

The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 29, 2021

in the 168th Year of the Parish

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701

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Office (570-323-4619) Fax (570-323-2452)

Rev. Brian D. Vasey, Pastor

bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org



Welcome to Saint Mark's Lutheran Church!

Please Note: The Center for Disease Control has provided revised guidelines with regard to mask wearing. Following these guidelines, and the specific recommendations of our bishop (Bishop Collins of the Upper Susquehanna Synod) Church Council strongly recommends that masks be worn, social distancing followed, and to speak and sing in very low tones when worshipping in St. Mark's church building. Thank You!

Our Mission: *“To know Christ and to make Christ known.”*

An Order for Holy Communion, 9:30 a.m., Lutheran Book of Worship, Setting Two, (LBW, “Green Book”)

**Please stand as you are able.*

PRELUDE

Prelude in E Minor

J.S. Bach

WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY

***BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

The pastor leads the congregation in the invocation, the sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their baptism.

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

C Amen

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the

inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P Most merciful God,

C we confess that we are in bondage 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

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us and for his sake forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare unto you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen

***HYMN**

Gather Us In (WOV; Blue Hymnal, p. 718)

**Here in this place the new light is streaming,
now is the darkness vanished away;
see in this space our fears and our dreamings
brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,
gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.**

**Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven, light years away—
here in this place the new light is shining,
now is the kingdom, and now is the day.
Gather us in and hold us forever,
gather us in and make us your own;
gather us in, all peoples together,
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.**

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
Tune: GATHER US IN 10 9 10 10 D

***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.**

*GLORY TO GOD



A Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to his peo-ple on earth.



C Lord God, heav-en-ly king, al-might-y God and Fa-ther:



We wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



You are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther; re-ceive our prayer.



For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,



you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,



in the glo-ry of God the Fa-ther. A-men

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P 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.

C Amen

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S READINGS

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.

THE FIRST LESSON.....Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

So 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.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 15

1LORD, who may dwell in your | tabernacle?

Who may abide upon your | holy hill?

**2Those 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 up- | on a neighbor.

**4In 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 a-
| gainst the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be | overthrown.

THE SECOND LESSON.....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.

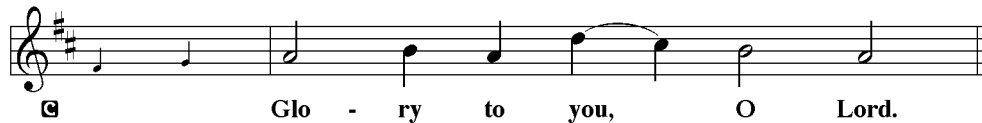
C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

***THE HOLY GOSPEL.....Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23**
The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the seventh chapter.



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;

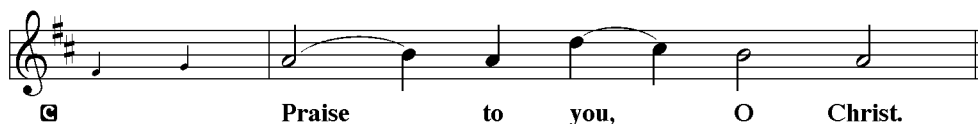
7in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.’

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.



THE SERMON

BLESSING THE BACK PACKS AND SCHOOL YEAR

P O God of wisdom, as we come to the beginning of a new school year we offer thanks and praise for the gift of new beginnings and for the opportunity to learn and wonder. We pray for teachers, students, and staff that this year might be rewarding to all. Be with us as we face the challenge of new tasks, the fear of failure, the expectations of parents, friends, and self. In our learning and in our teaching, may we grow in service to others and in love for your world, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen

Children are asked to hold-up their backpacks.

P Lord God, bless these bags and the children who will use them. Let them not be scared, be with them as they learn and grow this year. Show them how to serve you and help them to teach us all about your love. In Jesus' name.

C Amen

***THE APOSTLES' CREED**

P Living together in trust and hope, we affirm our faith:

**C I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again 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:**

After each petition, “Lord, in your mercy/Hear our prayer.”

***THE PEACE**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

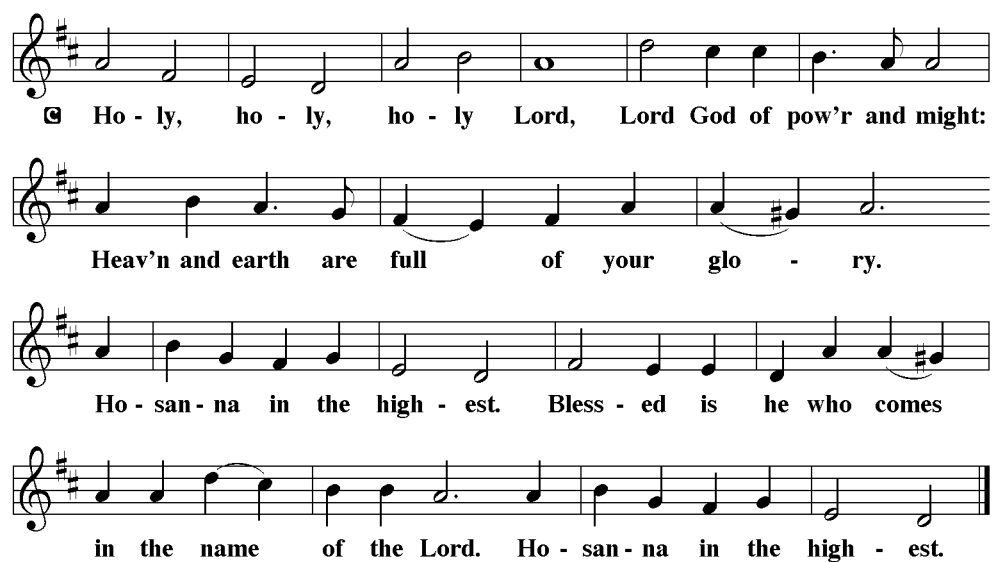
C And also with you.

The ministers and congregation greet one another with these or similar words, and/or gestures of peace, limiting physical touch and contact with one another.

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Each staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff has two phrases: 'P The Lord be with you.' and 'C And al - so with you.' The second staff has two phrases: 'P Lift up your hearts.' and 'C We lift them to the Lord.' The third staff has one phrase: 'P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.' The fourth staff has one phrase: 'C It is right to give him thanks and praise.'

P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; 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 the Church on earth and in heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:
 Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

P 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.

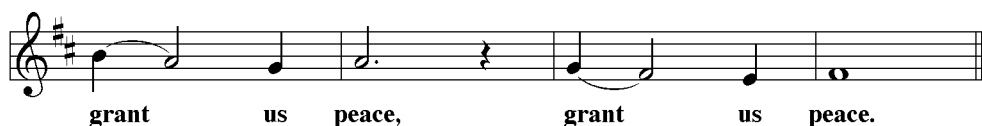
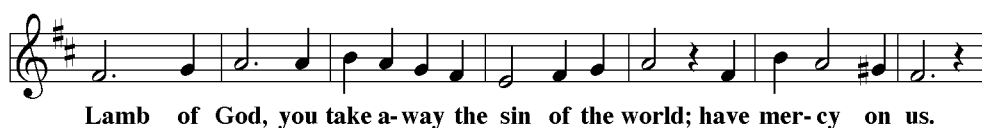
***OUR LORD'S PRAYER**

P Let us pray in the words our Savior gave us:

**C 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**

***LAMB OF GOD**



***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P Christ has set the table with more than enough for all! Come!
C Thanks be to God!

THE COMMUNION

Persons may come forward to the chancel to receive Holy Communion. This format will be more “continuous” noting the following procedure:

- *Communicants, masked and observing social distancing, are asked to come forward as directed by ushers by way of the center aisle, take a cup from the tray provided and receive the bread from Pastor Vasey.*
- *Once receiving the bread, communicants will proceed to one of two stations (left or right) to receive wine from the pouring chalice.*
- *After receiving wine, communicants will place the empty cup in the designated tray and return to their pew by way of the side aisles.*

Please do not kneel at the rail. Kneeling at the rail will return at a time to be determined by pastor and Church Council.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P 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.

C Amen

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***THE BLESSING**

P The blessing of God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, be upon you now and forever.

C Amen

***HYMN** Oh, that the Lord Would Guide My Ways (LBW, p. 480)

**Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways
to keep his statutes still!**

**Oh, that my God would grant me grace
to know and do his will!**

**Make me to walk in your commands,
'tis a delightful road;
nor let my head or heart or hands
offend against my God.**

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, alt.
Tune: EVAN CM

***DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

C **Thanks be to God.**

***POSTLUDE** *Prelude and Fugue in C Major* J. S. Bach

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Prayer List: Victims of COVID-19 and their families, Liz Ruesskamp, Grace Arner, Diane Damaska, Vanessa Morgan, Gary Clark, Doris Brown, Charles Miller, Jerry Miller, Patricia Alexander, Joann Zeigler, Diana Zeigler, Richard Ritter, Ashton Ott, Lucille Sider, April Clark, Lenny Sherlinski, Ruth Sherlinski, Gary Cable, Elsie Sechler, Virginia Pulaskie, Bernadette Jones, Susan Kalabacas, Kay Poliska, Bunny Ditchfield, Judy Fortin, Roy and Gloria Meyer, Mary Lou Doebler, Walt Haussmann, the victims and family members of COVID-19, the nation and people of Haiti, the nation and people of Afghanistan, victims of Hurricane Henri.

WORSHIP LEADERS

Lector Dan Zeigler

Cantor/Song-leader Deb Buckman

Communion Assistants Gregg Dancho/Becky Pryor

Organist Sam Robinson

USHERS: August 29

Carl Albright- Captain. Ushers: Brenda, Owen, Levi Gair

COVID CONTACT: Please note that your attendance at worship will be recorded. This serves as a precaution in case contact-tracing due to the pandemic is warranted. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

READ ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY? Faith and Fellowship has temporarily “moved some books” from our church library to the Front Lounge in order to make them more accessible. Stop by the Front Lounge and take a look!

OUR STEWARDSHIP

Regular Offering	\$3,252.00
Plate Offering	\$ 2.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 120.00
World Hunger	\$ 50.00
Food Pantry	\$ 50.00
Global Mission	\$ 50.00
Parish Life	\$ 34.00
Flower Memorials/Tributes	\$ 60.00
Synod Benevolence	\$ 20.00
Grand Total	\$3,638.00

ALTAR FLOWERS today are given to the glory of God:

- + In honor of my grandchildren: Ezra, Gillian and Asher, by Deb Buckman.
- + In loving memory of Pastor Duane Nelson (brother of Leah Hausmann) by the Hausmanns.
- + In honor of Shirley Kinney's 90th birthday by Mike and Jackie Kinney.

COMMEMORATIONS

Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig, bishop, renewer of the church, died 1872

Thursday, September 2, 2021

Grundtvig was, with Søren Kierkegaard, one of the two great Danish theologians of the nineteenth century. As a pastor, he battled the prevalent idea that Christianity was more a philosophy than divine revelation. He wrote over a thousand hymns.

BACK PACK 10 COMMANDMENTS

1. God is God – even at school!
2. God is more important than anything– even grades or friends.
3. Always say God’s name respectfully.
4. Don’t get too busy for church and Sunday School.
5. Speak of your father and mother with love.
6. Don’t hurt anyone- watch where you sling your book-bag and look out for the younger kids.
7. Be a loyal friend.
8. Do not steal other people’s stuff or the answers from their work.
9. Don’t tell lies about other people to get them in trouble or make yourself look good.
10. Don’t get jealous of what others have or what they can do.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, help me to always do my best; to serve you at home, at school and at play; and to remember your love for me. Amen
(ELCA Resources).