

Week three of our five week Worship Series looking at our values. LCGS values deep and meaningful relationships that cross generations for the sake of the Gospel, lived through: Worship that engages each of God's children. Your mind most likely went to the word "children." This value is about more than young people in worship, but rather how EACH of us is a child of God, and our worship engages each of God's children.

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 God,
the one who forms us,
✠ Jesus who bears the cross,
the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

Amen.

Let us bow before God in humility,
confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Steadfast and faithful God,
**you have revealed the ways of justice,
yet we fail to follow you.
We are overwhelmed
by the world's violence and suffering.
We are afraid to risk what we have
for the sake of others.**

**For the harm we have caused,
known and unknown, forgive us.
For the unjust demands we place on others
and your creation, forgive us.**

**For the ways we turn away
from you and our neighbor, forgive us.**

**Lead us back to you
and set us on the right path;
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior.**

Amen.

Beloved in Christ,
God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.
God's compassion is beyond compare.
In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.
In ✠ Christ, you are already and always forgiven.
Amen.

Gathering Hymn

"You Are Holy"

#525

Prayer of the Day

Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Reading from Romans 12:1-8

I appeal to you therefore, siblings in Christ, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. ² Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. ³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶ We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸ the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Message

Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke 2:41-52

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. ⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. ⁴³ When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents were unaware of this. ⁴⁴ Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ When his parents saw him they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously looking for you." ⁴⁹ He said to them, were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he said to them. ⁵¹ Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was obedient to them, and his mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favor.

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.

Going back to last week's readings that we heard, specifically from Romans, we heard Paul giving the Christians in Rome the "marks of a Christian."

In our Gospel text today we hear many marks of what we ought to hope our Christian Communities resemble.

Now, it may not seem that way at first when hearing a story of a pre-teen getting separated from his traveling family and being lost for three – five days, but such is life with Jesus.

In the story of confirmation aged Jesus being "lost" in the temple, we see many things that actually resemble what we long for our Christian Communities to look like.

First, Jesus and his family went on this pilgrimage every single year. It was their tradition to make their way to Jerusalem for Passover. That is what they did. It was their religious tradition. We have those as well. A similarity.

Second, we hear when they start their journey home that they are traveling with a large group. Their group was so large that they did not even notice that their own child was not with them. This, again, may not seem like something that we hope for our Christian Communities to resemble, until we look more closely at who this group consisted of, and how it is that they could have missed him not being there.

This group of travelers consisted of friends and family. Close personal relationships. They assumed that Jesus was in this group among those with whom they have close personal and safe relationships so they didn't think anything of it.

Is that not also what we hope for our Christian Communities to be like? A place where all of God's children are embraced and a part of those close, personal, and safe relationships?

Third, they've made it about a day's journey home when they discover he is not with them. Thus, they make the roughly day's journey BACK to Jerusalem, where they then look for three days, before they find him in the Temple.

Before we get to that I have some questions. In their first day of travel, were there never moments when it would be natural to think of your child's whereabouts? Were there not mealtimes? Bedtimes? And for the leaders in the temple. Did they not, at any time, think about where this child's parents might be? Did they feed him? Tuck him in at night?

Perhaps these questions again point to the caring community that he had found where he knew he was safe and taken care of. And is that not what we would hope our Christian Communities would look like?

They did finally find him, in the temple where he was learning and growing in faith at the feet of the temple leaders. At age 12 it was normal for Jewish boys to start to engage with their faith and the questions that arise. It is our hope as a Christian Community to do the same for our young people, hence confirmation class.

Now, the leaders of the temple could have cast this young child aside. They could have very easily cast him aside saying that these conversations, this learning, these questions and holy arguments, are reserved for the elders, the teachers, and the leaders. But that is not their tradition. It was the tradition of the church to do the opposite. They knew they had a role in being a safe place where a child could get lost in the questions they have about their faith. And so, they engaged.

The second value under our umbrella statement of valuing deep and meaningful relationships that cross generations for the sake of the gospel is that it is lived through worship that engages EACH of God's children.

When we hear that statement, we latch onto the word "children." We think of confirmation aged Jesus and the other children in our worship space and how our worship engages them. And, when we do that we forget that EACH of us is God's child. And when we look at our worship (and when we say worship we really mean all of what happens on a Sunday morning), we see an experience that truly engages EACH of God's children.

To be a place that engages each of God's children in worship (and all of life together) is to be a place like the temple in which Jesus got lost. The temple leaders in this story did not cast him out of the temple. They embraced him. They saw their role in his faith development and they engaged with him.

To be a place that values worship that engages each of God's children is to be a place that hears the words from Paul's letter to the romans and takes it to heart. Those with the gifts to teach are called to teach. Those with the gifts of reading in front of people read in front of people. The compassionate are called to care for the community. The servers are called to serve. And those who are firm in their faith and those things they hold dear to are called to be available for those who may have those big questions.

Why? Well, look at what it meant for Jesus. Because of the embrace of the community that he found himself a part of, "Jesus increased in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favor."

As a Christian Community is that not precisely what we want for one another? That we would increase in wisdom and in year, and in divine and human favor?

People of God, let us continue to strive to be a Christian Community that engages EACH of God's children. May we realize that in that statement we are all named. We all have a part and a role to play. The development of our faith never ceases, and may we be a place where EACH of God's children is safe to get lost.

Thanks be to God.

AMEN

Song of the Day

"Jesus Loves Me!"

#595

Prayers of Intercession

Trusting in the transformative power of God's loving Spirit, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

God of all grace, you are the source of life and joy. Strengthen the resolve of your church throughout the world (*global mission partners may be named*), that together we press on toward the goal of your heavenly call in Jesus Christ. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God of all creation, you plant and nourish the earth as your own precious vineyard. Bless fields and orchards and the hands of those who labor in them, that your people are fed with an abundant harvest of good fruit. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God of all the earth, you desire peace and justice between nations and peoples. Guide leaders of nations, states, provinces, and cities, that they faithfully govern your people with wisdom, integrity, and compassion. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God of all compassion, in Christ, you lovingly poured yourself out like wine for your people. Have mercy on all who mourn, who struggle with their mental health, who cry out for justice, who hunger, and all in any need (*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, Ada*). God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God of all steadfastness, you set Christ as the cornerstone and foundation of the church. Build up this congregation as living stones, that it stands in the community as a witness to your enduring faithfulness and love. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God of all hope, the saints who came before us lived and died with their hearts fixed on you. We give you thanks for their faithful witness, and we wait with hope for the great day when we join their voices in praise. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Gracious God, into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your unending love and amazing grace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

Offering

Offertory Prayer

God of power, God of plenty,
all things belong to you.

We bring your gifts to the table,
that all might be fed.

Form us into the body of your Beloved,
Jesus Christ, our Savior.

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

Blessed be your name, O God,
for we have feasted on your Word,
Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts.
Strengthened by this food,
send us to gather the world to your banquet,
where none are left out and all are satisfied.
Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. God is at work in you.
Okay! We will! Thanks be to God!
And all of Good Shepherd said...
AMEN!

Sending Song

“Blessed Assurance”

#638 vs. 1,3

Blessing

The God of glory,
✠ Jesus Christ, name above all names,
and the Spirit who lives in you,
bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

October Financial Snapshot

Your Generosity in Action:

Shepherd’s Closet, LCGS Quilters, and Chippewa Valley Street Ministry were recently able to help a family that experienced a catastrophic event. When we talk about needing to “pay the bills” and “keep the lights on,” housing ministries that reach out to the community is what we are actually doing.
THANK YOU!!

Through October 4
Total Revenue **\$6,464**
4 Sunday Offerings Remain
Total Expenses **\$6,920**
Last October: \$21,632
Difference to date:
\$100

2023 Financial Snapshot

Month of September Year-to-Date

Total Revenue	\$20,352	\$224,258
Total Expenses	\$21,677	\$218,134
Difference	-\$1,325	\$6,124

The Good Shepherd Leadership Team will be meeting this evening and hosting Fellowship Time on Sunday morning.

If you've ever wondered what being on the Leadership Team is about, or what the Leadership is discussing these days, Sunday morning would be a GREAT opportunity for you to ask any questions you might have! At the very least, come and enjoy some delicious treats following worship!

Would you like to help?

If you've been with us on a Sunday morning you've maybe noticed that we've got some college students that make Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd their college year worship home away from home.

If you remember back to your college days you may remember that October brought on some midterms. And, you may even remember how good it felt to receive care packages.

Kristy Goettl is going to be assembling care packages for our college students and she would love for you to help! Give her a call at (715)829-5297).

Roosevelt is always on the lookout for wonderful volunteers. Whether you are interested in helping with a one-time event or volunteering on a weekly basis, please consider Roosevelt. All volunteers will be asked complete an online background check and a paper volunteer agreement. To get the process started please contact Partnership Coordinator Tammy Rud at trud@ecasd.us. “

Did you know that we have a **Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study**?

Stick around for fellowship following Sunday worship and then head into the Library for Parking Lot Talk.

Parking Lot Talk is a Bible Study on the text that was just preached on in worship. It is a chance for you to ask all of the questions that you normally ask in the parking lot or on the way home.

Tuesday morning Bible study begins at 11 a.m. Bring your lunch and stay for fellowship.

Lunch at Good Shepherd Senior Apartments

Would you like to join your friends at the apartments for lunch sometime? They are now offering the opportunity to purchase lunch (to eat there or take out) to people outside of the residence. The cost is \$10 to dine in or \$11 for takeout. You must order by the Wednesday before the week you want to purchase lunch. We have the menu available for you to check out for Sept. 25-Oct. 7. If you have any questions or to order a meal, please call the GSSA office (715-834-3587).