



Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 13, 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 ~ ““The Eyes of All Wait Upon Thee”

Quartet

The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.
Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of ev'ry living thing.
The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.
The eyes of all wait upon thee.

Music: Jean Berger

Text: Psalm 145:15-16

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

C: **Amen.**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

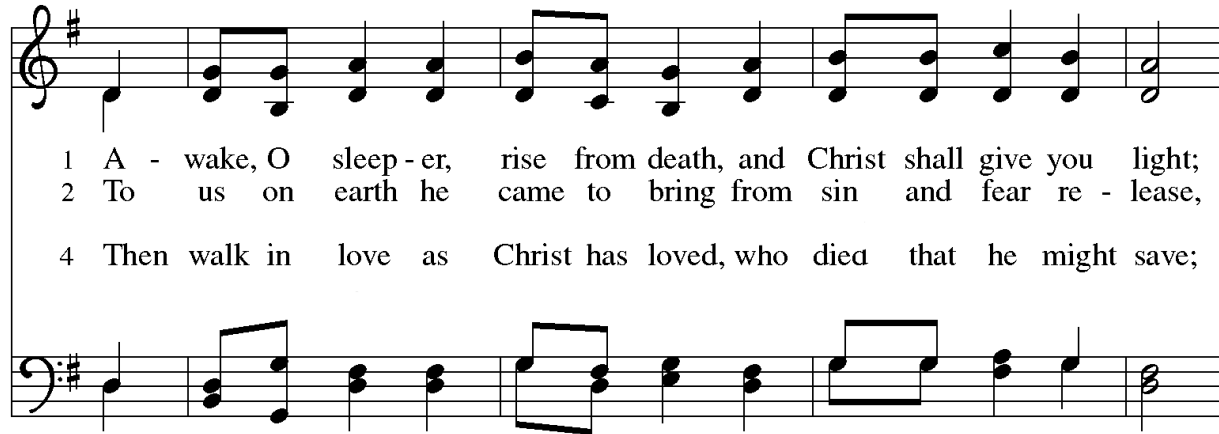
P: Faithful God,

C: **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.**

P: 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.

C: **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn ~ “Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death”



1 A - wake, O sleep - er, rise from death, and Christ shall give you light;
2 To us on earth he came to bring from sin and fear re - lease,
4 Then walk in love as Christ has loved, who died that he might save;



so learn his love, its length and breadth, its full - ness, depth, and height.
to give the Spir - it's u - ni - ty, the ver - y bond of peace.
with kind and gen - tle hearts for - give as God in Christ for - gave.

Text: F. Bland Tucker, 1895–1984
Music: AZMON, Carl G. Gläser, 1784–1829
Text © 1980 Augsburg Publishing House, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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: O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
C: **Amen.**

Children's Time

Word

First Reading: Genesis 15:15-21

A: Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Word of God, word of life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 103

(Cantor, then ALL)

The Lord is kind and mer - ci - ful;
slow to an - ger, a - bound - ing in love.

Bless your God, O my soul, bless God's name, my being.
Bless your God, O my soul, and never forget God's kindness.

Refrain.

God works good for the poor, treats oppression justly;
God is kindness and love, abounding in steadfast mercy.

Refrain.

As the height of the heavens over the earth:
So strong is God's mercy on those who have wonder toward their God.

Refrain.

Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

P: The holy gospel according to St. Matthew.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

P: Peter came and said to Jesus, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy-seven times.

“For this reason, the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Homily

Silence for reflection follows the homily.

Hymn of the Day ~ "Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive"



- 1 "For - give our sins as we for - give," you taught us, Lord, to pray;
- 2 How can your par - don reach and bless the un - for - giv - ing heart
- 3 In blaz - ing light your cross re - veals the truth we dim - ly knew:
- 4 Lord, cleanse the depths with - in our souls and bid re - sent - ment cease;



but you a - lone can grant us grace to live the words we say.
that broods on wrongs and will not let old bit - ter - ness de - part?
how tri - fling oth - ers' debts to us; how great our debt to you!
then, by your mer - cy rec - on - ciled, our lives will spread your peace.

Text: Rosamond E. Herklots, 1905–1987, alt.
Music: DETROIT, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844
Text © Oxford University Press 1969.

Apostles' Creed

P: Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

C: **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

A: Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

A: Uphold your church throughout the world; make it a place of welcome. Strengthen faith through Bible studies and Sunday schools, confirmation classes and youth ministries. Nurture new ministries of education and growth. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

A: Have compassion on your creation. Where humans have brought ruin and destruction, help us to heal, renew, and redeem your planet. Inspire us to be stewards of our natural world. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

A: Make your ways known to the nations. Bless our leaders with patience and wisdom. Guide us to be careful, caring citizens in this election season. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

A: Bring healing and justice wherever harm is dealt. Provide vindication for all who are oppressed. Free victims of human trafficking and forced labor; deliver all who are bound by debt. Feed all who hunger, and guard refugees fleeing famine, poverty, and war. We pray especially for those on our Prayer List: Martin, Jenny, Scott, Lisa, 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: Teach us to forgive. Teach us to treasure the gift of forgiveness. Temper our hearts when we are tempted to pass judgment. Make this congregation a community of mercy for one another and for all our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

A: Whether we live or whether we die, we are yours. We thank you for those who have showed us faithfulness, for the knees that taught us how to bow to you and the tongues that taught us to praise you. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

A: All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Peace

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

C: **And also with you.**

Where charity and love prevail, there God is ever found;
brought here together by Christ's love, by love we thus are bound.

Let us recall that in our midst dwells Christ, God's holy Son.
As members of each body joined, in him we are made one.

Let strife among us be unknown; let all contentions cease.
Be God's the glory that we seek; be his our only peace.

Let us forgive each other's faults as we our own confess,
That we may love each other well in Christian gentleness.

Love can exclude no race or creed if honored be God's name;
our common life embraces all whose Maker is the same.

Where charity and love prevail, there God is ever found.

Music: William McNair

Text: Latin hymn, 9th century

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:

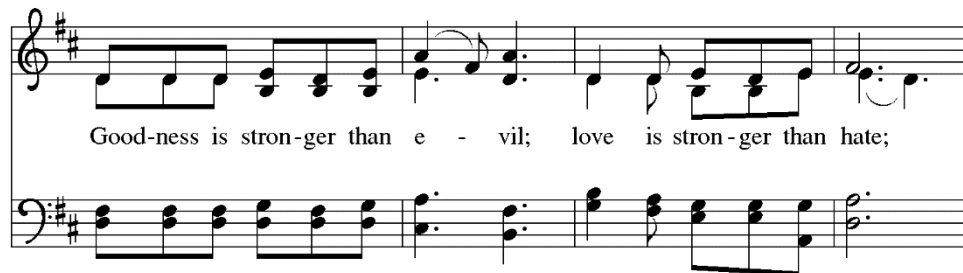
- 1. Simply giving - You can arrange for a regular gift (weekly, monthly, quarterly) to be deducted from a bank account. Please contact Marcie Godby, our bookkeeper, to arrange for this (stjohn1802bookkeeper@gmail.com).*
- 2. You may go to St. John's website, <https://www.stjohnbluebell.org/>, and under "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.

Voluntary~ "Goodness Is Stronger"

Ronald A. Nelson

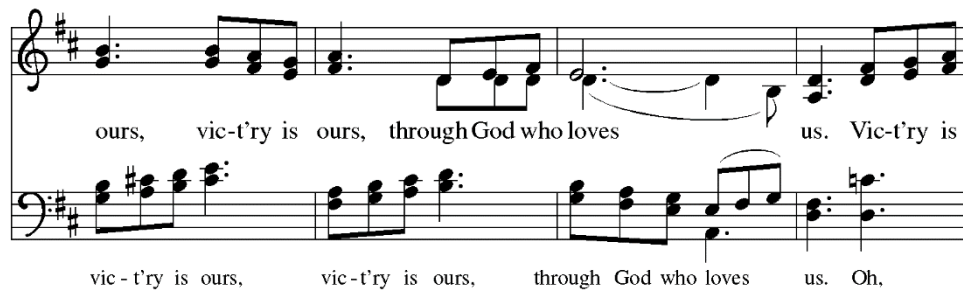
Offertory Hymn ~ "Goodness Is Stronger Than Evil"



Good-ness is stron-ger than e - vil; love is stron-ger than hate;



light is stron-ger than dark - ness; life is stron-ger than death; vic-t'ry is
Oh,



ours, vic-t'ry is ours, through God who loves us. Vic-t'ry is
vic-t'ry is ours, vic-t'ry is ours, through God who loves us. Oh,



ours, vic-t'ry is ours, through God who loves us.
vic-t'ry is ours, vic-t'ry is ours, through God who loves us.

Text: From *An African Prayer Book*, Desmond Tutu, b. 1931
Music: GOODNESS IS STRONGER, John L. Bell, b. 1949
Text from *An African Prayer Book* selected by Desmond Tutu, © 1995 by Desmond Tutu. Used by permission of Doubleday,
a div. of Random House, Inc., and Lynn C. Franklin Associates, Ltd.
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Offertory Prayer

- P: Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- 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: The God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus.
- C: **Amen.**

Sending Hymn ~ "In Thee Is Gladness"



1 In thee is glad-ness a - mid all sad - ness, Je - sus, sun - shine of my
2 Je - sus is ours! . . We fear no pow - ers, not of earth or sin or



heart. By thee are giv - en the gifts of heav - en, thou the
death. He sees and bless - es in worst dis - tress - es; he can



true re - deem - er art. Our souls thou wak - est; our bonds thou
change them with a breath. Where-fore the sto - ry tell of his



break - est. Who trusts thee sure - ly has built se - cure - ly
glo - ry with heart and voic - es; all heav'n re - joic - es



and stands for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia! Our hearts are
in him for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia! We shout for



pin - ing to see thy shin - ing, dy - ing or liv - ing,
glad - ness, tri - umph o'er sad - ness, love him and praise him



to thee are cleav - ing; naught can us sev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!
and still shall raise him glad hymns for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude ~ *"In dir ist Freude"*

Michael Burkhardt

Additional music links:

"I Come with Joy"

<https://youtu.be/b8LcEE14P78>

"In Thee is Gladness"

<https://youtu.be/B7ghtWjnzWM>

"Immortal, Invisible God Only Wise"

<https://youtu.be/hu3DUCiDNrY>

Assisting with Worship

Bridge Pastor

Director of Music

Lector

Prayers of Intercession

Apostles' Creed

Quartet

Pastor Stephen Godsall-Myers

Lawrence Baker

Betty Jeanguenin

Cheryl Posen

Barbara Tornetta

Deborah Swider, Maja Lisa Fritzhuspen,

Rob Laird, and Jonathan Oehler

