



²³“But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

~Matthew 13:23

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost – July 16, 2017

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Rev. Robert Zimmerman, Pastor

Carol Zimmerman, Organist

*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? 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

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost – July 16, 2017

God's word is like the rain that waters the earth and brings forth vegetation. It is also like the sower who scatters seed indiscriminately. Our lives are like seeds sown in the earth. Even from what appears to be little, dormant, or dead, God promises a harvest. At the Lord's table we are fed with the bread of life, that we may bear fruit in the world.

PRELUDE: *Amazing Grace* – Virginia Harmony, Arr. By John Carter

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

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

***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.
Almighty God,
we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word.
By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy,
live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

WORD

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

FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:10-13

God's word to Israel's exiles is as sure and effective as never-failing precipitation. Their return to the Holy Land in a new exodus is cheered on by singing mountains and by trees that clap their hands.

¹⁰For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
¹¹so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

¹²For you shall go out in joy,
and be led back in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

¹³Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;
and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial,
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 65

1. To you, O Lord, we pay our vows,
To you in Zion praise is due;
O Holy One who answers prayer,
All sinful flesh shall come to you.

2. When we are overwhelmed with sin,
Our wickedness, you will forgive;
And happy those you rightly choose
To draw into your courts to live.

3. We shall be satisfied to see
Your temple and its holiness;

You answer us, O Savior God,
With awesome deeds of righteousness.

4. You are the hope of those who live
In distant seas and far off lands;
You formed the mountains by your might
And girded them with powerful hands.

5. You still the roaring of the seas,
The restless waves, and peoples too;
The whole earth trembles at your signs;
The dawn and dusk rejoice in you.

6. You visit all the earth, O Lord,
And water it abundantly;
Your stream runs full; preparing grain,
You make provision rich and free.

7. You drench the furrows, smooth the fields,
Make soft the ground with heavy rain;

You crown with goodness all the year
And leave rich paths across the plain.

8. May desert fields be filled with herds,
And hills be clothed with gladness, too;
May meadows clothe themselves with flocks
And fields with grain and sing to you.

SECOND READING: Romans 8:1-11

There is no condemnation for those who live in Christ. God sent Christ to accomplish what the law was unable to do: condemn sin and free us from its slavery. The Spirit now empowers proper actions and values in our lives and gives us the promise of resurrected life.

¹There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



*GOSPEL READING: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

In Matthew's gospel, both Jesus and his disciples "sow the seed" of God's word by proclaiming the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near." Now, in a memorable parable, Jesus explains why this good news produces different results in those who hear.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ²Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹Let anyone with ears listen!"

¹⁸“Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²²As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

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

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY #681: *We Plow the Fields and Scatter

BLESSING OF GRADUATES

Introduction

Dear friends: Life presents us with various significant milestones that set the stage for the next phase in our earthly journey. Graduation from High School is one of these milestones. Today we wish to honor those who are moving through this special time of accomplishment, transition, and change, and to show them that we, their community of faith, stand with them and support them as fellow believers in Jesus Christ.

I invite Geena Provenzano and Zach Claus and their parents to come forward.

At this time of celebration and transition, hear these words from Holy Scripture.

One or more of the following or another brief scripture reading is proclaimed.

¹¹For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. ¹²Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. ¹³When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, ¹⁴I will let you find me, says the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile. *Jeremiah 29:11-14a*

The leader continues with these or similar words:

Dear graduates: At this special time in your life we are eager to show you how delighted we are that you have reached this milestone in your life. As fellow members of this community of faith we rejoice with you and want you to know of our pride and excitement as you move from this accomplishment into the next phase of your life. We also want you to know that wherever you go and whatever you do, you are going forward with our prayers for God's continued guidance, power, protection, and strength.

Families may join hands as the leader prays for God's blessing with these or similar words.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, when you welcomed the children your invitation included each one of us. Your guiding hand has continually been upon these young people. You have sustained them. You have shared in their laughter and wiped away their tears. In times of confusion you have offered direction. In times of sorrow you have offered hope. In times of doubt your Holy Spirit has lifted them up. Grant, O Savior, to these graduates the knowledge of your continued presence as they goes forth into the future. Bless them and keep them. Guide their steps. Hold them in the hollow of your hand. Bless Geena and Zach and keep them now and forever. **Amen.**

The leader addresses the assembly.

Members and friends of St. John Lutheran Church, will you promise to keep these graduates and their families in your thoughts and prayers as they go forth into the future? **We will.**

Will you, as fellow believers in Jesus Christ, promise to help Geena and Zach as need and opportunity arise? **We will.**

Parents and guardians may place a hand on the shoulder.

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord watch over you and keep you safe.

May the Lord guide your every step.

May you always know of our unending love for you.

Amen.

***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**

Called together in the Spirit's embrace, let us pray for the mending of God's world.

Gracious God, we give thanks for your living word that goes out and does not return empty. Make your church a partner in accomplishing what you desire. Unite us in faith, witness, and mission. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For land, creatures, and people suffering from drought, that gentle rain bring life and hope. For mountains, hills, and the trees of the field, that all creation clap for joy. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For nations suffering the violence and hunger of war. For exiles and refugees. Lead them home in peace and bless them with your fullness. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For victims and perpetrators of race-based crime. For all who suffer sorrow, illness, or injury, especially Jim, Dan, Denise, Sally, Bill, Raymond, Francis & Grace, David & Ellen, those on our prayer list, and all whom we remember aloud or in our hearts. Bring them justice, healing, and new life by the power of your Spirit. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.** For this congregation and its leaders; through our shared work, let your word prosper among us and bring life to the community beyond our doors. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In thanksgiving for all who have died recently, for strangers and dear ones who have blessed our lives and sparked our hope. Give comfort and confidence to all who mourn. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

All these things, and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your care through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

***OFFERING HYMN #512: Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil**

All stand for the final stanza as the gifts are brought forward.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

Merciful God,

you open wide your hand

and satisfy the need of every living thing.

You have set this feast before us.

Open our hands to receive it.

Open our hearts to embrace it.

Open our lives to live it.

We pray this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

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.

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;

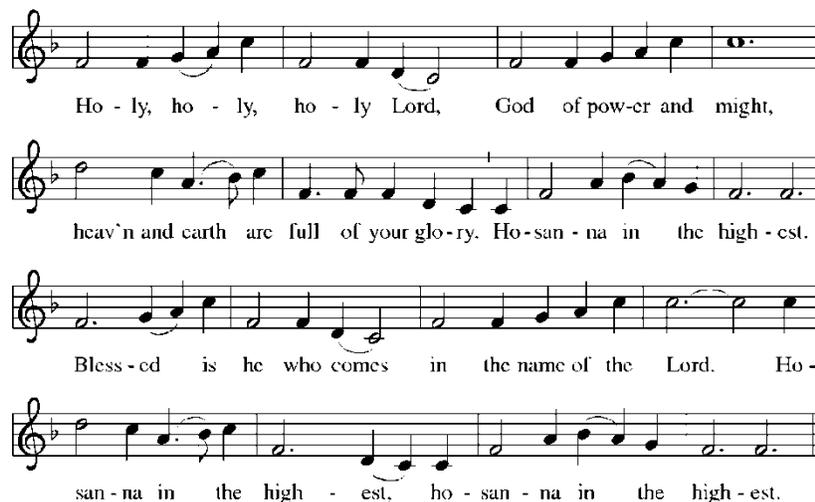
who on this day overcame death and the grave,

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:



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.

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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 death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.
Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever.
Amen.

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**

Come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread.
Our Lord's body let us take together.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.
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 #474: *Bread of Life from Heaven*

***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.

Jesus Christ, host of this meal,
you have given us not only this bread and cup,
but your very self, that we may feast on your great love.
Filled again by these signs of your grace,
may we hunger for your reign of justice,
may we thirst for your way of peace,
for you are Lord forevermore.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends in mission to the world.

***BLESSING**

May God, whose power working in us
can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine,
grant you the gifts of faith and hope.
Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

SENDING SONG #550: *On What Has Now Been Sown

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. The Spirit sends us forth to serve.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *Ceremonial March* – Edward Wetherill

The flowers this week are given by Katie & Todd Niklewicz in celebration of their 10th Wedding Anniversary this week and for the 38th Wedding Anniversary of Amy & Larry Werner next week.

9:00 am

Assisting Minister: Kelly Greb
Communion Assistant: Laura Greb
Acolyte: Greb
Lector:
Usher:

Attendance Last Week:	70	Attendance Last Year:	43
Weekly Budgeted Expense:	\$ 3,185.02	Last Week's General Giving:	\$ 1,937.72
YTD Budgeted Expenses:	\$ 82,810.47	Last Week's Designated Giving:	\$ 130.28
YTD Actual Expense:	\$ 83,839.16	YTD Receipts:	\$ 85,961.53

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