

“⁶⁴ But among you there are some who do not believe.” 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.”

John 6:64-65

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost – August 23, 2015

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Rev. Robert Zimmerman, 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

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost – August 23, 2015

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.

PRELUDE: *I Am the Bread of Life* – Ron Schmoltze

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

In the name of the Father,
and of the + Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

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.

Amen.

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

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.**

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

GATHERING SONG #582: *Gather Us In

***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.

***GLORY TO GOD**



1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.
 2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
 3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:
 Son of God and gra-cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;
 Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
 on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
 Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.
 Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.
 For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

***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.

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.

¹Then 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.”

¹⁶Then 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 34: 15-22

1. Your eyes, O God, are on the just; your ears are
2. You save the righ - teous in their need, for when they
3. The trou - bles of the just are great, and yet, you,
4. E - vil shall slay the false, and those who hate the

o - pen to their cry; your face is set a -
cry, Lord, you will hear; those crushed in spir - it
Lord will save your own and keep them safe from
just shall know your wrath; you ran - som all your

- gainst the false to root them out from mem - o - ry.
you will save, the bro - ken - heart - ed you are near.
ev - 'ry harm; not one shall break a sin - gle bone.
ser - vants' lives and chas - ten none who walk your path.

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.

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.

¹⁸Pray 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. ¹⁹Pray 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, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

*GOSPEL READING: 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. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This 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." ⁵⁹He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" ⁶¹But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? ⁶²Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴But 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. ⁶⁵And 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.

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY #810: *O Jesus, I Have Promised

***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**

With confidence in God's compassion and generosity, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of God's creation. Faithful God, we pray for the church. Lead it always to proclaim its faith in you, who gives us the words of eternal life. Give your church the gifts of truth and righteousness. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our fragile and beautiful planet. Renew our sense of wonder and our determination to care for your creation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the leaders of the world. Equip them to serve with justice and to dispel the forces of evil. Inspire the citizens of every country to love wisdom and mercy. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the brokenhearted and those whose spirits are crushed. Wrap them in the warm embrace of your all-encompassing love. Restore them to wholeness, especially for Ava, Denise, Frieda, Jim, Raymond, Wanda Jean, Francis & Grace, Kathryn, Fred & Jane, and David & Ellen. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for this assembly as it prepares education ministries. Bless those planning and preparing for Sunday school, confirmation, adult education, and intergenerational learning opportunities. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for all who have gone before us. Give us wisdom to follow their example of faithful living and to stay true to the path of peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your loving hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abundant mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

***PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN #483: Here Is Bread

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

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.
God of mercy and grace, the eyes of all wait upon you,
and you open your hand in blessing.
Fill us with good things at your table,
that we may come to the help of all in need,
through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord.
Amen.

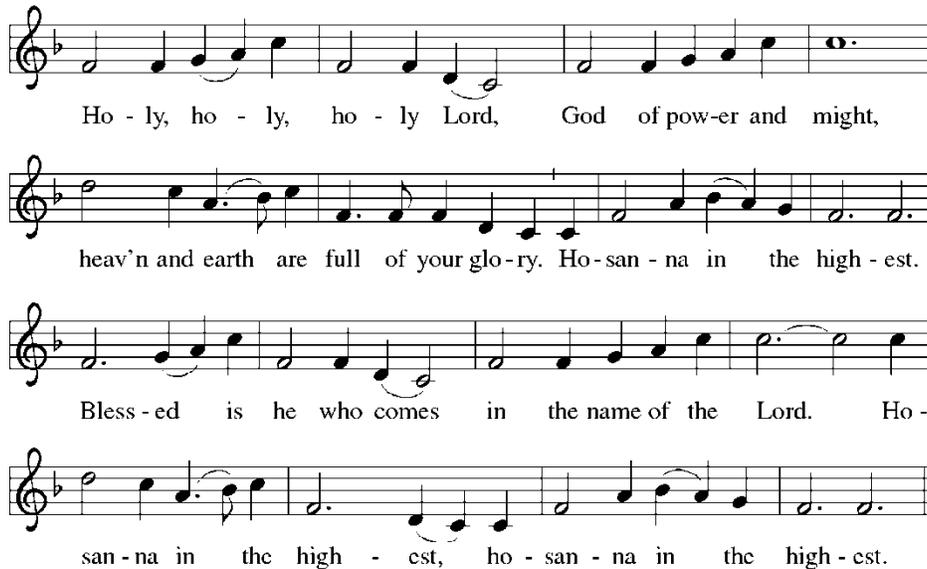
***DIALOGUE**

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'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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God,
our Maker, Redeemer, and Healer,
in the harmonious world of your creation,
the plants and animals,
the seas and stars
were whole and well in your praise.

When sin had scarred the world,
you sent your Son to heal our ills
and to form us again into one.

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,
his acts of healing,
his body given up,
and his victory over death,
we await that day when all the peoples of the earth
will come to the river to enjoy the tree of life.

Send your Spirit upon us and this meal:
as grains scattered on the hillside become one bread,
so let your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth,
that all may be fed with the Bread of life, your Son.

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**

Jesus said, "Whoever comes to me will never be hungry,
and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

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

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

COMMUNION SONG: *Lamb of God*



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

COMMUNION HYMN #638: Blessed Assurance

***POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

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

***POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Let us pray.
Wise and generous God,
we thank you that at this holy table
you have fed us again with the food of everlasting life.
Send us with your blessing to seek the good of our neighbor
and call others to your feast;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

***BLESSING**

Almighty and merciful God,
Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless, preserve, and keep you
this day and forevermore. **Amen.**

***SENDING SONG #485: I Am the Bread of Life**

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Live in love, as Christ loved us.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *O Jesus, I Have Promised* – Robert J. Powell

The flowers this week are in celebration of the life of Dolores Nelson, friend of Denise and Jim Hager.

9:00 am

Assisting Minister: Missy Kramer

Communion Assistant: Christine Dishong

Acolyte:

Usher: John Tully

Attendance Last Week: 44

Weekly Budgeted Need: \$ 2,755.44

YTD Budgeted Expenses: \$ 93,685.04

YTD Actual Expense: \$ 88,954.30

Attendance last year: 51

Last Week's Giving: \$ 1,840.00

YTD Receipts: \$86,563.53

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Your Eyes, O God, Are on the Just – text: Psalm 34:15-22, para. by Christopher L. Webber; music: ROCKINGHAM OLD by Edward Miller. Text © 2008 by Christopher L. Webber.