

WELCOMING WORD *Wisdom prepares a feast, sets her table, and invites all to come and eat her bread and drink her wine. The first chapter of John's gospel owes much to the biblical tradition that imagined Wisdom as existing before anything was created and having a role in the work of creation. Christ, the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24), today invites us to eat his flesh and drink his blood. John's gospel includes no account of the institution of the Lord's supper, but here we can't help hearing Jesus' words as an invitation to the meal of bread and wine we share.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Come, children, and listen to me; I will teach you reverence for the LORD.

C: Who among you takes pleasure in life and desires long life to enjoy prosperity?

L: Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from lying words.

C: Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

OPENING HYMN: #256 (Green hymnal) *Oh, Sing Jubilee to the Lord*

Oh, sing jubilee to the Lord, ev'ry land: glory be to God!
Oh, serve him with gladness, as in his halls we stand;
Sing praises to God out of Zion!

He made us his own, and has given us breath; glory be to God!
The sheep of his pasture, we need not fear our death;
Sing praises to God out of Zion!

Oh, come to his feast with thanksgiving and praise; glory be to God!
Give glory to him, and your brightest banners raise;
sing praises to God out of Zion!

His mercy is ours; he is Lord over all; glory be to God!
May all generations find power in his call;
sing praises to God out of Zion!

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

C: Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

L: God, our provider

C: 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.

L: 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.

C: Amen.

INVOCATION

P: 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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Ever-loving God,

C: **your Son gives himself as living bread for the life of the world. Fill us with such a knowledge of his presence that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life to serve you continually, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

FIRST LESSON: Proverbs 9:1-6 ¹Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn her seven pillars. ²She has slaughtered her animals, she has mixed her wine, she has also set her table. ³She has sent out her servant-girls, she calls from the highest places in the town, "You that are simple, turn in here!" To those without sense she says, ⁵"Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. ⁶Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight."

SECOND LESSON: Ephesians 5:15-20 ¹⁵Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, ²⁰giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL: John 6:51-58 [Jesus said,] ⁵¹"I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

⁵²The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" ⁵³So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; ⁵⁵for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever."

MESSAGE Pastor John Twiton

SERMON HYMN: #701 (Blue hymnal) *What Feast of Love*

What feast of love is offered here, what banquet come from heaven?
What food of everlasting life, what gracious gift is given?
This, this is Christ the king, the bread come down from heaven.
Oh, taste and see and sing! How sweet the manna given!

What light of truth is offered here, what covenant from heaven?
What hope of everlasting life, what wondrous word is given?
This, this is Christ the king, the sun come down from heaven.
Oh, see and hear and sing! The Word of God is given!

What wine of love is offered here, what crimson drink from heaven?
What stream of everlasting life, what precious blood is given?
This, this is Christ the king, the sweetest wine of heaven.
Oh, taste and see and sing! The Son of God is given!

CONFESSION OF FAITH

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.

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.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

P: Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence

God of wisdom, enlighten your church. Guide theologians, biblical scholars, authors, and seminary professors as they seek greater knowledge and invite others into deeper understanding. Teach us to ask faithful questions and open our minds to new ideas. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: God of all nations, direct our leaders. Grant them courage to lay aside political grudges and renew their determination to address difficult conflicts. Guide them in the work of reconciliation. Be with those who serve this nation around the world, give them wisdom and strength each day. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: God of compassion, tend to the wounded. Rescue those tormented by mental illness or mired in addiction. Ease the anxiety of those struggling with dementia. Come quickly to help all who are grieving and all those who suffer (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: God of beauty, inspire artists. Bless those whose visual and musical gifts enliven this assembly. Bless the creative work of poets, hymnwriters, composers, painters, sculptors, and others that enrich our worship and daily life. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: God of resurrection, bring us to new life. Give us the living bread from heaven through which we abide in your love, and on the last day raise us with all the saints to eternal life. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

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. 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.

BENEDICTION *May the blessing of God our creator, the love of Jesus Christ our redeemer, and the presence of the Holy Spirit the comforter, surround you and sustain you until we gather again. Amen.*

CLOSING HYMN: #557 (Green hymnal) *Let All Things Now Living*

Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving
To God the creator triumphantly raise,
Who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us,
Who still guides us on to the end of our days.
God's banners are o'er us, God's light goes before us,
A pillar of fire shining forth in the night,
Till shadows have vanished and darkness is banished,
As forward we travel from light into light.

God rules all the forces: the stars in their courses
And sun in its orbit obediently shine;
The hills and the mountains, the rivers and fountains,
The deeps of the ocean proclaim God divine.
We too should be voicing our love and rejoicing;
With glad adoration a song let us raise
Till all things now living unite in thanksgiving:
"To God in the highest, hosanna and praise!"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLEASE PRAY FOR Ashley Van Galen, Kyle Fargo, Mary Jane Ellis (friend of Bonny Kellogg), Kristin Swedlund-Twiton, Mike Mackler (friend of Char Smith), Connie Peterson, Bonnie Bender, Ginger Quaderer (Diane Mueller's cousin), Norbert Haag (brother of Virgil Haag), Richard Schuhler (friend of Ron & Bonny Kellogg), Agnes Robertson (friend of Holly Thompson), Delores Bryant, Makenzee Smith, Shirley Thompson, Brock Howe, Dianne Haskins (friend of Char Smith), Brian Marshall (friend of Kim Kelliher), Jeannie U'Ren, Ruth Ann Nemet, Mike Olson, Irene Bruflat, Connie Fausett, Bill Steinhauer, Harlan Oimoen, Peter Toniazco, Grace Aavang, Carol Johnson

Our partner congregation IGLESIA EVANGÉLICA LUTERANA DIVINO SALVADOR (Divine Savior Lutheran Church) in Cataño, P.R



ELC COFFEE TIME Coffee Time meets on **Wednesdays at 10:00am**. Join us at ELC for time to gather and catch up with our church family.

ELC FAITH CONNECTION-Our ELC Group on Facebook, *ELC Faith Connection*, is for everyone of all ages. This summer, keep your eyes open for 'hearts' you notice in nature. Share your photos on our Facebook group and we will draw names for gift cards to our local community before school begins. #heartsinthewild. Contact Brenda, if you need help connecting.

STEEPLE ECHOES DEADLINE The deadline for September *Steeple Echoes* articles is first thing Friday (August 20) morning.

RETIREMENT CELEBRATION FOR KATHY & CAROL **Sunday, August 29th following worship** Come and share in a time of gratitude and appreciate for the work of Kathy O'Donnell and Carol Engstad as they retire from the ELC office. We'll gather in Fellowship Hall following worship for a time to say thank you and pray God's Blessings.



OUTING TO BLUE MOUNDS STATE PARK (9th grade confirmation youth) On Friday, August 20th, our 9th graders will be hiking at Blue Mounds State Park. Please meet at church at 9:15am, if you want to carpool. Otherwise, please meet us at 9:30am in Blue Mounds. This is a time to hike and talk about faith and life. Bring a sack life.

YOUTH GATHERING & MISSION TRIP KICKOFF Join us on **August 24th, 7:00pm** as we kick off the beginnings of our journeys next summer to the ELCA Youth Gathering and a Youthworks Mission Trip. Come and see what makes these moments the best times in your life! 8th-12th graders (this fall) are eligible to attend the Gathering. Our mission trip is open for current high school students.

GIVE/LOVE/SERVE (Thriving on Thursdays) - Middle - High school youth may join us on **Thursday, August 19**, to help the Madison Reading Project and help with the care boxes at Second Harvest. A great opportunity to help our community. **REGISTER online:** (watch times & locations for each day on sign up)

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d4daea929a5ffc70-giveloveservice>

DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 15, 2021

SHARE: What was a high point of your day? What was a low point?

READ: Read the following daily readings to deepen your understanding,
Monday, Psalm 36, Human Wickedness and Divine Goodness
Tuesday, Acts 7:9-16, Stephen's Speech
Wednesday, Genesis 47:13-26, The Famine in Egypt
Thursday, Psalm 34:15-22, God Hears and Responds
Friday, Romans 13:11-14, Paul's Urgent Appeal
Saturday, Luke 11:5-13, Perseverance in Prayer

TALK: Consider some of these ideas: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." – John 6:41 *In John's gospel, the feeding of the five thousand leads to extended teaching in which Jesus identifies himself as the true "bread of life." Finally, in these verses, he makes a connection that would not be understood until after his death, in light of the church's celebration of Holy Communion.*

- Jesus' audience is put off by the idea of flesh as food. How do you explain this mystery? (John 6:51-58)
- How often do you eat food to sustain your physical body?
- How often do you partake the Lord's Supper to sustain your spiritual life?

PRAY: Ever Loving God, your Son gives himself as living bread for the life of the world. Fill us with such a knowledge of his presence that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life to serve you continually, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

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