

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023

In Isaiah the people are advised to look to their spiritual ancestors as the rock from which they were hewn. Jesus declares that the church will be built on the rock of Peter's bold confession of faith. God's word of reconciliation and God's mercy are keys to the church's mission. Paul urges us to not be conformed to this world but to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, using our individual gifts to build up the body of Christ. From the table we go forth to offer our spiritual worship through word and deed.

**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**

**“The Church's One Foundation”**

**#654 vs. 1,2,5**

**Prayer of the Day**

O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into the body of your Son, that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Acts 11: 1-4, 18 (verses 5-17 to be covered in the sermon)**

Now the apostles and the brothers and sisters who were in Judea heard that the gentiles had also accepted the word of God. <sup>2</sup> So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, <sup>3</sup> saying, “Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?” <sup>4</sup> Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, <sup>18</sup> When they heard all that he would tell them, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, “Then God has given even to the gentiles the repentance that leads to life.”

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Children's Message**

## **Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew 16:13-20**

<sup>13</sup>Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” <sup>14</sup>And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” <sup>15</sup>He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” <sup>16</sup>Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” <sup>17</sup>And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. <sup>18</sup>And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. <sup>19</sup>I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” <sup>20</sup>Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

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.

For the better part of the 12 weeks that we’ve been in this process, we have heard call narratives and sermons about God calling us into the uncomfortable places. Seemingly each and every one of the narratives that we have read has pointed to God calling us into the places that we would rather not go to. But they’ve all stopped short of showing us what happens when we do.

We’ve allowed ourselves to think of our reasons why not. We’ve imagined the things we’ve told ourselves that have kept us from fully living into that which God calls us to, and the rah rah sermons have been there. And so has the hesitancy.

With each of those messages I’ve had my own thoughts of “is this actually what we are going to do? Do I, as the Pastor, actually want to be a part of this? Will it work? Is it worth it?”

These are questions that I have asked. Perhaps I am not alone. And I think it’s okay to ask those questions. After all, we are human. It is human nature to second guess a really good plan. We do it all the time. AND, the stories that we’ve heard that encourage us to do those things, haven’t always told us how it will actually go.

But we are reminded of those themes that we heard in the beginning of this process. God is at the center of all that we do. We will continue to keep it that way. We will remind ourselves that this is nothing that we are doing on our own, rather it is God working through us in the world.

And, when we remember those things it does us good to get back to thinking about those places that we’ve told ourselves we can’t go and those Big Hairy Audacious Goals we’ve told ourselves we can’t accomplish.

Thankfully, our call narrative for today shows us what DOES happen when we allow ourselves to actually pursue those things we’ve always told ourselves we can’t.

Peter. One of the Apostle’s. The Rock. The one on whom Christ will build the church, finds himself in Joppa. At this point in his life he is still clinging to those things that he has told himself to be true and the way things ought to be. In his mind God is still a God of division and who can and can’t.

While in Joppa he has a vision. A large sheet is coming down from heaven and is coming close to him. As he looks closely he sees four footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. And there is a voice, “Get up, Peter; kill and eat.”

Peter, again clinging to that which he knows to be true abiding by the way things ought to be, refuses. “I cannot. Nothing profane or unclean must enter my mouth.”

A second time the voice calls, saying, “What God has made clean, you must not call profane.”

Three times this happened. Finally the vision ends and there are three men from Caesarea and the Spirit guides Peter to go with them. The Spirit encourages him to pay no attention to the distinctions that he might have been himself and them. Remember, Peter is clinging to that which he knows to be true and the way things ought to be.

Upon entering a man's house he hears that an Angel had appeared to the man and told him to send for Peter. The man, whom Peter would consider to be outside of the boundary that he is to cross, who goes against all that Peter knows to be true and against the way things ought to be, tells him that Peter is to give a message by which he and the entire household will be saved.

In their conversation the Holy Spirit fell upon him just as it had fallen upon the believers who were there at the beginning. And it is in that moment that Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

He then has a realization that I think ought to be plastered at every exit of every church for people to see as they are about to go out into the mission field that is the world around us: "If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?"

How often do we get in God's way with the excuses we make for why we can't do what we believe God is calling us to do?

This who story, the sharing of the experience that he had, is in response to the question he received regarding why he ate with those that he was not to eat with. Those who were different. Those who were on the other side of the boundary that they had set up. In response to there questions he gives them his experience.

"When they heard this, they were silenced."

What follows could have gone one of many directions. They could have been angry. They could have laughed him out of the room. He could have been banished. Instead...

"They praised God, saying, 'Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.'"

When those who questioned Peter's ministry heard the stories of God's action in it, their excuses ended.

They praised God for reaching across the boundaries they had set up and realized the life giving love of God in Christ Jesus is for all people.

Putting aside all that they knew to be true and what they knew of how things ought to be, they were no longer a hindrance to God's activity in the world.

People of God, this is the message we need to hear. It is no longer a wondering about how things might go if we dare ourselves to be uncomfortable and challenged by the Gospel. This story shows us what will happen when we loose the bonds that we have placed on the Good News of God's Love for God's People.

If God has given the same gift of the Holy Spirit to those whom we encounter, that we ourselves have received in believing in Christ, then who are we that we could hinder God?

Thanks be to God.

AMEN

**Song of the Day**      **"Seek Ye First"**

**Apostle's Creed**

**Prayers of Intercession**

Confident that God receives our joys and concerns, let us offer our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

God of Sarah and Abraham, inspire your church to pursue righteousness in its ministry. Equip us to share your compassion that unites us as one family of faith. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Remind us that from the beginning of creation, you knit together a world meant for harmony. Protect and restore the wasted places to joy and gladness. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Stir the leaders of nations and towns, militaries and courts, to respond to your teachings. Let your call for justice reach all people and bring deliverance where there is oppression. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Show your steadfast love and faithfulness to those in despair. Increase their strength, care for all who feel low, keep safe any in the midst of trouble, and protect vulnerable people from harm (*We pray especially for Peyton, Matt, David, Verna, Irene, Clarice, Steve, Kathy, Val, Jacob, Cherri, Keith and JoJo, Bob and Joanne, Bill and Bonnie, Frank and Heather, Bob and Sonja, Bill and Betty, Tom and Kay, Sherm and Mary, Verne and Kathy, family of Sandy Johnson*). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Encourage those who offer their gifts and talents in service to your church. Energize this congregation's rostered and lay leaders, musicians, teachers, greeters, and administrators so they may be transformed in sharing your grace. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

God of all the saints, death is overcome in Christ's resurrection. We rejoice with the faithful departed (*especially*). Sustain us in hope until we come at last to our heavenly home. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, in the name of the one who reconciled all creation to himself, Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

## **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**

**Hymns #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 All Are One in Mission”

#576 vs. 1,3

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Share the harvest.  
**Okay! We will! Thanks be to God!**  
And all of Good Shepherd said...  
**AMEN!**

# August Financial Snapshot

## Did you know:

We are in the process of welcoming the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Resource Center into our building. The Synod Resource Center will be moving into what we call “Sacred Grounds.” We are excited for this partnership and the traffic and visibility it will give to many of our Outreach Ministries!

## Through August 23

Total Revenue      **\$17,822**

1 more Sunday Offering to Come

Total Expenses      **\$18,006**

Difference to date:  
**-\$184**





Lutheran Church of the  
**GOOD SHEPHERD**  
KNOWN · SEEN · LOVED

## Strong Again Summer Appeal

Boiler Loan = \$2,047.27 **ELIMINATED**,  
Youth Room Remodel = \$3,000 **COVERED**  
Line of Credit = \$10,259.19 **PAID OFF**  
Towards a Fall Cushion = \$9,031  
and **GROWING STRONGER**

Generosity	\$2,000 Lead Gift
Breakdown	\$10,00 match met = \$20,000
	\$24,334 total

# Welcome Back Weekend 2023

## September 9-10

<p>Saturday, September 9 - Work and Play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Property Clean-up, inside and out</li> <li>Clean out the garages</li> <li>BYO Picnic Lunch</li> <li>Supper on the Grill</li> </ul>	<p>Sunday, September 10 - Worship and Play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worship at 9 am</li> <li>Blessing of Backpacks</li> <li>Fall Faith Formation Kickoff</li> <li>Delicious Treats!</li> </ul>
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