

Messiah Lutheran Church

GATHER, EMPOWER, SERVE



✝ Holy Communion ✝

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 17, 2025



TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

The word of God is a refining fire. Jesus is the great divide in human history. He invites our undivided attention and devotion. Today in worship we are surrounded by a great "cloud of witnesses." In the word and in holy communion we are invited yet again to look to Jesus, "the pioneer and perfecter of our faith."

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: In the name of the Father,
and of the ✠ Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.

Kneel

P: Merciful God,

C: you free us to love others,
but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way.
You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace,
but we turn away from the abundant life you offer.
You surround us with patience, kindness,
and generosity,
but we grow weary in doing what is right.
In your mercy, forgive us.
Do not give up on us.
Heal us, break our bonds,
and show us the path of life.
Amen

P: You belong to Christ Jesus
and you are God's children through faith.
In the cross of ✠ Christ,
and through the power of the Holy Spirit,
your sins are forgiven.
Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation.

C: Amen

Stand

GATHERING HYMN

Let the Whole Creation CryLBW 242



1 Let the whole cre - a - tion cry, "Glo - ry to the Lord on high!"
2 War-riors fight - ing for the Lord, proph-ets burn - ing with his word,
3 Men and wom - en, young and old, raise the an - them loud and bold,

Heav'n and earth, a - wake and sing, "Praise him, our al - might - y king!"
those to whom the arts be - long add their voic - es to the song,
and let chil - dren's hap - py hearts in this wor - ship take their parts;

Praise him, an - gel hosts a - bove, ev - er bright and fair in love;
Kings of knowl - edge and of law, to the glo - rious cir - cle draw;
from the north to south - ern pole let the might - y cho - rus roll:

sun and moon, lift up your voice; night and stars, in God re - joice.
all who work and all who wait, sing, "The Lord is good and great!"
"Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly One; glo - ry be to God a - lone!"

Text: Stopford A. Brooke, 1832–1916, alt.
Music: SALZBURG, Jakob Hintze, 1622–1702, adapt.; arr. J. S. Bach, 1685–1750


APOSTOLIC GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

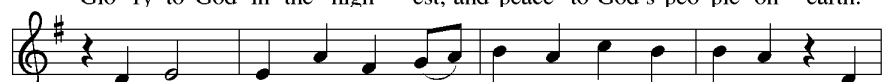
C: And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Refrain



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.




1 Lord God, heav'n - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther, we

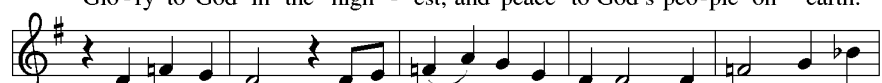


wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

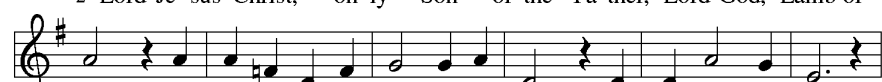
Refrain



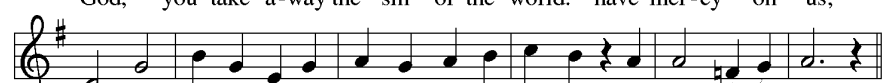
Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of




God, you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;

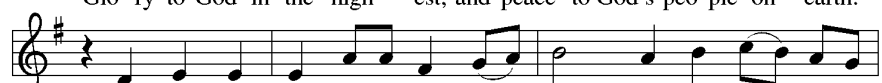


you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.

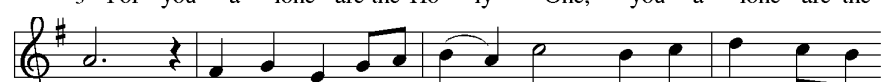
Refrain



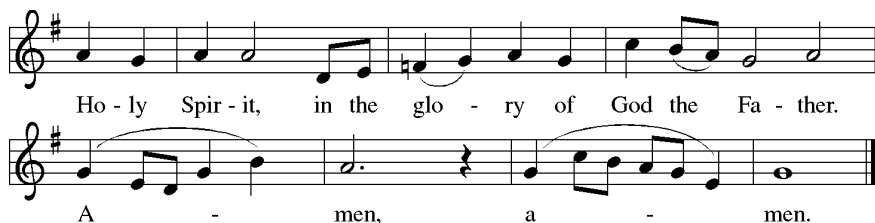
Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



3 For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the



Lord, you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the



PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

O God, judge eternal, you love justice and hate oppression, and you call us to share your zeal for truth. Give us courage to take our stand with all victims of bloodshed and greed, and, following your servants and prophets, to look to the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

Sit

WORD

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 23:23-29

Because Jeremiah preaches the unpopular message of God's judgment, he suffers rejection. Today's reading distinguishes between the true prophet, like Jeremiah, who speaks God's word, and the false prophet who misleads the people through dreams. One is like wheat; the other like worthless straw.

A: A Reading from Jeremiah:

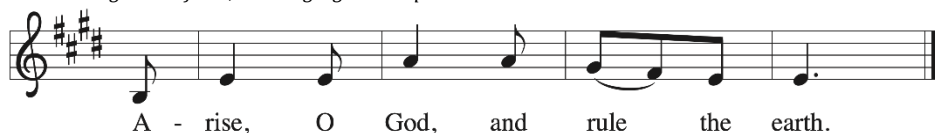
²³ Am I a God near by, says the LORD, and not a God far off? ²⁴ Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? says the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the LORD. ²⁵ I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, "I have dreamed! I have dreamed!" ²⁶ How long? Will the hearts of the prophets ever turn back those who prophesy lies and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart? ²⁷ They plan to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, just as their ancestors forgot my name for Baal. ²⁸ Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let the one who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? says the LORD. ²⁹ Is not my word like fire, says the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?

A: The word of the Lord.

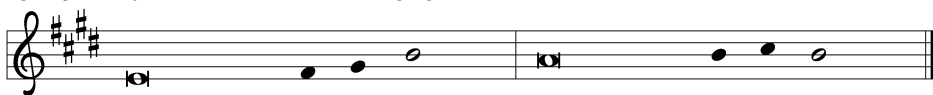
C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 82

The cantor sings the refrain; the congregation repeats it.



Sung responsively between the cantor and congregation.



¹ God stands to charge the divine coun- | cil assembled,
giving judgment in the midst | of the gods:

² **"How long will you | judge unjustly,
and show favor | to the wicked?"**

³ Save the weak | and the orphan;
defend the hum- | ble and needy;

⁴ **rescue the weak | and the poor;
deliver them from the power | of the wicked. R**

⁵ They do not know, neither do they understand; they wander a- | bout in
darkness;

all the foundations of the | earth are shaken.

⁶ **Now I say to you, | 'You are gods,
and all of you children of | the Most High;**

⁷ nevertheless, you shall | die like mortals,
and fall like | any prince.'"

⁸ **Arise, O God, and | rule the earth,
for you shall take all nations | for your own. R**

SECOND READING: Hebrews 11:29-12:2

The author of Hebrews presents us with rich stories of faith. In a long list of biblical heroes, we find examples of trust in God that enabled them to face the trials of life faithfully. In addition to this "cloud of witnesses," we have Jesus, the perfect model of faithful endurance.

A: A Reading from Hebrews:

²⁹ By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. ³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. ³¹ By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

³² And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon,

Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵ Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Others suffered mocking and flogging and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned to death; they were sawn in two; they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains and in caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹ Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰ since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

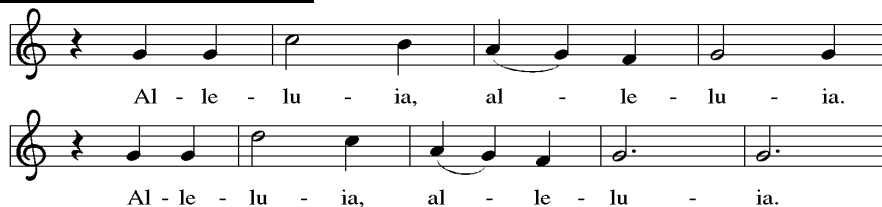
12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Cantor: My sheep | hear my voice.* I know them, and they | follow me.

C: Repeat the Alleluias

GOSPEL: Luke 12:49-56

Jesus delivers harsh words about the purifying and potentially divisive effects of obedience to God's call. The way of the cross often leads followers to encounter hostility and rejection, even from those they love.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 12th chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus said: ⁴⁹“I have come to cast fire upon the earth, and how I wish it were already ablaze! ⁵⁰I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what constraint I am under until it is completed! ⁵¹Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! ⁵²From now on five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; ⁵³they will be divided: father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

⁵⁴He also said to the crowds, “When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, ‘It is going to rain,’ and so it happens. ⁵⁵And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, ‘There will be scorching heat,’ and it happens. ⁵⁶You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sit
SERMON..... Janet Stroble

Stand
HYMN OF THE DAY
Thy Strong Word..... LBW 233

1	Thy	strong	word	did	cleave	the	dark - ness;	at	thy
2	Lo,	on	those	who	dwelt	in	dark - ness,	dark	as
3	Thy	strong	Word	be -	speaks	us	righ - teous;	bright	with
4	From	the	cross	thy	wis -	dom	shin - ing	break -	eth



speak - ing it was done. For cre - at - ed light we
 night and deep as death, broke the light of thy sal -
 thine own ho - li - ness, glo - rious now, we press toward
 forth in con - qu'ring might; from the cross for - ev - er



thank thee, while thine or - dered sea - sons run.
 va - tion, breathed thine own life - breath - ing breath.
 glo - ry, and our lives our hopes con - fess.
 beam - eth all thy bright re - deem - ing light.



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise to thee who light dost send!



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!

5 Give us lips to sing thy glory,
 tongues thy mercy to proclaim,
 throats that shout the hope that fills us,
 mouths to speak thy holy name.
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 May the light which thou dost send
 fill our songs with alleluias,
 alleluias without end!

6 God the Father, light-creator,
 to thee laud and honor be.
 To thee, Light of Light begotten,
 praise be sung eternally.
 Holy Spirit, light-revealer,
 glory, glory be to thee.
 Mortals, angels, now and ever
 praise the holy Trinity!

Text: Martin H. Franzmann, 1907–1976

Music: EBENEZER, Thomas J. Williams, 1869–1944

Text © 1969 Concordia Publishing House

APOSTLES' CREED

**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

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A brief silence is held after the introduction.

P: Let us pray for the church, the creation, and the whole people of God, for
God is near.

After each petition:

P: Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

The prayers conclude:

P: Confident in God's presence and promise, we entrust our prayers to the
one who always receives them; through Jesus Christ, our wisdom and
companion.

C: Amen

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The pastor and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Peace be with you. R: Peace be with you

Sit

MEAL

OFFERING

The Offering is received as the Lord's table is prepared.

ANTHEM

Come Down Lord Sister Miriam Therese Winter, SCMM.

Virginia Amme/Bob Schweppenheiser

Stand

OFFERTORY*As the gifts are presented, the Offertory is sung*

1 Ac - cept, O Lord, the gifts we bring to place up - on your ta - ble.
 2 The vines were plant - ed, seeds were sown. They grew in your good plea - sure.
 3 Our hopes and dreams, our toils and cares we lift in prayer be - fore you.

We do not wor - ship as we ought but on - ly as we're a - ble.
 What once was com - mon, dail - y food be - comes a ho - ly trea - sure.
 Lord, by your grace now come to us, as hum - bly we a - dore you.

OFFERING PRAYER**A:** Let us pray.**C:** Creator God,

in your wisdom you bring forth all that is good
 and the harvest is plentiful.

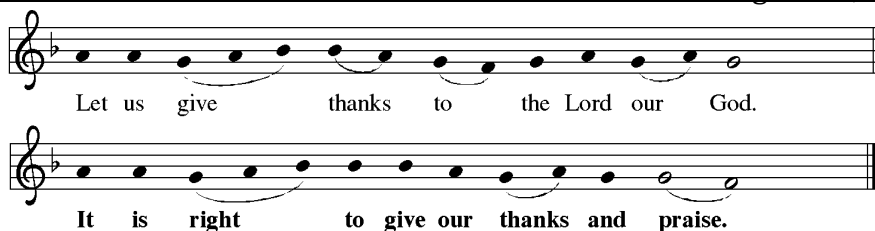
Strengthen us at your table with these gifts of the earth
 and our labor,
 that we may work for the good of all;
 through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen

GREAT THANKSGIVING

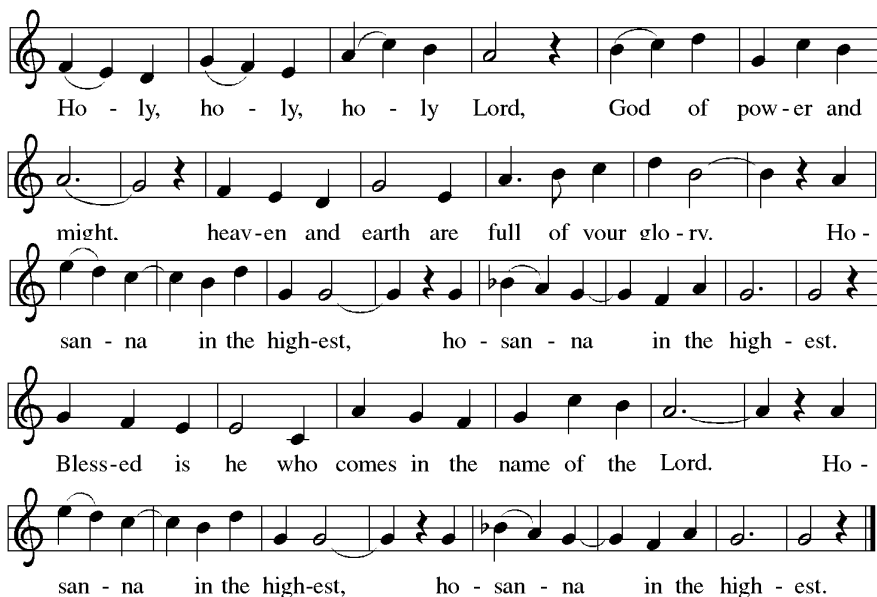
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.



PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

[P]: Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore,
his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.
Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever.

C: 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,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: The kingdom of God is set before you. Eat and rejoice.

C: Thanks be to 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, grant us peace.

Sit

COMMUNION

All baptized believers are invited to this holy meal. Those not communing are invited for a blessing. Please follow the instructions of the ushers to gather at the altar table. As the ministers give the bread and wine, they say these words to each communicant:

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.
The communicant may say: Amen

COMMUNION HYMN
Come, Let Us EatLBW 214

Stand

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

Mothering God,
you gathered us to your table
and we drank deeply of your grace.
Send us out by your Spirit
to love our neighbors as ourselves
and proclaim your love in Jesus' name.

C: Amen

SENDING

BLESSING

P: The love of God abound in you;
the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ fill your hearts;
and the life of the Spirit
✠ bless you and give you peace.

C: Amen

SENDING HYMN

Lead On, O King Eternal!..... LBW 495

1 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal! The day of march has come;
2 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal, till sin's fierce war shall cease,
3 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal: we fol - low, not with fears,

hence - forth in fields of con - quest your tents will be our home.
and ho - li - ness shall whis - per the sweet a - men of peace;
for glad - ness breaks like morn - ing wher - e'er your face ap - pears.

Through days of prep - a - ra - tion your grace has made us strong;
for not with swords loud clash - ing, nor roll of stir - ring drums,
Your cross is lift - ed o'er us; we jour - ney in its light;

and now, O King e - ter - nal, we lift our bat - tle song.
but deeds of love and mer - cy the heav'n - ly king - dom comes.
the crown a - waits the con - quest; lead on, O God of might!

Text: Ernest W. Shurtleff, 1862–1917
Music: LANCASHIRE, Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Live by the Spirit.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE



SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Ushers: Charles Luppert, Larry and Donna Britton, Rhonda Koch, Sylvia McCarty, Larry Solomon; **Lay Assistant:** Carola Storrs ; **Communion Assistant:** Susan Bryan; **Acolyte:** Dylan Sherman; **Altar Guild:** Vicki Bair, Doris Butt; **Greeters/Presenters:** Jody Fullmer, Carl Gee; **Cantor:** Carol Waltz; **Flower Delivery:** Susan Bryan

IN BLESSED MEMORY

The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of loved ones gone too soon.

The Sanctuary Lamp burns in memory of Nita and Eugene Hamm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to Messiah Church! It is our joy to have you worship with us. If you are visiting, please make yourself known and leave your name & information to a congregation member. We hope to see you again.

This morning we welcome Janet Stroble, an Authorized Lay Worship Leader (ALWL) of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Janet has received extensive training so as to provide worship leadership and preaching, and has been authorized by the bishop of the synod to preside at the Eucharist.

Messiah's Women of the ELCA are once again asking for "good used shoes" for **SOLES4SOULS** ... shoes for children and adults. **The campaign runs from August 13 thru September 14 with a goal of collecting 200 pairs of shoes.** Please put your donations in the blue bin. Children's shoes are especially needed ... wearing shoes enables a child to attend school in a Third World country.

Please join us for our Welcome Back Picnic on Sunday, September 7th. This year we will be recognizing all of our volunteers with in the church. How many volunteers are there? Come to the picnic and see for yourself. Please fill out your reservation and return to the office or place in the offering plate by August 31, 2025.

Singing Our Praise to God - Choir rehearsals will start on **Thursday, September 4 at 7:00 pm**. We hope you will consider adding your voice to our worship services. If you would consider singing with us occasionally, we will have several opportunities throughout the year for you to join us on **"Saints in Song" Sundays**. Our first **"Saints in Song"** Sunday will be **October 19**, so mark your calendar for October 12 and plan to stay after worship for a short rehearsal. We could lift our voices together to praise our God.

Today is the last day for donations for the Lutheran World Relief School Kits. *Monetary donations are welcome and helpful as this enables us to even out the piles of items for which we have a lower count.* Please make checks payable to Messiah Lutheran Church with LWR School Kits in the memo line. Cash should be placed in an envelope marked LWR School Kits. If you have already purchased items but have not brought them with you today, please bring them to the church office as early in the week as possible as we will be finishing our shopping for missing items before the store shelves have been emptied. ***A huge and heartfelt thank you to all who have donated!***

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

JARED GIST, ORGANIST

324 South Howard Street | South Williamsport, PA 17702
(570) 326-9171 | www.messiahsouth.org

It's So Confusing

Entering someone else's conversation halfway through can be disorienting. You don't know the context, and you're confused about the background, so you can't really make heads or tails of what's being discussed. Today's gospel reading is kind of like that experience. It's so confusing to hear Jesus talk like this!

But if we're honest with ourselves, we know our world is already full of the divisions Jesus describes. Political divisions have only deepened. Religious divisions cause people to talk over one another. We encounter racial divisions that we're afraid to talk about or even acknowledge, and economic divisions that isolate people according to status and means. Yes, our world is already full of divisions. And what about the tone of this gospel reading? Jesus' sayings are so provocative! With the kind of rhetoric being thrown around in our world today, do we need more alarming words?

When we look closely at the reading and pay attention to the context, we can get a better idea of what exactly Jesus is proposing in these inflammatory sayings. Notice the divisions he mentions here: divisions within families. In the context of the ancient world, the family was the central unit of connection and the source of your identity. The family told you who you were and how you could (or could not) operate.

It is into that kind of ordering, the foundation of identity, that Jesus brings disruption. His point is that in the kingdom of God, whether you were born into wealth or poverty, a family of prestige or one of pandemonium, you are God's beloved child. The message of God in Christ breaks up the social boxes and social games of this world, erasing the dividing lines we already set up for ourselves.

In the death and resurrection of Christ, we're all united in God's family, enjoying a new ordering of identity that breaks down what divides us.

From sundaysandseasons.com.

Copyright © 2022 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2006 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #24158. New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Reprinted Hymns by permission of OneLicense.net #A-712396 and CCLI #11444333.