**St. John’s Lutheran Church­­­­­­**

**Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

**October 4, 2020**

**GATHERING** Gather and troubleshoot Emily Volland, Host

Prelude: Where He Leads

**WELCOME:** Pastor Peter

**CONFESSION** **AND FORGIVENESS:** AM - Barbie Pietz

P: Blessed be the Holy Trinity, ☩ one God,

who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

**Amen.**

AM: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Faithful God,

**have mercy on us.**

**We confess that we are captive to sin**

**and cannot free ourselves.**

**We turn from your loving embrace**

**and go our own ways.**

**We pass judgment on one another**

**before examining ourselves.**

**We place our own needs before those of our neighbors.**

**We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves.**

**Make us humble, cast away our transgressions,**

**and turn us again to life in you**

**through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

AM: God hears the cries of all who call out in need,

and through Jesus’ death and resurrection,

Christ has made us God’s own.

Hear the truth that God proclaims:

P: Your sins are forgiven in the name of ☩ Jesus Christ.

Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness

to do God’s work in the world. **Amen.**

**OPENING SONG**: Seek Ye First – Alice Gould & Winnie Severson

**GREETING:**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

**FIRST READING:** Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 19-21 Reader – Victor Forberger

Then God spoke all these words:

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work.

Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

You shall not covet your neighbour’s house; you shall not covet your neighbour’s wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Moses, ‘You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die.’ Moses said to the people, ‘Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin.’ Then the people stood at a distance, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## Second Reading Philippians 3:4b-14

Even though I, too, have reason for confidence in the flesh.

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on towards the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

**GOSPEL:** Matthew 21:33-46 Pastor Peter

‘Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.” But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.” So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?’ They said to him, ‘He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.’

Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the scriptures:  
“The stone that the builders rejected  
 has become the cornerstone;  
this was the Lord’s doing,  
and it is amazing in our eyes”?  
Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.’

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**

**SERMON:** Pastor Peter

**HYMN OF THE DAY**: Trust In You

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (unison)

We believe in a loving God,  
who is life’s breath for all of earth’s creatures,  
who is the ground in which our lives flourish,  
who is the mystery toward which we are drawn.

We believe in the risen Christ,  
whose life is the way we see God made real,

whose death bears witness to the power of love,  
whose presence nourishes our spirits each day.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
who flows as a refreshing spring of life,  
who comes as divine fire to energize the faithful,  
who creates communities of joy and justice.

(Permission is granted to use or adapt these words in worship with credit noted)

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**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:** (congregation offers prays and end with, “God in your mercy”, the rest of us will reply, “Receive our Prayer”)

**PEACE:**

**LIFE TOGETHER:**  Blessing of Animals – Slide Show

**EUCHARISTIC PRAYER** – From Seasons of Creation

P: It is right to give you thanks, loving Creator.

Your Word is the impulse for all things to be,

for space, stars and stardust to appear,

for Earth to emerge from the deep,

for life to be born of Earth and

for humans to be born of Earth and the Spirit.

AM: You chose to be born a human being,

to become a part of Earth,

to suffer, die and rise from death

to redeem humankind, renew creation,

and affirm all born of Earth and the Spirit.

P: Your presence is the living impulse in all things,

the Christ deep among us,

filling Earth—land, sea and air;

filling every element and place;

filling the grain and the grape

we share with you this day.

AM: Therefore with angels and archangels,

ancient voices in the forest,

high voices from the sky,

deep voices from the sea

and the whole company of creation,

we proclaim your presence among us

All: **Holy, holy, holy, God of all life,**

**Earth and sea and sky**

**and all things that exist**

**are full of your presence**

**and glorify your name. Amen**

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**: Have bread/cracker and wine/juice available at your home for communion

**LORD’S PRAYER:**

**Our Father/Mother 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.**

**DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION**

**POST COMMUNION BLESSING:**

**POST COMMUNION PRAYER**: AM: We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare, the body and blood of Christ. Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven,

into your beloved world to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst, guided by the example of Jesus Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

**BENEDICTION – from St. Francis**

P: May God bless us with **discomfort** at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that we may live deep within our hearts.

AM: May God bless us with **anger** at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that we may work for justice, freedom, and peace.

P: May God bless us with **tears** to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, hunger, and war, so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and turn their pain into joy.

AM: And may God bless us with enough **foolishness** to believe that we can make a difference in this world, so that we can do what others claim cannot be done, to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.

**SENDING SONG:**  The Lord Now Sends Us Forth – last page

**DISMISSAL**: AM - Go in peace. Share the good news.

**We will. Thanks be to God.**

