



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



Jacob's Homeward Journey

September 17, 2017 10:30 Holy Communion

A couple decades have passed since Jacob fled from home because his brother was plotting to kill him. Now he is returning home, and not just him. Now he has a family, servants, and wealth. The question is, how will his brother receive him? Jacob has doubts. Our reading today begins with Jacob being a coward. By the end of our reading Jacob will be a broken man, but a man with courage. For the first time in his life he acts with bravery and accepts responsibility for his actions.

Welcome to worship today!

If you are visiting with us we invite you to sign the Guest Book in the back of the sanctuary.

Nursery care is available during the service. Please see one of the ushers if you need more information.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Gathering Hymn Here in This Place
(For music turn to Hymn 532 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **Here in this place new light is streaming,
now is the darkness vanished away;
see in this space our fears and our dreamings
brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,
gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.**

2. **We are the young, our lives are a myst'ry,
we are the old who yearn for your face;
we have been sung throughout all of hist'ry,
called to be light to the whole human race.
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty,
gather us in, the proud and the strong;
give us a heart, so meek and so lowly,
give us the courage to enter the song.**

3. **Here we will take the wine and the water,
here we will take the bread of new birth,
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
call us anew to be salt for the earth.
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,
give us to eat the bread that is you;
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.**

4. **Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven, light years away—
here in this place the new light is shining,
now is the kingdom, and now is the day.
Gather us in and hold us forever,
gather us in and make us your own;
gather us in, all peoples together,
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.**

Apostles' Greeting

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.

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, the one who fashions us, the one who heals us, the one who reforms us again and again.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin, calling for God's transforming power.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

P: Source of all life,

C: we confess that we have not allowed your grace to set us free. We still fear that we are not good enough. We hear your word of love freely given to us, yet we expect others to earn it. We turn the church inward, rather than moving it outward. Forgive us. Stir us. Reform us to be a church powered by your will, willing to speak for what is right and work for what is just. Amen.

P: God hears our cry and sends the Spirit to change us and to empower our lives in the world. Our sins are forgiven and God continues to work in us. God's love is unconditional, and we are raised up as God's people who will always be made new, in the name of Jesus our Lord.

C: Amen.

Hymn of Praise Now the Feast and Celebration
(For music turn to Hymn 789 in the Blue Hymnal)

Refrain

**Now the feast and celebration,
all of creation sings for joy
to the God of life and love and freedom
praise and glory forevermore!**

- 1. Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain,
whose blood has freed and united us
to be one great people of God.** *Refrain*
- 2. Power and riches, wisdom and might,
all honor and glory to Christ forever.** *Refrain*
- 3. For God has come to dwell with us,
to make us people of God;
to make all things new.** *Refrain*

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

First Reading Genesis 32:1-33:17

Jacob went on his way and the angels of God met him; ²and when Jacob saw them he said, "This is God's camp!" So he called that place Mahanaim.

³Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, ⁴instructing them, "Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: Thus says your servant Jacob, 'I have lived with Laban as an alien, and stayed until now; ⁵and I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male and female slaves; and I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favor in your sight.'" ⁶The messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him."

⁷Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies, ⁸thinking, "If Esau comes to the one company and destroys it, then the company that is left will escape."

⁹And Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will do you good,' ¹⁰I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan; and now I have become two companies. ¹¹Deliver me, please, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I am afraid of him; he may come and kill us all, the mothers with the children. ¹²Yet you have said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted because of their number.'" ¹³So he spent that night there, and from what he had with him he took a present for his brother Esau, ¹⁴two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, ¹⁵thirty milch camels and their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. ¹⁶These he delivered into the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass on ahead of me, and put a space

between drove and drove.”¹⁷ He instructed the foremost, “When Esau my brother meets you, and asks you, ‘To whom do you belong? Where are you going? And whose are these ahead of you?’¹⁸ then you shall say, ‘They belong to your servant Jacob; they are a present sent to my lord Esau; and moreover he is behind us.’”¹⁹ He likewise instructed the second and the third and all who followed the droves, “You shall say the same thing to Esau when you meet him,²⁰ and you shall say, ‘Moreover your servant Jacob is behind us.’” For he thought, “I may appease him with the present that goes ahead of me, and afterwards I shall see his face; perhaps he will accept me.”²¹ So the present passed on ahead of him; and he himself spent that night in the camp.

²²The same night he got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok.²³ He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had.

²⁴Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak.²⁵ When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob’s hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him.²⁶ Then he said, “Let me go, for the day is breaking.” But Jacob said, “I will not let you go, unless you bless me.”²⁷ So he said to him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Jacob.”²⁸ Then the man said, “You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed.”²⁹ Then Jacob asked him, “Please tell me your name.” But he said, “Why is it that you ask my name?” And there he blessed him.³⁰ So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, “For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved.”³¹ The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip.³² Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the thigh muscle that is on the hip socket, because he struck Jacob on the hip socket at the thigh muscle.

Now Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming, and four hundred men with him. So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two maids.² He put the maids with their children in front, then Leah with her children, and Rachel and Joseph last of all.³ He himself went on ahead of them, bowing himself to the ground seven times, until he came near his brother.⁴ But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.

⁵When Esau looked up and saw the women and children, he said, “Who are these with you?” Jacob said, “The children whom God has graciously given your servant.”⁶ Then the maids drew near, they and their children, and bowed down; ⁷Leah likewise and her children drew near and bowed down; and finally Joseph and Rachel drew near, and they bowed down.⁸ Esau said, “What do you mean by all this company that I met?”

Jacob answered, “To find favor with my lord.”⁹ But Esau said, “I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself.”¹⁰ Jacob said, “No, please; if I find favor with you, then accept my present from my hand; for truly to see your face is like seeing the face of God—since you have received me with such favor.”¹¹ Please accept my gift that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have everything I want.” So he urged him, and he took it.¹² Then Esau said, “Let us journey on our way, and I will go alongside you.”¹³ But Jacob said to him, “My lord knows that the children are frail and that the flocks and herds, which are nursing, are a care to me; and if they are overdriven for one day, all the flocks will die.”¹⁴ Let my lord pass on ahead of his servant, and I will lead on slowly, according to the pace of the cattle that are before me and according to the pace of the children, until I come to my lord in Seir.”¹⁵ So Esau said, “Let me leave with you some of the people who are with me.” But he said, “Why should my lord be so kind to me?”¹⁶ So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir.¹⁷ But Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built himself a house, and made booths for his cattle; therefore the place is called Succoth.

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

C: Thanks be to God.

Scripture Poetry Psalm 143:7-12 (read responsively)

A: Answer me quickly, Lord.

My strength is spent.

Do not hide from me

or I will fall into the grave.

**C: Let morning announce your love,
for it is you I trust.**

Show me the right way,

I offer you myself.

A: Rescue me from my foes,
you are my only refuge, Lord.

**C: Teach me your will,
for you are my God.**

A: Graciously lead me, Lord,
on to level ground.

I call on your just name,

keep me safe, free from danger.

**C: In your great love for me,
disarm my enemies,
destroy their power,
for I belong to you.**

Gospel Acclamation (John 6:68)

C: Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

Gospel Reading Matthew 5:43-48

The gospel is announced:

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 5th chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

[Jesus taught] ⁴³“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. ⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

After the reading:

P: The gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children’s Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day Just a Closer Walk With Thee
(For music turn to Hymn 697 in the Red Hymnal)

Refrain

**Just a closer walk with thee,
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea,
Daily walking close to thee,
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.**

1. **I am weak, by thou art strong;
Jesus, keep me from all wrong;
I’ll be satisfied as long
as I walk, let me walk close to thee. Refrain**
2. **Through this world of toils and snares,
if I falter, Lord, who cares?
Who with me my burden shares?**

None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee. *Refrain*

3. **When my feeble life is o'er
time for me will be no more;
guide me gently, safely o'er
to thy kingdom shore, to thy shore.** *Refrain*

Text and music: North American traditional

Apostles' Creed

A: 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.**

Prayers of the Church

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 a sign of Christ's peace.

† MEAL †

Offering & Special Music

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

A: Let us pray: God of life,

C: you give us these gifts of the earth, these resources of our life and our labor. Take them, offered in great thanksgiving, and use them to set a table that will heal the whole creation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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: Speak to us, O Lord, in the breaking of the bread, and make us one with you.

Communion Distribution

Welcome to the Lord's Supper! All who are baptized are invited to receive communion. You will receive bread from the communion assistant. You may receive wine from either the common cup or in an individual glass. If you would like to receive in a glass please pick one up from the tray as you approach the altar rail. White grape juice is available in the individual glasses for those who do not wish to take wine. As we commune together everyone is invited to sing the following hymns:

Lamb of God (Page 39 of the Blue Hymnal)

461 All Who Hunger Gather Gladly (Red Hymnal)

496 One Bread, One Body (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 and compassionate God, in bread and wine you give us gifts that form us to be both humble and courageous. May your word come to life in our serving and in our witness, that we might speak a living voice of healing and justice to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our rock and our redeemer.

C: Amen.

‡ SENDING ‡

Blessing

P: God, creator of all things, speaking reformation into being; Jesus Christ, savior of the world, raising the dead; Holy Spirit, living voice, calling and enlightening the church: Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn My Life Flows On in Endless Song
(for music please turn to Hymn 763 in the Red Hymnal)

**1. My life flows on in endless song;
above earth's lamentation,
I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn
That hails a new creation.**

Refrain

**No storm can shake my inmost calm
while to that Rock I'm clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,
how can I keep from singing?**

2. Through all the tumult and the strife,

**I hear that music ringing.
It finds an echo in my soul.**

How can I keep from singing? *Refrain*

3. **What though my joys and comforts die?**
The Lord my Savior liveth.
What though the darkness gather round?
Songs in the night he giveth. *Refrain*
4. **The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,**
a fountain ever springing!
All things are mine since I am his!
How can I keep from singing? *Refrain*

Text and Music: Robert Lowry

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

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

Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers	Gay and John Card
Acolyte	Ally Buch
Altar Care	Liz Brown
Communion Assistants	Liz and Tim Brown
Nursery Care	Katy Stimmel
Counters	Nancy and Ivan Shuler
Coffee Hour	Sue Kaufmann

Worship assistants for next Sunday, September 10

Greeters and Ushers	Jack and Pat Hortop
Acolyte	Olivia DeLeon
Nursery Care	Beth Perdan
Counters	Bruce Boncke and Art Fields
Coffee Hour	Cassie Ross

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. Psalm from *The Psalter* copyright 1994, Liturgical Training Publications. Variable worship texts from *Sundays and Seasons 2017* copyright 2016 Augsburg Fortress.

St. John's Lutheran Church
 888 County Road 9, Victor, NY 14564
 stjohnsvictor.com (585) 924-5192
 The Rev. Jonathan Deibler, Pastor
 Heidi Griffith, Music Director