St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



The 25th Sunday After Pentecost

November 8, 2026 10:30 Service of the Word

We turn to the book of Nehemiah today and for the next two Sundays. Nehemiah continues the story of the rebuilding of Jerusalem that we began in Ezra. In worship today we'll see Nehemiah's passion and commitment to God's work, even as it upends his settled life.

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.

✞ GATHERING ✞

Prelude and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness
P: Blessed be the Holy Trinity, one God,
who pours love into our hearts
and healing upon the earth.
C: Amen.

P: Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Merciful God,
C: we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.
Creation groans from overuse.
Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.
Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.
Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others.
Turn our hearts back to you.
Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.
Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.
Amen.

P: Hear this good news:
We have peace with God through Jesus Christ,
in whom there is no condemnation,
but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.
Receive freely this healing gift of grace.
C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn Arise, Your Light Has Come
For music turn to Hymn 314 in the Red Hymnal

1. **Arise, your light has come!**
The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God
which shines on you today.

2. **Arise, your light has come!**
Fling wide the prison door;

proclaim the captive's liberty,
good tidings to the poor.

3. **Arise, your light has come!**
All you in sorrow born,
bind up the broken hearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.

4. **Arise, your light has come!**
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing,
God's pow'r will make us strong.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947. Music: William H. Walter, 1825-1893. Text copyright 1992 GIA Publications, Inc.

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…
Draw your church together, O God, into one great company of disciples, together following our teacher Jesus Christ into every walk of life, together serving in Christ's mission to the world, and together witnessing to your love wherever you send us; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.
C: Amen.

✞ WORD ✞

First Reading Nehemiah 1:1-4
B: The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah. In the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capital, [2]one of my brothers, Hanani, came with certain men from Judah; and I asked them about the Jews that survived, those who had escaped the captivity, and about Jerusalem. [3]They replied, 'The survivors there in the province who escaped captivity are in great trouble and shame; the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been destroyed by fire.'
When I heard these words I sat down and wept, and mourned for days, fasting and praying before the God of heaven.
After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord
C: Thanks be to God.

Scripture Poetry Psalm 119: 9-16 *(Read responsively)*
D: How do the young stay pure?
By staying close to your word!
C: I seek you with all my heart.
Do not let me stray!
D: I cherish your word within me
to avoid offending you.
C: I bless you, Lord,
teach me what you require.
D: I open my mouth
to echo your judgments.
C: I treasure your ways
more than great riches.
D: I meditate on your laws,
searching out your path.
C: I delight in your rules
and remember each one.

Second Reading Nehemiah 2
E: In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was served to him, I carried the wine and gave it to the king. Now, I had never been sad in his presence before. [2]So the king said to me, 'Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This can only be sadness of the heart.' Then I was very much afraid. [3]I said to the king, 'May the king live for ever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my ancestors' graves, lies waste, and its gates have been destroyed by

fire?’ [4]Then the king said to me, ‘What do you request?’ So I prayed to the God of heaven. [5]Then I said to the king, ‘If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor with you, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my ancestors’ graves, so that I may rebuild it.’ [6]The king said to me (the queen also was sitting beside him), ‘How long will you be gone, and when will you return?’ So it pleased the king to send me, and I set him a date. [7]Then I said to the king, ‘If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may grant me passage until I arrive in Judah; [8]and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king’s forest, directing him to give me timber to make beams for the gates of the temple fortress, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy.’ And the king granted me what I asked, for the gracious hand of my God was upon me.
9 Then I came to the governors of the province Beyond the River, and gave them the king’s letters. Now the king had sent officers of the army and cavalry with me. [10]When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard this, it displeased them greatly that someone had come to seek the welfare of the people of Israel.
11 So I came to Jerusalem and was there for three days. [12]Then I got up during the night, I and a few men with me; I told no one what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. The only animal I took was the animal I rode. [13]I went out by night by the Valley Gate past the Dragon’s Spring and to the Dung Gate, and I inspected the walls of Jerusalem that had been broken down and its gates that had been destroyed by fire. [14]Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King’s Pool; but there was no place for the animal I was riding to continue. [15]So I went up by way of the valley by night and inspected the wall. Then I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. [16]The officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing; I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, and the rest that were to do the work.
17 Then I said to them, ‘You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burnt. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, so that we may no longer suffer disgrace.’ [18]I told them that the hand of my God had been gracious upon me, and also the words that the king had spoken to me. Then they said, ‘Let us start building!’ So they committed themselves to the common good. [19]But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they mocked and ridiculed us, saying, ‘What is this that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?’ [20]Then I replied to them,

‘The God of heaven is the one who will give us success, and we his servants are going to start building; but you have no share or claim or historic right in Jerusalem.’
After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord
C: Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation (John 7:38)
C: Alleluia. Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water. Alleluia.

Gospel Reading John 7:37-44
The gospel is announced:
P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 7th chapter.
C: Glory to you O Lord.
On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, [38]and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, “Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.” ’ [39]Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified.
40 When they heard these words, some in the crowd said, ‘This is really the prophet.’ [41]Others said, ‘This is the Messiah.’ But some asked, ‘Surely the Messiah does not come from Galilee, does he? [42]Has not the scripture said that the Messiah is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?’ [43]So there was a division in the crowd because of him. [44]Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.
After the reading:
P: The Gospel of the Lord
C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children’s Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore
For music turn to Hymn 817 in the Red Hymnal

1. **You have come down to the lakeshore**
seeking neither the wise nor the wealthy,
but only asking for me to follow.

Refrain **Sweet Lord, you have looked into my eyes;**
kindly smiling, you've called out my name.
On the sand I have abandoned my small boat;
now with you, I will seek other seas.

2. **You know full well what I have, Lord:**
neither treasure nor weapons for conquest,
just these my fish nets and will for working. *Refrain*

3. **You need my hands, my exhaustion,**
working love for the rest of the weary
a love that's willing to go on loving. *Refrain*

4. **You who have fished other waters;**
you, the longing of souls that are yearning:
O loving Friend, you have come to call me. *Refrain*

Text and music: Cesareo Gabarain, 1936-1991; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946: Text and music copyright 1979 Cesareo Gabarain, OCP Publications.

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 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise
(For music turn to Hymn 834 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **Immortal, invisible, God only wise,**
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise!

2. **Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,**
nor wanting nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

3. **To all, life thou givest, to both great and small;**
in all life thou livest, the true life of all;
we blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree,
and wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.

4. **Thou reignest in glory; thou dwellest in light;**
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all laud we would render; oh, help us to see
'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee!

Text: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1824-1908, alt. Music: Welsh traditional; arr. John Roberts, 1807-1876

Dismissal
P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
C: God's Work. Our Hands.


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Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers	Helen Crown
Acolyte	Alyssa Young
Counters	Greg and Mary Zuege
Coffee Hour	

Worship assistants for next Sunday, November 15

Greeters and Ushers	Linda Flood
Acolyte	Charlotte Stroup
Altar Care	Linda Flood
Communion Assistant	Allyn Itterly
Counters	Anne Stromstad and Michele Myers
Coffee Hour	The Stuarts

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