



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



The 13th Sunday After Pentecost

August 18, 2024

10:30 Service of the Word

Ecclesiastes could be the most depressing book in the scripture. It questions the meaning of life and the point of everything we do. It questions the fundamentals of fairness and justice. What has lasting value? What should we apply ourselves to in our short span of life? Yes, it can all be depressing. But ultimately Ecclesiastes points us to trust in God and know that all things are in God's hands.

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 shown in the nursery.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Opening Dialog

P: O Lord, open my lips,

C: and my mouth shall declare your praise.

P: Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, O God.

C: that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

P: Praise to the blest and holy Trinity, one God,

C: who gives us life, salvation, and resurrection.

Psalmody Psalm 95:1-7

P: Give glory to God, our light and our life.

C: O come, let us worship him!

O come, let us sing to the Lord;

let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

For the Lord is a great God,

and a great King above all gods.

In his hands are the depths of the earth;

the heights of the mountains are his also.

The sea is his, for he made it,

and the dry land, which his hands have formed.

P: Give glory to God, our light and our life.

C: O come, let us worship him!

Gathering Hymn O Christ the Same
(For music see Hymn 778 in the Blue Hymnal)

1. **O Christ the same, through all our story's pages
our loves and hopes, our failures and our fears;
eternal Lord, the king of all the ages,
unchanging still amid the passing years:
O living Word, the source of all creation,
who spread the skies and set the start ablaze;
O Christ the same, who wrought our whole salvation
we bring our thanks for all our yesterdays.**

2. **O Christ the same, the friend of sinners, sharing
our inmost thoughts, the secrets none can hide;
still as of old upon your body bearing
the marks of love in triumph glorified:
O Son of Man, who stooped for us from heaven
O Prince of life, in all your saving power;
O Christ the same, to whom our hearts are given:
we bring our thanks for this the present hour.**

3. **O Christ the same, secure within whose keeping
our lives and loves, our days and years remain;
our work and rest, our waking and our sleeping,
our calm and storm, our pleasure and our pain:
O Lord of love, for all our joys and sorrows,
for all our hopes when earth shall fade and flee;
O Christ the same, beyond our brief tomorrows,
we bring our thanks for all that is to be.**

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, b. 1926. Music: Irish tune, arr. John Barhard, b. 1948. Text and arr. copyright 1982 Hope Publishing Co.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

By your word, eternal God, your creation sprang forth, and we were given the breath of life. By your word, eternal God, death is overcome, Christ is raised from the tomb, and we are given new life in the power of your Spirit. May we boldly proclaim this good news in our words and our deeds, rejoicing always in your powerful presence, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

Responsive Scripture Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

B: For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

²a time to be born, and a time to die;

C: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

B: ³a time to kill, and a time to heal;

C: a time to break down, and a time to build up;

B: ⁴a time to weep, and a time to laugh;

C: a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

B: ⁵a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

C: a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

B: ⁶a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away;

C: ⁷a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

B: ⁸a time to love, and a time to hate;

C: a time for war, and a time for peace.

First Reading Ecclesiastes 3:9-22

D: ⁹What gain have the workers from their toil? ¹⁰I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. ¹¹He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. ¹²I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; ¹³moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil. ¹⁴I know that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has done this, so that all should stand in awe before him. ¹⁵That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already is; and God seeks out what has gone by.

¹⁶Moreover I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, wickedness was there, and in the place of righteousness, wickedness was there as well. ¹⁷I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for he has appointed a time for every matter, and for every work. ¹⁸I said in my heart with regard to human beings that God is testing them to show that they are but animals. ¹⁹For the fate of humans and the fate of animals is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and humans have no advantage over the animals; for all is vanity. ²⁰All go to one place; all are from the dust, and all turn to dust again. ²¹Who knows whether the human spirit goes upward and the spirit of animals

goes downward to the earth? ²²So I saw that there is nothing better than that all should enjoy their work, for that is their lot; who can bring them to see what will be after them?

After the reading the reader may say: You have been born anew

C: through the living and abiding Word of God.

Gospel Acclamation (Proverbs 9:10)

C: Alleluia. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. 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.

⁴⁴Then 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.

Sermon

Hymn of the Day How Small Our Span of Life
(For music see Hymn 636 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **How small our span of life, O God,
our years from birth till death:
a single beat within the heart,
the catching of a breath,
a drop within the ocean's deep,
a grain upon the shore,
a flash of light before we sleep
to see the sun no more.**

2. **And yet our speck of life is spanned
by your infinity;
our tick of time on earth is caught
in your eternity.
While suns and stars spin endlessly
through depths of cosmic space,
while aeons roll and ages pass,
you hold us in your grace.**

3. **O Christ, you left eternity
to plunge in time's swift stream,
to share the shortness of our span,
our mortal lives redeem.
You filled your cross-closed years with love;
you loved us to the end
and touch us with your risen life
that ours may time transcend.**

4. **We thank you, God, for kindling faith
that lights our transient years,
illuminating our pilgrimage
through mists of doubt and fears;
for hope that sees a life beyond
the swiftly passing days;
for love, both human and divine,
that lifts our hearts to praise.**

Gospel Canticle (Based on "The Song of Zechariah, Luke 1:68-79)

P: Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel.

C: You have come to your people and set them free.

P: You have raised up for us a mighty Savior,

C: born of the house of your servant David.

P: Through your holy prophets you promised of old to save us from our enemies,

C: and to remember your holy covenant.

P: This is the oath you swore to our father Abraham:

C: to set us free from the hands of our enemies.

P: Free to worship you without fear,

C: holy and righteous in your sight, all the days of our lives.

P: And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,

C: for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way.

P: To give the people knowledge of salvation

C: and the forgiveness of sins.

P: In the tender compassion of our God,

C: the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

P: to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,

C: and to guide our feet in to the way of peace.

Prayers

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray:

P: Mighty God of mercy, we thank you for the resurrection dawn, bringing the glory of our risen Lord who makes every day new.

Especially we thank you:

for the sustaining goodness of your creation

for the new creation in Christ and all gifts of healing and forgiveness

for the gifts of relationship with others

for the communion of faith in your church.

Merciful God of might, renew this weary world, heal the hurts of all your children, and bring about your peace for all in Christ Jesus, the saving Lord.

Especially we pray:

for those who govern the nations of the world

for the people in countries ravaged by strife or warfare.

for all who work for peace and international harmony

for all who strive to save the earth from carelessness and destruction

for the church of Jesus Christ in every land.

Almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome in adversity. In all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

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 ✠

Special Music

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.

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: Let us bless the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

P: Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn Go, My Children, with My Blessing
(For music see Hymn 543 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **“Go, my children, with my blessing,
never alone.
Waking, sleeping, I am with you,
you are my own.
In my love’s baptismal river
I have made you mine forever.
Go, my children, with my blessing,
you are my own.”**

2. **“Go, my children, sins forgiven,
at peace and pure.
Here you learned how much I love you,
what I can cure.
Here you heard my dear Son’s story,
here you touched him, saw his glory.
Go, my children, sins forgiven,
at peace and pure.”**

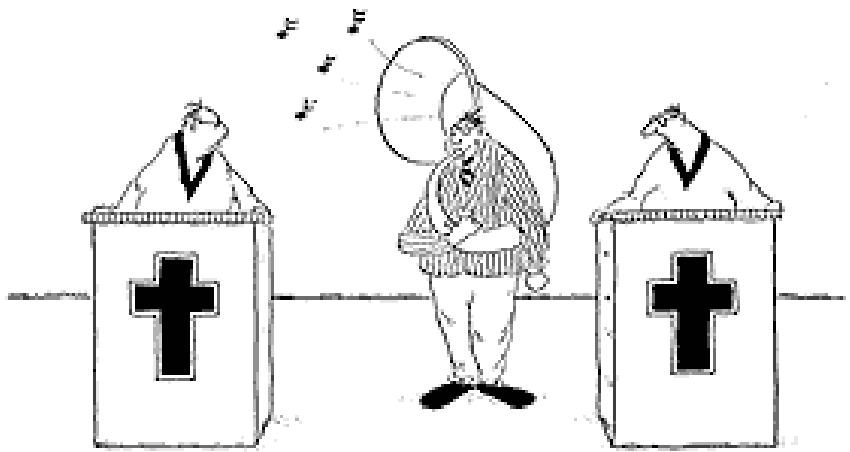
3. **“Go, my children, fed and nourished,
closer to me.
Grow in love and love by serving,
joyful and free.
Here my Spirit’s power filled you,
here my tender comfort stilled you.
Go, my children, fed and nourished,
joyful and free.”**

Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, b. 1919, alt. Copyright 1983 Concordia Publishing House. Music: Welsh traditional; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958, Copyright Oxford University Press

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **God’s Work. Our Hands.**



thePenguin

"The organist called in sick so I had to get a last minute replacement."

Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers Tom and Carol Urbanic
Acolyte Alyssa Young
Counters Mary and Greg Zuege
Coffee Hour Watermelon

Worship assistants for next Sunday, August 18

Greeters and Ushers
Acolyte Thomas Bullwinkle
Counters Bill and Katy Stimmel
Coffee Hour

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