St. Paul’s Lutheran Church
17th Sunday after Pentecost
September 16, 2018

Rev. Arden Dorn, Transitional Minister
Mike Tessman, Assistant Minister
Rita Jordan, Lay Reader
Rita Jordan, Organist

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Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Three weeks ago we heard John’s gospel's version of Peter’s confession of faith. This week we hear Mark’s version, when Peter says, “You are the Messiah.” In John, the stumbling block is Jesus’ invitation to eat his flesh, given for the life of the world. In Mark too the scandal has to do with Jesus’ words about his own coming death, and here Peter himself stumbles over Jesus’ words. But Jesus is anointed (the meaning of “messiah”) in Mark only on the way to the cross (14:3); so we are anointed in baptism with the sign of the cross.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING HYMN (ELW p. 660) Lift High the Cross

GREETING

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

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, the one who fashions us, the one who heals us, the one who reforms us again and again. Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ,

The assembly shall kneel, as they are able.

We confess...
That we come believing in our emptiness, believing that we will never have enough, believing that what we have is unworthy.

We confess...
That we come fearful of sharing, fearful of losing our tenuous grip on security, fearful of touching and knowing the pain of others.

We confess...
That we come overwhelmed by the hunger, overwhelmed by the suffering of children near and far, overwhelmed by the endless tales of senseless violence, greed, and death.

We confess...
That we come aching from the weight of the responsibility, aching from the chilling challenge of knowing our abundance, aching from the gnawing awareness that we have much to share.
We pray...

**That while we come clinging to our meager offerings, you might loosen our grip and help us to give so that all might thrive.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ takes our offerings and blessed them and us. Christ forgives us our sins and breaks us open for the world. Jesus shows us how we can share all that we are and still live in abundance. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen. Thanks be to God!**

1. Have mercy on us, Lord, and hear our solemn prayer.
2. Have mercy on us, Christ, and wash away our sin.
3. Have mercy on us, Lord; make sin and shame depart.

We come to hear your living word; it saves us from despair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may begin.
Renew us with your saving pow'r; create in us new hearts!

1. Glory be to God in heaven; peace, good-will to all the earth.
2. Glory be to Christ forever, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
3. Holy One we now acclaim you; Lord alone, to you we call;

Mighty God of all creation, Father of surpassing worth:
Son of God and gracious Savior, you have come from heav'n above;
Holy One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:

we exalt you, we adore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
Jesus Christ, with God the Spirit, in the Father's splendor bright.

Saints and angels bow before you; here on earth our songs we raise.
Hear our prayer; restore, forgive us; in your promise firm we stand.
For the peace that we inherit, glory be to God on high!
Let us pray. **God of the universe,**
We thank You for Your many good gifts -
For the beauty of Creation and its rich and
varied fruits. For clean water and fresh air, for
food and shelter, animals and plants.
Forgive us for the times we have taken the
earth's resources for granted and wasted what
You have given us. Transform our hearts and
minds So that we learn to care and share, to
touch the earth with gentleness and with
love, respecting all living things.
We pray for all those who suffer as a result of
our waste, greed and indifference, and we pray
that the day would come when everyone has
enough food and clean water. Help us to respect
the rights of all people and all species, and help
us to willingly share your gifts today and
always. Amen.

**The assembly is seated.**

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**FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-9a**

The image of the servant of the Lord is one of the notable motifs in the book of Isaiah. Today’s reading describes the mission of the servant, whom early Christians associated with Jesus. Like Jesus, the servant does not strike back at his detractors but trusts in God’s steadfast love.

4 The Lord God has given me
    the tongue of a teacher,
that I may know how to sustain
    the weary with a word.
Morning by morning he wakens—
    wakens my ear
    to listen as those who are taught.
5 The Lord God has opened my ear,
    and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.
6 I gave my back to those who struck me,
    and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;
I did not hide my face
    from insult and spitting.
7 The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame;
8 he who vindicates me is near.
Who will contend with me?
Let us stand up together.
Who are my adversaries?
Let them confront me.
9a It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 116:1-9

R: I will walk in the presence of the Lord.

1 I love the Lord, who has heard my voice, and listened to my supplication,
2 for the Lord has given ear to me whenever I called.
3 The cords of death entangled me; the anguish of the grave came upon me; I came to grief and sorrow.
4 Then I called upon the name of the Lord: “O Lord, I pray you, save my life.” R
5 Gracious is the Lord and righteous; our God is full of compassion.
6 The Lord watches over the innocent; I was brought low, and God saved me.
7 Turn again to your rest, O my soul.
for the Lord has dealt well with you.
8 For you have rescued my life from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling;
9 I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living. R

SECOND READING: James 3:1-12

This text uses various images to illustrate how damaging and hurtful the way we speak to and about others can be. Not only are we to control our speech, but what we say and how we say it to reflect our faith.

1 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. 2 For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. 3 If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. 4 Or look at ships:
though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. 2So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits.

How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! 5And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. 7For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, 8but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. 9With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. 10From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. 11Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? 12Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.
The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al-le-lu-ia! Lord and Saviour: open now your saving word.

Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred.

Al-le-lu-ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO: Mark 8:27-38

Glory to You, O Lord!

This story provides the turning point in Mark’s gospel. Peter is the first human being in the narrative to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, but he cannot accept that as the Messiah Jesus will have to suffer. Moreover, Jesus issues a strong challenge to all by connecting discipleship and the cross.

27Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” 28And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” 29He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.” 30And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him. 31Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32He said
all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

34 He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35 For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. 36 For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? 37 Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? 38 Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ!

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY (ELW p. 770) Give Me Jesus

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

The assembly shall kneel, as they are able.

Freed by God in Christ to live and love and serve, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God’s beloved creation.

Gracious God, you call your church to proclaim the love of Christ to a needy world. Embolden us to be your risen body by welcoming strangers and serving our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Creative God, Protect your creation and teach us to cherish it. We praise you for the rain that continues to fall on this thirsty land, for the crops that have been harvested, and the livestock, wildlife and pets that inhabit our community. Thank you for the ways they sustain
us and for our place among them to tend and watch over what you have made. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Merciful God, you are the strength for those who suffer. We pray for those that have been devastated by Hurricane Florence, abundant rainfall in other areas, wildfires, and other natural disasters throughout your world, may they be comforted by your presence, aided by others more fortunate, and healed from the trauma they have suffered. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Sovereign God, you draw order from chaos. Watch over the nations of the world. Bless citizens and leaders who strive toward the beloved community for which you long. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

O God of wisdom, in your goodness you provide faithful teachers for your church. By your Holy Spirit give all teachers insight into your holy word, lives that are examples to us all, and the courage to know and do the truth. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Loving God, you give us all that we need. When your children suffer from hunger, poverty, loneliness, persecution, injury, or illness, send generous helpers and companions. We pray especially for Sadat, David, Sharon, Ellvera, Bobby & Betty, Alex, James, Pauline, Mitch, Roxanne, Shane, Norma, Laquita, Helen, Linda, Jack, Andy, Michael, Raymond, Alva, Steve, Evalina, Francis, Ella, Khloe, Kenneth, Eric, Moma, The Ndeh Family, Charles, Leroy, Carly, Shanna, Travis, John, Yvonne, Anyemarie, Mary Ruth, Kyle, Cody, and Norma, as well as those that we name out loud or in our hearts... Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Welcoming God, you set a table for us. Embolden this congregation to seek new ways of inviting others to the feast of all creation. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

As we sow Seeds of Hope, we pray for St. John Lutheran in Westhoff. Guide them to new opportunities and abilities to draw younger people into the congregation. We pray also for St. Peter's in Elgin that they may have vision, direction, and that God would use them as an instrument of grace in their community. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Into your wide embrace, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your boundless mercy through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

The assembly stands.

OFFERING HYMN (ELW p. 512) Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil
OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.
God of life, you give us these gifts of the earth, these resources of our life and our labor. Take them, offered in great thanksgiving, and use them to set a table that will heal the whole creation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Light. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.
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. You reveal your glory as the glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: equal in majesty, undivided in splendor, one Lord, one God, ever to be adored in your eternal glory. 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:
THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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.

LORD’S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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

Speak to us, O Lord, in the breaking of the bread, and make us one with you.

The assembly is seated.

DISTRIBUTION – All are WELCOME at the table of the Lord.

This meal gives you strength for your journey of faith & life. Go forward as the body of Christ in your family, community and the world. Children or anyone choosing not to commune, but wishing to be blessed, may indicate this by folding their arms across their chest. Anyone who is unable to come forward may indicate to an usher that you wish to receive communion where you are seated.

Following Communion, the assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy and compassionate God, in bread and wine you give us gifts that form us to be humble and courageous. May your words come to life in our serving and in our witness, that we might speak a living voice of healing and justice to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our rock and our redeemer.

Amen.
Sending
God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING
May God who has created you in rich community, to love, to learn, to share and to serve, be with you as you go out. May God who meets you, in grace, in challenge, in beauty and in patience, greet you outside these walls. And may God who walks with you, in water and wine, in friend and stranger, watch over you and bring you joy. Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless and guide you today and always.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN  (ELW p. 879)  For the Beauty of the Earth

DISMISSAL
Go in peace. Sound the good news.
Thanks be to God.

DOXOLOGY  (ELW p. 884)  Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

For Prayerful Consideration


For those in the military: Nick Adams, Anthony Alvarez, Allen Bowles, Justin Chandler, Justin Elkins, Rodney Foreman, Jamaica Goodhue, Jacob Jones, Felipe Leal, Jr., Garrett Peterson, Jon Wayne Schulz, James Skinner, Chris Sustaita, Kassie Thompson, John Vasquez, and Delmiro Villanueva

Birthdays: Robert Busselman (Sept. 18), Buddy Kerlick (Sept. 19), Rebecca Robinson (Sept. 23)
Welcome!

We have all come to St. Paul’s by different paths, and from various walks of life. Through worship, study, prayer and fellowship we each seek to deepen our faith, comfort and encourage one another and dedicate our lives more fully to sharing Christ in our homes, our community and the world. All are welcome at St. Paul’s. We are eager to know you, and we invite you to get to know us. **If you are unable to hear, require a bulletin, or need any other assistance**, please signal an usher.

Coming Events

**Let’s join together and PARTICIPATE!**

The Women of the Church will be purchasing and putting together school kits for Lutheran World Relief. Anyone who would like to donate to this cause can do so at any time. We will be accepting monetary donations to help pay for the school kits. Place your donation in a marked envelope that says **Women’s Group**. Thank you!

**Women’s Bible Study Group: “Seamless” by Angie Smith.** Wednesday evenings at 6:00 in seven sessions, **Seamless** covers the people, places and promises of the Bible, tying them together into the greater story of Scripture. Each week of study features key information that ties all of scripture together into the seamless truth of the gospel message and is accompanied by maps, general Bible facts, and word studies. For more information, contact Rita Jordan. A sign up sheet is located in the Fellowship Hall.

The pastor's of our conference will be meeting at St. Paul’s on Tuesday, September 18 at 9:30AM. We need men and women to prepare a light breakfast for them. Talk to Pastor Dorn if you are available.

St. Paul’s will be hosting **5th Quarter on Friday, September 28.** This is an event for the high school children after the football game. If you would like to make a monetary donation, please mark your check or envelope with **5th Quarter Donation**, and place it in the offering plate. Volunteers are needed the night of September 28. We also need donations of cookies, brownies, and rice crispies. Thank you for your continuing support! For more information please contact Barbara or a Council Member.

**Rita Jordan has tickets to the MercyMe Concert** to be held at Freeman Coliseum in San Antonio on October 14, 2018, 7:30 p.m. Tickets are $35.00 each. See Rita if interested in tickets. This would be a great opportunity, especially for our youth, to attend a contemporary Christian concert! Tell them to invite friends.