit, that we may be raised to new life in Christ and serve you in righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

First Reading Deuteronomy 6:4-9

B: Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. ⁵You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. ⁶Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. ⁷Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. ⁸Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, ⁹and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

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

C: Thanks be to God.

Scripture Poetry Psalm 36 (read responsively)

D: Sin whispers with the wicked,
shares its evil, heart to heart.
These sinners shut their eyes
to all fear of God.

**C: They refuse to see their sin,
to know it and hate it.**

D: Their words ring false and empty,
their plans neglect what is good.

**C: They daydream of evil,
plot their crooked ways,
seizing on all that is vile.**

D: Your mercy, Lord, spans the sky;
your faithfulness soars among the clouds.

**C: Your integrity towers like a mountain;
your justice runs deeper than the sea.**

D: Lord, how you embrace all life:
How we prize your tender mercy!

**C: God, your people seek shelter,
safe in the warmth of your wings.**

D: They feast at your full table,
slake their thirst in your cool stream.

**C: for you are the fount of life,
you give us light and we see.**

D: Grant mercy always to your own,
victory to honest hearts.

C: keep the proud from trampling me,

Assaulting me with wicked hands.

D: Let those sinners collapse,
struck down, never to rise.

Second Reading Colossians 3:1-11

E: So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, ³for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient. ⁷These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life. * ⁸But now you must get rid of all such things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices ¹⁰and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. ¹¹In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

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

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (Matthew 23:39)

**C: Alleluia. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Alleluia.**

Gospel Reading Matthew 23

The gospel is announced:

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 23rd chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, ²‘The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat; ³therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. ⁴They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. ⁵They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. ⁶They love to have the place of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, ⁷and to

be greeted with respect in the market-places, and to have people call them rabbi. ⁸But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students. ⁹And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father—the one in heaven. ¹⁰Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah. ¹¹The greatest among you will be your servant. ¹²All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.

‘But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them. ¹⁵Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell* as yourselves.

Woe to you, blind guides, who say, “Whoever swears by the sanctuary is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gold of the sanctuary is bound by the oath.” ¹⁷You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the sanctuary that has made the gold sacred? ¹⁸And you say, “Whoever swears by the altar is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gift that is on the altar is bound by the oath.” ¹⁹How blind you are! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? ²⁰So whoever swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it; ²¹and whoever swears by the sanctuary, swears by it and by the one who dwells in it; ²²and whoever swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by the one who is seated upon it.

‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others. ²⁴You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!

‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. ²⁶You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup, so that the outside also may become clean.

‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful, but inside they are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of filth. ²⁸So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous, ³⁰and you say, “If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.” ³¹Thus you

testify against yourselves that you are descendants of those who murdered the prophets. ³²Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors. ³³You snakes, you brood of vipers! How can you escape being sentenced to hell? ³⁴Therefore I send you prophets, sages, and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town, ³⁵so that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. ³⁶Truly I tell you, all this will come upon this generation.

‘Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁸See, your house is left to you, desolate. ³⁹For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.”’

After the reading:

P: The Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children’s Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day O God of Every Nation
(For harmonization see Hymn 713 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **O God of ev’ry nation,
of ev’ry race and land,
redeem your whole creation
with your almighty hand;
where hate and fear divide us
and bitter threats are hurled,
in love and mercy guide us
and heal our strife-torn world.**

2. **From search for wealth and power
and scorn of truth and right,
from trust in bombs that shower
destruction through the night,
from pride of race and station
and blindness to your way,**

deliver ev'ry nation,
eternal God, we pray.

3. Lord, strengthen all who labor
that all may find release
from fear of rattling saber,
from dread of war's increase;
when hope and courage falter,
Lord, let your voice be heard;
with faith that none can alter,
your servants undergird.

4. Keep bright in us the vision
of days when war shall cease,
when hatred and division
give way to love and peace,
till dawns the morning glorious
when truth and love shall reign,
and Christ shall rule victorious
o'er all the world's domain.

Text: Willaim W. Reid Jr., b. 1923, copyright 1958, ren. 1986 The Hymn Society, admin. Hope Publishing Company. Music: Welsh tune, 19th cent.

Nicene Creed

P: Let us confirm our faith with the Nicene Creed

C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again, in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We

acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Peace

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

C: And also with you.

P: We share that peace with one another.

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

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 lifted in prayer later in the service.

‡ MEAL ‡

Hymn of Thanksgiving Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise Him, all creatures here below;
praise Him, above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637-1711. Music: Louis Bourgeois, 1510-1561

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray: Merciful God,

**C: accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory
You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day when we
will hunger and thirst no more. Nourish us with the body and blood
of Jesus, that goodness and mercy may follow us and bless the word
you love. In the name of Jesus, 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 prayed for.

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.

Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus, the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin, who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has embodied the promise of eternal life. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with all the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join in their unending hymn:

(Isaiah 6:3, spoken)

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

P: In the night in which he was handed over our Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying, "Take and eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

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.

Invitation to Communion

P: Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord.

Communion Distribution

Welcome to the Lord's Supper! All who are baptized are invited to receive communion. We use wheat bread and wine for communion. If you would prefer a gluten free wafer instead of bread please tell the communion assistant. Also, if you prefer grape juice to wine, it is available pre-filled in the individual glasses. As we commune together everyone is invited to sing the following hymns:

Lamb of God (Page 39 of the Blue Hymnal)

715 Christ, Be Our Light (Red Hymnal)

728 Blest Are They (Red Hymnal)

Communion Blessing After all have communed the pastor will say:

P: The body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

Post Communion Prayer

A: Let us pray:

Holy One, through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus,

C: Amen.

† SENDING †

Blessing

P: God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end, Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead, and the Spirit, our advocate and peace, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sending Let Justice Flow Like Streams

(For music see Hymn 717 in the Red Hymnal)

**1. Let justice flow like streams
of sparkling water, pure,
enabling growth, refreshing life,**

abundant, cleansing sure.

- 2. Let righteousness roll on
as others' cares we heed,
an ever-flowing stream of faith
translated into deed.**
- 3. So may God's plumb line, straight,
define our measure true,
and justice, right, and peace pervade
this world our whole life through.**

Text: Jane Parker Huber, b. 1926, copyright 1984 Jane Parker Huber, admin. Westminster John Knox Press. Music: Aaron Williams, 1731-1776

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **God's Work. Our Hands.**

Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers	Sue Kaufmann
Acolyte	Thomas Bullwinkle
Altar Care	
Communion Assistants	Rob Stroup
Counters	Anne Stromstad and Michele Myers
Coffee Hour	Greta Crowell

Worship assistants for next Sunday, May 24

Greeters and Ushers	Helen Crown
Acolyte	Alyssa Young
Altar Care	
Communion Assistants	Linda Flood
Counters	Bill and Katy Stimmel
Coffee Hour	Confirmation Reception

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, unless otherwise noted. Psalm from *The Psalter* copyright 1994, Liturgical Training Publications. Variable worship texts from *Sundays and Seasons 2026* copyright 2025 Augsburg Fortress.

St. John's Lutheran Church

888 County Road 9, Victor, NY 14564
stjohnsvictor.com (585) 924-5192

The Rev. Jonathan Deibler, Pastor
Dongwon Shin, Pianist