St. Paul’s Lutheran Church
20th Sunday after Pentecost
October 7, 2018

Rev. Arden Dorn, Transitional Minister
Mike Tessman, Assistant Minister
Dale Tessman, Lay Reader

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

Today’s gospel combines a saying that makes many of us uncomfortable with a story we find comforting. Jesus’ saying on divorce is another of his rejections of human legislation in favor of the original intent of God’s law. Jesus’ rebuke of the disciples who are fending off the children should challenge us as well. What does it mean to receive the kingdom of God as a child does?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING HYMN (ELW p. 641) All Are Welcome

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.

Let us confess our sin, calling for God's transforming power.

Source of all life,
we confess that we have not allowed your grace to set us free.
We fear that we are not good enough.
We hear your word of love freely given to us, yet we expect others to earn it.
We turn the church inward, rather than moving it outward.
Forgive us. Stir us.
Reform us to be a church powered by love,
willing to speak for what is right,
act for what is just,
and seek the healing of your whole creation.
Amen.

God hears our cry and sends the Spirit to change us
and to empower our lives in the world.
Our sins are forgiven,
✩ God’s love is unconditional,
and we are raised up as God’s people
who will always be made new,
in the name of Jesus Christ.
Amen.
KYRIE

1 Have mer-cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol-emn prayer.
2 Have mer-cy on us, Christ, and wash a-way our sin.
3 Have mer-cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de-part.

We come to hear your liv-ing word; it saves us from de-spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be-gin.
Re-new us with your sav-ing pow’r; cre-ate in us new hearts!

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.
2 Glo-ry be to Christ for-ev-er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
3 Ho-ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a-lone, to you we call;

Might-y God of all cre-a-tion, Fa-ther of sur-pass-ing worth:
Son of God and gra-cious Sav-iour, you have come from heav’n a-bove;
Ho-ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:

we ex-alt you, we a-dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God’s right hand.
Je-sus Christ, with God the Spir-it, in the Fa-ther’s splen-dor bright.

Saints and an-gels bow be-fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.
Hear our prayer; re-store, for-give us; in your prom-ise firm we stand.
For the peace that we in-her-it, glo-ry be to God on high!
PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. **Sovereign God, you have created us to live in loving community with one another.** Form us for life that is faithful and steadfast, and teach us to trust like little children, that we may reflect the image of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

*The assembly is seated*

Oremos. **Dios soberano, nos has creado para vivir en una comunidad amorosa el uno con el otro. Nos forman para la vida que es fiel y firme, y nos enseñan a confiar como niños pequeños, para que podamos reflejar la imagen de su hijo, Jesucristo, nuestro Salvador y Señor. Amén.**

Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Genesis 2:18-24

Genesis 2 stresses that people are not meant to live in isolation but in relationship. Out of love for humanity, God creates them male and female, to provide companionship for each other and to become with each other "one flesh." The Hebrew words used here are ish (man) and ishshah (woman).

18 The Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." 19 So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. 21 So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken." 24 Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 8

R: You crown us with glory and honor.

1 O Lord our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! 2 you whose glory is chanted above the heavens out of the mouths of infants and children; you have set up a fortress against your enemies, to silence the foe and avenger. 3 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars you have set in their courses, 4 what are mere mortals that you should be mindful of them, human beings that you should care for them? R 5 Yet you have made them little less than divine; with glory and honor you crown them. 6 You have made them rule over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet:
all flocks and cattle, even the wild beasts of the field,  
the birds of the air, the fish of the sea,  
and whatever passes along the paths of the sea.  
O Lord our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth! R

SECOND READING: Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12

Quoting from the psalms, this passage from Hebrews emphasizes that Jesus, the one through whom God created everything and who sits at God’s right hand, is also the one who experienced human suffering and death in order to blaze the path of salvation for us.

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of God’s very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Now God did not subject the coming world, about which we are speaking, to angels. But someone has testified somewhere, “What are human beings that you are mindful of them, or mortals, that you care for them? You have made them for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned them with glory and honor, subjecting all things under their feet.”

Now in subjecting all things to them, God left nothing outside their control. As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them, but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying, “I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.”

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.
The assembly stands.

Al-le-lu-ia! Lord and Savior: 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 10:2-16

Glory to You, O Lord!

Jesus announced and enacted in history the new reality of God’s surprising activity. These two stories demonstrate this new reality: Women and children are accepted and valued, not dismissed as inferior to adult men.

2Some Pharisees came, and to test [Jesus] they asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” 3He answered them, “What did Moses command you?” 4They said, “Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her.” 5But Jesus said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. 6But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ 7For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, 8and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.” 10Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. 11He said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; 12and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.” 13People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. 14But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. 15Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.” 16And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ!

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY (ELW p. 656) Blест Be the Tie That Binds

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

Longing for God’s will to be fulfilled among us, we pray persistently for the church, the world, and all people in need.

The assembly shall kneel, as they are able

Holy God, send your blessing out into the world through missionaries, evangelists, and servants of your church. Through them spread good news to all who need it. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We praise you for the animals of the field, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, and all the works of your hands. Let our care for all you have made reflect your desire for the health of all creation. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Rule the nations of this world with the same grace you employ to align planets, stars, and moons. Where there is disorder, move us toward righteousness and justice. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Deliver your care to your children who feel unworthy of care. Bend down low to lift up people who struggle to find others who will embrace them in time of need. We pray especially for Ellvera, Bobby & Betty, Laquita, Helen, Andy, Alva, Francis, Linda, Kenneth, Leroy, and John, as well as those that we name out loud or in our hearts... Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Give courage and faith to all who mourn, and a sure and certain hope in your loving care, that, casting all their sorrow on you, they may have strength for the days ahead. We pray especially for the family of Mary Ruth Witte. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Bring reconciliation among this community. Heal relationships that are broken. When we face division, open our eyes to signs of new life. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Along with all the saints, form us into a holy and loving community in which people can find abundant compassion and peace. Through us bring others into your unbreakable covenant. 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.

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.

THE 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

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

God, creator of all things, speaking reformation into being;
Jesus Christ, savior of the world, raising the dead;
Holy Spirit, living voice, calling and enlightening the church:
Almighty God, Father, ✡ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN  (ELW p. 595)  Jesus Loves Me!

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

*Birthday:* Sandra Dickens (Oct. 12)

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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!

AN EVENING OF CONVERSATION WITH BISHOP SUE & REV. DR. JUDITH
The 2nd Annual Evelyn Streng Lecture Series in Contemporary Issues, Oct. 9th, 2018 - 7pm, Dunne Conference Center in Tschoepe Hall at TLU. Spend an evening with Bishop of the Southwestern Texas Synod, ELCA Rev. Sue Briner and Bishop Associate, Rev. Dr. Judith Spindt as they lead an interactive discussion on adaptive leadership in these challenging times. Current society faces many serious issues and Revs. Briner and Spindt will guide us as we explore some of these issues and how leadership in the 21st century can be a team sport, especially for women who find themselves in these roles. Light refreshments will be served.

Rita Jordan has 20 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.
October is Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month.
It was first declared so on October 25, 1988 by President Ronald Reagan. On that day he said, "When a child loses his parent, they are called an orphan. When a spouse loses her or his partner, they are called a widow or widower. When parents lose their child, there isn't a word to describe them. This month recognizes the loss so many parents experience across the United States and around the world. It is also meant to inform and provide resources for parents who have lost children due to miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, molar pregnancy, stillbirths, birth defects, SIDS, and other causes. Now, Therefore, I, Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of October as Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities."

This October 21 at 3:00pm, St. John Lutheran Church, Robstown will hold a Little Ones' Memorial Service in remembrance of all our little ones. Bishop Sue Briner of the Southwestern Texas Synod of the ELCA will preside at this service. In addition to the list of pregnancy and infant losses listed above, this service will also include those of us who have suffered infertility and are mourning children never conceived as well as those families who have lost children of any age and for any cause. Our losses may be recent, or they may be decades old. All are welcome.

All who wish to attend are invited. You may come remembering your own loss or come to support those who have had such an experience.

All who wish are invited to bring a memento in honor of their little one(s). We all grieve in different ways. Some of us have stuffed animals, special flowers, or pictures of our little ones that hold special meaning. Others of us might have paintings, letters, or objects that symbolize our loss. If you would like to, you are invited to bring such an item to place at the front of the church for this worship service.

All who wish are invited to contribute to an offering for Refuge of Hope Pregnancy Resource Center. God is a master at turning sorrow into joy and death into life. While it is often hard for those mourning the loss of a child to see others welcoming babies, it is also a gift when the lives of our little ones can become a blessing beyond our personal experience. Those who wish are invited to bring a baby item or an offering to share with Refuge of Hope Pregnancy Center so that this gathering will become a blessing beyond the walls of the church into the lives of little ones in need of some extra love and support.

I personally want to thank you all again for your continued love and support through our family's loss. So many of you have told us your stories and shared with us that you are remembering us in your prayers. We are so thankful for this community of faith! Our prayer is that this service would be a time that we can all come together to share the gift of community and proclaim God's promises for each of us and our little ones.

In Christ,
Pastor Sarah Nye