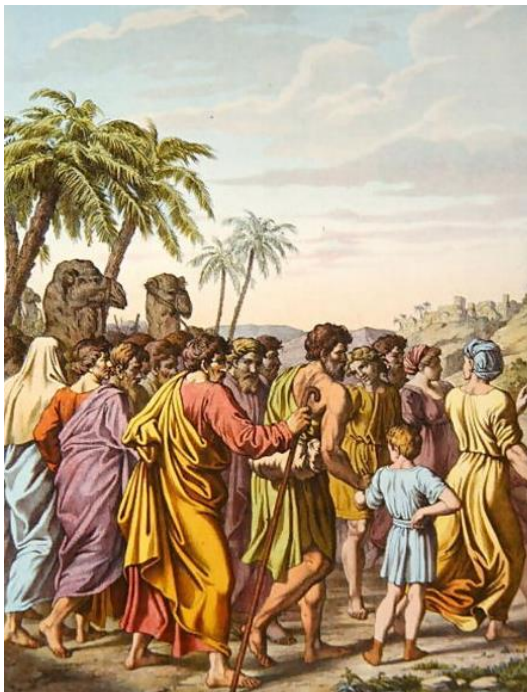




St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



The 20th Sunday After Pentecost

October 11, 2026 10:30 Service of the Word

We've been reading from the book of Ezra for a few weeks but have not yet met Ezra himself. Today we finally meet him! He is leading a new wave of people from Babylon back to the Jewish homeland. We get a chance to see his priorities and his fears. These inform our own faith lives too.

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 Open the Eyes of My Heart
(For music turn to Hymn 26 in the Songbook binder)

*Chorus, Verse and Bridge are repeated however the musicians feel
moved to play*

Chorus **Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,
open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see You,
I want to see You.**

**Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,
open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see You,
I want to see You.**

Verse **To see you high and lifted up,
shining in the light of Your glory.
Pour out your pow'r and love
as we sing "Holy, holy, holy."**

Bridge **Holy, holy, holy.
Holy, holy, holy.
Holy, holy, holy.
I want to see You.**

Text and music: Paul Baloche; copyright 1997 Integrity's Hosanna! Music

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...

God of compassion, you have opened the way for us and brought us to yourself. Pour your love into our hearts, that, overflowing with joy, we may freely share the blessings of your realm and faithfully proclaim the good news of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

First Reading Ezra 7:1a, 6-7, 8:15a, 21-36

B: After this, in the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, went up from Babylonia. He was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses that the Lord the God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all that he asked, for the hand of the Lord his God was upon him.

Some of the people of Israel, and some of the priests and Levites, the singers and gatekeepers, and the temple servants also went up to Jerusalem, in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes.

[Ezra writes] I gathered them by the river that runs to Ahava, and there we camped for three days. Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might deny ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our possessions. ²²For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and cavalry to protect us against the enemy on our way, since we had told the king that the hand of our God is gracious to all who seek him, but his power and his wrath are against all who forsake him. ²³So we fasted and petitioned our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty.

Then I set apart twelve of the leading priests: Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their kin with them. ²⁵And I weighed out to them the silver and the gold and the vessels, the offering for the house of our God that the king, his counsellors, his lords, and all Israel there present had offered; ²⁶I weighed out into their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and one hundred silver vessels worth [several] talents, and one hundred talents of gold, ²⁷twenty gold bowls worth a thousand darics, and two vessels of fine polished bronze as precious as gold. ²⁸And I said to them, ‘You are holy to the Lord, and the vessels are holy; and the silver and the gold are a freewill-offering to the Lord, the God of your ancestors.

²⁹Guard them and keep them until you weigh them before the chief priests and the Levites and the heads of families in Israel at Jerusalem, within the chambers of the house of the Lord.’ ³⁰So the priests and the Levites took over the silver, the gold, and the vessels as they were weighed out, to bring them to Jerusalem, to the house of our God.

Then we left the river Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month, to go to Jerusalem; the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy and from ambushes along the way. ³²We came to Jerusalem and remained there for three days. ³³On the fourth day, within the house of our God, the silver, the gold, and the vessels were weighed into the hands of the priest Meremoth son of Uriah, and with him was Eleazar son of Phinehas, and with them were the Levites, Jozabad son of

Jeshua and Noadiah son of Binnui. ³⁴The total was counted and weighed, and the weight of everything was recorded.

At that time those who had come from captivity, the returned exiles, offered burnt-offerings to the God of Israel, twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and as a sin-offering twelve male goats; all this was a burnt-offering to the Lord. ³⁶They also delivered the king's commissions to the king's satraps and to the governors of the province Beyond the River; and they supported the people and the house of God.

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

C: Thanks be to God.

Scripture Poetry Psalm 24 (*Read responsively*)

D: The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it;

**C: for he has founded it on the seas,
and established it on the rivers.**

D: Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?
And who shall stand in his holy place?

**C: Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,
who do not lift up their souls to what is false,
and do not swear deceitfully.**

D: They will receive blessing from the LORD,
and vindication from the God of their salvation.

**C: Such is the company of those who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.**

D: Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.

C: Who is the King of glory?

The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle.

D: Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.

C: Who is this King of glory?

The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory.

Gospel Acclamation (*Psalm 24:10*)

C: Alleluia. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Alleluia.

Gospel Reading John 12:44-50

The gospel is announced:

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 12th chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

Then Jesus cried aloud: ‘Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me. ⁴⁵And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. ⁴⁶I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness. ⁴⁷I do not judge anyone who hears my words and does not keep them, for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. ⁴⁸The one who rejects me and does not receive my word has a judge; on the last day the word that I have spoken will serve as judge, ⁴⁹for I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment about what to say and what to speak. ⁵⁰And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I speak, therefore, I speak just as the Father has told me.’

After the reading:

P: The Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day If You But Trust in God to Guide You

(For music see Hymn 769 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **If you but trust in God to guide you
with gentle hand through all your ways,
you'll find that God is there beside you
when crosses come, in trying days.
Trust then in God's unchanging love;
build on the rock that will not move.**
2. **What gain is there in anxious weeping,
in helpless anger and distress?
If you are in your Savior's keeping,
in sorrow will he love you less?
For Christ who took for you a cross
will bring you safe through ev'ry loss.**
3. **The Lord our restless hearts is holding,
in peace and quietness content.
We rest in God's good will unfolding,**

what wisdom from on high has sent.
God, who had chosen us by grace,
knows very well the fears we face.

4. Sing, pray, and keep God's ways unswerving,
offer your service faithfully.
Trust heaven's word; though undeserving,
you'll find God's promise true to be.
This is our confidence indeed:
God never fails in time of need.

Text: Georg Neumark, 1621-1681; tr. composite. Music: Georg Neumark, Text copyright 1978, 2006 Augsburg Fortress

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 Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing
(For music see Hymn 545 in the Red Hymnal)

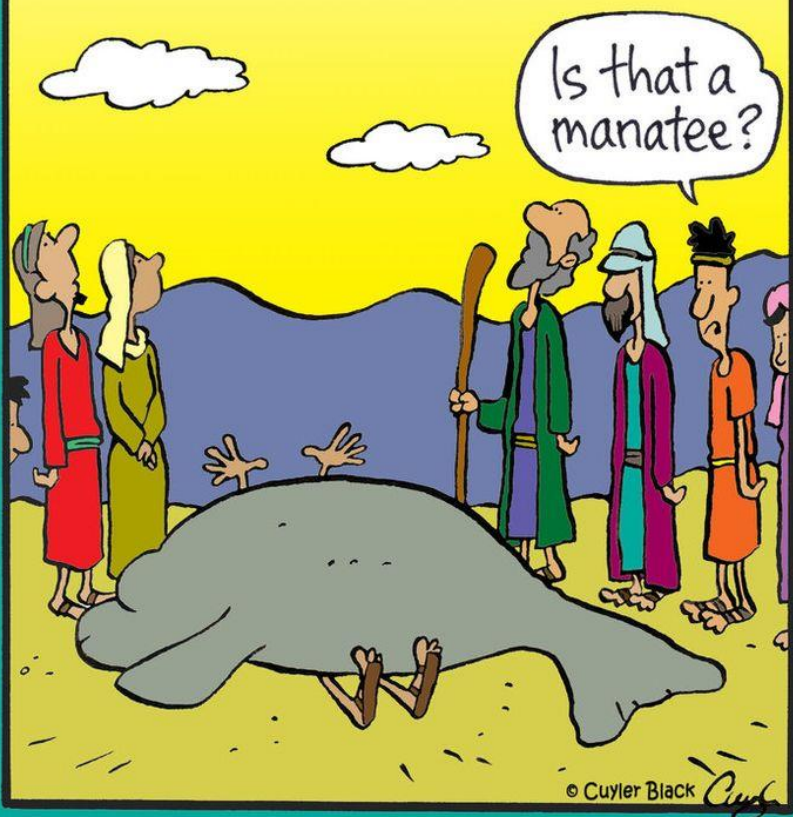
1. **Lord, dismiss us with your blessing,
fill our hearts with joy and peace;
let us each, your love possessing,
triumph in redeeming grace.
Oh, refresh us; oh, refresh us,
trav'ling through this wilderness.**
2. **Thanks we give and adoration
for your gospel's joyful sound.
May the fruits of your salvation
in our hearts and lives abound.
Ever faithful, ever faithful
to you truth may we be found.**
3. **Savior, when your love shall call us
from our struggling pilgrim way,
let no fear of death appall us,
glad your summons to obey.
May we ever, may we ever
reign with you in endless day.**

Text: attr. John Fawcett, 1740-1817, sts. 1-2, alt.; Godfrey Thring, 1823-1903, st. 3 alt. Music: Sicilian, 18th century

Dismissal

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

And then there was the day
Ezra the Complainer told God
he wanted tea with his manna.



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Cuyler

Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers	Bruce and Connie Stevenson
Acolyte	Elijah Young
Counters	John and Linda Thompson
Coffee Hour	Pumpkin Yummies

Worship assistants for next Sunday, October 18

Greeters and Ushers	Greg and Mary Zuege
Acolyte	Charlotte Stroup
Altar Care	Mary Zuege
Communion Assistant	Sue Kaufmann
Counters	Babette Huber and Burdie Gillern
Coffee Hour	

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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