**WELCOME TO WORSHIP**

at

***St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church***

**a reconciling in Christ congregation**



**Eighth Sunday of Pentecost**

July 26, 2020

**Pastor:** The Reverend Susan D. Ruggles

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**Guest and Visitor Information**

**Welcome** . . . We are grateful that you have come to tune in with us this morning.  It is our hope that you experience the love of Christ this morning and the presence of God during our worship.

***Statement of Welcome***

*There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.—*Galatians 3:28

As a community of God striving to be open to all people, we at St. John’s Lutheran Congregation believe that the gospel is God’s gift to all people, to be shared unconditionally. We welcome all to join us as we struggle to better understand the mysteries of God’s teachings. We are challenged by Christ to care for, to love, to understand, and to listen to each other, regardless of race, age, gender, marital status, physical and mental abilities, sexual/affectional orientation, national origin or economic status. We celebrate together our unity as God’s people. St. John’s Lutheran Congregation is a place for each person to shine in their own unique gifts.



***Statement of Mission***

St. John’s Lutheran Church is a downtown, community-oriented, congregation of Christians. We worship God, strive to welcome and wholly accept everyone, and reach out with and in God’s love.

**Gathering**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

***Announcements***

***Prelude***

***\*Confession and Forgiveness***

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**

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

*(Let us silently pray the Confession together*

*as it is read by the Pastor.)*

C: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.

P: Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen**

***\*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.**

***\*Kyrie***  *(sung by Pastor & Vicar)*



***Prayer of the Day***

A: Let us pray. Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen**

**Word**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

***First Lesson*  1 Kings 3:5-12**

At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, “Ask what I should give you.” 6And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. 7And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. 8And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. 9Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?”  
  10It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. 11God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, 12I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.”

A: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God**

***Psalm* 119:129-136** *(Read Responsively, leave your mask on)*

129Your decrees are wonderful;  
therefore I obey them with all my heart.

130**When your word is opened it gives light;**  
**it gives understanding to the simple.**

131I open my mouth and pant  
because I long for your commandments.

132**Turn to me and be gracious to me,**  
**as you always do to those who love your name.**

133Order my footsteps in your word;  
let no iniquity have dominion over me.

134**Rescue me from those who oppress me,**  
**and I will keep your commandments.**

135Let your face shine up-on your servant  
and teach me your statutes.

136**My eyes shed streams of tears,**  
**because people do not keep your teaching.**

***Second Lesson*  Romans 8:26-39**

26The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. 27And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.  
  28We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. 29For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. 30And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.  
  31What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? 33Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. 34Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. 35Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36As it is written,   
 “For your sake we are being killed all day long;  
  we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”  
37No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

A: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

***Gospel*****Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 13th chapter.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

1[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;32it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”  
  33He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”  
  44“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.  
  45“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; 46on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.  
  47“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; 48when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. 49So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous 50and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.  
  51“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” 52And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you**, **O Christ.**

**Homily *–*** The Reverend Susan D. Ruggles

*(Please pause for a moment of silence / reflection)*

***Apostles Creed***

**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***

A: Merciful God, your word gives light and understanding. Increase our understanding and awe of your creation. Help your church be witness to the surprising ways you encounter us in daily life. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: Merciful God, your spirit helps us in weakness. Help us when we do not know how to pray. Give comfort to the dying, refuge to the weary, justice to those who are oppressed, and healing to the sick including those on our prayer list . . . and those we name aloud or in our hearts. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: Merciful God, you show steadfast love. Help this congregation be both in asking for what it needs. Refresh us with new dreams of being your people in this place and time. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

*(Here other intercessions may be offered.)*

A: In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

***\*The Sharing of the Peace***

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

*(Please gesture to others near you as a sign of peace.)*

**Meal**

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

***\*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.**

***Preface*** *(Pastor continues … )*

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 Christ;

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 all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**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.**

***Communion Form*** *(Pastor continues … )*

***The Lord’s Prayer***

**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.**

***Holy Communion***

*\*Please remain seated, a pre-filled communion set*

*will be offered to you in your pew.*

*(Grape juice and wheat wafer, please ask for gluten free if necessary.)*

*\*\*Communion is a time for silent meditation.*

***Post Communion Prayer***

P: Let us pray. Gracious God, in this meal we have feasted on your goodness and have been united by your presence among us. Empower us to go forth sustained by these gifts so that we may share your neighborly love with all, through Jesus Christ, the giver of abundant life.

**C: Amen.**

**Sending**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

***Blessing***

P: God, the Source of glory,

God, the Word of life,

God, the Spirit of truth + bless you all,

now and forever.

**C: Amen. Thanks be to God.**

***Postlude***

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