



July 23, 2023

9:00 a.m.

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost, Year A

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, ELCA

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Sunday, July 23rd 2023
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost, Year A
Reverend Rich Block

WELCOME

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, † One God, who greets us in every season, whose word never fails, whose promise is sure.

Amen.

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Trusting in God's mercy, let us acknowledge the ways we fall short from what God intends for us, in the presence of God and one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,

Your creatures cry and creation groans, but we turn away. We are quick to excuse ourselves from responsibility: we are tired or we are busy. It is hard to imagine that we might make a difference. Forgive us. Restore our imaginations and our hearts. Let your courage and compassion flow through our veins. Guide our hands to reach out and share your love. Amen.

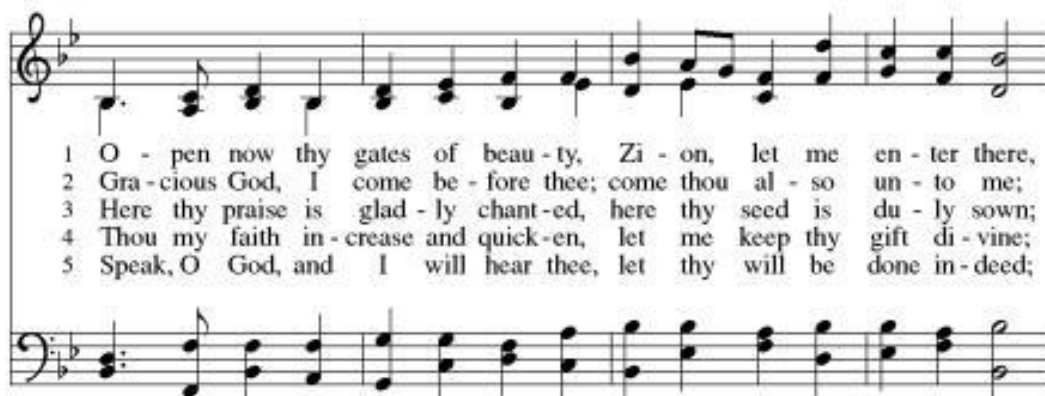
Siblings in Christ, God's hand shall lead us and hold us fast. God pours out boundless grace.

Hear the good news: in Jesus † Christ you are forgiven.

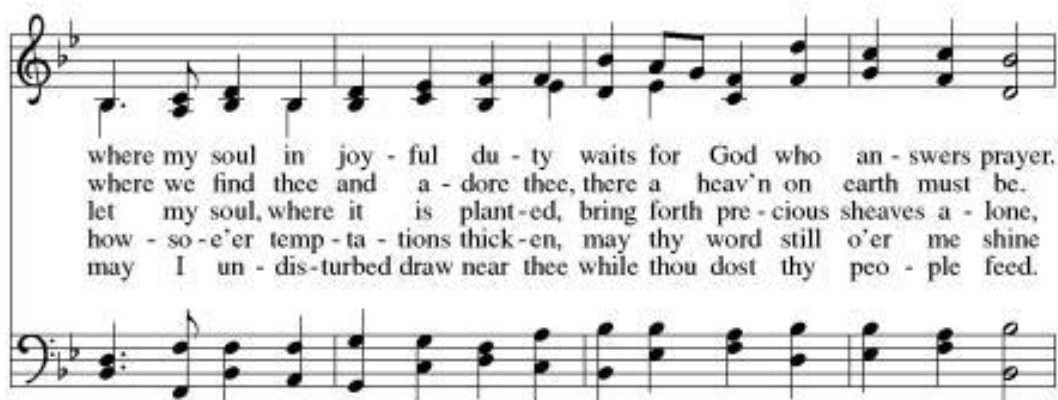
Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty



1 O - pen now thy gates of beau - ty, Zi - on, let me en - ter there,
2 Gra - cious God, I come be - fore thee; come thou al - so un - to me;
3 Here thy praise is glad - ly chant - ed, here thy seed is du - ly sown;
4 Thou my faith in - crease and quick - en, let me keep thy gift di - vine;
5 Speak, O God, and I will hear thee, let thy will be done in - deed;



where my soul in joy - ful du - ty waits for God who an - swers prayer.
where we find thee and a - dore thee, there a heav'n on earth must be.
let my soul, where it is plant - ed, bring forth pre - cious sheaves a - lone,
how - so - e'er temp - ta - tions thic - ken, may thy word still o'er me shine
may I un - dis - turbed draw near thee while thou dost thy peo - ple feed.



Oh, how bless - ed is this place, filled with so - lace, light, and grace!
To my heart, oh, en - ter thou, let it be thy tem - ple now!
so that all I hear may be fruit - ful un - to life in me.
as my guid - ing star through life, as my com - fort in all strife.
Here of life the foun - tain flows; here is balm for all our woes.

Text: Benjamin Schmolck, 1672-1737; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.
Music: UNSER HERRSCHER, Joachim Neander, 1650-1680

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Harvesting God,

As we listen to your Word, may our hearts be opened, finding abundant growth in the presence of your Spirit. Nurture us, that we may be rooted in Christ, growing deeper into relationship with you.

Amen.

READING: Genesis 28:10-19a

¹⁰Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. ¹¹He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. ¹²And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³And the LORD stood beside him and said, “I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; ¹⁴and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. ¹⁵Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” ¹⁶Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, “Surely the LORD is in this place—and I did not know it!” ¹⁷And he was afraid, and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

¹⁸So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. ^{19a}He called that place Bethel.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

READING: Romans 8:12-25

¹²So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—
¹³for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

¹⁸I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; ²³and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For

who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



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: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁴[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field;²⁵but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ ²⁸He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ ²⁹But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ ”

³⁶Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” ³⁷He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

1 Great is thy faith-ful-ness, O God my Fa-ther; there is no
 2 Sum-mer and win-ter and spring-time and har-vest, sun, moon, and
 3 Par-don for sin and a peace that en-dur-eth, thine own dear

shad-ow of turn-ing with thee; thou chang-est not, thy com-
 stars in their cours-es a-bove; join with all na-ture in
 pres-ence to cheer and to guide; strength for to-day and bright

pas-sions they fail not; as thou hast been, thou for-ev-er wilt be.
 man-i-fold wit-ness to thy great faith-ful-ness, mer-cy, and love,
 hope for to-mor-row, bless-ings all mine, with ten thou-sand be-side!

Refrain

Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Morn-ing by

morn-ing new mer-cies I see; all I have need-ed thy

hand hath pro-vid-ed; great is thy faith-ful-ness, Lord, un-to me.

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

Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. Responding to "God of grace," with "hear our prayer."

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

God blesses us that we might carry that blessing into the world. Let us give with grateful hearts.

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful

Offering Song

Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of
all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble
with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980

Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927

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OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious God,

Receive these and all of our offerings as we present them in faithful service

for the sake of your mission. May all creation be joined together as one in your love. In Christ we pray.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

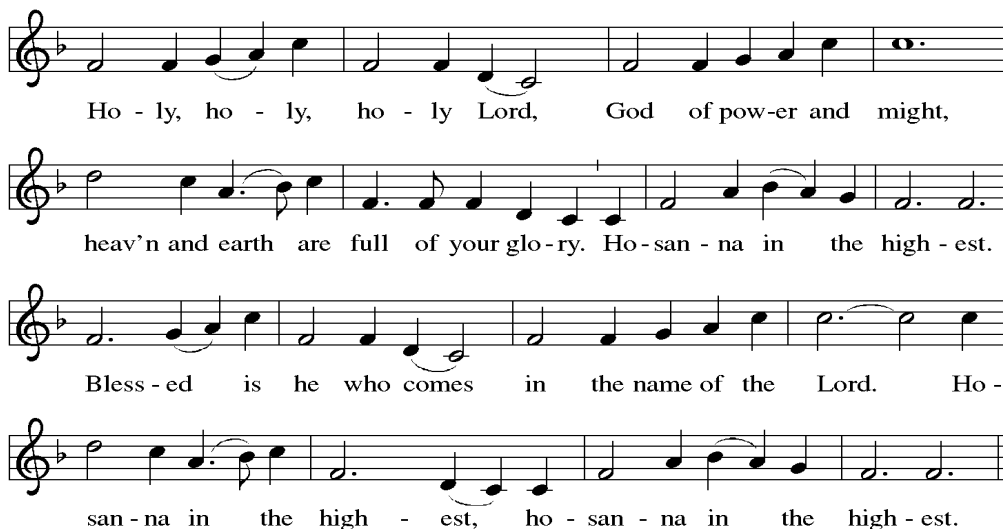
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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



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

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.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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

Taste and see God's love.

COMMUNION HYMNS



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 HYMNS CONTINUED

You Satisfy the Hungry Heart

Gift of Finest Wheat

Refrain




You sat - is - fy the hun - gry heart with gift of fin - est wheat.



Come give to us, O sav - ing Lord, the bread of life to eat.



- 1 As when the shep - herd calls his sheep, they know and heed his voice;
- 2 With joy - ful lips we sing to you our praise and grat - i - tude
- 3 Is not the cup we bless and share the blood of Christ out - poured?
- 4 The mys - t'ry of your pres - ence, Lord, no mor - tal tongue can tell:
- 5 You give your - self to us, O Lord; then self - less let us be,



Refrain

so when you call your fam - 'ly, Lord, we fol - low and re - joice.
that you should count us wor - thy, Lord, to share this heav' n - ly food.
Do not one cup, one loaf, de - clare our one - ness in the Lord?
whom all the world can - not con - tain comes in our hearts to dwell.
to serve each oth - er in your name in truth and char - i - ty.

Text: Omer Westendorf, 1916-1997
Music: BICENTENNIAL, Robert E. Kreutz, 1922-1996
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Blessed Assurance

1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,

Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood,
an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love,
watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love,

Refrain

This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:

this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820-1915
Music: ASSURANCE, Phoebe P. Knapp, 1830-1908

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Generous God,

We thank you for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table.

Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

May God's grace blossom in your heart and rejuvenate your soul.

May Christ's love sprout from your hands, cultivating compassion.

May the Spirit's presence gladden your heart and bring you peace.

And may the Three in One ✠ bless your harvest and all that is tilled up along the way.

Amen.

SENDING SONG

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heav'n, to
 2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - 'ry
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, pure and spot - less

earth come down! Fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy
 trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -

faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,
 find thy prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,
 ly re - stored in thee! Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,

pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
 till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our

thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty,
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love,
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788
 Music: HYFRYDOL, Rowland H. Prichard, 1811-1887

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the harvest.

Thanks be to God.

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Welcome to all! Welcome! The Holy Spirit calls us together as the church to worship and praise God, made known to us in Christ. Peace be with you all.

As harvest time draws near in the northern hemisphere, we thank you, Holy Spirit, for cultivating our lives to bear good fruit that serves your kingdom.

Please remember to silence pagers and cell phones during services.

To those who are visiting: Welcome to St. John and thank you for joining us! You are welcome to sign our registry in the narthex. May God bless you today and all days.

Reminder! If you are in need of Pastoral care, please contact St. John's at (715) 675-6950

Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday. All are welcome to share the Lord's Supper with us.

Food Basket. Each week you are invited to bring non-perishable grocery items to be given to a local food pantry. Place your gift in the *Food Basket* next to the main entrance.

2024 YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT GATHERING IN NEW ORLEANS

July 16-20, 2024, National Youth Gathering! Registration for this event will take place **Sept. 15–Nov. 1, 2023**. This is for all youth that will be in 8th to 12th grade at the time of registration (fall 2023). Please let Pastor Maggie know if you are interested so we can start planning and fundraising.

July 16-20, 2024, National Young Adult Youth Gathering! Due to the cancellation of the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering, this gathering will be open to individuals who will be 18-35 at the time of the event! Registration for this event will take place **Sept. 15–Nov. 1, 2023**. Please let Pastor Maggie know if you are interested.

LIVING RIVER CONCERT, OCTOBER 1, 2023 SAVE THE DATE!!!

St. John has contracted with Living River Quartet to perform on **Oct.1, 2023**

at 2:00 pm. Living River praises God with their music. They share a blend of contemporary praise and worship, gospel and a cappella styles. The lyrics reflect the light that only Jesus Christ can bring to a hurting world. They cannot perform during worship service because one of their members is in ministry, so they are not available Sunday mornings. The polka band that performed in the past is now retired.

We will be offering a **10:30 Worship service** that day with our chili dinner and raffle to follow. The concert will be at 2:00 pm. in the sanctuary.

Please consider having your raffle item donations at church by Rally Sunday, September 10. Ticket sales will begin that day.

We are very excited to be hosting Living River and having our traditional chili dinner and raffle. The Nowaks are making their delicious chili and Linda Graveen is in charge of the raffle again this year.

We've not been able to share this special time together since Covid interrupted our world. Join us on October 1, to once again enjoy worship, food, fellowship, fun and music.

More information to follow. If you have immediate questions contact Barb Paulsen, Sue Harris or Linda Graveen (raffle items).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Monday, July 31 at 6:30 p.m. Pastor Maggie’s Book Club will be discussing Peace Like A River by Leif Enger.

Exciting news! Pictures that were taken for the new church directory are here and can be picked up in the fellowship hall. Pictures are located on the table and in the box. We are also excited to have our new directories soon, stay tuned.

St. John Parking Lot. During the May council meeting, a discussion was had about St. John's Parking lot, as the asphalt needs to be replaced. There are many cracks, crevasses, and areas where the base layer is no longer good and as time goes on would only grow worse. The area to be replaced starts at the corner of the building going out to the road.

A meeting will be held at a later date for the congregation to discuss options.

A discussion is noted in the meeting minutes for May, please contact a council member if you have concerns.

Live Streaming and Photography Notice. When you enter a St. John Lutheran Church service or event, you will be entering an area where photography, video and audio recording or live streaming may occur. If you prefer not to be recognized on camera, the back row inside the church is not within viewing distance of a camera and communion will typically be only on a wide shot where it may be difficult to recognize congregants. Parents, please note our children’s sermons are being recorded and live streamed. If you do not want your child to be recognized on camera, please refrain from having them participate.

Coming This Week @ St. John July 23– July 30

	<u>Today</u>
9:00 a.m.	Worship
	<u>July 30</u>
9:00 a.m.	Worship