



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



The Golden Calf

Exodus 32:1-24

September 23, 2018

10:30 Service of the Word

In the excitement of a moment do you sometimes make a commitment you later break? Even though the Israelites promised loyalty to God, and the manna and quail arrive every day, they break their promises all too quickly. When Moses is on the mountain longer than they expect they take matters into their own hands. A golden calf is made as an object of worship. Though God becomes angry over this, the people are also given a path for restoration.

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

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 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 outward. Forgive us. Stir us. Reform us to be a church powered by love, willing to speak for what is right, act for what is just, and seek the healing of your whole creation. 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, 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.

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.**

Text and music: Marty Haugen; copyright 1982 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 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...

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

First Reading Exodus 32:1-24

A1: When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, “Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”² Aaron said to them, “Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.”³ So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron.⁴ He took the gold from them, formed it in a mold, and cast an image of a calf; and they said, “These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!”⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, “Tomorrow shall be a festival to the Lord.”⁶ They rose early the next day, and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.

A2: The Lord said to Moses, “Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely;⁸ they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’”⁹ The Lord said to Moses, “I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are.¹⁰ Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation.”¹¹ But Moses implored the Lord his God, and said, “O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?¹² Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people.¹³ Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, ‘I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.’”¹⁴ And the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

A3: Then Moses turned and went down from the mountain, carrying the two tablets of the covenant in his hands, tablets that were written on both sides, written on the front and on the back.¹⁶ The tablets were the work of

God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved upon the tablets. ¹⁷When Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, “There is a noise of war in the camp.” ¹⁸But he said, “It is not the sound made by victors, or the sound made by losers; it is the sound of revelers that I hear.” ¹⁹As soon as he came near the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses’ anger burned hot, and he threw the tablets from his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. ²⁰He took the calf that they had made, burned it with fire, ground it to powder, scattered it on the water, and made the Israelites drink it.

²¹Moses said to Aaron, “What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?” ²²And Aaron said, “Do not let the anger of my lord burn hot; you know the people, that they are bent on evil. ²³They said to me, ‘Make us gods, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ ²⁴So I said to them, ‘Whoever has gold, take it off’; so they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!”

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

C: Thanks be to God.

Scripture Poetry Psalm 106: 6, 19-23, 47 (*Read responsively*)

A: Like our ancestors we sinned,
we acted badly, wickedly.

**C: They fashioned a calf at Horeb,
bowed low and worshiped it.**

A: They traded their God
for a grass-chewing idol.

**C: They forgot God, their savior,
the One who gave signs in Egypt,
marvels in the land of Pharaoh,
and terror at the Red Sea,**

A: the One who would have destroyed them,
had not Moses, God’s chosen one,
stood alone before him,
deflecting the divine wrath.

**C: Lord our God, save us.
Gather us from the nations
to give thanks to your holy name
and rejoice in praising you.**

Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 5:12-24

¹²But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; ¹³esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. ¹⁴And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. ¹⁵See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all.

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil. ²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

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

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (John 15:9)

C: Alleluia. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. Alleluia.

Gospel Reading John 15:4-11

The gospel is announced:

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 15th chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

[Jesus said] Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

⁹As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

After the reading:

P: The gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Hymn of the Day Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me
(For music turn to Hymn 623 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
let me hide myself in thee;
let the water and the blood,
from thy riven side which flowed,
be of sin the double cure;
cleans me from its guilt and pow'r.**
2. **Not the labors of my hands
can fulfill thy law's demands;
could my zeal no respite know,
could my tears forever flow,
all for sin could not atone;
thou my save, and thou alone.**
3. **Nothing in my hand I bring;
simply to thy cross I cling.
Naked, come to thee for dress;
helpless, look to thee for grace;
foul, I to the fountain fly;
wash me, Savior, or I die.**
4. **While I draw this fleeting breath,
when mine eyelids close in death,
when I soar to worlds unknown,
see thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
let me hide myself in thee.**

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 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

A: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

A: Let us share that peace with one another.

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

† THANKSGIVING †

Offering & Special Music

Hymn of Thanksgiving As the offering is brought forward the congregation sings:

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

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 Light. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

A: 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: God, creator of all things, speaking reformation into being;
Jesus the 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 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***

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: God's Work. Our Hands.

Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers	Mike and Bettina Kalish
Acolyte	Katya Kurilovitch
Nursery Care	Beth Perdan
Counters	Tim Brown and Bill Hagerman
Coffee Hour	Boisseaus and Hendersons

Worship assistants for next Sunday, September 30, 2018

Greeters and Ushers	Linda and John Thompson
Acolyte	Viala Wagner
Altar Care	Linda Thompson
Communion Assistants	Tim and Liz Brown
Nursery Care	Katy Stimmel
Counters	Nancy and Ivan Shuler
Coffee Hour	Connie Stevenson and Pat CiPollina

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