



²³ 'His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

~Matthew 25:23

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost – November 16, 2014
PO Box 411
Mars, PA 16046-0411
www.stjohnchurchmars.org
Phone: 724-625-1830 email: office@stjohnchurchmars.org
Rev. Deborah Byrum, Guest Pastor
Jacob Gordon, Director of Music

*We welcome you to St. John Lutheran Church. We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning. Should you have no permanent church-home in this community, why not consider making this one your own? Please sign the guest book as you leave worship today or the attendance pad in the pew. You are most welcome here at St. John! Most elements of our service can be found in the bulletin, everything else is in the hymnal. Page refers to the numbered pages towards the front of the hymnal, hymns are bold and towards the back. Please rise when there is an *, congregational responses are in **bold**, and underlined elements of the service are found in the hymnal.*

HOLY COMMUNION

Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost – November 16, 2014

Our readings during November speak of the end times. Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the Lord will be filled with wrath and distress. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.

PRELUDE: *'I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light'* – Wayne L. Wold

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
the Sovereign over all the earth,
the Wisdom from on high,
our merciful Judge and Savior.

Amen.

Let us boldly approach the throne of grace,
trusting in God's mercy and love.

Generous and faithful God,
**we confess to you all the ways,
known and unknown,
that we reject and undermine your steadfast love.
Though you made us your people,
we treat strangers with suspicion.
Though you forgave our debts,
we collect without mercy.
Yet we are quick to pass judgment on others.
Have mercy on us, O God,
and remember your promise to us,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.**

The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever.
Through the living Word, + Jesus Christ,
God forgives your every debt, your every sin,
and gives you a new heart and a new spirit.
Amen.

***GATHERING SONG #707: Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us**

***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.

***HYMN OF PRAISE**

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

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

**Righteous God, our merciful master,
you own the earth and all its peoples,
and you give us all that we have.**

**Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom,
and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 1:7, 12–18 (page 874 in Old Testament)

Zephaniah (like the prophet Amos in last week's first reading) presents the day of the Lord as one of judgment and wrath. Descriptions of the last day in the New Testament include details taken from Old Testament accounts of the day of the Lord.

⁷Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is at hand; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests. ¹²At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their hearts, "The LORD will not do good, nor will he do harm." ¹³Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them.

¹⁴The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there. ¹⁵That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, ¹⁶a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.

¹⁷I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against the LORD, their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. ¹⁸Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the LORD's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed; for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

1. To you, O Lord, I lift my eyes, to you en-throned a-
 2. O Lord our God, your mer-cy show; for hu-man pride and
 -bove the skies. As ser-vants watch their mas-ter's hand,
 scorn we know. Re-proach and shame your saints en-dure
 or maid-ens by their mis-tress stand, so to the Lord our
 from sin-ners who ap-pear se-cure. To you, O Lord, I
 eyes we raise, un-til his mer-cy he dis-plays.
 life my eyes, to you en-throned a-bove the skies.

Text: Psalm 123; vers. *Psalter*, 1887, alt.
 Music: Norman Cocker, 1889-1953
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RYBURN

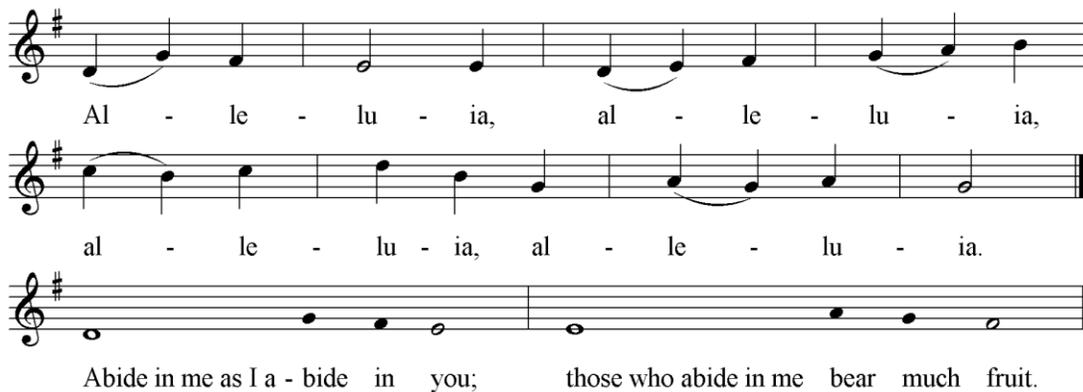
SECOND READING: 1Thessalonians 5:1-11 (page 205 in New Testament)

Though we do not know and cannot calculate the day of Christ's return, we live faithfully in the here and now as we anticipate the day when we will be given eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! ⁴But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; ⁵for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. ⁶So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; ⁷for those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who are drunk, get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
Abide in me as I a - bide in you; those who abide in me bear much fruit.

*GOSPEL READING: Matthew 25:14–30 (page 28 in New Testament)

Jesus tells a parable about his second coming, indicating that it is not sufficient merely to maintain things as they are. Those who await his return should make good use of the gifts that God has provided them.

The holy gospel, according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁴For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' ²¹His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²²And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' ²³His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' ²⁶But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter?' ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY #688: *Lord of Light*

*REMEMBERING THOSE WHO HAVE DIED

In joyful expectation of the resurrection to eternal life, we remember those who have gone before us in faith and who now rest from their labors, especially those family members and friends who are dear to us: Paul & Hulda Schulz, Ed & Frances Wehr, Marion DeMauro, Nancy DeMauro, Louis DeMauro, Sr., Louis DeMauro Jr., Anthony Pusateri Jr., Walter Allshouse, Carmela Russo, Emanuela Cipullo, Wally Strable, Bob Windhorst, Wesley & Nannie Gordon, Otha & Hazel Robertson, Ryan Baker.

As we remember these your children,
**strengthen us to follow Christ through this world
until we are carried into the harvest of eternal life,
where suffering and death will be no more.**

Hear our prayer in the name of the good and gracious shepherd,
Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. **Amen.**

***NICENE CREED**

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Remembering the saints who have gone before us and giving thanks for God's blessings, we pray for the church, all in need, and God's good creation.

We pray for the church, that it continues to sow seeds of mercy, love, forgiveness, and joy, even as it anticipates your coming again to bring restoration to the new heaven and earth. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all creation, for the wonder of climate and tide, of mountains, valleys, rivers, and oceans, that we become better stewards of this bounty. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all nations, their leaders and governments, that they replace power, pride, greed, and enmity with justice, mercy, reconciliation, and peacemaking. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the lonely, the disheartened, those who suffer from debilitating illness, those who cannot speak for themselves, and those in any need, especially Jim, John, Robert, Frieda, Joe, Bill & Kathy, Jim, Raymond, George, Wanda Jean, Helen, Francis & Grace, Kathryn, Ed, Fred & Jane, and David & Ellen. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our congregation's leaders, that they continue to encourage us and send us out in peace and love to follow your call. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those leading our search for a new pastor, that you guide them and uphold them in their work. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for all the saints, for their faithfulness and perseverance in following you, whose examples will bring us closer to you. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Receive our prayers and hopes, Good Shepherd, and bring us safely into all joy and peace, through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

***PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN #679: *For the Fruit of All Creation*

(All stand for the final stanza as the gifts are brought forward)

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

Merciful God, as grains of wheat scattered upon the hills were gathered together to become one bread, so let your church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory through Jesus Christ, now and forever.

Amen.

***DIALOGUE**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

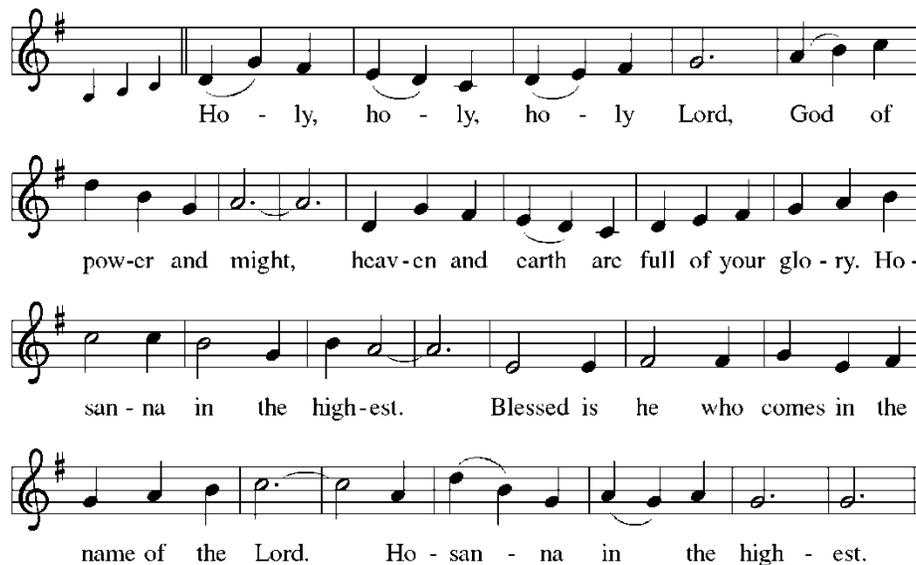
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal:
surrounded by evil and bordered by death
we appeal to you,
our Sovereign, our Wisdom, and our Judge.

We praise you for Christ, who proclaimed your reign of peace
and promised an end to injustice and harm.

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, therefore,
the sacrifice of his life and death
and the victory of his resurrection,
we await with all the saints
his loving redemption of our suffering world.

Send your Spirit on these gifts of bread and wine
and on all who share in the body and blood of your Son:
teach us your mercy and justice,
and make all things new in Christ.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,

in your holy Church,
both now and forever. **Amen.**

***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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

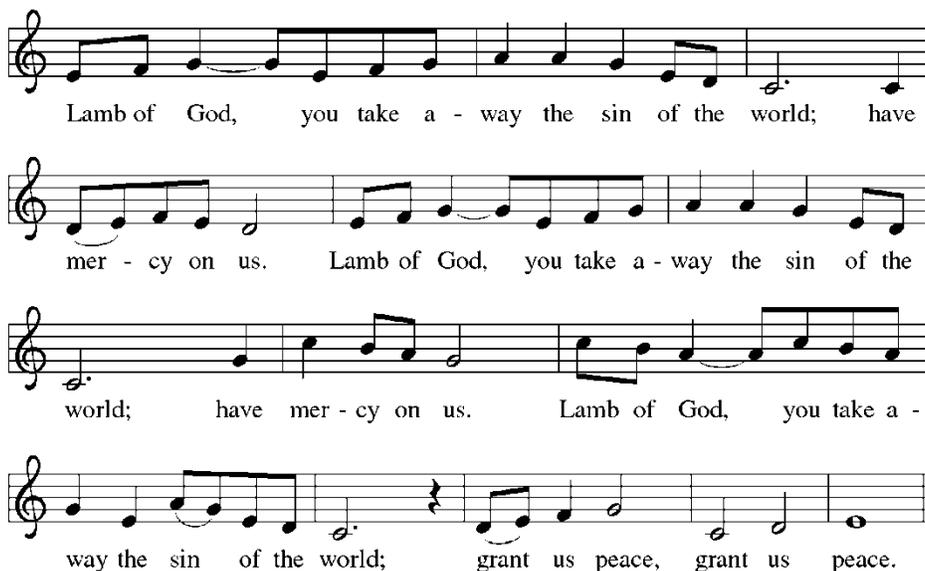
The reign of God is at hand.
Come, taste the joy prepared for you.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
Amen.

In response to Jesus' invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine of communion. Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. All are invited forward for communion or a blessing. The area of cups bordered by green tape has grape juice.

***COMMUNION SONG**



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.

COMMUNION HYMN #815: *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

***POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in grace. **Amen.**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

O God, the host at every meal at this table you spread out a feast for all peoples, the bread of life and the cup of salvation. Send us from this banquet to invite others into these good things, to let justice roll down like waters, and to care for the least of our sisters and brothers; through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and our Savior.

Amen.

***BLESSING**

Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG #674: *Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: 'Hyfrydol' – Ralph Vaughan Williams

8:00 am

Assisting Minister: Kelly Greb

Communion Assistant:

Acolyte: Lindsey Greb

Lector: Kelly Greb

Usher:

Attendance Last Week: 53

Weekly Budgeted Need: \$ 2,640.27

YTD Budgeted Expenses: \$ 110,891.31

YTD Actual Expense: \$ 105,091.85

10:30 am

Assisting Minister: Carolyn Jarrett

Communion Assistant:

Acolyte: Gio Sunseri

Lector: Denise Hager

Usher:

Attendance last year: 68

Last Week's Giving: \$ 2,204.50

(Includes Harvest Dinner & Thrivent Choice)

Year to Date Receipts: \$122,374.00

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