

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost  
June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Introduction to the Day

God does not promise that the path of the disciple will be easy. Jeremiah feels the pain of rejection from those who do not want to hear what he has to say. Jesus declares that his words may bring stark division. Even so, we need not be afraid for God accounts for each hair on our heads. Though we may experience rejection, frustration, division, and death, God's grace and love make us a new creation each day. Marked with the cross and filled with holy food, we are sent from worship to witness to Christ in the world.

**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**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
who greets us in this and every season,  
whose word never fails,  
whose promise is sure.

**Amen.**

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

Merciful God,

**we confess that we have sinned.**

**We have hurt our community.**

**We have squandered your blessings.**

**We have hoarded your bounty.**

**In the name of Jesus,**

**forgive us and grant us your mercy.**

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Righteous God,

**we confess that we have sinned.**

**We have failed to be honest.**

**We have lacked the courage to speak.**

**We have spoken falsely.**

**In the name of Jesus,**

**forgive us and grant us your mercy.**

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God is a cup of cold water when we thirst.

God offers boundless grace when we fail.

Claim the gift of God's mercy:

you are freed and forgiven

in the name of † Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

**Gathering Hymn**    “Gather Us In”

#532 vs. 1,3,4

**Prayer of the Day**

Teach us, good Lord God, to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, except that of knowing that we do your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Reading: 1 Samuel 28:15-25**

<sup>15</sup>Then Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?” Saul answered, “I am in great distress, for the Philistines are warring against me, and God has turned away from me and answers me no more, either by prophets or by dreams; so I have summoned you to tell me what I should do.” <sup>16</sup>Samuel said, “Why then do you ask me, since the LORD has turned from you and become your enemy? <sup>17</sup>The LORD has done to you just as he spoke by me; for the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand, and given it to your neighbor, David. <sup>18</sup>Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD, and did not carry out his fierce wrath against Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you today. <sup>19</sup>Moreover the LORD will give Israel along with you into the hands of the Philistines; and tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me; the LORD will also give the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines.”

<sup>20</sup>Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, filled with fear because of the words of Samuel; and there was no strength in him, for he had eaten nothing all day and all night. <sup>21</sup>The woman came to Saul, and when she saw that he was terrified, she said to him, “Your servant has listened to you; I have taken my life in my hand, and have listened to what you have said to me. <sup>22</sup>Now therefore, you also listen to your servant; let me set a morsel of bread before you. Eat, that you may have strength when you go on your way.” <sup>23</sup>He refused, and said, “I will not eat.” But his servants, together with the woman, urged him; and he listened to their words. So he got up from the ground and sat on the bed. <sup>24</sup>Now the woman had a fattened calf in the house. She quickly slaughtered it, and she took flour, kneaded it, and baked unleavened cakes. <sup>25</sup>She put them before Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they rose and went away that night.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Children’s Message**

**Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew 10:24-39**

[Jesus said to the twelve:] <sup>24</sup>“A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; <sup>25</sup>it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

<sup>26</sup>“So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. <sup>27</sup>What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. <sup>28</sup>Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. <sup>29</sup>Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. <sup>30</sup>And even the hairs of your head are all counted. <sup>31</sup>So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

<sup>32</sup>“Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; <sup>33</sup>but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

<sup>34</sup>“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

<sup>35</sup>For I have come to set a man against his father,

and a daughter against her mother,

and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;

<sup>36</sup>and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household.

<sup>37</sup>Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; <sup>38</sup>and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. <sup>39</sup>Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ**

**Sermon**

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

We find ourselves having just passed the quarter point of our 16 week dive into call narratives throughout scripture as part of our own discerning about what God is calling us to in the future as church. The first four weeks of this process have revolved around some very prevalent themes.

God affirms those whom God calls and assures them that they have what it takes to carry out God’s mission.

God reminds them that God will continue to be present with them throughout that which they are called.

Each character has responded in their own way, some with hesitancy others have jumped in feet first, and others decide to test God to see if God means what God is saying.

But, they all do it. They all set out to lead God's people on the mission to which God has called them.

And then we get this story of Saul. Now, this is the Old Testament Saul, not to be confused with Saul of the New Testament. They each go through their own conversions, if you will, just in the opposite order of one another.

As our Discerning God's Call: Listening to God in Scripture resource points out:

Saul served as the first King of Israel and his reign did not go well. He quickly lost God's favor and the prophet Samuel anointed David to be the next King. For years Saul had a love/hate relationship with David, but eventually he sought to take David's life to protect the throne for himself and his sons.

When Philistines invaded, Saul sought God's response. With Samuel dead, he didn't know where to turn. He encountered God's silence, so he took matters into his own hands.

Saul had it good, and his power got to him.

Thinking that all that he had came from himself and nothing more, Saul lost favor with God. Contrary to the previous call narratives that we have heard, Saul did not keep God at the center of all that has happened for him. His power was his and his alone and Saul lost touch and lost favor with God.

So, he calls upon his servants to bring to him a medium, someone that could speak to the dead, someone that he as previously banished from the Kingdom. His servants go and find this woman, but because he knows that she will know it is him that banished her, he comes in disguise.

While this story of Saul is perhaps one of the most head scratching as far as how it applies to us and the process we are going through, it actually is one of the best at answering the questions that we have been asking.

How do the people in the story hear God's call to them? For Saul it is through this woman. She brings back Samuel and Samuel tells Saul essentially that he has gotten what was coming to him. And Saul falls to the ground in fear. But this woman, the one whom he has banished from the Kingdom, is the one who brings a word of call to Saul. "Listen." Three times she tells him of people who have listened. First his servant listened to him. Then, she listened to him. And now, it is his turn. "Listen."

She is saying to him to repent from all that he has done wrong. Listen to what you know and return to what you know to be right.

The second question: How open are they to God's call? For Saul he was fearful. Realizing what he had done wrong, and the fear that came with it, was paralyzing. He fell to the ground, gripped with fear.

For us this is a cautionary tale. Perhaps a perfectly placed cautionary tale as we begin the second quarter of this 16 week process.

It is a cautionary tale reminding us of what we heard in the narratives of Abram, Moses, Joshua, and Gideon.

1. Keep God at the center.
2. Remember that it is God who is doing this. Not us.
3. And, it is a process worthy of immersing ourselves in.

And, what we hear in the story of Saul: If we start think that it is us and a great thing that we are doing and the power is all ours...It might not go so well.

People of God. Let us continue to dive boldly into figuring out the future God is calling us to. Remembering that it is God who is at work here, it is God who is at the center of our lives as people of faith, and it is God who will continue to be a constant presence in our future together.

Thanks be to God.

AMEN

**Song of the Day**      **“Bind Us Together”**

**Apostle’s Creed**

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**Offering**

**Offertory Prayer**

God of field and forest, sea and sky,  
you are the giver of all good things.

Sustain us with these gifts of your creation,  
and multiply your graciousness in us,  
that the world may be fed with your love,  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Words of Institution**

**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**

**Communion**      **#471 & #466**

**Prayer**

We thank you, generous God,  
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.**

**Blessing**

The God who calls across the cosmos  
and speaks in the smallest seed  
✠ bless, keep, and sustain you  
now and to the end of the age.

**Amen.**

**Sending Song**      **“We Are Called”**

**#720**

**Dismissal**

Go in peace. Share the harvest.

**Okay! We will! Thanks be to God!**

And all of Good Shepherd said...

**AMEN!**

# June Financial Snapshot

## Your generosity in action:

WE HAVE PAID OFF THE BOILER LOAN  
and plans are being made for our  
Middle School and High School Students  
to start dreaming about their space!

### Going Strong Update:

\$2,000 lead gift  
\$2,925 towards the \$10,000 match.  
\$14,925 total!

**THANK YOU!!**

Through June 20

Total  
Revenue **\$20,516**

1 more Sunday Offering to Come

Total  
Expenses **\$20,661**

1 more payroll: -\$4,000

Difference to date:  
**-\$145**

Please join us SUNDAY to celebrate Bill and Betty Davey's 75th wedding anniversary. We will be in the upper fellowship hall at Good Shepherd from 2-4.

Please no gifts, cards will be accepted and appreciated.

Snacks and drinks will be available.

Hope to see you on June 25!

Bill and Betty's family

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**SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

**YOU** provide the  
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**RETIREMENT OPEN HOUSE  
FOR  
REVEREND GREG KAUFMANN**



Luther Park Bible Camp-Chetek  
Saturday, August 26, 2023  
1-4 p.m.

Program at 2:30

Celebrating 23 years of ministry

RSVP: Liz Bartsch

715.859.6810 or

[lbartsch@nswi.org](mailto:lbartsch@nswi.org)