



18th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday October 1, 2023

Lutheran Church of the Living Christ
2725 Concord Drive
Florissant, MO 63033

Welcome to Lutheran Church of the Living Christ

Welcome! If you are a guest today, we hope you leave as a friend. May this worship service surround you with the love of God through Christ and fills you with the Holy Spirit.

Invitation to Communion: We welcome all to commune at LCLC. It is the table of Jesus Christ - not our table, nor this congregation's table, nor our denomination's table. By his invitation there is a place for everyone. We believe that Jesus is present in the bread and wine that forgives sin, nourishes faith, and calls us to be witnesses of the gospel.

Notes about our worship service: You can also follow along with the service on the screen in the front. Guidance is printed in *italics* throughout. "P" indicates the speaking part of the presiding minister; "L" indicates a speaking part of a lay leader; "C" and parts in boldface indicate speaking parts of the whole congregation. We use a variety of resources to select music and other parts of the service. Please be mindful of others' comfort with touch. Ask before giving a handshake or hug.

PRELUDE

" We Praise You Oh God"

Michael Burkhardt

WELCOME

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be God, the one who forms us, ☩ Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

C: Amen.

P: Let us be humbled before God, confessing our sin.

Silence for reflection.

P: Steadfast and faithful God,

C: 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.

P: 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.

C: Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

"God is Here"

ELW#526

GREETING

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

FIRST READING Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

¹The word of the LORD came to me: ²What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? ³As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

²⁵Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

L: Word of God, Word of Life

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 25:1-9

L: ¹To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

C: ²My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.

L: ³Let none who look to you be put to shame; rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

C: ⁴Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.

L: ⁵Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

C: ⁶Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.

L: ⁷Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.

C: ⁸You are gracious and upright, O LORD; therefore you teach sinners in your way.

L: ⁹You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.

SECOND READING Philippians 2:1-13

¹If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,

⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

L: Word of God, Word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING - *Please stand, as you are able, to welcome the gospel.*

P: The holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 21st chapter (verses 23-32)

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

²³When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ²⁶But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Following the reading the assembly is seated.

SERMON Pastor Matt Helfrich

HYMN OF THE DAY "On that the Lord Would Guide" ELW #772

PROFESSION OF FAITH – *The Apostles' Creed*

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,**

and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

We put our trust in you as we pray for the church. Give bishops, pastors, deacons, and teachers the gifts of wisdom and discernment. Be with them in bold truth and faithful witness. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Lead us in your truth as we pray for creation. Empower us to look to the interests of others as we make choices that impact the environment. Summon us to be advocates for healthy waterways, habitats, and air. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Lead us in justice as we pray for those in government, the military, and other positions of authority (*local and national leaders may be named*). Give them humble and willing hearts, looking to the needs of others. We pray also for our enemies. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Trusting your goodness, we pray for all caregivers and people who are sick or suffering in any way (*especially*). Give them encouragement and consolation in your presence. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Teach us your paths as we pray for this congregation. Be at work in us, inspire us to welcome everyone into this fellowship, and unite us in your love as we labor together for the sake of the gospel. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for all the saints who died secure in the knowledge of salvation. Keep us fearless in our faith and certain of your resurrection. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of the risen Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Share God's peace in whatever way you and/or neighbors are comfortable.

Following the sharing of the peace the assembly is seated.

GATHERING OF OFFERINGS

OFFERING AND PRAYER

P: God of power and 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.

C: Amen

COMMUNION LITURGY

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise. Hosanna in the highest!

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.

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 for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

LORD'S PRAYER

P: Remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray,

C: 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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: All people are called to Christ's table. Come, eat what is good.

C: Amen.

DISTRIBUTION

Time is given for the sharing of bread and wine. Additional verbal directions will be given.

Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

“We Plow the Fields and Scatter”

ELW#681

BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you in God’s grace unto eternal life.

C: Amen.

PRAYER

L: 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. In Jesus’ name we pray.

C: Amen.

**(ANNOUNCEMENTS – Please see announcements at the end of this bulletin.)*

BENEDICTION

P: The God of glory, † Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

SENDING HYMN

“On Eagle’s Wings”

ELW#787

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace. God is at work in you. **C: Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE:

“On Eagle’s Wings”
ANNOUNCEMENTS

by Douglas E. Wagner

1. **The Funeral services for Mary Zell is October 6 @11:00am at Hutchins Mortuary.**
2. **CHURCH CLEAN-UP October 7th @ 9:00 am (see signup sheet)**
3. **OCTOBER LUNCH BUNCH WILL MEET AT HENDEL'S** The Lunch Bunch will meet **October 12** at 11:30 at Hendel's, 599 St. Denis St., Florissant, 63031. For reservations, contact Judy Holmes at 314-355-1125 or mickey.holmes@att.net. OR Joyce Meyer at 314-374-4135 or jameyer46@charter.net. All are welcome.
4. **FIFTY PLUS IS HAVING AN OKTOBERFEST!** The Fifty Plus group will gather at 10:30 Wednesday, **October 18**, in the lower-level social hall at church. There will be trivia and games before lunch. A German style meal will be served about noon. The menu includes brats, sauerkraut, German potato salad, desserts, beer, soda and pretzels. There is no cost for members, \$10 for guests. The sign-up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board by October 1. Please get your name on it.
5. **SAVE THE DATE: Trunk r Treat Saturday, October 28**
6. **Sharing in Mission and Ministry – Great Rivers Collaborative** The Holy Spirit guides our congregation to perform amazing mission and ministry using the resources with which we have been blessed. Recently, leaders from several area ELCA churches gathered to discuss how the gifts within individual congregations could be used in conjunction with gifts in other congregations to provide even greater mission and ministry. From these conversations, the Great Rivers Collaborative (GRC) was formed. The GRC member congregations are Atonement, Living Christ, Good Shepherd, Shepherd of the Hills, St. Philips, Unity, and Zion. The GRC Committee already has several ideas and will share them with you soon. We encourage you to participate as you are able in upcoming GRC events! Our first event will be a combined Reformation Service at Unity on the afternoon of **October 29th** . Watch for more details in announcements and The Communicator. If you have questions or ideas, please contact Randy Henning or Laurie Brown.
7. A sample of food is on display in the Great Room today, along with copies of the Food List. If you are giving a Gift Card, see Bob Fayman, please.
8. **MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT** - We are trying out a time to spotlight the ways people at Living Christ are generously and joyfully giving of their time, talents, and resources.
 - Bill Kaepfel wears many "hats" here at Living Christ, one of which is that of a nurse. Bill continues to serve at Living Christ by taking blood pressures once a month and leads an exercise class for the community twice a week. Thank you, Bill, for all you do for the health and well-being of our members.

October 1, 2023

Preaching/Presiding: Pr. Matt

Assisting Minister: Angela Bennett

Lector: Randy Henning

Zoom & Slides: Rod Wallace

Musician: David Eggers

Ushers: Ann Schultz & Marilyn Wiley

Greeter: Joyce Meyer

Altar Guild: Doris Stoechner & Bill Kaepfel

October 8, 2023

Preaching/Presiding: Pr. Matt

Assisting Minister: Randy Henning

Lector: Bill Kaepfel

Zoom & Slides: Erle Craig

Musician: David Eggers

Ushers: Levaughn & Sheila Smart

Greeter: Jeanne Calderwood

Altar Guild: Maureen Buchek & Marjorie Becker

