



September 1, 2024

**15th Sunday after Pentecost
Service of Holy Communion**

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.

+GATHERING+

The Holy Spirit calls us together as people of God.

WELCOME

PRELUDE Prelude on *The Night You Gave Us, God, Has Ended*
arr. C. Callahan; H. Gerike

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

Amen.

Let us confess our sin and come to God for healing.

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.

By water and the Holy Spirit God gives you a new birth,

and through the death and resurrection of † Jesus Christ,
God forgives you all your sins.
The God of mercy and might strengthen you in all goodness
and keep you in eternal life.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN The Night You Gave Us, God, Has Ended ACS 994

- 1 The night you gave us, God, has ended,
 the darkness hails the sun's bright rays;
 as shadows flee and earth awakens,
 we rise again to sing your praise.
- 2 We thank you for each glorious sunrise
 that paints the earth a golden hue;
 each day your grace grants new beginnings,
 the chance to start again anew.
- 3 Bless those who work in hours of darkness,
 who serve and toil while others sleep;
 their lives of caring and protecting
 reflect your love so strong and deep.
- 4 We pray for energy and passion
 to live our lives each day for you;
 may all around us sense your presence
 in all we say and all we do.
- 5 We praise you, God, for nature's rhythms,
 for dark and daylight, stars and sun;
 your whole creation sings your glory,
 O Trinity, most Holy One.

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.

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

+WORD+

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

FIRST READING

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

The Israelites believed the law was a divine gift that provided guidelines for living out the covenant. Moses commands the people to obey the law and to neither add to nor subtract from it. The Israelites are also to teach the law to their children and their children's children.

A reading from Deuteronomy.

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.**

PSALM Psalm 15 (Read responsively by verse)

¹LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle?

Who may abide upon your holy hill?

²**Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,
who speak the truth from their heart;**

³they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

⁴**In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear
the LORD.**

They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.

⁵They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes
against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

SECOND READING James 1:17-27

The letter of James was intended to provide first-century Christians with instruction in godly behavior. Here Christians are encouraged to listen carefully and to act on what they hear, especially by caring for those least able to care for themselves.

A reading from James.

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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**ELW 175***We all sing*

The musical score consists of two systems of vocal parts. Each system has a soprano line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The lyrics are: "Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia." The music is in a 3/4 time signature with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first system ends with a double bar line, and the second system also ends with a double bar line. Below the second system, there is a single treble clef staff with some faint, illegible markings.

God gave us birth by the | word of truth* so that we would become a kind of first fruits | of creation. *Repeat Alleluia.*

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

Mark's gospel depicts Jesus as challenging traditional ways in which religious people determine what is pure or impure. For Jesus, the observance of religious practices cannot become a substitute for godly words or deeds that spring from a faithful heart.

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.

²¹"For 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

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.

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 Drawn together in the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray with confidence for the church, God's good creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

A God of every generation, give the church a sense of purpose and belonging. Sustain and build up leaders and lay people as we accompany one another in our life with Christ.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A God of creation, you named humans as co-creators with you. Where the earth cries out in pain, bring wholeness. Guide governments and industry, that environmental laws and practices seek to heal and not harm. Bring relief and justice to people and places suffering from climate catastrophe.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A Sovereign God, we pray for local communities of every kind: rural and urban; established and new. Lead those in authority to seek the good of all through their words and actions and to mentor others in honest and generous ways.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A Healing God, you draw near to all who are hurting. Be with all who desire relief from chronic and acute illness, cancer, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Strengthen health care workers, therapists, and caregivers. Tend to those who are close to 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 On this Labor Day weekend we remember and give thanks for all who have fought for workers' rights around the world. Continue to improve working conditions and establish fair wages so that all people may thrive. 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 Comforting God, console us as we mourn our departed. We hold fast to the promise that death has been defeated by our Savior Jesus Christ. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A We entrust these and all our prayers to you, holy God, in the name of your beloved child, Jesus Christ, our Savior.
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.*

OFFERTORY SOLO *Holy, Holy, Holy ELW 193*
Terry Gustafson

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 in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise God, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

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

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray:
Blessed are you, O God,

source of every gift of your creation.
By these gifts and with our lives,
help us to serve one another and all in need,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
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!

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

GREAT THANKSGIVING

O God most mighty,
 O God most merciful,
 O God our rock and our salvation,
 hear us as we praise,
 call us to your table,
 grant us your life.

We praise you, O God.

When the earth was a formless void,
 you formed order and beauty.
 When Abraham and Sarah were barren,
 you sent them a child;

When the Israelites were enslaved,
 you led them to freedom.
 Ruth faced starvation, David fought Goliath,
 and the psalmists cried out for healing,
 and full of compassion, you granted the people your life.

We bless you, O God.

You entered our sorrows in Jesus our brother.
 He was born among the poor,
 he lived under oppression,
 he wept over the city.
 With infinite love, he granted the people your life.

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 death, we cry out Amen. **Amen**
 Celebrating his resurrection, we shout Amen. **Amen**
 Trusting his presence in every time and place, we plead Amen. **Amen**

○ God, you are Breath: send your Spirit on this meal.
○ God, you are Bread: feed us with yourself.
○ God, you are Wine: warm our hearts and make us one.
○ God, you are Fire: transform us with hope.

○ God most majestic, ○ God most motherly,
○ God our strength and our song,
you show us a vision of a tree of life
with fruits for all and leaves that heal the nations.
Grant us such life,
the life of the Father to the Son,
the life of the Spirit of our risen Savior,
life in you, now and forever.

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.**

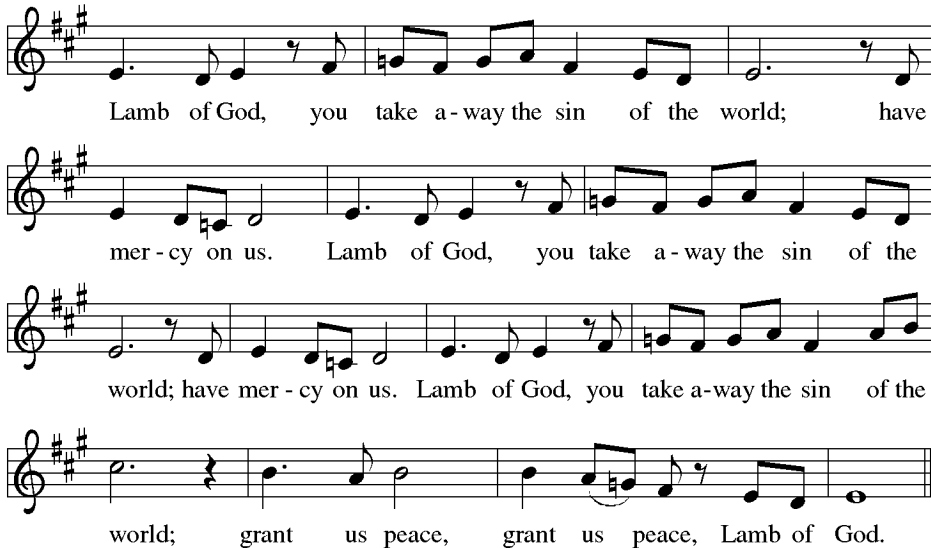
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

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!

Come, the feast is ready! Jesus welcomes you!

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:

Holy God,

you have welcomed us to this meal
and fed us with dignity at your table.

Send us now to welcome others
and to be at peace with one another,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

+SENDING+

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

God all mighty,

God most merciful

✠ bless you, keep you,

and give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN Take My Life, That I May Be ELW 583

Refrain

Take my life, that I may be
consecrated, Lord, to thee;
take my moments and my days;
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

- 1 Take my hands and let them move
at the impulse of thy love;
take my feet and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee. *Refrain*
- 2 Take my silver and my gold,
not a mite would I withhold;
take my intellect and use
ev'ry pow'r as thou shalt choose. *Refrain*
- 3 Take my voice and let me sing
always, only for my King;
take my lips and let them be
filled with messages from thee. *Refrain*
- 4 Take my will and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine;
take my heart, it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne. *Refrain*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Follow Jesus.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP LEADERS for Sunday, September 1, 2024

Presiding Minister: Pastor Les Swenson

Musician: Gwynne Hopko, Deacon, Minister of Music

Assisting Minister: Keith Clark

Lector: Jen Alling

Tech Team: Abigail Griffin, Ken Griffin, Connor Pratt

Ushers: Donald Millbrandt, Bill Golden, Kathy Golden

Altar Guild: Denise Martin

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THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

Tuesday, September 3, 2023

6:45 p.m. Hand Bell Choir

7:30 p.m. Voice Choir

Thursday, September 5, 2024

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

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

Saturday, September 7, 2024

9:00 a.m. Tag Sale at Grace Lutheran

6:00 p.m. Summer Bell Concert

Sunday, September 8, 2024; 16th 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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Nicole Gergler, Church Administrator