



Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

July 26, 2020

Welcome to St. John

We are very pleased that you have joined us for worship today. If you are visiting for the first time, we have a welcome gift for you. We also appreciate any comments or suggestions that you may have. Thank you for coming today!

Holy Communion is celebrated weekly, and we offer guidance for those visiting in the following pages underneath the heading “Communion Distribution.”

Our bulletin is all you will need for worship this morning. We have inserted helpful information in *italics* including when, if able, to stand and sit. Congregation responses are in **bold**.

Children are welcome at St. John. We have worship activity bags located at each sanctuary entrance. All children are encouraged to come forward during Children’s Time. Our parents of children are welcome to use the Family Room at any time during worship—it is located in the Nursery School wing (upstairs). The room is open for families to use as needed for their children. We also have a baby changing station in the restroom by the main office. Please ask an usher if you have any questions.

Following our services, we will have beverages, cookies and conversation in our Great Room. We hope that you will join us and introduce yourself to others.

St. John Lutheran Church 1802 Skippack Pike, Blue Bell, PA 19422
www.stjohnbluebell.org www.facebook.com/stjohnbluebell
Nursery School website: www.stjohnsns.com
610-277-1086

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Our Council Members are listed on our website.

Celebrating 250 years of mission and ministry, 1769-2019.



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Order for Worship

Prelude ~ “Who Shall Separate Us from the Love of Christ”

Jonathan Oehler, Baritone

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?
shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine,
or nakedness or peril, or sword?
Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.
For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities,
nor pow'rs, nor things present, nor things to come,
Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature,
shall be able to separate us from the love of God,
which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Music: Daniel Pinkham (from *Letters from Saint Paul*)

Text: Romans 8:35-39

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose steadfast love is everlasting,
whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation.

C: **Amen.**

P: Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Reconciling God,

C: **we confess that we do not trust your abundance,
and we deny your presence in our lives.
We place our hope in ourselves
and rely on our own efforts.
We fail to believe that you provide enough for all.
We abuse your good creation for our own benefit.
We fear difference and do not welcome others
as you have welcomed us.
We sin in thought, word, and deed.
By your grace, forgive us;
through your love, renew us;
and in your Spirit, lead us;
so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.**

P: Beloved of God,
 by the radical abundance of divine mercy
 we have peace with God through † Christ Jesus,
 through whom we have obtained grace upon grace.
 Our sins are forgiven.
 Let us live now in hope.
 For hope does not disappoint,
 because God's love has been poured into our hearts
 through the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn ~ Gather Us In



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing, now is the dark - ness
 2 We are the young, our lives are a mys - t'ry, we are the old who



van - ished a - way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
 yearn for your face; we have been sung through - out all of his - t'ry,



brought here to you in the light of this day.
 called to be light to the whole hu - man race.



Gath-er us in, the lost and for - sak - en, gath - er us in, the
Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty, gath - er us in, the



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en,
proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low - ly,



we shall a - rise at the sound of our name.
give us the cour - age to en - ter the song.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: GATHER US IN, Marty Haugen

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Greeting

P: The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

P: Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: **Amen.**

Children's Time

Baptism~ Lucien Benjamin Kleiss

Pastor Steve: In baptism our gracious heavenly Father frees us from sin ... we grow in faith, love, and obedience to the will of God.

Pastor to Lucien's parents: Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have *Lucien* baptized into Christ?

Response: We do.

As you bring *Lucien* to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:

to live with *him* among God's faithful people,
bring *him* to the word of God and the holy supper,
teach *him* the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments,
place in *his* hands the holy scriptures,
and nurture *him* in faith and prayer,
so that *he* may learn to trust God,
proclaim Christ through word and deed,
care for others and the world God made,
and work for justice and peace.

Do you promise to help *Lucien* grow in the Christian faith and life?

Response: We do.

Pastor to Lucien's sponsor:

Hannah, do you promise to nurture *Lucien* in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, and to help him live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

Response: I do.

Pastor to the congregation:

People of God, do you promise to support *Lucien* and pray for *him* in *his* new life in Christ?

C: We do.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Pastor: I now ask you – parents, sponsor and congregation to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God,
the powers of this world that rebel against God,
and the ways of sin that draw you from God?

Response: We renounce them.

Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**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.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE FONT

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, O God, ... To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

BAPTISM

Pastor: *Lucien Benjamin Kleiss*, You are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Pastor: Let us pray.

We give you thanks, O God, ... Sustain *Lucien* with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever. **Amen.**

Lucien, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. **Amen.**

WELCOME

Pastor: Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Pastor: Let us welcome the newly baptized.

C: We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

Word

Psalm 119: 129-136

Your decrees are wonderful;
therefore I obey them with all my heart.
**When your word is opened it gives light;
it gives understanding to the simple.**

I open my mouth and pant
because I long for your commandments.
**Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as you always do to those who love your name.**

Order my footsteps in your word;
let no iniquity have dominion over me.
**Rescue me from those who oppress me,
and I will keep your commandments.**

Let your face shine upon your servant
and teach me your statutes.
**My eyes shed streams of tears,
because people do not keep your teaching.**

Second Reading: Romans 8:26-35, 37-39

A: The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I

am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Word of God, word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

P: The holy gospel according to St. Matthew.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

P: Jesus put before the crowds another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So, it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Homily

Silence for reflection follows the homily.

Hymn of the Day ~ “God, When Human Bonds Are Broken”



1 God, when hu - man bonds are bro - ken and we lack the
2 Through that still - ness, with your Spir - it come in - to our
4 Send us, God of new be - gin - nings, hum - bly hope - ful
5 Give us faith to be more faith - ful, give us hope to



love or skill to re - store the hope of heal - ing,
world of stress, for the sake of Christ for - giv - ing
in - to life. Use us as a means of bless - ing:
be more true, give us love to go on learn - ing:



give us grace and make us still.
all the fail - ures we con - fess.
make us stron - ger, give us faith.
God, en - cour - age and re - new!

Text: Fred Kaan, b. 1929

Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823–1889

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Prayers of Intercession

A: Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

A: Merciful God, your reign is revealed to us in common things: a mustard shrub, a woman baking bread, a fishing net. Help your church witness to the surprising yet common ways you encounter us in daily life. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

A: When your word is opened, it gives light and understanding. Increase our understanding and awe of your creation; guide the work of scientists and researchers. Treasuring the earth, may we live as grateful and healing caretakers of our home. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

A: As the birds of the air nest in branches of trees, gather the nations of the world into the welcoming shade of your merciful reign. Direct leaders of nations to build trust with each other and walk in the ways of peace. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

A: Your Spirit helps us in our weakness and intercedes for the saints according to your will. Help us when we do not know how to pray. Give comfort to the dying, refuge to the weary, justice to those who are oppressed, and healing to the sick. We pray especially for those on our Prayer List: Adina, Kathy, John, Eric, Tom, Jack, Jon, Rob, Sue, Lauren, Bill, Dave, Gladys, Dylan, Randy, Dorothy, Judy, Jim, Gerry, Hadley, Robert, Abby, Laura, and Donna. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

A: You show steadfast love and direct us to ask of you what we need. Help this congregation in these days of transition to pray boldly for our future and the leader you have prepared for us. Refresh us with new dreams of being your people in this place and time. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

A: In you our lives are never lost. Strengthen us by the inspiring witness of your people in all times and places. Embolden our witness now and one day gather us with all your saints in light. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

A: In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

Anthem~ "Redeeming Grace"

Jonathan Oehler, Baritone

Come all who love my Lord and Master, and like old David, I will tell,
Though chief of sinners, I've found favor, redeemed by grace from death and hell.
Far as the east from west is parted, so far my sins, by his dying love,
from me by faith are separated, blest antepast of joys above.

I late estranged from Jesus wandered and thought each dangerous poison good;
but he in mercy long pursued me with cries of his redeeming blood.
Though like Bartimaeus I was blinded in nature's darkest night concealed.
But Jesus' love removed my blindness, and he his pardoning grace revealed.

Now I will serve him while he spares me, and with his people sing aloud;
though hell oppose and sinners mock me, in rapturous songs I'll praise my God.
By faith I view the heavenly concert, they sing high strains of Jesus' love;
I fain would be with Christ above. Oh, with desire
my soul is longing, and fain would be with Christ above.

Music: K. Lee Scott

Text: Traditional American

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

During our time away, we will not be passing the offering plates. We are grateful for all who are able to continue their support of St. John. There are three ways to share tithes and offerings:

- 1. Simply giving - You can arrange for a regular gift (weekly, monthly, quarterly) to be deducted from a bank account. Please contact Marcie Godby, our bookkeeper, to arrange for this (stjohn1802bookkeeper@gmail.com).*
- 2. You may go to St. John's website, <https://www.stjohnbluebell.org/>, and under "Quick Links" hit the "Online Giving and Donations" button.*
- 3. You may put your offering envelope (checks are preferred) in another stamped envelope and mail it to St. John: 1802 Skippack Pike, Blue Bell, PA 19422 (Attn: Marcie).*

Take a moment and reflect on the gifts we have received – even in these difficult days.

Offertory Hymn ~ “Accept O Lord, the Gifts We Bring”



- 1 Ac - cept, O Lord, the gifts we bring to place up - on your ta - ble.
- 2 The vines were plant - ed, seeds were sown. They grew in your good plea - sure.
- 3 Our hopes and dreams, our toils and cares we lift in prayer be - fore you.



We do not wor - ship as we ought but on - ly as we're a - ble.
 What once was com - mon, dail - y food be - comes a ho - ly trea - sure.
 Lord, by your grace now come to us, as hum - bly we a - dore you.

Text: Beth Bergeron Folkemer, b. 1957
 Music: BARBARA ALLEN, English folk tune
 Text © 1990 Augsburg Fortress

Offertory Prayer

- P: God of goodness and growth,
 all creation is yours,
 and your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.
 Water and word, wine and bread:
 these are signs of your abundant grace.
 Nourish us through these gifts,
 that we might proclaim your steadfast love
 in our communities and in the world,
 through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song.
- C: **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

- P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:
- C: **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.**

Benediction

P: God, the creator, † Jesus, the Christ,
and the Holy Spirit, the comforter,
bless you and keep you in eternal love.

C: **Amen.**

Sending Hymn ~ “God of Grace and God of Glory”

God of grace and God of glory,
on your people pour your pow'r;
crown your ancient church's story;
bring its bud to glorious flow'r.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.

Lo! the hosts of evil round us
scorn the Christ, assail his ways!
From the fears that long have bound us
free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the living of these days,
for the living of these days,

Save us from weak resignation
to the evils we deplore;
let the gift of your salvation
be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
serving you whom we adore,
serving you whom we adore.

Text: Harry E. Fosdick, 1878-1969

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude ~ “Trumpet Tune on *God of Grace*”

Wayne L. Wold

Additional music links:

“Open Now Mine Eyes”

<https://youtu.be/X-B-H6Yf8hs>

“If God Be for Us”

<https://youtu.be/Jifj1fsXq3s>

“Kingdom of God”

<https://youtu.be/HvBFJrPzA9Y>

Assisting with Worship

Bridge Pastor

Director of Music

Lectors

Prayers of Intercession

Soloist

Pastor Stephen Godsall-Myers

Lawrence Baker

Barbara Tornetta

Judy Winship

Jonathan Oehler

