

**WELCOMING WORD** *In today's gospel many people take offense at Jesus' invitation to eat his flesh and drink his blood; even many of Jesus' disciples peel off. This is the backdrop in John's gospel for Peter's confession of faith. "To whom can we go?" asks Peter, in words we sometimes sing just before the gospel is read. "You have the words of eternal life." In order to take such a stand, as Peter and Joshua did, Paul tells us to arm ourselves with the word of God. We pray in the Spirit that we might be bold ambassadors of the gospel.*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: The righteous cry, and the LORD hears them and delivers them from all their troubles.

**C: The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves those whose spirits are crushed.**

L: Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the LORD delivers them from every one.

**C: O LORD, you redeem the life of your servants, and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.**

**OPENING HYMN: #543 Praise to the Lord** (vs. 1, 4)

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!  
O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!  
Let all who hear now to his altar draw near,  
Joining in glad adoration!

Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me adore him!  
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him.  
Let the amen sound from his people again.  
Gladly forever adore him.

**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: Holy God,

**C: your word feeds your people with life that is eternal. Direct our choices and preserve us in your truth, that, renouncing what is false and evil, we may live in you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**FIRST LESSON: Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18** <sup>1</sup>Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. <sup>2a</sup>And Joshua said to all the people, <sup>14</sup>“Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. <sup>15</sup>Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

<sup>16</sup>Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; <sup>17</sup>for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; <sup>18</sup>and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.”

**SECOND LESSON: Ephesians 6:10-20** <sup>10</sup>Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. <sup>11</sup>Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup>For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup>Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. <sup>14</sup>Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. <sup>15</sup>As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup>With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup>Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

<sup>18</sup>Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. <sup>19</sup>Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup>for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

**GOSPEL: John 6:56-69** [Jesus said,] <sup>56</sup>“Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. <sup>57</sup>Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. <sup>58</sup>This 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.” <sup>59</sup>He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

<sup>60</sup>When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” <sup>61</sup>But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? <sup>62</sup>Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? <sup>63</sup>It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. <sup>64</sup>But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. <sup>65</sup>And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

<sup>66</sup>Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. <sup>67</sup>So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” <sup>68</sup>Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. <sup>69</sup>We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

**MESSAGE** Intern Joseph Tiegen

**SERMON HYMN: #343 Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer (vs. 1-2)**

Guide me ever, great Redeemer, pilgrim through this barren land.  
I am weak, but you are mighty; hold me with your pow'r ful hand.  
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven, feed me now and evermore,  
Feed me now and evermore.

When I tread the verge of Jordan, bid my anxious fears subside.  
Death of death and hell's destruction, land me safe on Canaan's side.  
Songs and praises, songs and praises, I will raise forevermore,  
I will raise forevermore.

## **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: Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need

*A brief silence*

God of courage, bless all leaders of your church. Make them ready to proclaim the gospel of peace and strengthen them to preach your loving word. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: God of creation, bless fields and orchards. Protect the land from drought and bring life-giving rain to support growth. Instruct your people in wise treatment of the world you have provided for all your creatures. Comfort those affected by natural disaster. We pray especially for those in Haiti. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: God of community, bless all who seek justice between nations and peoples. Give guidance to bridge-builders, heal divisions, and inspire cooperation in times of crisis, disaster, and war. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: God of compassion, bless all who are in any need. Accompany all who are lonely and feeling abandoned and remind them of your abiding presence. Accompany all who are persecuted and exploited and open us to their cries. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: God of change, bless our transitions. Guide all who are embarking on new stages in life such as a new job, new school, or new community. Sustain enduring friendships and kindle new relationships and interests. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; 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:** #383 *Rise Up, O Saints of God* (vs. 1, 2, 5)

Rise up, O saints of God! from vain ambitions turn;  
Christ rose triumphant that your hearts with nobler zeal might burn.

Speak out, O saints of God, despair engulfs earth's frame;  
As heirs of God's baptismal grace, his word of hope proclaim.

Commit your hearts to seek the paths which Christ has trod.  
And quickened by the Spirit's power, rise up, O saints of God!



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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**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 Brufat, Connie Fausett, Bill Steinhauer, Harlan Oimoen, Peter Toniazzo, Grace Aavang, Carol Johnson

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



**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED on TUESDAY, August 24 at 9:00am to help assemble the September newsletter. Newcomers are welcome.** The assembly process usually takes about 2 hours, but no one needs to stay for the whole time. COVID protocols will be observed. Please, come and enjoy the fellowship.

**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.



**RETIREMENT CELEBRATION FOR KATHY & CAROL Sunday, August 29<sup>th</sup> 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 will also welcome our new office manager, Nancy Voss. We'll gather in Fellowship Hall following worship for a time to say thank you and pray God's Blessings.

## YOUTH GATHERING & MISSION TRIP KICKOFF Join us on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 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! 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders (this fall) are eligible to attend the Gathering. Our mission trip is open for current high school students.



### DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 22, 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 119:97-104, God's Word Is Sweet

Tuesday, John 1:43-51, Jesus Say: Follow Me

Wednesday, Isaiah 33:10-16, The Righteous Will Eat

Thursday, Psalm 15, Dwelling in God's Tabernacle

Friday, James 1:9-16, Blessed are Those Who Endure Temptation

Saturday, John 18:28-32, Ritual Defilement and The Passover

**TALK: Consider some of these ideas:** "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them." – John 6:56 *In John's gospel, there are those who take great offense to what Jesus is telling them, even to the point of choosing to no longer follow him. We are invited to follow Christ even when it becomes difficult.*

- What did the crowd find so offensive about what Jesus had to say? Why wasn't Peter offended, or was he? (John 6:56-69)
- Are any of the words you hear Jesus speak offensive to you?
- What do you practice in your daily life to abide in Christ?

**PRAY:** Holy God, you have the words of eternal life. Guide us through life's hardship and keep us focused on you, our daily bread. Help us to discern your truth and to reject what is false. Grant us wisdom, oh God, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

**BLESS:** The blessing of God, who guides us, joins us, and forever sustains us, be with you always.