

CREATED, SAVED AND GIFTED BY GOD,
WE SEEK, SERVE AND SHARE JESUS CHRIST.



FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

AUGUST 25, 2024 - 10:30 AM

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
901 EAST STROOP ROAD
KETTERING, OH 45429-4688
(937) 298-0136

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introduction

In today's gospel many people take offense at Jesus' invitation to eat his flesh and drink his blood; even many of Jesus' disciples peel off. This is the backdrop in John's gospel for Peter's confession of faith. "To whom can we go?" asks Peter, in words we sometimes sing just before the gospel is read. "You have the words of eternal life." In order to take such a stand, as Peter and Joshua did, Paul tells us to arm ourselves with the word of God. We pray in the Spirit that we might be bold ambassadors of the gospel.

Questions Remain

Throughout his time on earth, Jesus taught the disciples what it means to follow him, delving deeper into difficult concepts with each step toward the cross. Jesus' thought-provoking and life-changing words challenged existing wisdom, stretching the boundaries of belief, forcing each person who heard them to reevaluate everything they thought they knew. How could they eat this bread and live forever?

Is it any easier for us to wrap our minds around Jesus' teachings? How do we open our hearts to the mystery of flesh given for us, blood shed for us, and bread come down from heaven when our culture insists that there is a simple black-and-white answer to every question? Who takes time to slow down and reflect on challenging Bible passages? Can we allow those words we do not understand to just be, to percolate and take root in the fertile soil of Christ's presence until the Spirit can coax a shoot of understanding to spring forth and grow into the light?

Too many unanswered questions weighed heavily on some of Jesus' followers. They wanted out; it was too difficult. They turned back to the safety of familiar routines and comfortable ideologies, prompting Jesus to wonder if all the disciples would abandon him. "Do you also wish to go away?" he asked the twelve (John 6:67). He asks the same question of us today whenever the circumstances of our lives challenge our faith, whenever our hearts are broken and our bodies exhausted, whenever it feels like we cannot take another step. Will we trust in Jesus' promise that his words are spirit and life? Do we believe he is the Holy One of God?

Questions remain, but the good news is that God's love is stronger than our doubts and fears, calling us back to worship, filling us with strength and giving us peace in the midst of uncertainty.

GATHERING

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Jamie Vannoy

CALL TO WORSHIP

Make Me a Servant (W&P 96)

F Dm⁷ Gm⁷ C⁷

Make me a ser - vant, hum - ble and meek.

Gm⁷ Bb/C C⁷ Bb/F F Fsus⁴ F A

Lord, let me lift up those who are weak.

Dm Dm/C G²/B Bbm⁶

And may the prayer of my heart al - ways be:

F/A Gm⁷ F/A Gm⁷

Make me a ser - vant, make me a ser - vant,

F/C C⁷sus F²

make me a ser - vant to - day.

OPENING LITANY

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!

To you our hearts and souls sing for joy, O God.

Happy are those who live in your house, O Lord of hosts.

Happy are those whose strength is in you, O God.

It is better to be a doorkeeper in your house

than to live in the tents of wickedness.

O Lord of hosts, happy are those who trust in you.

** GATHERING SONGS

Taste and See

(Verse - Music Ministers)

Jesus is the Bread of Life,
Broken and poured out for us,
And because of his great sacrifice
We can know the Father's love.

(Refrain - Music Ministers)

Taste and see the Lord is good,
Good to those who hunger after him.
Drink and be filled from the Living Well,
And never thirst again, never thirst again.
Taste and see the Lord is good,
He's been good to me.

(Verse - All)

**Jesus is the Bread of Life,
Broken and poured out for us,
And because of his great sacrifice
We can know the Father's love.**

(Refrain - All)

**Taste and see the Lord is good,
Good to those who hunger after him.
Drink and be filled from the Living Well,
And never thirst again,
never thirst again.
Taste and see the Lord is good,
He's been good to me.**

(Interlude)

(Music Ministers)

Taste and see the Lord is good,
Good to those who hunger after him.
Drink and be filled from the Living Well,
And never thirst again.

(Final Refrain - All / Music Ministers)

**Taste and see the Lord is good,
Good to those who hunger after him.
Drink and be filled from the Living Well,
And never thirst again,
never thirst again.**

**Taste and see the Lord is good,
He's been good to me.**

He's been good to me,
You've been good to me,
You've been good to me,
You've been good to me.

~~~~~

*Blessed Be Your Name*

**(Verse 1 - All)**

**Blessed be your name in the land that is plentiful,  
Where your streams of abundance flow,  
Blessed be your name.**

**(Verse 2 - All)**

**Blessed be your name when I'm found in the desert place,  
Though I walk through the wilderness,  
Blessed be your name.**

**(Refrain - All)**

**Every blessing you pour out I'll turn back to praise.  
When the darkness closes in, Lord, still I will say:  
Blessed be the name of the Lord;  
Blessed be your name.  
Blessed be the name of the Lord;  
Blessed be your glorious name.**

**(Verse 3 - All)**

**Blessed be your name when the sun's shining down on me,  
When the world's all as it should be,  
Blessed be your name.**

**(Verse 4 - All)**

**Blessed be your name on the road marked with suffering,  
Though there's pain in the offering,  
Blessed be your name.**

**(Refrain - All)**

**Every blessing you pour out I'll turn back to praise.  
When the darkness closes in, Lord, still I will say:  
Blessed be the name of the Lord;  
Blessed be your name.  
Blessed be the name of the Lord;  
Blessed be your glorious name.**

**(Bridge - Music Ministers / All)**

You give and take away,  
You give and take away.  
My heart will choose to say,  
"Lord, blessed be your name."  
**You give and take away,  
You give and take away.  
My heart will choose to say,  
"Lord, blessed be your name."**

**(Refrain - All)**

**Blessed be the name of the Lord;  
Blessed be your name.  
Blessed be the name of the Lord;  
Blessed be your glorious name.**

~~~~~

Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)

Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now I'm found;
Was blind, but now I see.

(Verse 2 - All)

**'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.**

(Refrain - All)

**My chains are gone, I've been set free.
My God, my Savior has ransomed me,
And like a flood his mercy rains,
Unending love, amazing grace.**

(Verse 3 - All)

**The Lord has promised good to me.
His word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.**

(Refrain - All)

**My chains are gone, I've been set free.
My God, my Savior has ransomed me,
And like a flood his mercy rains,
Unending love, amazing grace.**

(Verse 4 - Music Ministers)

**The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine,
But God who called me here below
Will be forever mine,
Will be forever mine.
You are forever mine.**

(Refrain - All)

**My chains are gone, I've been set free.
My God, my Savior has ransomed me,
And like a flood his mercy rains,
Unending love, amazing grace.**

**My chains are gone, I've been set free.
My God, my Savior has ransomed me,
And like a flood his mercy rains,
Unending love, amazing grace.**

CONFESSION

Eternal God, **our judge and redeemer, we confess that we have tried to hide from you, for we have done wrong. We have lived for ourselves and apart from you. We have turned from our neighbors and refused to bear the burdens of others. We have ignored the pain of the world and passed by the hungry, the poor, and the oppressed.**

In your great mercy, forgive our sins and free us from selfishness, that we may choose your will and obey your commandments; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

FORGIVENESS

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.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Assistant Minister

Holy God, **your word feeds your people with life that is eternal. Direct our choices and preserve us in your truth, that, renouncing what is false and evil, we may live in you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

WORD

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

FIRST READING

Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

In the Near East, covenant means “agreement” or “alliance.” It describes relationships and is the primary word used to characterize the relationship between God and Israel. By delivering Israel, God has already begun the relationship. Joshua calls upon the people to respond.

A reading from the book of Joshua.

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, “Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.” Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.”

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

PSALM

Psalms 34:15-22

The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous. (Ps. 34:15)

The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous,
and God’s ears are open to their cry.

**The face of the Lord is against those who do evil,
to erase the remembrance of them from the earth.**

The righteous cry, and the Lord hears them
and delivers them from all their troubles.

**The Lord is near to the brokenhearted
and saves those whose spirits are crushed.**

Many are the troubles of the righteous,
but the Lord delivers them from every one.

**God will keep safe all their bones;
not one of them shall be broken.**

Evil will bring death to the wicked
and those who hate the righteous will be punished.

**O Lord, you redeem the life of your servants,
and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.**

SECOND READING

Ephesians 6:10-20

Like a general giving a rousing speech to troops before battle, this letter closes by calling on Christians to be equipped for spiritual warfare against evil. The full armor of God includes truth, righteousness, peace, faith, the gift of salvation, and the word of God inspired by the Spirit.

A reading from the book of Ephesians.

Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

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

** GOSPEL

John 6:56-69

The “hard saying” that offends Jesus’ disciples is his claim that his followers must eat his flesh and drink his blood. The followers who return to their old lives know something about how odd this sounds. Simon Peter, on the other hand, knows something about the scarcity of living, gracious words. He asks the most important question: “To whom shall we go?”

The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said,] “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum. When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray

him. And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father." Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ**

YOUTH MESSAGE

MESSAGE

Pr. Jamie Vannoy

**** 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 power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell.**

**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 THE COMMUNITY

GATHERING OF GIFTS

OFFERTORY

OFFERING PRAYER

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.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Lift up your heads; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your voices; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your hearts; **we lift them up to God.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

And so we gather at the table. We come from many different places in life. And as we come together around the table we discover that our differences are not something we just tolerate, but that our differences are indeed a blessing. So come, children of God, just as you are. Wherever you are on this journey of life and faith, you are welcome here - here in this place, here in this community, here at this table. Come, children of God, come and remember. Remember the stories that Jesus' friends tell: Stories of bread broken and shared to feed a multitude; stories of gathering both enemy and friend together around a common table; stories of unlikely guests revealing the face of the sacred.

On a night of both celebration and betrayal Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it; gave it to his disciples and said, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Then Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to his disciples 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."

And so we pray: Lord, bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be open, and that we might recognize the risen Christ in our midst, indeed in one another .

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

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

HOLY COMMUNION

REFLECTION DURING COMMUNION

**** TABLE BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you and always keep you in God's grace.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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

**** BLESSING**

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

**** SENDING HYMN**

All the People Said Amen

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)

You are not alone if you are lonely.
When you feel afraid, you're not the only.
We are all the same - in need of mercy,
To be forgiven and be free.
It's all you got to lean on,
But thank God it's all you need.

(Refrain - All)

And all the people said, "amen." Whoa!
And all the people said, "amen."
Give thanks to the Lord, for his love never ends;
And all the people said, "amen."

(Verse 2 - Music Ministers)

If you're rich or poor... well it don't matter;
Weak or strong, you know love is what we're after.
We're all broken, but we're all in this together.
God knows we stumble and fall,
And he so loved the world,
He sent his Son to save us all.

(Refrain - All)

And all the people said, "amen." Whoa!
And all the people said, "amen."
Give thanks to the Lord, for his love never ends;
And all the people said, "amen."

(Bridge - Music Ministers / All)

Blessed are the poor in spirit who are torn apart;
Blessed are the persecuted and the pure in heart;
Blessed are the people hungry for another start,
For theirs is the kingdom, **the kingdom of God.**

(Final Refrain - All)

And all the people said, "amen." Whoa!
And all the people said, "amen."
Give thanks to the Lord, for his love never ends;
And all the people said, "amen."

And all the people said, "amen." Whoa!
And all the people said, "amen."
Give thanks to the Lord, for his love never ends;
And all the people said, "amen."
And all the people said, "amen."

** **DISMISSAL**

Assistant Minister

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

**Created, saved and gifted by God, we seek, serve and share Jesus Christ.
Hallelujah! Thanks be to God.**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below;

praise God above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

POSTLUDE

“W + 2” = Worship Plus Two
Make a commitment to not only worship each week
but also try to find a way to serve in the congregation
and seek out a way to serve our community.

YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD

Upcoming Commemorations

Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, died 430 Wednesday, August 28, 2024

Augustine was one of the greatest theologians of the Western church. A native of North Africa, he recovered from a debauched young adulthood through the influence of his mother, Monica, and Bishop Ambrose of Milan. Besides writing influential theological books, he served as bishop of Hippo, in present-day Algeria.

Moses the Black, monk, martyr, died around 400 Wednesday, August 28, 2024

Converted from life as a thief and a robber to Christianity, Moses was an Ethiopian who became a desert monk at Skete. The change in his heart and life had a profound impact on his native country. He was murdered when Berber bandits attacked his monastery.

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2014 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #22920.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.