

9:00 A.M., SUNDAY, AUGUST 29, 2021



Jesus protests against human customs being given the weight of divine law, while the essence of God's law is ignored. True uncleanness comes not from external things, but from the intentions of the human heart. Last week Jesus told us "the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (John 6:63). Now James says God has given us birth by the word of truth. We who were washed in the word when we were born in the font return to it every Sunday to ask God to create in us clean hearts.

Welcome to guests and visitors! *This pamphlet will guide your worship today. The assembly's parts are indicated by **☐** and bold font. The vertical line in the left margin indicates when the assembly stands as each is able.*

About Holy Communion with Saint John Lutheran Church: "It is taught that the true body and blood of Christ are truly present under the form of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper and are distributed and received there" (Augsburg Confession, Article X). "A person who has faith in these words, 'given for you' and 'shed for you for the forgiveness of sins,' is really worthy and well prepared." "Forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are given to us in the sacrament" (The Small Catechism, Part VI). "This church practices Eucharistic hospitality. All baptized persons are welcomed to Communion" (The Use of the Means of Grace, Principle 50).

Guest Preacher & Presider: Rev. Mary Pharmer Accompanist: Ellen Westlund

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

☐ Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

☐ Amen.

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Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
The assembly kneels or stands. Silence is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God,

**☩ 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.**

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.

☩ Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *For the Beauty of the Earth* (ELW # 879:1, 4-5)

**1 For the beauty of the earth,
for the beauty of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies:
Christ, our God, to thee we raise
this our sacrifice of praise.**

**4 For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth and friends above;
for all gentle thoughts and mild:**

**Christ, our God, to thee we raise
this our sacrifice of praise.**

**5 For each perfect gift of thine,
peace on earth and joy in heav'n;
for thyself, best gift divine,
to our world so freely giv'n:
Christ, our God, to thee we raise
this our sacrifice of praise.**

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

☩ And also with you.

KYRIE

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

☩ Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation,
let us pray to the Lord.

☩ Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of
God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

☩ Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord.

☩ Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

☩ Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

☩ And also with you.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

O God our strength, without you we are weak and wayward creatures. Protect us from all dangers that attack us from the outside, and cleanse us from all evil that arises from within ourselves, that we may be preserved through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

☩ Amen.

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

¹So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. ²You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God with which I am charging you.

⁶You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!" ⁷For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is whenever we call to him? ⁸And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today?

⁹But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children.

The word of the Lord.

☩ Thanks be to God.

PSALMODY: Psalm 15

¹Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle?
Who may abide upon your holy hill?

**☩ ²Whoever leads a blameless life and does what is right,
who speaks the truth from his heart,**

³there is no guile upon his tongue; he does no evil to his friend;
he does not heap contempt upon his neighbor.

**☩ ⁴In his sight the wicked is rejected,
but he honors those who fear the Lord.**

⁵He has sworn to do no wrong and does not take back his word.

**☩ ⁶He does not give his money in hope of gain,
nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.**

⁷Whoever does these things shall never be overthrown.

**☩ Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle?
Who may abide upon your holy hill?**

SECOND READING: James 1:17-27

¹⁷Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

¹⁹You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. ²¹Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

²²But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. ²³For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; ²⁴for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. ²⁵But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

²⁶If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

The word of the Lord.

☩ Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The nations will fear the name of the Lord,

☩ and all the kings of the earth your glory.

For the Lord will build up Zion;

☩ he will appear in his glory.

Alleluia. God gave us birth by the word of truth

☩ so that we would become a kind of first fruits of creation. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

The holy gospel according to Mark.

☩ Glory to you, O Lord.

¹Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus, ²they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. ³(For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; ⁴and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) ⁵So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?” ⁶He said to them, “Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

‘This people honors me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
⁷in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.’

⁸You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

¹⁴Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.”

²¹For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, ²²adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. ²³All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

The gospel of the Lord.

☩ Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Silence for reflection may follow the sermon.

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil* (ELW # 512)

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.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

☞ And also with you.

The assembly remains in place, as the service continues.

APOSTLES' CREED

God has made us God's people through our baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**☞ 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

Each petition ends: Lord, in your mercy,

☞ hear our prayer.

The prayers conclude: Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

☞ Amen.

OFFERING PRESENTATION

Offerings are received at the door as one enters. The offering is presented for the work of Christ's Church, here and throughout the world. The following is sung during the presentation.

OFFERTORY SONG: *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful* (ELW # 184)

**☞ 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 the dreams of all;
unite them with the prayers we offer.
Grace our table with your presence,
and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.**

OFFERING PRAYER

At the conclusion, the assembly responds:

☞ Amen.

The table is set.

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

☞ And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

☞ We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

☞ It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

The minister continues, concluding: ... and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS: Holy, Holy, Holy (ELW p. 153)

**☩ Holy, holy, holy Lord,
Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heav'n 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.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God. . . .

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

☩ Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.

☩ Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**☩ Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

☩ Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION SONG: *Lamb of God (Agnus Dei)* (ELW p. 154)

**☞ Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace, grant us peace.**

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Please remain seated where you are. The communion elements will be brought to you. The host is received in your open hand. The wine is received by individual glass, taken from by you the offered tray. Carefully place your empty glass in the pickup tray.

BLESSING & POST-COMMUNION PSALM (71)

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

☞ Amen.

In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;

☞ let me never be ashamed.

In your righteousness, deliver me and set me free;

☞ incline your ear to me and save me.

Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe;

☞ you are my crag and my stronghold.

For you are my hope, O Lord God,

☞ my confidence since I was young.

I have been sustained by you ever since I was born;

☞ my praise shall be always of you.

Do not cast me off in my old age;

☞ forsake me not when my strength fails.

O God, be not far from me;

☞ come quickly to help me, O my God.

But I shall always wait in patience,
☞ and shall praise you more and more.

My lips will sing with joy when I pray to you,
☞ and so will my soul, which you have redeemed.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
☞ as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

At the conclusion, the assembly responds:

☞ Amen.

BLESSING

Response after the blessing:

☞ Amen.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please check web-sites and printed materials for further information.

SENDING SONG: *Let Justice Flow like Streams* (ELW # 717)

**1 Let justice flow like streams
of sparkling water, pure,
enabling growth, refreshing life,
abundant, cleansing, sure.**

**2 Let righteousness roll on
as others' cares we heed,
an ever-flowing stream of faith
translated into deed.**

**3 So may God's plumb line, straight,
define our measure true,
and justice, right, and peace pervade
this world our whole life through.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

☞ Thanks be to God.

Hearts in Need

In today's gospel, the Pharisees ask Jesus why his disciples do not wash their hands prior to eating. This question might sound strange to those of us accustomed to antibacterial soap! The question, though, is not one of hygiene, but of religious practice. As Jesus points out in his response, practices around handwashing are more about ritual and tradition than they are about cleanliness. Make no mistake: the traditions and rituals that developed over generations were derived from and were attempts to follow the laws God had given the Jewish people in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. But by quoting the prophet Isaiah (Mark 7:6-8), Jesus bluntly tells the Pharisees that if their hearts remain far from God, then all the handwashing and tradition-following in the world is worthless.

It isn't wrong to practice ritual and tradition. In fact, it is good and right to seek to obey God's word, such as the directives we find in the Ten Commandments. But thinking we can be true to God's will through our own willpower will never succeed because, as Jesus tells us, going through the motions of ritual will not cleanse our hearts from sin. We cannot fix our own hearts. We cannot stop sinning of our own accord. Only God makes it possible for us to obey God's will. Jesus' message to the Pharisees is his message to us: our hearts are unclean and in need of his grace and forgiveness. The good news is that he comes to do exactly that. In the waters of baptism, in the words of absolution, in the bread and wine become body and blood, your heart is made clean and brought back to God. You, beloved child of God, are free and undefiled.