



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



Wagner Organ, 1741, Trondheim Cathedral, Norway

The 15th Sunday after Pentecost

September 21, 2025

10:30 Holy Communion

Jesus criticized the leaders of the Pharisees for being lovers of money. He says that God knew what is in their hearts even though they hid it well from others. They knew all the right things from the religious laws and from the prophets. Yet they were still way off the mark from what true faithfulness looked like. Today we will look at how we know what we know about God and about how that knowledge comes to life in us.

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 Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty
(For music see Hymn 533 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **Open now thy gates of beauty,
Zion, let me enter there,
where my soul in joyful duty
waits for God who answers prayer.
Oh, how blessed is this place,
filled with solace, light, and grace!**
2. **Gracious God, I come before thee;
come thou also unto me;
where we find thee and adore thee,
there a heav'n on earth must be.
To my heart, oh, enter thou,
let it be thy temple now!**
3. **Here thy praise is gladly chanted,
here thy seed is duly sown;
let my soul, where it is planted,
bring forth precious sheaves alone,
so that all I hear may be
fruitful unto life in me.**
4. **Thou my faith increase and quicken,
let me keep thy gift divine;
how so e're temptations thicken,
may thy word sill o'er me shine
as my guiding star through life,
as my comfort in all strife.**
5. **Speak, O God, and I will hear thee,
let thy will be done indeed;
may I undisturbed draw near thee
while thou dost thy people feed.
Here of life the fountain flows;
here is balm for all our woes.**

Confession and Forgiveness

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection.

P: Most merciful God,

C: We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen

P: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

C: Amen

Hymn of Praise Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee
(For music, turn to Hymn 836 in the Red Hymnal)

1. Joyful, joyful we adore thee,
God of glory, Lord of love!
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee,
praising thee, their sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
drive the gloom of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day.
2. All thy works with joy surround thee,

earth and heav'n reflect thy rays,
stars and angels sing around thee,
center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird, and flowing fountain
call us to rejoice in thee.

3. Thou art giving and forgiving,
ever blessing, ever blest,
wellspring of the joy of living,
ocean depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our brother,
all who live in love are thine;
teach us how to love each other,
lift us to the joy divine!

©Text: Henry van Dyke, 1852-1933; Tune: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770-1827, adapt.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

O God, rich in mercy, you look with compassion on this troubled world.
Feed us with your grace, and grant us the treasure that comes only from
you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

First Reading Amos 6:1a, 4-7

B: Alas for those who are at ease in Zion,
and for those who feel secure on Mount Samaria,

⁴Alas for those who lie on beds of ivory,
and lounge on their couches,

and eat lambs from the flock,
and calves from the stall;

⁵who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp,
and like David improvise on instruments of music;

⁶who drink wine from bowls,
and anoint themselves with the finest oils,
but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!

⁷Therefore they shall now be the first to go into exile,
and the revelry of the loungers shall pass away.

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

C: Thanks be to God.

Scripture Poetry Psalm 146 (*read responsively*)

D: Hallelujah!

Praise the Lord, my heart! My whole life, give praise.

Let me sing to God as long as I live.

C: Never depend on rulers: born of earth, they cannot save.

They die, they turn to dust. That day, their plans crumble.

D: They are wise who depend on God, who look to Jacob's Lord,
creator of heaven and earth, maker of the teeming sea.

**C: The Lord keeps faith forever, giving food to the hungry,
justice to the poor, freedom to captives.**

D: The Lord opens blind eyes and straightens the bent,
comforting widows and orphans, protecting the stranger.

The Lord loves the just but blocks the path of the wicked.

**C: Zion, praise the Lord! Your God reigns forever,
from generation to generation. Hallelujah!**

Second Reading 1 Timothy 6:6-19

E: ⁶Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; ⁷for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; ⁸but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. ⁹But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

¹¹But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

¹³In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you ¹⁴to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵which he will bring about at the right time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. ¹⁶It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen. ¹⁷As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with

everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, ¹⁹thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

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

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (2 Corinthians 8:9)

C: Alleluia. You know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. Alleluia.

Gospel Reading Luke 16:19-31

The gospel is announced:

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 16th chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

¹⁴The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all this, and they ridiculed him. ¹⁵So he said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of others; but God knows your hearts; for what is prized by human beings is an abomination in the sight of God. ¹⁶“The law and the prophets were in effect until John came; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is proclaimed, and everyone tries to enter it by force. ¹⁷But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one stroke of a letter in the law to be dropped. ¹⁸“Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and whoever marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.

¹⁹“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. ²²The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴He called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.’ ²⁵But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. ²⁶Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.’ ²⁷He said, ‘Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father’s house— ²⁸for I have five

brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.’²⁹ Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.’³⁰ He said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’³¹ He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

After the reading:

P: The gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children’s Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord
(For music see Hymn 395 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord,
with all your graces now outpoured
on each believer’s mind and heart;
your fervent love to them impart.
Lord, by the brightness of your light
in holy faith your church unite;
from ev’ry land and ev’ry tongue,
this to your praise, O Lord, our God, be sung:
Alleluia! Alleluia!**
2. **Come, holy Light, guide divine,
now cause the word of life to shine.
Teach us to know our God aright
as loving Father, our delight.
From ev’ry error keep us free;
let none but Christ our teacher be,
that we in living faith abide,
in him, our Lord, with all our might confide.
Alleluia! Alleluia!**
3. **Come, holy Fire, comfort true,
grant us the will your work to do
and in your service to abide;
let trials turn us not aside.
Lord, by your pow’r prepare each heart
and to our weakness strength impart,**

**that bravely here we may contend,
through life and death to you, our Lord, ascend.
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Text: German hymn, 15th cent., st. 1: Martin Luther, 1483-1546, sts. 2-3 tr. composite. Music: *Enchiridion*, Erfurt, 1524

Apostles' Creed

P: We confirm our faith with the Apostles' Creed.

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.

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

During the offertory 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.

† MEAL †

Hymn of Thanksgiving Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful Lord

For music turn to page 35 in the Blue Hymnal

**Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,
and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.**

Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,

**that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and dreams of all;
unite them with the prayers we offer now.
Grace our table with your presence, Lord,
and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.**

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray: God of abundance:

C: you have set before us a plentiful harvest. As we feast on your goodness, strengthen us to labor in your field, and equip us to bear fruit for the good of all, 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, through our Savior Jesus of Nazareth; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with church of yesterday, today and tomorrow; and the church here in this place and all churches throughout the world, we praise your name and join 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, the Lord invites all people to the table.

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)

465 *As the Grains of Wheat (Red Hymnal)*

467 *We Place upon Your Table, Lord (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:

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us

through this gift in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: 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 The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve
(For music see Hymn 551 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **The Spirit sends us forth to serve;
we go in Jesus' name
to bring glad tidings to the poor,
God's favor to proclaim.**
2. **We go to comfort those who mourn
and set the burdened free;
where hope is dim, to share a dream
and help the blind to see.**
3. **We go to be the hands of Christ,
to scatter joy like seed
and, all our days, to cherish life,
to do the loving deed.**
4. **Then let us go to serve in peace,
the gospel to proclaim.
God's Spirit has empowered us;
we go in Jesus' name.**

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939. Copyright 1993 Delores Duffner admin. OCP Publications. Music: attr. Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: God's Work. Our Hands.

J.S. Bach
Fantasia super Komm, heiliger Geist
BWV 651



Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers Bruce and Connie Stevenson
Acolyte Charlotte Stroup
Altar Care Gary Boisseau
Communion Assistants Linda Flood
Counters John and Linda Thompson
Coffee Hour

Worship assistants for next Sunday, September 28

Greeters and Ushers Greg and Mary Zuege
Acolyte Elijah Young
Counters Michele Myers and Anne Stromstad
Coffee Hour

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