



Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church – ELCA

"Encouraging faith and proclaiming God's love by Gathering, Growing and Giving."

15th Sunday after Pentecost

Service of the Word

September 10th, 2023

This worship is being livestreamed. Your presence in the sanctuary signifies your agreeing to be on our live broadcast.

*NOTE: **Bold text** indicates worshippers' response, and * means please stand as able.*

PRELUDE

Michelle Young

WELCOME & MINISTRY MESSAGES

Pastor Ron Gerl

Reader: *Kris Jenson* Acolyte: *Hailey Webb* Video: *Dave Young*

Ushers: *Randy and Renee Simpson & Tim Jenson*

Serving Fellowship today: *Linda and Bob Dempski*

GATHERING

* GREETING The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C: And also with you.**

* GATHERING HYMN *Jesus Loves Me*

Jesus Loves Me

Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so;

little ones to him belong, they are weak, but he is strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me he who died heaven's gates to open wide;

he will wash away my sin, let his little child come in.

Yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me loves me still, though I'm very weak and ill;

from his shining throne on high, comes to watch me where I lie.

Yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me he will stay close beside me all the way;

when at last I come to die, he will take me home on high.

Yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.

Text: Anna B. Warner, 1820-1915, alt.

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* CONFESSION 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.

* FORGIVENESS 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.

* PRAYER OF THE DAY O God, **enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy. Without your help, we mortals will fail; remove far from us everything that is harmful, and lead us toward all that gives life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

Amen.

KIDS CHURCH

"What are Backpacks for?"

All youth are invited to come forward with their school backpacks.

Prayer of Blessing Back packs and kids:

P: Dear Lord, we pray for these children, youth, and adults gathered this morning.

We pray a blessing on their lives as students: We pray your blessing now upon these backpacks and those that will carry them to and from school every day. As they carry these backpacks, may they be reminded of this church family that surrounds them. As these backpacks get scuffed and dirty and even torn, we pray that each step of the way, these students will know that they are loved, and as they are loved they can show the love and kindness of Jesus to other kids in their class and the adults in charge. In Jesus name,

C: Amen

We pray a blessing for all teachers (all teachers in public and church school stand in place): Lord, we lift up to you all teachers in their schools and all adults that make the school un smoothly. Thank you for their calling to teach and make a difference in the lives of young people. We pray that you would bless their school year at church or public centers of learning. Help them to know that their family of God surrounds them with love and care and they will never be alone. In Jesus name,

C: Amen.

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heav'nly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637-1711

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GROWING

Our first reading is from the 33rd chapter of Ezekiel

First Reading: Ezekiel 33:7-11

God appointed Ezekiel as a sentinel for the house of Israel. Ezekiel must faithfully convey God's warnings to the people. Remarkably, God—who is about to attack Jerusalem—gives a warning with the hope that repentance will make the attack unnecessary.

⁷So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. ⁹But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

¹⁰Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" ¹¹Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?
Here ends the first reading.

C: Thanks be to God.

Please join in reading Psalm 119 responsively

Psalm 119:33-40

³³Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes,
and I shall keep it to the end.

³⁴**Give me understanding, and I shall keep your teaching;
I shall keep it with all my heart.**

³⁵Lead me in the path of your commandments,
for that is my desire.

³⁶**Incline my heart to your decrees
and not to unjust gain.**

³⁷Turn my eyes from beholding falsehood;
give me life in your way.

³⁸**Fulfill your promise to your servant,
which is for those who fear you.**

³⁹Turn away the reproach that I dread,
because your judgements are good.

⁴⁰**Behold, I long for your commandments;
by your righteousness enliven me.**

Our second reading is from the 13th Chapter of Romans

Second Reading: Romans 13:8-14 *The obligation of Christians is to love one another and so fulfill the heart and goal of the law. Clothes make the person as we "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" and live today in light of the future God has in store for us.*

⁸Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Here ends the second reading. **C: Thanks be to God.** **Please stand as you are able.*

The Holy Gospel according to Mathew the 16th chapter

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 16:21-28 *After Peter confesses that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (16:16), Jesus reveals the ultimate purpose of his ministry. These words prove hard to accept, even for a disciple whom Jesus has called a "rock."*

²¹From that time on, [after Peter confessed that Jesus was the Messiah,] Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²²And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you." ²³But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

²⁴Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ²⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. ²⁶For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?

²⁷"For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. ²⁸Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

MESSAGE **"Heart Knowledge"**

Pastor Ron Gerl

* HYMN OF THE DAY Seek Ye First #784 WOV- all verses

Seek Ye First

Seek ye first the kingdom of god and its
righteousness and all these things shall be
added unto you. Allelu, alleluia.

Ask and it shall be given onto you; seek and
you shall find; knock and the door shall be
opened unto you . Allelu, Alleluia.

We do not live by bread alone. But by
Ev'ry word that proceeds from the
Mouth of god. Allelu, Alleluia.

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*THE APOSTLES' CREED (*professed together*)

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell.* On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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**

*Or, He descended to the dead. ** universal

* 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.

Hold us accountable, O God. Show your church where repentance is needed and lead us in paths of intentional compassion and listening. Help us extend hands of reconciliation and care, especially in relationships with other Christians and people of other faiths. **Merciful God, receive our prayer.**

Reveal your miracles to us, O God. Move us to cherish you as we behold the wonders of creation. Renew the seas and the soil, the forests and the creatures that live in them. Turn us to ways of living that seek Earth's thriving. **Merciful God, receive our prayer.**

Inspire us to lead with honor, O God. Guide judges and legislators, police, and government officials to create and uphold just laws. Move us to treat all people with dignity and guide our conversations with one another. **Merciful God, receive our prayer.**

Help us comfort those who suffer, O God. Reassure any who are harmed by the wicked acts of others. Bring peace to all who are vulnerable, frightened, despairing, or sick (*especially*). Guard their waking and their sleeping. **Merciful God, receive our prayer.**

Awaken us, O God. Challenge and encourage your people to value the vocation to which each is called. We pray for all discerning new possibilities or changing employment (*especially*). In all our diverse callings, teach us to love our neighbor above all else. **Merciful God, receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Be our hope, O God. We remember with thanksgiving your disciples who died in faith (*especially*). May their trust in your promise be our protection and our hope. **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.

The OFFERING PLATE is located at the entrance of the church sanctuary. Your generous giving supports God's ministry at Shepherd of the Hill.

* OFFERING PRAYER O Lord our God, **maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us. Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

* 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, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

* ANNOUNCEMENTS

* 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 HYMN ***What a Friend We Have in Jesus* #439- all verses**

What a Friend We Have in Jesus

What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry ev'rything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit; oh, what needless pain we bear--
All because we do not carry ev'rything to God in prayer!

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged-- take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness-- take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy-laden, cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge-- take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.
In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a solace there.

MAILING ADDRESSES for those folks who you may want to send words of care/concern.

Please let the secretary know if you would like to be added and/or know someone who might like to receive some cheer in the mail.

- Faylene Howe 314 W Menomonie St., Elk Mound, WI 54739 (*recovering from hip surgery*)
- Evie Silvernale 3435 Fairfax St. #13, Eau Claire, WI 54701-5817

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