

Ninth Sunday After Pentecost – July 21st, 2024

Introduction to the Day

Mark's gospel makes clear how great is the press of the crowd, with its countless needs to be met, on Jesus and his disciples. Yet in today's gospel Jesus advises his disciples to get away and rest, to take care of themselves.

Sometimes we think that when others are in great need we shouldn't think of ourselves at all; but Jesus also honors the caregivers' need. We are sent from Christ's table to care for others and for ourselves.

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.

Welcome

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
the God of manna,
the God of miracles,
the God of mercy.

Amen.

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God, our provider,

help us.

It is hard to believe there is enough to share.

**We question your ways when they differ from
the ways**

of the world in which we live.

**We turn to our own understanding
rather than trusting in you.**

**We take offense at your teachings and your
ways.**

Turn us again to you.

Where else can we turn?

**Share with us the words of eternal life
and feed us for life in the world.**

Amen.

Beloved people of God:

in Jesus, the manna from heaven,
you are fed and nourished.

By Jesus, the worker of miracles,
there is always more than enough.

Through Jesus, † the bread of life,
you are shown God's mercy:

you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.

Amen.

Gathering Hymn

“Rise, Shine, You People!”

#665

Prayer of the Day

O God, powerful and compassionate, you shepherd your people, faithfully feeding and protecting us. Heal each of us, and make us a whole people, that we may embody the justice and peace of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Reading – Psalm 23

¹ The LORD ¹ is my shepherd; I shall not ¹ be in want.

² **The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.**

³ You restore my soul, O LORD, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴ **Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶ **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Message

Gospel – Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

³⁰ The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹ He said to them, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. ³² And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. ³³ Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. ³⁴ As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

⁵³ When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. ⁵⁴ When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, ⁵⁵ and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶ And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

The Gospel of Our 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

Our gospel text (for today) skips a rather incredible story, Jesus feeding the five thousand. Don't worry, we'll hear it next week. But, knowing that the Feeding of the Five Thousand is what we skip here makes what happens in the verses we DO get, even more incredible.

Our Gospel text starts with the disciples excitedly returning from the mission in which they were sent out with essentially nothing but the partner that Jesus sent them with. They return sharing the exciting stories of all that they had done.

Now, imagine for a moment something that you LOVE to talk about. One of my favorite things to do is be a part of a conversation with someone where they tell me about something that they are passionate about. It can be something I'm familiar with, or something I have no clue about, and I will be continually blown away by the passion and excitement with which they speak!

Perhaps you know the feeling. Maybe not. But, that is how I imagine the disciples speaking to Jesus telling them of all that they had done, and a picture is painted, in my mind, of Jesus just sitting back and listening to all of the stories that they have to share. Fascinated by all that they have experienced.

And his response is gold. “Come away to a deserted place. Let us rest for a while.”

Hearing of all that they had done, and experiencing the excitement of the moment with them, “Jesus’ response is, “cool, let’s rest for a while.”

It is on that journey to rest where Jesus and the disciples encounter the crowd they could not escape. In their attempt to get away they are spotted and folks arrive at their destination before they even do and they are waiting for them. They've heard of Jesus. They know what he can do. They are aware of what he means for them and their lives and they have to be a part of what he is up to. So much for going to a quiet place to rest. The hour gets late and the disciples sense that the people are tired and hungry. And Jesus gives them the directive to ensure that all are fed. Now, again, this part of Mark's gospel is skipped in our text for today, but we will get more of the feeding of the five thousand next week, but for now it does us good to know that what we skip in our text for today is a story of God's abundance in Jesus Christ.

Our Gospel text picks back up with Jesus and the disciples heading back across the sea from the deserted place to where they tie up their boat at Genessaret. Sure enough, they are again recognized by a crowd that knows what Jesus means for them. They came from the whole region around the Sea of Galilee bringing people to Jesus that needed healing.

Carrying their loved ones on mats, they bring them to the marketplaces wherever Jesus was, hoping, just hoping, that they, too, might encounter the one that everyone is talking about. They know what he means for them, and they are willing to do whatever it takes, to the point of carrying their loved ones on mats to the marketplaces of where he will be, in the hopes that they, too, may just get a glimpse of God's grace and mercy that is Jesus active in the world.

And, when he would come into their midst, whether in the villages, cities, or farms, they would beg him that they might touch even just the fringe of his cloak.

I want to pause for a moment and think about the magnitude of this moment, this experience, what is happening here. We are coming off of the story in which Jesus feeds 5,000 people. This gives us an idea of what these crowds were like. Crowds were so large that they seemingly always knew of Jesus' whereabouts and what he was up to. Large crowds often met Jesus at his destinations because they knew he was going to be there.

And, we know from the first chunk of this Gospel text, that Jesus looks at these crowds of people with compassion. The crowd that met him looked like sheep without a shepherd, and he had compassion for them. In his efforts to get his disciples to a quiet place for rest, he sees a massive crowd and has compassion for them. How many of us would react that way in that moment? I would be borderline mad!

But not Jesus. Throughout this Gospel text, in the parts we hear and the section we skip, we hear of a compassionate Jesus.

But, we also hear of the power of faith. I would bet that many of us, and I won't assume all, feel more a part of that crowd that would have been eager to meet Jesus at his next generation, but the call of this Gospel text is to be the crowd that brought their loved ones that needed healing no matter the cost and effort. We are here because we know the healing power of God's grace and mercy in Jesus Christ.

But, when is the last time we brought that person that we knew, if they could touch even the fringes of God's grace and mercy could be healed? Imagine the faith of those that navigated that crowd with their loved ones on a mat, hoping, just hoping, that they might touch the fringe of his cloak, and be made well.

This text is a story of Christ's compassion for his followers. This story is a story of the faith of those that brought their loved ones. And, this story is a call for us to live in that compassion, but also the strength of faith to know that even the fringes of God's grace and mercy are enough to heal our weary souls.

Thanks be to God. AMEN

Hymn of the Day

"Children of the Heavenly Father"

#781

Apostle's Creed

Prayers

One in the communion of saints and in the power of the Holy Spirit, we join our voices in prayer.

A brief silence.

For the church of Jesus Christ in this and every land: Through the One who is the cornerstone of a firm foundation, join us together and build us up as a temple of mercy and peace. In your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For the creation: Cause new trees to be planted. Restrain the melting of polar ice caps. Save land from destruction. Like a shepherd tends her sheep, raise up from among us caretakers of all you have made. In your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For the leaders of nations and heads of tribes (*especially*): Where peace seems far off, bring it near. Where justice seems fleeting, bring it to light. Where discord seems relentless, bring harmony. In your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For the health and well-being of family, friends, and neighbors: Heal those who are sick (*We pray especially for Matt, Clarice, Steve, Kathy, Val, Cherri, Peggy, John, Judy, Keith and JoJo, Bob and Joanne, Frank and Heather, Bob and Sonja, Bill and Betty, Tom and Kay, Sherm and Mary, Dan and Sharon, Roger and MaryLee*). Give courage to all who struggle with addiction. Touch with your tender care all who reach out to you in pain. In your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For this assembly and for the faith communities represented this week at the ELCA Youth Gathering: Nurture the faith of young people as they encounter new experiences and people. Break down dividing walls and inspire collaboration among people of every age. In your mercy,

hear our prayer.

In thanksgiving for those who have died (*especially*): Make us certain that in Christ we are no longer strangers and aliens but citizens with the saints in the household of God. In your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Holy God, holy and merciful: into your outstretched arms we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in the one who is the way, the truth, and the life, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Peace

Offering

Offertory Prayer

Jesus, Bread of life,
you have set this table with your very self,
and called us to the feast of plenty.

Gather what has been sown among us,
and strengthen us in this meal.

Make us to be what we receive here,
your body for the life of the world.

Amen

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Hymns #471 & #474 vs. 1,2

Lord's Prayer

Christ has set the table with more than enough for all.

Come!

Post Communion Prayer

Jesus, Bread of life,
we have received from your table
more than we could ever ask.

As you have nourished us in this meal,
now strengthen us to love the world with your own life.

In your name we pray.

Amen.

Blessing

The blessing of God,
who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us,
✠ be upon you now and forever.

Amen.

Sending Hymn

“Blessed Assurance”

#638

Sending

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ!

Okay! We will! Thanks be to God.

And all of Good Shepherd said,

“AMEN”

Your Generosity in Action:



We've got a wonderful team of volunteers hard at work this week stripping and resurfacing the main hallway and both fellowship halls here at church.

This was made possible because of 2 generous sources.

- 1) Our Ruby's Pantry team covered a large portion of the cost
- 2) YOUR generosity in supporting the mission plan of the congregation has put us in a place to be able to say "we can do that" to projects that we haven't been able to do in recent years.

THANK YOU!!

Monthly Financials to date:	Total Revenue	Total Expenses	Difference
	\$17,273	\$11,468	\$5,805
	2023: \$26,173	2023: \$23,425	Checkbook Available thru June \$15,026

**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN
MATCHING GIFT CHALLENGE**
towards the Consultant Fee
\$13,600 from Leadership Team
\$5,550 matched so far

WECARE EAU CLAIRE
OUR 5th YEAR

WE CARE
EAU CLAIRE
OUR 5th YEAR

**WE provide the SCHOOL SUPPLIES
YOU provide the BACKPACKS
TOGETHER we provide the LOVE OF JESUS**

Bring backpacks to any participating church by August 1st

To donate funds to help purchase school supplies go to:
www.wecareeauclaire.com

Event at Phoenix Park Aug. 19

If you would like to donate backpacks, or give a donation towards backpacks, you can drop these off at the church office.



Heart For Luther Park 2024

Art, Craft, and Quilt Auction

Sunday, August 4th



Luther Park
Bible Camp

944 24 1/4 St. Chetek, WI

lutherpark.org

**NO CHILD
IN SCHOOL
WITHOUT
NEW
SNEAKERS**



Help us fill
Shepherd's
Closet with
sneakers for
their Aug. 7
Give-Away.

Shepherd's Closet



Children's sizes 10-13
Girls/Women and Boys/Men size 1-8

