



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



Justice

October 24, 2021 10:30 Service of the Word

We continue looking at the prophet Ezekiel this week. He speaks to his fellow Jews in Babylon. He brings news of God's justice. This justice is both good news and bad news. The good news is that God forgives the wicked. They are expected to change their ways and make good on what they did in the past. This justice could be bad news for the righteous, however. Those who think their past goodness is like saving money in a bank are not understanding things correctly. Life is not a transaction with God where we can bank up good deeds in order to make up for future misdeeds. No, every day is to be a day of righteousness.

Welcome to worship today!

Please observe social distancing and remain conscious of the need to prevent the spread of infectious disease. In this bulletin is an insert that will be used to determine today's attendance. It will also help to identify who was here if contact tracing is necessary. Please fill it out and place it in the offering plate.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God,
whose teaching is life,
whose presence is sure,
and whose love is endless.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sins to the one who welcomes us with an open heart.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God our comforter:

**C: like lost sheep, we have gone astray.
We gaze upon abundance and see scarcity.
We turn our faces away from injustice and oppression.
We exploit the earth with our apathy and greed.
Free us from our sin, gracious God.
Listen when we call out to you for help.
Lead us by your love to love our neighbors as ourselves.
Amen.**

P: All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. By the gift of grace in Christ Jesus, God makes you righteous. Receive with glad hearts the forgiveness of all your sins.

C: Amen.

Gathering Come, Now Is the Time to Worship
(For music turn to Hymn 8 in the Songbook binder)

Refrain

**Come, now is the time to worship;
Come, now is the time to give your heart.
Come, just as you are to worship;
Come, just as you are before your God, come.**

**1. Open up the doors to our heart and our soul,
leaving earthly cares far behind.
Come, unite us all to serve you now
With love and faith in our mind. Refrain**

**2. One day every tongue will confess you are God,
one day every knee will bow;
still the greatest treasure remains
for those who gladly choose you now. Refrain**

Text and Music by Brian Doerksen; copyright 1998 Vineyard Songs, admin by Mercy/Vineyard Publishing; CCLI #2430948

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:

Eternal light, shine in our hearts. Eternal wisdom, scatter the darkness of our ignorance. Eternal compassion, have mercy on us. Turn us to seek your face, and enable us to reflect your goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

First Reading Ezekiel 33:10-20

B: ¹⁰Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" ¹¹Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel? ¹²And you, mortal, say to your people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not save them when they transgress; and as for the wickedness of the wicked, it shall not make them stumble when they turn from their wickedness; and the

righteous shall not be able to live by their righteousness when they sin. ¹³Though I say to the righteous that they shall surely live, yet if they trust in their righteousness and commit iniquity, none of their righteous deeds shall be remembered; but in the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. ¹⁴Again, though I say to the wicked, “You shall surely die,” yet if they turn from their sin and do what is lawful and right— ¹⁵if the wicked restore the pledge, give back what they have taken by robbery, and walk in the statutes of life, committing no iniquity—they shall surely live, they shall not die. ¹⁶None of the sins that they have committed shall be remembered against them; they have done what is lawful and right, they shall surely live. ¹⁷Yet your people say, “The way of the Lord is not just,” when it is their own way that is not just. ¹⁸When the righteous turn from their righteousness, and commit iniquity, they shall die for it. ¹⁹And when the wicked turn from their wickedness, and do what is lawful and right, they shall live by it. ²⁰Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is not just.” O house of Israel, I will judge all of you according to your ways!

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

C: Thanks be to God.

Scripture Poetry Psalm 50:16-23 (*read responsively*)

D: God tells the evildoer:

“How dare you quote my law to me
and invoke the covenant?”

**C: you hate my guidance,
you turn back when I speak.**

D: Meet a thief
and you are instant friends.
You are at home with adultery.

**C: Your mouth serves evil,
and your tongue savors deceit.**

D: You malign your family
and slander your own king.
This is how you act.

**C: If I kept silent
you would think I am like you.
So I will indict you
and bring my case against you.**

D: Think hard about these things,
you who ignore God,
for if I rip you apart
you have no one to save you.

**C: Who thanks me, honors me.
Who keeps my way, I save.”**

Second Reading 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:10

¹⁶So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, ¹⁸because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ²For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling— ³if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked. ⁴For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ⁵He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. ⁶So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord— ⁷for we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. ¹⁰For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

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

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (Jeremiah 1:8)

C: Alleluia. God says, “Do not be afraid, I am with you.” Alleluia.

Gospel Reading Matthew 12:33-37

The gospel is announced:

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

C: Glory to you O Lord.

[Jesus taught] “Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. ³⁴You brood of vipers! How can you speak good things, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵The good person brings good things out of a good treasure, and the evil person brings evil things out of an evil treasure. ³⁶I tell you, on the day of judgment you will have

to give an account for every careless word you utter; ³⁷for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

After the reading:

P: The Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day God of Grace and God of Glory
(For music see Hymn 705 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **God of grace and God of glory,
on your people pour your pow'r;
crown your ancient church's story;
bring its bud to glorious flow'r.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.**

2. **Lo! The hosts of evil round us
scorn the Christ, assail his ways!
From the fears that long have bound us
free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the living of these days,
for the living of these days.**

3. **Cure your children's war-ing madness;
bend our pride to your control;
shame our wanton, selfish gladness,
rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
lest we miss your kingdom's goal,
lest we miss your kingdom's goal.**

4. **Save us from weak resignation
to the evils we deplore;
let the gift of your salvation
be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
serving you whom we adore,**

serving you whom we adore.

Text: Harry E. Fosdick, 1878-1969. Music: John Hughes, 1873-1932

Response to the Word

E: 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.

E: 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)*

† PRAYER †

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: We share that peace with one another.

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

Special Music

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: People of God,
you are Christ's body,
bringing new life to a suffering world.
The holy Trinity, one God,
bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn Shout to the North
(For music turn to Hymn 31 in the Songbook binder)

**1. Men of faith, rise up and sing
of the great and glorious King.
You are strong when you are weak,
in your brokenness complete.**

Refrain

**Shout to the north and the south;
sing to the east and the west.
Jesus is Savior of all, Lord of heaven and earth.**

**2. Rise up women of the truth,
stand and sing to broken hearts
who can know the healing pow'r
of our awesome King of love.**

Refrain

**3. We've been through fire, we've been through rain;
We've been refined by the pow'r of His name.
We've fallen deeper in love with You.
You've burned the truth on our lips.**

Refrain

**4. Rise up church with broken wings,
Fill this place with songs again
of our God who reigns on high.
By His grace again we'll fly.**

Refrain

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Dismissal

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



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