

St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA
Walhalla, South Carolina
9am Worship



Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
October 15, 2023

St. John's Fellowship Hall

Welcome to Our Lakeside Worship

In Isaiah we are given a vision of the great feast to come, when God will wipe away death forever. In Jesus' parable about a great banquet, those invited do not come, so the invitation is extended to others. In our liturgy God spreads a table before us. Even amid anxiety and hardship we rejoice in the peace of God which surpasses all understanding. With great joy we feast at the table of the Lord, and we go forth to share the wonderful invitation with others hungering and thirsting for the abundant life of God.

PRE-GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING SONG “*God Welcomes All*” (Repeat)

God welcomes all, strangers and friends;
God's love is strong and it never ends.

Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949

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CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Blessed be God, the one who forms us, ✙ Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete. People: Amen.

Pastor: Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

Steadfast and faithful God,

People: You have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you. We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering.

We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others.

For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us.

For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation, forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor, forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path; in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Pastor: Beloved in Christ, God's justice stretches beyond all understanding. God's compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us. In ✙ Christ, you are already and always forgiven. **People: Amen.**



OPENING SONG: *"We Have Come Into This House"*

1 We have come in - to this house and gath-ered in his name to
2 So for - get a - bout your-self and con-cen - trate on him and
3 Let us lift up ho - ly hands and mag - ni - fy his name and

wor - ship him. We have come in - to this house and
wor - ship him. So for - get a - bout your-self and
wor - ship him. Let us lift up ho - ly hands and

gath-ered in his name to wor - ship him. We have
con - cen - trate on him and wor - ship him. So for -
mag - ni - fy his name and wor - ship him. Let us

come in - to this house and gath - ered in his name to
get a - bout your - self and con - cen - trate on him and
lift up ho - ly hands and mag - ni - fy his name and

wor-ship Christ, the Lord; wor-ship him, Christ the Lord.

Text: Bruce Ballinger, b. 1945
Music: WORSHIP HIM, Bruce Ballinger, b. 1945

THE APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Lord of the feast, you have prepared a table before all peoples and poured out your life with abundance. Call us again to your banquet. Strengthen us by what is honorable, just, and pure, and transform us into a people of righteousness and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **People: Amen.**



THE FIRST READING:

Isaiah 25:1-9

¹O LORD, you are my God; I will exalt you, I will praise your name; for you have done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure.

²For you have made the city a heap, the fortified city a ruin; the palace of aliens is a city no more, it will never be rebuilt. ³Therefore strong peoples will glorify you; cities of ruthless nations will fear you. ⁴For you have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat. When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm, ⁵the noise of aliens like heat in a dry place, you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds; the song of the ruthless was stilled. ⁶On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear. ⁷And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; ⁸he will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. ⁹It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Psalm: 23— *Read Responsively*

¹The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

²**The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.**

³You restore my soul, O LORD, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

THE SECOND READING:

Philippians 4:1-9

¹My brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. ²I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. ⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Lector: The Word of the Lord. **People: Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able for the reading of the Gospel

GOSPEL VERSE: "Thy Word" Sing 2X



Thy word is a lamp un-to my feet and a light un-to my path.

THE HOLY GOSPEL:

Matthew 22:1-14

¹Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: ²“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. ³He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. ⁴Again he sent other slaves, saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.’ ⁵But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. ⁷The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. ⁸Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’ ¹⁰Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. ¹¹“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, ¹²and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

THE MESSAGE

The Reverend Dr. Rachel Connelly

SONG OF RESPONSE: “*We Come to the Hungry Feast*”

We come to the hungry feast
hungry for a word of peace.
To hungry hearts unsatisfied
the love of God is not denied.
We come, we come to the hungry feast.

We come to the hungry feast
hungry for a world released
from hungry folk of ev’ry kind,
the poor in body, poor in mind.
We come, we come to the hungry feast.

We come to the hungry feast
hungry that the hunger cease,
and knowing, though we eat our fill,
the hunger will stay with us; still
we come, we come to the hungry feast.

Text: Ray Makeever, b. 1943
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THE 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 and 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 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.

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

After each petition— God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

THE SHARING OF CHRIST’S PEACE



PRE-COMMUNION SONG: *“Sanctuary”*

Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary pure and holy, tried and true
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for You.

Holy Spirit, fill this vessel; make my heart to burn within
Purify me, make my life be a sanctuary for You.

THE MEAL

All are welcome at the table of communion

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

THE PASTORAL BLESSING

COMMUNION HYMN: *“Here is Bread”*

Refrain: In this bread there is healing,
in this cup is life forever.
In this moment, by the Spirit,
Christ is with us here.

1. Here is bread, here is wine,
Christ is with us, he is with us.
Break the bread, taste the wine,
Christ is with us here. *Refrain*
2. Here is grace, here is peace,
Christ is with us, he is with us
Know his grace, find his peace,
feast on Jesus here. *Refrain*
3. Here we are, joined in one,
Christ is with us, he is with us.
We'll proclaim till he comes
Jesus crucified. *Refrain*

THE POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word,
Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food,
send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and
all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray, **Amen.**

THE BLESSING

The God of glory, ✝ Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit
who lives in you, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG: *“Bring Forth the Kingdom”*

Leader All

1 You are salt for the earth, O peo-ple: salt for the king-dom of God!
 2 You are a light on the hill, O peo-ple: light for the cit - y of God!
 3 You are a seed of the word, O peo-ple: bring forth the king-dom of God!
 4 We are a blest and a pil-grim peo-ple: bound for the king-dom of God!

Leader All

Share the fla - vor of life, O peo - ple: life in the king-dom of God!
 Shine so ho - ly and bright, O peo - ple: shine for the king-dom of God!
 Seeds of mer - cy and seeds of jus - tice, grow in the king-dom of God!
 Love our jour - ney and love our home - land: love is the king-dom of God!

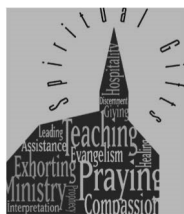
Refrain

Bring forth the king-dom of mer - cy, bring forth the
 king-dom of peace; bring forth the king-dom of jus - tice,
 bring forth the cit - y of God!

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Thanks be to God.



Presiding Minister:
 Lay Assistant:
 Lector:
 Greeters/Ushers:
 Musicians:

Serving Today

The Rev. Dr. Rachel Connolly
 Vicar Olga-Maria Cruz
 Patty Shepard
 Grace Schmeelcke
 Carla Padgett, Tom Ward,
 Ray Burroughs, Dave Devoe

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The Bell Tower—Ministry News



ADULT CLASSES—Scott Sprouse's Class is using the Augsburg Adult Bible Studies "God's Law is Love". The new class "One More Chair" is sharing in topical book and article studies and discussions. This class is co-
led by Cathy & David Plowden and Grace Schmeelcke.

YOUTH/CHILDREN—Confirmation Classes led by Mark McLean continue for Youth. Classes for Elementary aged children are led by Tiffany Chapman and Bill Brackett.



The **Fall Foothills Conference** will be held on **Saturday, October 21, at St. Michael Lutheran Church in Greenville from 10 am to 2 pm.** Guest speaker will be Mandy Learo, a representative of Jasmine Road in Greenville, whose mission is to provide a path to healing and employment for women survivors of sex trafficking, prostitution and addiction. Lunch is provided with a short business meeting. Questions? Contact Barbara Wilson.



Come join St. John's Youth and Children as we participate in Downtown Walhalla's Main Street Trunk-or-Treat during the Walhalloween celebration on **Saturday, October 28, from 11am to 3pm.** Contact Tiffany Chapman for more information tiffany_berg@hotmail.com.



The Survivors Group is having a Potluck Halloween Party on **October 30** at 11am at Biggerstaff. All widows/widowers are invited to be a part of this group. Contact Jan Long or Shonda Mahler for more information.



Due to circumstances beyond our control, poinsettia orders need to be in by **Wednesday, November 1.** Order forms are on the Spiritual Ops table. This year's price is \$14 each. Contact Diane Rawlins with any questions.



Calling all veterans...Wreaths Across America will be held on **Saturday, December 16.** Any veteran who would like to participate in the ceremony can contact Jane Harris, harrisjaner@gmail.com or 864-882-3043.

**Our Church Family**

Michael Pode, recovery from surgery
Andrea Carlson, recovery
Fred Hallman, recovery
Anne Fogel, tests
Marcia Lyle, recovery/healing
Brenda Safrit, chemotherapy/healing
Jean Norton, radiation treatments
Thelma Miller, healing
Lynne Williams, healing
Bill Watt, fall/healing
Tiffany Chapman, healing
Robert Campbell, healing

Those grieving

The Finkenstadt Family, loss of Jane
Dottie Brandt & Sarah Wyatt, loss of brother, the Rev. Henry N. Brandt.
Micky Ward and family, loss of mother, Evelyn Miller

Our Elders at Home or Assisted Living

Jenine Baldus, hospice/home care
Ann Biemann, home
Dottie Brandt, Lila Doyle, well-being
Jack Campbell, home
Brenda Cantrell, home
Julie Corbett, home care
Doug Deane, hospice at home
Linda Humphries, home, rehab Lila Doyle
Marie Palmatier, home
Betty Sosebee, hospice
Peg Turner, The Oaks
Betty Wallace, Belvedere
Jeanne Welch, home

Other Prayer Concerns

For peace in the Middle East, and comfort to those impacted by the violence there.
For those recovering and those who are providing care and disaster response in the aftermath of recent natural disasters throughout the world.
For those dealing with loss and fear from the recent mass shootings and gun violence.
All military Personnel
Bishop Ginny Aebischer and our Synod Staff

Our Extended Family and Friends

Zach James (son-in-law of Heavner's)
John Rash, healing (son-in-law of Carolyn Brandt)
Kevin Hathcock, healing (Safrit's family)
Frank Guldner, healing
Dan Huber, improving (Safrits)
George Combes, healing (brother of Grace Lichtenwald)
Don Rivers, COPD (brother-in-law of Ann Brackett)
Mark Vassey, failure of transplanted kidney (Brackett)
Ken Burnside, chemo/radiation (cousin of Barbara and Paul Wilson)
Lauren Bowman, Lyme disease (daughter of Gary and Barb Bowman)
Sara Pike, breast cancer/treatment (daughter of Dean and Anne Fogel)
Perry Shearouse, cancer treatment (cousin of Delores Kreuger)
Diane Rivers, cancer treatment (sister of Bill Brackett)
Tara Nolan, cancer (friend of Anne Fogel)
Jacquelyn Moore, healing/MS (niece of Kathy Scherter)
Bennie Smith, health (nephew of Wards)
Jaime Henry, heart issues (son of Annie Henry)
Kay Davis, cancer (friend of the Daniels)
Betty Watkins (friend of Betty Sosebee)
John Heasley, diabetes (son-in-law of Johnsons)
Dohnvan (grandson of Kathy Scherter)
Tom Tyree, cancer (friend of Sears)
Harold Smith, heart (friend of Tina Barrett)
Dolorico Perez (father of Josie Perez)
Eve Mills, cancer (niece of Francoise Fussell)
Gina Daly, health (daughter of Bob Johnson)



*Please let the church office know of
any updates to our prayer list.*



CHURCH
OFFICE
STAFF

St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA

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Additional St. John's Staff

Ray Burroughs, Facilities Manager

Joan Lewis, Spiritual Gifts Coordinator

Greg Harris, Congregational President

Patty Shepard, Youth Director

Tiffany Chapman, Children's Ministry Coordinator

Our tithes and offerings are an important part of our faith journey.

- Electronic offerings may be given through the GIVELIFY app.
- You may also go to our website: www.stjohnswalhalla.org and click on the "Give Now With Givelify" button
- Another option is to scan this QR code to go directly to our Givelify page.

