



St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran – Sept. 6, 2020

120 North 8th Street, Upper Sandusky, Ohio 43351

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday 8am-12pm, 1-5pm

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Listen live on WYNT 95.9 FM or on demand at www.stpaulupper.org

****Please note that there will be no congregational singing. The congregation WILL respond to the Confession and Forgiveness, Responsive Psalm, recite the Apostles' Creed, and respond to the prayers. Please follow all directions of the ushers and keep your masks on at all times while in the building. If you would like to bring your hymnal from home, we encourage you to do so. Please take everything with you from your pew and dispose of it at home.*

+ GATHERING +

PRELUDE

"Wake, Awake to Love and Work" Held

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. **Amen**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Faithful God, have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of ☩ Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG: "*Built on a Rock*" (sung by cantors)

1 Built on a rock the church shall stand, even when steeples are falling; crumbled have spires in ev'ry land, bells still are chiming and calling—calling the young and old to rest, calling the souls of those distressed, longing for life everlasting.

2 Surely, in temples made with hands God the Most High is not dwelling—high in the heav'ns his temple stands, all earthly temples excelling. Yet he who dwells in heav'n above deigns to abide with us in love, making our bodies his temple.

3 Christ builds a house of living stones: we are his own habitation; he fills our hearts, his humble thrones, granting us life and salvation. Where two or three will seek his face, he in their midst will show his grace, blessings upon them bestowing.

4 Yet in this house, an earthly frame, Jesus the children is blessing; hither we come to praise his name, faith in our Savior confessing. Jesus to us his Spirit sent, making with us his covenant, granting his children the kingdom.

5 Through all the passing years, O Lord, grant that, when church bells are ringing, many may come to hear your Word, who here this promise is bringing: "I know my own, my own know me; you, not the world, my face shall see; my peace I leave with you. Amen."

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.

KYRIE & CANTICLE OF PRAISE (sung by cantor)

p. 213-215

PRAYER OF THE DAY

SPECIAL MUSIC by Lydia Schneider & Ben Schneider

+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 33:7-11
...The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 119:33-40

³³Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes, and I will observe it to the end.

³⁴**Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart.**

³⁵Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it.

³⁶**Turn my heart to your decrees, and not to selfish gain.**

³⁷Turn my eyes from looking at vanities; give me life in your ways.

³⁸**Confirm to your servant your promise, which is for those who fear you.**

³⁹Turn away the disgrace that I dread, for your ordinances are good.

⁴⁰**See, I have longed for your precepts; in your righteousness give me life.**

SECOND READING: Romans 13:8-14
...The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (spoken by presiding minister)

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:15-20

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 18th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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

SERMON

Gene Luidhardt, SAM

HYMN OF THE DAY: "*God Is Here!*" (sung by cantors)

1 God is here! As we your people meet to offer praise and prayer, may we find in fuller measure what it is in Christ we share. Here, as in the world around us, all our varied skills and arts wait the coming of the Spirit into open minds and hearts.

2 Here are symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace; here are table, font, and pulpit; here the cross has central place. Here in honesty of preaching, here in silence, as in speech, here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each.

3 Here our children find a welcome in the Shepherd's flock and fold; here as bread and wine are taken, Christ sustains us as of old. Here the servants of the Servant seek in worship to explore what it means in daily living to believe and to adore.

4 Lord of all, of church and kingdom, in an age of change and doubt, keep us faithful to the gospel; help us work your purpose out. Here, in this day's dedication, all we have to give, receive; we, who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!

BLESSING OF STUDENTS, TEACHERS, & SUPPORT STAFF

THE 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

*Following each petition: ...Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

SHARING OF THE PEACE WITH NO CONTACT

PRAYER CONCERNS: Joyce Koehler, Janis Eippert, Bonnie Menningen, Jim Pfeifer, Mary Orwick, Tim & Karen Koehler, Jim Gottfried, Pastor John Kerr, Wyandot Cares

A BIG THANK YOU to Gene Luidhardt who has served as our stated supply since August 11 of last year! Today is the last Sunday he will lead our worship service in that capacity. We wish many blessings for him as he continues to serve as a SAM.

THE PROPERTY TEAM will meet at 11:30am in the Family Space after service.

SEPTEMBER CROSSTALK is available for you to pick up on the way out. They are on the table in the vestibule.

WELCA would like a few items to complete 50 school kits. Items needed include: 4 blunt nose scissors, 11 large pencil sharpeners, 30 blue or black ballpoint pens, and 20-4oz. bars of soap. Please put your donations on the table in the vestibule and mark it LWR.

CIRCLE MEETINGS: Ruth/Naomi Circle will meet Wednesday, Sept. 9th at 9:30am at Stepping Stones Park. Please bring a sack lunch. Martha Circle will meet Thursday, Sept. 10th at 4:30pm in the white shelter house at Harrison Smith Park. All women are invited to join one group or the other or BOTH! 😊

THE MISSION OUTREACH line on your offering envelope for September will go to the Christian Food Center in loving memory of Darlene Schaadt.

CHRISTIAN FOOD CENTER: We are collecting canned fruit during September. Please put your donations on the table in the vestibule.

SPECIAL MUSIC: please let Linda know if you or someone you know would like to provide special music for us in the coming weeks.

Restoring Right Relationships

In today's gospel reading, Jesus turns his attention to the community of believers. Matthew is the only gospel in which Jesus explicitly speaks about the church and therefore addresses some concerns of communal living. This week, Matthew provides a framework for responding to sin and conflict for the sake of restoration within a community.

It is inevitable that in a relationship, a time comes when someone lets you down. They may disappoint you, fail to meet your expectations, hurt your feelings, disagree with you, misspeak, or break your trust. This happens in all relationships and in all places—the church is no exception. Although these actions can be unintentional, occasionally relationships are scarred by purposeful acts of betrayal, abuse, deception, and malice. In all cases, Jesus' way acknowledges the reality of broken people and relationships, and recommends a path forward.

It is common to seek revenge or try to get even with those who have hurt us. We expect them to be punished for the wrong they have done. What Jesus proposes here is a system not of retributive justice but of restorative justice. Instead of demanding vengeance, we can engage the other person in order to heal and repair the relationship and community. We are to try multiple times, involving the community as needed, to make amends. We are not to give up on the ones who do harm, but to offer opportunities for dialogue and healing.

Jesus does not abandon sinners or the church filled with conflicted believers. He comes among them as they listen to each other and works to restore their relationships. We practice the work of restoration every week by sharing a sign of peace with one another. In each exchange of peace, Jesus comes among us to offer grace and forgiveness.