



August 25, 2024

**14th Sunday after Pentecost
Service of Holy Communion**

In today's gospel many people take offense at Jesus' invitation to eat his flesh and drink his blood; even many of Jesus' disciples peel off. This is the backdrop in John's gospel for Peter's confession of faith. "To whom can we go?" asks Peter, in words we sometimes sing just before the gospel is read. "You have the words of eternal life." In order to take such a stand, as Peter and Joshua did, Paul tells us to arm ourselves with the word of God. We pray in the Spirit that we might be bold ambassadors of the gospel.

+GATHERING+

The Holy Spirit calls us together as people of God.

WELCOME

PRELUDE *Schmücke Dich* (Now We Join in Celebration)
Arr. David Cherwien

Confession and Forgiveness

The assembly stands. *All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
the God of manna,
the God of miracles,
the God of mercy.

Amen.

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance,
let us confess our sin.
Silence is kept for reflection.

God, our provider,
help us.

**It is hard to believe there is enough to share.
We question your ways when they differ from the ways
of the world in which we live.
We turn to our own understanding
rather than trusting in you.
We take offense at your teachings and your ways.
Turn us again to you.
Where else can we turn?
Share with us the words of eternal life**

and feed us for life in the world.

Amen.

Beloved people of God:

in Jesus, the manna from heaven,
you are fed and nourished.

By Jesus, the worker of miracles,
there is always more than enough.

Through Jesus, † the bread of life,
you are shown God's mercy:

you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN When Morning Gilds the Skies ELW 853

- 1 When morning gilds the skies,
 my heart awaking cries:
 may Jesus Christ be praised!
 When evening shadows fall,
 this rings my curfew call:
 may Jesus Christ be praised!

- 2 When mirth for music longs,
 this is my song of songs:
 may Jesus Christ be praised!
 God's holy house of prayer
 has none that can compare
 with "Jesus Christ be praised!"

- 3 No lovelier antiphon
 in all high heav'n is known
 than "Jesus Christ be praised!"
 There to the eternal Word
 the eternal psalm is heard:

oh, Jesus Christ be praised!

- 4 Let all of humankind
in this their concord find:
may Jesus Christ be praised!
Let all the earth around
ring joyous with the sound:
may Jesus Christ be praised!
- 5 Sing, sun and stars of space,
sing, all who see his face,
sing, "Jesus Christ be praised!"
God's whole creation o'er,
today and evermore
shall Jesus Christ be praised!

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY.

Let us pray.

Holy God, your word feeds your people with life that is eternal. Direct our choices and preserve us in your truth, that, renouncing what is false and evil, we may live in you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen

+WORD+

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

FIRST READING**Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18**

In the Near East, covenant means "agreement" or "alliance." It describes relationships and is the primary word used to characterize the relationship between God and Israel. By delivering Israel, God has already begun the relationship. Joshua calls upon the people to respond.

A reading from Joshua.

¹ Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. ^{2a} And Joshua said to all the people, ¹⁴ "Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵ Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

¹⁶ Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷ for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; ¹⁸ and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God."

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

PSALM**Psalm 34:15-22 (Read responsively by verse)**

¹⁵ The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous,
and God's ears are open to their cry.

¹⁶ **The face of the LORD is against those who do evil,**

to erase the remembrance of them from the earth.

¹⁷The righteous cry, and the LORD hears them and delivers them from all their troubles.

¹⁸**The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves those whose spirits are crushed.**

¹⁹Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the LORD delivers them from every one.

²⁰**God will keep safe all their bones; not one of them shall be broken.**

²¹Evil will bring death to the wicked and those who hate the righteous will be punished.

²²**O LORD, you redeem the life of your servants, and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.**

SECOND READING Ephesians 6:10-20

Like a general giving a rousing speech to troops before battle, this letter closes by calling on Christians to be equipped for spiritual warfare against evil. The full armor of God includes truth, righteousness, peace, faith, the gift of salvation, and the word of God inspired by the Spirit.

A reading from Ephesians.

¹⁰Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸ Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW 175

We all sing

The image shows a musical score for the Alleluia acclamation. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The first system has the lyrics "Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia." written below the vocal line. The second system also has the lyrics "Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia." written below the vocal line. The piano accompaniment is written in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The vocal line is written in treble clef. The music is in a simple, hymn-like style with a steady rhythm.

Lord, to whom I shall we go?* You have the words of eternal life.
Repeat Alleluia.

GOSPEL **John 6:56-69**

The "hard saying" that offends Jesus' disciples is his claim that his followers must eat his flesh and drink his blood. The followers who return to their old lives know something about how odd this sounds. Simon Peter, on the other hand, knows something about the scarcity of living, gracious words. He asks the most important question: "To whom shall we go?"

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said,] ⁵⁶ "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever." ⁵⁹ He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰ When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" ⁶¹ But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? ⁶² Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³ It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴ But among you there are some who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. ⁶⁵ And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father."

⁶⁶ Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷ So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY **Eat This Bread, Drink This Cup** ELW 492

Refrain

Eat this bread, drink this cup.
Taste and see the goodness of God.
Bread of life, cup of love,
we rejoice in your presence.

- 1 I will bless the Lord at all times,
praise with heart and voice;
in my God I glory forever:
listen and rejoice! *Refrain*
- 2 Look upon the Lord, be radiant,
never turn away.
God will save in ev'ry affliction,
hear us when we pray. *Refrain*
- 3 Angels fold their wings around us,
guard through good and ill.
Those who seek the Lord will lack nothing;
taste, and have your fill. *Refrain*
- 4 Saints of God, bow down and worship,
bless the holy name.
Rise to tell God's greatness forever,
wondrous deeds proclaim! *Refrain*

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 Calling on the spirit of Wisdom to guide our hearts and our minds, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

A Holy God, you have the words of eternal life. Lead the church to put its trust in Jesus, the living Word. Direct preachers, teachers, writers, and all the baptized in faithful speech and bold witness.
 Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A Creator God, we and all creation are sustained by your Word. We pray for all who remind us of our interconnectedness with all living things. Prosper the work of conservation organizations, ELCA advocacy, and local climate justice advocates.
Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A God of wisdom, as our nation navigates another election cycle, guide our leaders to act justly for the sake of the world. Bring about fruitful conversation among your people and bring about change where you see fit. Sustain all who serve on juries in their deliberations.
Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A God of restoration, bring healing and wholeness to all who cry to you. Where pain is sharp, bring a sense of comfort and relief. Where grief runs deep, bring your tender mercy. Care for those on our hearts, especially Freda, Sandy, Lori, Nancy, Charlie, Susan, Patricia, Rusty, Nancy, Jean, Terry, Lee, Denise, Larry, Patti, Bob, Joan, Ann, Pamela, Bill, Marge, Donna, Marge, Callum, Krista, Paul, Charles, Steven, Tracey, Johanna, Carole, John, Todd, and those we name before you, on our lips or in the silence of our hearts.

(Pause for silence)

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A God of new life, be with teachers and students as they begin a new year of learning and growth in the days ahead. Inspire and nurture them with new knowledge and understanding. Help them discover healthy community with one another and the world around them. Keep them safe.
Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A Gracious God, we give thanks for those who have been appointed to serve on the call committee and entrusted with the work of discerning a new pastor to guide the congregation of Faith Lutheran Church. Grant them wisdom, patience, and the direction of your Holy Spirit, that they may exercise right judgment, and so serve you and the mission of your people here.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A Guide and nurture the people and friends of Grace, Zion and St. Andrew Churches — the future Faith Lutheran Church — as we continue charting and discovering pathways of joining together in proclaiming your Good News and building a servant community of healing, hope and new life. Open our hearts and minds to visions of your church for a new day.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A God of every generation, we remember with thanksgiving all who have completed their baptismal journeys. Strengthen us in our baptismal callings to serve you faithfully until our journey's end.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A We lift up these prayers to you, gracious God. Receive them into your holy keeping.

Amen.

SHARE THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

+MEAL+

God feeds us in the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING *An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.*

OFFERING MUSIC The Night You Gave Us, God, Has Ended
(ACS 994)

OFFERTORY HYMN Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow
ELW 885

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

The image shows three staves of musical notation for the hymn. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are as follows:

- Staff 1: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Lyrics: Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise God, all
- Staff 2: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Lyrics: crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye
- Staff 3: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Lyrics: heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711, alt.
Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray:

Jesus, Bread of life,
you have set this table with your very self,
and called us to the feast of plenty.
Gather what has been sown among us,
and strengthen us in this meal.

Make us to be what we receive here,
your body for the life of the world.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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

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:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

SANCTUS ~ *Holy, Holy, Holy*

Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth a - dored;
 Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout the glo-ry of Your name.
 Sing ho - san - na in the high-est, sing ho - san - na to the Lord;
 Tru - ly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

*Sabaoth (SAH-buy-oth) is Hebrew for "heavenly hosts."
 Hosanna is a Hebrew word of praise meaning "save us now."*

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Holy God,
 you alone are holy,
 you alone are God.

The universe declares your praise:
 beyond the stars;
 beneath the sea;
 within each cell;

with every breath.

We praise you, O God.

Generations bless your faithfulness:
through the water;
by night and day;
across the wilderness;
out of exile;
into the future.

We bless you, O God.

We give you thanks for your dear Son:
at the heart of human life;
near to those who suffer;
beside the sinner;
among the poor;
with us now.

We thank you, O God.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread,
and gave thanks; broke it,
and gave it to his disciples,
saying: Take and eat;
this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper,
he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink,
saying: This cup
is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people
for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering his love for us
on the way,
at the table,
and to the end,
we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We pray for the gift of your Spirit:
in our gathering;
within this meal;
among your people;
throughout the world.

Blessing, praise, and thanks
to you, holy God,
through Christ Jesus,
by your Spirit,
in your church,
without end.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

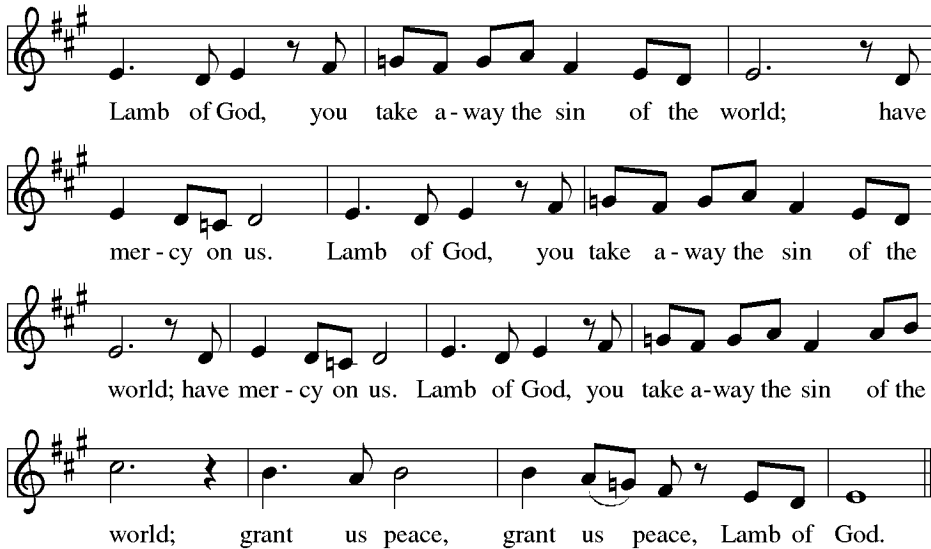
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

You are invited to come forward down the center aisle to the altar railing receive the Meal today. Please fill in along the railing from the pulpit to lectern sides. You may either stand or kneel to receive the Meal. The Meal will be served continuously. After you have received the Meal and after a quiet prayer of thanksgiving you may return to your seats via the side aisles. Gluten free wafers are available as an alternative. Please ask. White grape juice, in the center ring of each serving tray, is available as an alternative to the wine. Praise God for the life giving presence of the crucified-risen Christ in the bread and wine of this holy meal!

Christ has set the table with more than enough for all.
Come! The feast is ready!

COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN *Lamb of God* ELW p. 191



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

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

Amen

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray:

Jesus, Bread of life,

we have received from your table
more than we could ever ask.

As you have nourished us in this meal,

now strengthen us to love the world with your own life.

In your name we pray.

Amen.

+SENDING+

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***BLESSING**

The blessing of God,
who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us,
‡ be upon you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN O Jesus, I Have Promised ELW 810

- 1 O Jesus, I have promised
to serve you to the end;
remain forever near me,
my master and my friend.
I shall not fear the battle
if you are by my side,
nor wander from the pathway
if you will be my guide.
- 2 Oh, let me feel you near me;
the world is ever near.
I see the sights that dazzle,
the tempting sounds I hear.
My foes are ever near me,
around me and within;
but, Jesus, then draw nearer
to shield my soul from sin.

- 3 Oh, let me hear you speaking
in accents clear and still
above the storms of passion,
the murmurs of self-will.
Now speak to reassure me,
to hasten or control;
now speak and make me listen,
O Guardian of my soul.
- 4 O Jesus, you have promised
to all who follow you
that where you are in glory
your servant shall be too.
And Jesus, I have promised
to serve you to the end;
oh, give me grace to follow,
my master and my friend.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad. You are the body of Christ!
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP LEADERS for Sunday, August 25, 2024

Presiding Minister: Pastor Les Swenson

Musician: Gwynne Hopko, Deacon, Minister of Music

Assisting Minister: Keith Clark

Lector: Arlene Creswell

Tech Team: Abigail Griffin, Ken Griffin, Connor Pratt

Ushers: John Fitzgerald, Roy Tessman

Altar Guild: Denise Martin

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THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

Monday, August 26, 2024

6:30 p.m. New Church Steering Committee Meeting at St. Andrew

Wednesday, August 28, 2024

6:30 p.m. Summer Bells

Thursday, August 29, 2024

7:00 p.m. AA (Fellowship Hall)

7:00 p.m. Al Anon (Youth Room)

Sunday, September 1, 2024; 15th Sunday after Pentecost

9:30 a.m. Service of Holy Communion (Sanctuary, You Tube, Facebook)

10:30 a.m. Coffee Hour

ST. ANDREW LUTHERAN CHURCH, BRISTOL, CT

1125 Stafford Ave., Bristol, CT

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Gwynne Hopko, Deacon, Minister of Music

Nicole Gergler, Church Administrator