

October 3, 2021
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost



ST. STEPHEN
Evangelical Lutheran Church

*Congregation is invited to stand as able
Please be aware that video cameras are in use during our hybrid (combined) Worship Service and that images are being shared with the online participants.

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?

Our Mission

We respond to Christ's love by feeding those who hunger in body, mind, and spirit.

Prelude

" Antiphon V: How Fair and How Pleasant Art Thou "

by Marcel Dupre

Gathering

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

***Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy. **Amen.**

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God, our provider,
help us. It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn?
Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for life in the world. Amen.

Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, † the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn

"Let the Whole Creation Cry"

Hymn#876

- 1 Let the whole creation cry,
"Glory to the Lord on high!"
Heav'n and earth, awake and sing,
"Praise to our almighty king!"
Praise God, angel hosts above,
ever bright and fair in love;
sun and moon, lift up your voice;
night and stars, in God rejoice.

- 2 Servants striving for the Lord,
prophets burning with the word,
those to whom the arts belong
add their voices to the song.
Pow'rs of knowledge and of law,
to the glorious circle draw;
all who work and all who wait,
sing, "The Lord is good and great!"

- 3 Men and women, young and old,
raise the anthem loud and bold,
and let children's happy hearts
in this worship take their parts;
from the north to southern pole
let the mighty chorus roll:
"Holy, Holy, Holy One;
glory be to God alone!"

Text: Stopford A. Brooke, 1832-1916, alt.

***Apostolic Greeting**

The boundless grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God, and the light of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

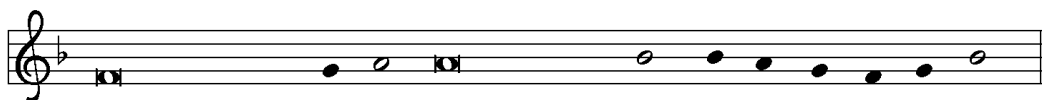
***Kyrie**



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



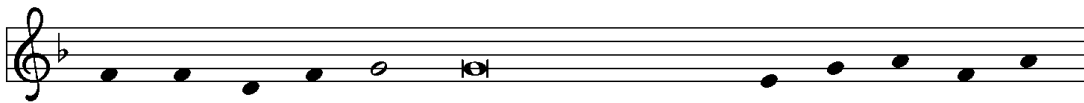
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of



God, and for the uni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



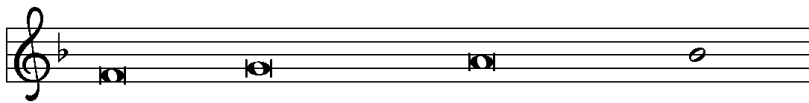
For this ho - ly house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and



praise, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gracious Lord.



A - men.

***Canticle of Praise**

Refrain



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace



to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the

high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

1 Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - mighty 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. 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. 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 Ho - ly
Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.
Final refrain
Glo - ry to God in the high - est.
A - men, a - men.

***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.

Word

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

The First Lesson

Job 1:1-1; 2:1-10

This passage is part of the prologue of Job. The righteous man Job is severely afflicted as the result of a wager between God and the satan (here not the devil, but "the accuser"). Job responds at first with great patience, but the rest of the book will show him lamenting and protesting.

A reading from the book of Job, the 1st and 2nd chapters.

¹There was once a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. That man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil.

^{2:1}One day the heavenly beings came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. ²The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." ³The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. He still persists in his integrity, although you incited me against him, to destroy him for no reason." ⁴Then Satan answered the LORD, "Skin for skin! All that people have they will give to save their lives. ⁵But stretch out your hand now and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." ⁶The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, he is in your power; only spare his life."

⁷So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and inflicted loathsome sores on Job from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. ⁸Job took a potsherd with which to scrape himself, and sat among the ashes.

⁹Then his wife said to him, "Do you still persist in your integrity? Curse God, and die." ¹⁰But he said to her, "You speak as any foolish woman would speak. Shall we receive the good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm

Psalm 26

¹Give judgment for me, O LORD, for I have lived ¹ with integrity;
I have trusted in the LORD and ¹ have not faltered.

²**Test me, O ¹ LORD, and try me;
examine my heart ¹ and my mind.**

³For your steadfast love is be- ¹ fore my eyes;
I have walked faithful- ¹ ly with you.

⁴**I have not sat ¹ with the worthless,
nor do I consort with ¹ the deceitful.**

⁵I have hated the company of ¹ evildoers;
I will not sit down ¹ with the wicked.

⁶**I will wash my hands in inno- ¹ cence, O LORD,
that I may go in procession ¹ round your altar,**

⁷singing aloud a song ¹ of thanksgiving
and recounting all your won- ¹ derful deeds.

⁸**LORD, I love the house in ¹ which you dwell
and the place where your glo- ¹ ry abides.**

⁹Do not sweep me a- ¹ way with sinners,
nor my life with those who ¹ thirst for blood,

¹⁰**whose hands are full of ¹ evil plots,
and their right hands ¹ full of bribes.**

¹¹As for me, I will live ¹ with integrity;
redeem me, and be gra- ¹ cious to me.

¹²**I take my stand on ¹ level ground;
in the full assembly I will ¹ bless the LORD.**

The Second Lesson

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.

A reading from the book of the Hebrews, the 1st and 2nd chapter.

¹Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, ²but 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. ³He 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, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

^{2:5}Now God did not subject the coming world, about which we are speaking, to angels. ⁶But someone has testified somewhere,

“What are human beings that you are mindful of them,
or mortals, that you care for them?

⁷You have made them for a little while lower than the angels;
you have crowned them with glory and honor,

⁸subjecting all things under their feet.”

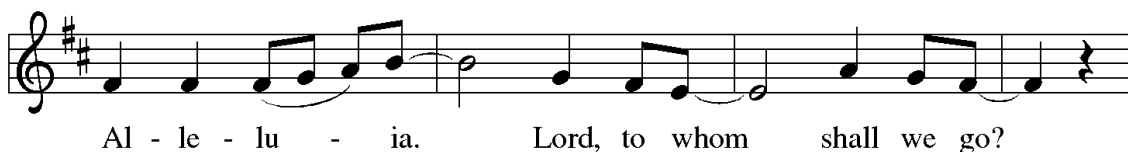
Now in subjecting all things to them, God left nothing outside their control. As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them, ⁹but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

¹⁰It 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. ¹¹For 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, ¹²saying,

“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.**

*Gospel Acclamation



***Gospel Reading**

Mark 10:2-16

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.

A reading from the Gospel according to St. Mark, the 10th chapter. **Glory to You O Lord.**

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.' ⁷'For 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

The Rev Matthew Best

Hymn of the Day

"If you but Trust in God to Guide You"

Hymn#769 vs. 1,2,4

- 1 If you but trust in God to guide you
with gentle hand through all your ways,
you'll find that God is there beside you
when crosses come, in trying days.
Trust then in God's unchanging love;
build on the rock that will not move.
- 2 What gain is there in anxious weeping,
in helpless anger and distress?
If you are in your Savior's keeping,
in sorrow will he love you less?
For Christ who took for you a cross
will bring you safe through ev'ry loss.
- 4 Sing, pray, and keep God's ways unswerving,
offer your service faithfully.
Trust heaven's word; though undeserving,
you'll find this promise true to be.
This is our confidence indeed:
God never fails in time of need.

Text: Georg Neumark, 1621-1681; tr. composite
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***Apostles Creed**

AM: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us profess our faith, using the words of 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.**

***Prayers of Intercession**

Congregational response after each petition:

AM: ...Lord, in Your mercy, **C: hear our prayer.**

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

Loving God, we are thankful for the gift of your son Jesus Christ. We pray for your Christian churches, missionaries, and all Christians across the world sharing and spreading Jesus's gospel message. May we be like little children, your children, coming to you with open hearts and minds to worship and serve. Direct our steps, our actions, and our words. May we touch others with the light and love of Jesus. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, we pray for the earth, your creation, and every living thing. We rejoice in the beauty of golden fall days and the bounty of the harvest season. Thank you for providing all we need. Help us to share the abundance with others, and to take care of the earth and all its wonders. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our Father, we pray for peace and justice in the world. In today's readings, we are reminded that we as human beings have control issues. We like having all the answers and being right. But God, we recognize that you are the one, the only one, with all the answers. Use us as instruments of your peace in this fallen world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of mercy, we pray for the poor, the oppressed, the sick, bereaved and lonely. Give us eyes to see them, hands to help them, and may we share the good news with them. May they be like little children filled with wonder at your goodness. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of grace, we pray for all who suffer in body, mind or spirit. We pray for all families affected by COVID-19, all families hurt by opioid and other addictions, all families struggling with job losses, cancer and other diseases, natural disasters, gun violence and other tragedies. We pray that you bring beauty out of chaos. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy God, we pray for each and every member of St. Stephen. Bind us together despite this strange time when we're mostly apart. Unite us in mission and may we continue to serve our Cumberland County community. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Loving God we pray for all those who are hospitalized, and we remember all those who recently passed away. Additionally, we pray for continued strength and wisdom for all medical professionals. We pray for your healing touch on all. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

***Peace**

P: The Peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us show a sign of that peace!

***Offering**

The offering, whether in person or through digital means, is an act of worship. Worship, at its core, is a reverent love and devotion accorded to God. We give because God loves us first, and we are called to love God and neighbor as a result. The offering is one way we show our love of God.

To assist you in this act of worship, there are several ways to make your offering: Go to www.StStephenLC.org and scroll to the bottom of the page, and click **DONATE.**

Text your offering dollar amount to 717-685-6947. Text "help" for options.

Use Engage from your smart phone or Internet connected device at <https://engage.suran.com/sslc/> or QR code below:



Set up regular electronic offerings by contacting Kevin, our office manager, at 717-766- 2168, Monday through Thursday from 9am – 2pm, or by email at office@StStephenLC.org to get set up.

Mail in your check, made payable to St. Stephen Lutheran Church. Our address is 30 W. Main St., PO Box 266, New Kingstown, PA 17072.

The offerings are used to carry out the ministry of the church, to share the Good News, to provide pastoral care, to worship as a community, and to create an environment where Jesus encounters people and their lives are transformed. All of these things continue to take place. Thank you for your generosity.

***Offertory Prayer**

Let us pray. Jesus, Bread of life, you have set this table with your very self, and called us to the feast of plenty. Gather what has been sown among us, and strengthen us in this meal. Make us to be what we receive here, your body for the life of the world.

Amen

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

***The 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:

Ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow-er and might,
 heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

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 handed over, 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.

Amen.

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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**

Christ has set the table with more than enough for all.
Come!

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.

Music: *Bread of Life*, Jeremy Young, b. 1948
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The Body and Blood of Christ given and shed for you

***Post Communion Prayer**

Let us pray. Jesus, Bread of life,
we have received from your table more than we could ever ask. As you have nourished us in
this meal, now strengthen us to love the world with your own life. In your name we pray.
Amen.

Sending

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

***Blessing**

The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, ☩ be upon you now
and forever.
Amen.

Sending Hymn

“We’ve Come this Far by Faith”

Hymn#633, refrain

Refrain

We've come this far by faith,
leaning on the Lord;
trusting in his holy word,
he's never failed us yet.
Oh, can't turn around,
we've come this far by faith.
We've come this far by faith.

Text: Albert A. Goodson, 1883-1947

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***Dismissal**

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“ Classical Postlude ”

by Franz Joseph Haydn
arr. By James Mansfield

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