

November 1st Worship
All Saints Sunday

Introduction to the Day

All Saints celebrates the baptized people of God, living and dead, who are the body of Christ. As November heralds the dying of the landscape in many northern regions, the readings and liturgy call us to remember all who have died in Christ and whose baptism is complete. At the Lord's table we gather with the faithful of every time and place, trusting that the promises of God will be fulfilled and that all tears will be wiped away in the new Jerusalem.

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved.

Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy One,

we confess that we are not awake for you.

We are not faithful in using your gifts.

We forget the least of our siblings.

We do not see your beautiful image

in one another.

**We are infected by sin that divides your beloved
community.**

**Open our hearts to your coming,
open our eyes to see you in our neighbor,
open our hands to serve your creation. Amen.**

Beloved, we are God's children,
and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us.

Through † Jesus you are forgiven,

by Jesus you are welcome,

in Jesus you are called to rejoice!

Let us live in the promises prepared for us
from the foundation of the world.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you have knit your people together in one communion in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Lesson – 1 John 3:1-3

¹See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. ³And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

Gospel – Matthew 5:1-12

¹When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Message

People of God, grace, to you and peace from God and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Over the past few weeks, there's been a post on social media, Facebook in particular, that has gone viral. The post makes note of the fact that it's been seven months that we have been in this time of not being able to hug those people that we were used to hugging, that we're not able to meet with those people we are used to meeting with, and the re-forming of society that we've experienced and discussed a bit in last week's sermon.

The gist of this viral posts is that as we get into colder and darker months and a season of the year that is already difficult enough, is going to be made even more difficult darker months and season of the year, that is already difficult enough this year. I saw as friend after friend shared it, some of them with their own commentary on it, their own experiences, their own feelings, I've thought of those people that I know is that as these darker seasons do come upon us, those friends I've thought of who very publicly share the difficulty they experience in it. And the hope of the viral post is that we would hear this call to care for each other. That we would hear this call to care for those people around us, to care for those people that we don't get to hug and see and visit with and share life experiences with.

I saw and pondered what this means for us as friend after friend shared this post. Then when I woke up on Wednesday morning I had a message from someone who I admire greatly who would definitely not consider himself a church person but is someone that I consider to be one of the best Christians I know. This person is everything I would hope to be as a person of faith.

So I woke up Wednesday morning to a message from Rusty. He said, “there's gotta be a sermon in here somewhere. All around us are signs of people struggling with mental health.”

And I sat with that, and didn't take long to realize he is absolutely right. There's absolutely a sermon in there somewhere, but in all honesty, mental health is a thing we don't want to talk about. Mental health is something we are readily available to discuss. We want to treat it as that 800 pound gorilla in the room that we just know about...so we don't have to go there.

Then I started reading through the worship service, the liturgy for today. And I was struck by the reminders that we get in our worship:

That we are gods
and we are loved
and we are called to care for each other.

And as we wonder about this call to care for ourselves and each other and our mental health, and to reach out to those we think may be struggling and to reach out if we are one of those struggling, I was struck by our words from our worship today. at the words that we hear in worship today

In our confession and forgiveness: Beloved, we are God's children. Through Jesus you are forgiven. By Jesus you are welcome. In Jesus you are called to rejoice. Let us live in the promises.

From our prayer of the day: You have knit your people together in the body of your son Jesus Christ Our Lord. In our first lesson: We should be called children of God. And that is what we are beloved. We are God's children.

In our prayer after communion, where we invite all who believe and need the redeeming power of Christ's body and blood. In our prayer following that meal: Sustain us on the journey, strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on the way.

And finally, our blessing as our worship will conclude: May the God of all creation in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved, who strengthens us for service, give you reason to rejoice and be glad.

Reason to rejoice and be glad.

As people of faith, as people tuning into worship hoping to hear a good word, as people of faith tuning into worship hoping to hear a message of hope, as people of faith tuning in to All Saints Sunday Worship, where we remember those who have died in the last year...

We are longing for a word of hope.

We've got on our minds and in our hearts those people who have gone from our lives in the last year, some of whom may have died at the hands of mental health crises.

The message I received from my friend Rusty came after he had had a long conversation with another friend of his. They had been discussing this, the presence of mental health issues in our society, and wanting to be the person that people who are struggling need, and wishing they were able to carry the burden that so many feel, and wondering "what can we do?"

Our words matter. The words we hear in worship ought to be words that we don't just hear, but we listen, to that we internalize. The words we speak ought to be words that we think about. How does what we say shape our interactions? How do our words and what we say affect our relationship?

Then we look at our Gospel text: The beatitudes.

Jesus saw the crowds and he sat down, his disciples came to him and he began to speak, teaching them saying:

Blessed are

- the poor in spirits.
- Those who mourn
- the meek
- those who hunger and thirst for righteousness
- the merciful
- the pure in heart
- The peacemakers
- those who are persecuted.

And in each of those, he gives a word of hope – what it is that they will inherit – their reward.

But as we celebrate this All Saints Sunday, a day when we remember those who have passed, but also are reminded that in our baptism, we are those saints that are named and gathered in the waters of baptism.

After giving the list of the “blessed are the...” Jesus speaks three words that I want you to hear this day.

Blessed. Are. You.

When people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you, falsely.

Blessed. Are. You.

Rejoice and be glad for your reward is great in heaven.

Jesus was speaking to the people of his time. He was speaking to his followers in that time and in that place. But he's speaking to us. It's no coincidence that this text comes to us seven and a half months into a pandemic that has turned upside down our way of life as we know it.

Jesus gives us a word of hope. Our liturgy for worship gives us reminders that we need to hear. Our Sundays in the seasons of the church year give us the things that we know - that today is All Saints Sunday. And that yes, while it is the day when we remember the saints who have passed from this life, that we are gathered as God's people. We are gathered around the promise that we have been made in God's image each and every single one of us. No matter the life experiences that we have endured, no matter what it is that we are going through right now, or what we will go through as the months get more and more darker and difficult.

We are God's.

So, people of God, I implore you to remember those three words from our gospel text.

Blessed. Are. You

Beloved of God you have been made in God's image.

In that you have been made perfect.

In Christ dying on the cross you have been forgiven.

You are loved immeasurably.

Every single time that it is needed Jesus will say to you, “you are my child and I love you. No matter what.”

We need to hear that.

If you know someone that struggles to hear that, call them, tell them that they are loved - By you - by God - by your church. Tell them tomorrow too. And the next day.

And, if it's you that needs to hear that, then please hear it.

Blessed are you child of God for you are loved unconditionally forever.

Blessed. Are. You.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Apostle's Creed

Prayers

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Lord of all the saints, we praise you for evangelists and martyrs whose sacrifices witness to your gospel across time and space. Inspire us by their courage to carry our faith to new people and places around us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of every place, the universe proclaims your greatness from generation to generation. Bless the work of naturalists, conservationists, and park rangers who train our attention to the wonders of the world you have made. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of every nation, guide this country—red states and blue states, rural voters and urban voters, young and old—as we share in another national election. Kindle hearts eager to understand our common needs and seek our common good. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of every blessing, your Son's blessing came to those living with poverty, grief, hunger, thirst, and persecution. Shape our vision of the saints to match his own. Awaken in us your call to serve all who suffer. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of every venture, anoint us with the missionary spirit of the early church. Bless all new missions of our synod and our churches. Empower testimony from new communities of faith to shape a diverse witness to your saving power. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Lord of every time, countless are the multitudes you have called by name and gathered to yourself. Comfort us as we grieve those who have died in the past year: Mary J. Hanson - Dorothy Running - Eunice Johnston - Joel Ellis - Herbert Hoehn - Mary Koontz - Melvin Sanders - Irene Bulgerin - Inez Rasmussen - June E. Johnson - Robert Gardow - Dorothy Dutzle - James A. Johnson - Joan Ippolite - and others we name before you now. In faith, may we join with them in ceaseless praise. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever.

Amen.

Offering and Offertory Prayer

Our 4th Quarter Well Offering / Mission Offering:

Northwest Synod of Wisconsin and Lutheran Disaster Response.

God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant. **Amen.**

At Home Communion Liturgy

+WORDS OF INSTITUTION+

(Holding the bread) 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."

(Holding the cup) 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 all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me." When we eat this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

(Tear the bread, share with each person – invite them to dip into the cup of wine/grace juice) +

LORD'S PRAYER +

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION +

Lord Jesus, in this simple meal you have set a banquet. Sustain us on the journey, strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children, and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on the way.

Amen.

BLESSING EACH OTHER +

(Using your pointer finger, dip it in the bowl of water, and make the sign of the cross on another's forehead or the back of their hand)

"Child of God, marked as God's own, Jesus loves you, and will love you forever. AMEN"

Take turns until each person has been blessed.

Blessing

May the God of all creation,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved,
who strengthens us for service,
give you reason to rejoice and be glad!
The blessing of God,
Sovereign, † Savior, and Spirit,
be with you today and always.

Amen.

Dismissal

Beloved of God,
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS! ANNOUNCEMENTS! ANNOUNCEMENTS!

Opportunities to Connect!

Mondays: Coffee and Conversation in the Upper Fellowship Hall at 9 am

Tuesdays: Lunch and Laughter – Join us at noon!

Wednesdays: Youth and Family Ministries throughout the Day

Thursdays: Sanctuary open for "Prayer Around the Cross"

*Communion is available each day by appointment

*All opportunities require a mask and spacing precautions will be in place

Last call for the purchase/claiming of Church Pews

Please contact DeAnne in the church office if you would like to claim or purchase a church pew.

Funds received over the cost of new chairs will be used towards eliminating the debt from the purchase of the new boilers.