**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**Sunday, October 11, 2020**

***19th Sunday after Pentecost***

**Introduction to the day**

*In Isaiah we are given a vision of the great feast to come, when God will wipe away death forever. In Jesus’ parable about a great banquet, those invited do not come, so the invitation is extended to others. In our liturgy God spreads a table before us. Even amid anxiety and hardship we rejoice in the peace of God which surpasses all understanding. With great joy we feast at the table of the Lord, and we go forth to share the wonderful invitation with others hungering and thirsting for the abundant life of God.*

**SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS**

**Prelude**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

P: In the name of the Father,

and of the ☩ Son,

and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P: Gracious God,

**C: have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.** **Amen.**

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake

God forgives us all our sins.

As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority,

I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins,

In the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

**Gathering Song *O Day of Rest and Gladness* (ELW 521)**

(hum or sing softly with mask on)

1 O day of rest and gladness, O day of joy and light,  
O balm for care and sadness, most beautiful, most bright:  
on you the high and lowly, through ages joined in tune,  
sing, "Holy, holy, holy," to the great God triune.  
  
2 On you, at earth's creation, the light first had its birth;  
on you, for our salvation, Christ rose from depths of earth;  
on you, our Lord victorious the Spirit sent from heav'n;  
and thus on you, most glorious, a threefold light was giv'n.  
  
3 Today on weary nations the heav'nly manna falls;  
to holy convocations the silver trumpet calls,  
where gospel light is glowing with pure and radiant beams  
and living water flowing with soul-refreshing streams.  
  
4 New graces ever gaining from this our day of rest,  
we reach the rest remaining to spirits of the blest.  
We sing to you our praises, O Father, Spirit, Son;  
the church its voice upraises to you, blest Three in One.

**Greeting**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

**Prayer of the Day**

P: Let us pray.

**C: Lord of the feast, you have prepared a table before all peoples and poured out your life with abundance. Call us again to your banquet. Strengthen us by what is honorable, just, and pure, and transform us into a people of righteousness and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**Word**

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

**First Reading: Isaiah 25:1-9**

L: A reading from Isaiah.

*After a hymn of praise acknowledging God as a shelter for the poor, the prophet portrays a wonderful victory banquet at which death—which in ancient Canaan was depicted as a monster swallowing up everyone—will be swallowed up forever. The prophet urges celebration of this victory of salvation.*

1O Lord, you are my God;  
  I will exalt you, I will praise your name;  
 for you have done wonderful things,  
  plans formed of old, faithful and sure.  
 2For you have made the city a heap,  
  the fortified city a ruin;  
 the palace of aliens is a city no more,  
  it will never be rebuilt.  
 3Therefore strong peoples will glorify you;  
  cities of ruthless nations will fear you.  
 4For you have been a refuge to the poor,  
  a refuge to the needy in their distress,  
  a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat.  
 When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm,  
  5the noise of aliens like heat in a dry place,  
 you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds;  
  the song of the ruthless was stilled.  
  
 6On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples  
  a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,  
  of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear.  
 7And he will destroy on this mountain  
  the shroud that is cast over all peoples,  
  the sheet that is spread over all nations;  
  8he will swallow up death forever.  
 Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces,  
  and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,  
  for the Lord has spoken.  
 9It will be said on that day,  
  Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us.  
  This is the Lord for whom we have waited;  
  let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 23 read responsively**

1The Lord is my shepherd;  
  I shall not be in want.  
 2**The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures**  
  **and leads me beside still waters.**  
 3You restore my soul, O Lord,  
  and guide me along right pathways for your name’s sake.  
 4**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;**  
  **for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**   
 5You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
  you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.  
 6**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,**  
  **and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

**Second Reading:** **Philippians 4:1-9**

L: A reading from Philippians.

*Though writing from prison and facing an uncertain future, Paul calls on the Philippians to rejoice and give thanks to God no matter what the circumstance. God’s peace is with us and binds together our hearts and minds in Jesus Christ, especially when things around us do not seem peaceful.*

1My brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.  
  2I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. 3Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.  
  4Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. 6Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.  
  8Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation**

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life.**

**Alleluia. Alleluia.**

**Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14**

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew.

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

*Jesus tells a parable indicating that the blessings of God’s kingdom are available to all, but the invitation is not to be taken lightly.*

1Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: 2“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. 3He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. 4Again he sent other slaves, saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.’ 5But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, 6while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. 7The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. 8Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. 9Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’ 10Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.  
  11“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, 12and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless. 13Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ 14For many are called, but few are chosen.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

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

**Sermon**

***Silence for meditation***

**Hymn of the DaY *God Be with You Till We Meet Again* (ELW 536)**

(Hum or sing softly with mask on)

1 God be with you till we meet again;  
by good counsels guide, uphold you,  
with a shepherd's care enfold you;  
God be with you till we meet again.  
  
Refrain  
Till we meet, (till we meet,)  
till we meet, (till we meet again,)  
till we meet at Jesus' feet; (till we meet,)  
till we meet, (till we meet,)  
till we meet, (till we meet again.)  
God be with you till we meet again.  
2 God be with you till we meet again;  
holy wings securely hide you,  
daily manna still provide you;  
God be with you till we meet again. Refrain  
  
3 God be with you till we meet again;  
when life's perils thick confound you,  
put unfailing arms around you;  
God be with you till we meet again. Refrain

**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**

A: With confidence in God’s grace and mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

*A brief silence.*

A: Gracious host, fill your church with a spirit of joyous hospitality. We pray for bishops, teachers, church leaders, and all children of God as they invite others to your table of boundless grace. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: Gracious host, as creation waits with eager longing for redemption, protect your creatures that are mistreated. Restore valleys, mountains and pastures, and still and running waters. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: Gracious host, as you set a table in the presence of enemies, so bless the efforts of diplomats, international peace workers, and world leaders who navigate conflict. May they proceed with dialogue and understanding, so that justice and peace prevails. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: Gracious host, let your gentleness be known among those who are weary or ill (especially). Strengthen doctors, medical care workers, and caretakers who see to their needs. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: Gracious host, when we are quick to judge outward appearance, remind us how you clothe all in your mercy. We pray for ministries that provide needed clothing and other personal care assistance in this community (local ministries can be named). Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: Gracious host, as we remember those who have died and are gathered at the heavenly banquet, comfort us with your presence. Assure us of your peace at all times. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

P: Listen as we call on you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

**Meal**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

**Offering Prayer**

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things.

You have set before us these gifts of your good creation.

Prepare us for your heavenly banquet, nourish us with this rich food and drink,

and send us forth to set tables in the midst of a suffering world,

through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Great Thanksgiving**

**Dialogue**

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.**

**Preface by Pastor**

**Holy, Holy, Holy**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,**

**God of pow’r and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Thanksgiving at the Table**

Holy God,

our Bread of life, our Table, and our Food,

you created a world in which all might be satisfied by your abundance.

You dined with Abraham and Sarah, promising them life,

and fed your people Israel with manna from heaven.

You sent your Son to eat with sinners

and to become food for the world.

In the night in which he was betrayed,

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 life given for us and his rising from the grave,

we await his coming again to share with us the everlasting feast.

By your Spirit nurture and sustain us with this meal:

strengthen us to serve all in hunger and want,

and by this bread and cup make of us the body of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,

Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,

in your holy Church, both now and forever.

**Amen**

**Lord’s Prayer**

**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**

P: Come to the banquet table

where Christ gives himself as food and drink.

**The Sacrament of Holy Communion**

*Please come forward to receive the “body of Christ” by holding out your hands in a cup like fashion as far as you can. The Pastor will drop the wafer into your hand, saying “the body of Christ given for you,” and you respond “Amen,” then go to the left or right and receive the “blood of Christ” from a pre-filled glass. The glasses will be separated so you don’t touch one another. Take the glass and the communion assistant standing in the choir loft will say, “the blood of Christ shed for you.” There will be a separate tray of glasses with grape juice for those who prefer grape juice.*

**Communion**

*When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say*

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

*and each person may respond*

Amen.

**Communion Song**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;** **have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;** **have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;** **grant us peace.**

**Song after Communion*Jesus, Remember Me***

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.  
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

**Prayer after Communion**

A: We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare,the body and blood of Christ. Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven, into your beloved vineyard to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst, guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

**Sending**

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

**Blessing**

**Dismissal**

**Postlude**

***Please leave your offering in the offertory plate located at each exit of the church.***

***Announcements***

*Pastor Aucker is on vacation this week. For pastoral emergencies contact Pastor Runser at 570.725.2155.*

Remember in prayer: Rowen Aldridge, Luke Antolick, Bob Braucht, Dawn Hauser, Ralph Lehman, Caleb Leone, David Mitchell, Bob and Phyllis Moriarity, Kathy Neal, Rev. Donald and Ruth Nice, Cora Pellitier, Jack Rishel, Joann Rishel, Jane Shaffer, Brenda Traxler, Jillian Waldman, and all of our shut-ins; the safety of our military troops around the world (Mark Baier, Jade Cordrey, Paul Laidacker, Kenny Leitch, Maddison Myers, Tyler O’Neal, Adam Shaffer, Aaron Stabley, Paul St. James, Jenna White); Everyone affected by the fires on the West Coast; Family Promise and the homeless in our counties. Bishop Eaton, our Presiding Bishop; and Bishop Collins, Bishop of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. For our Companion Synod in Liberia and Ansbach-Wurzburg, Germany; our sister church, St. Wunibald in Heidenheim, Germany and for the New Love Center as it seeks to build a new food hub.

The flowers are given to the Glory of God and in memory of my dear mother who entered the Church Triumphant one year ago today.  I miss you and know I will see you again.  Love, Becky

Special Thanks to this week’s helpers: Lectors –Darlene Bilby; Assisting Ministers -Bill Ely Jr. and Ken Dougherty; Acolyte –; Communion Assistants-; Head Usher -Gina Johnson; Tellers- Jim Ely; Bulletin sponsor -;

Next week’s helpers: Lectors –Shane Snyder; Assisting Ministers -Gary Johnson and Karen Aucker; Acolyte –; Communion Assistants -; Head Usher -Gina Johnson; Tellers- Jim Ely; Bulletin sponsor -;

The Lutheran Church **Women’s Prayer Chain** is a vital ministry of St. John Lutheran.

Anyone in need of prayers is asked to contact any of the following persons:

Gloria Ely – 570-873-3597

Sarah Davidson - 570-398-0659

Joyce Braucht - 570-398-2852

**Blanket Sunday -**Lutheran World Relief **-** sponsored jointly by the Women of ELCA and the Committee for Global Missions Upper Susquehanna Synod of the ELCA. The Women of the Church receive their annual offering for Blankets October 11. While we no longer physically receive blankets due to the cost of shipping them, we do give thanks for those who donate money to purchase blankets in other countries where they are used for warmth and shelter in refugee camps and orphanages.

**Bible Study to Resume October 19** -While everything is still in a state of flux regarding the safety of members to gather in groups, we are hopeful that we can resume Bible study on October 19 with a luncheon following Bible study at the home of Gloria and Dean Ely, 1212 Creekside Lane. Bible Study will be held at 10:00 a.m. every Monday in the large Sunday School room. We will study the book of Esther. Please read ahead on Esther.

**Chancel Choir is FUN!**  -Yes, you need to go to rehearsal, but we are a great group.  Choir invites you to join us—make a joyful noise unto the Lord and have great fellowship!  Choir will practice Wednesday, October 21 and 28 at 6:30 p.m. and sing an anthem beginning on Sunday, November 1.  Choir members will be asked / required to wear a mask or shield at all times, and we will work on socially distancing at rehearsal and in the nave. We’d love for you to join us!

**Carpenter’s Farm -**A favorite Fall tradition is approaching as we invite all of our youth to Carpenter’s Farm in Linden on Saturday, October 24 at 2:00 p.m. We will be going for a hayride, walking through the corn maze, and all participants will be allowed to take home one pumpkin. If you are interested in this event, please text Molly at 570-814-3489.

**“Grab-a-Tab” -** The youth of St. John would like to ask for donations of little tabs from beverage, soup and dessert cans. It doesn’t matter what color the tab, just grab them and deliver them to the church office. This project will benefit the Ronald McDonald House of Danville.“Grab-a-Tab” program allows people of all ages to join in the effort of providing a “Home-away-from-Home” to children with cancer or other serious illnesses and their families.

**Giving Plus+ -** Download the “Giving Plus+” app from your app store for your cell phone. This feature is also available on our web site. Enter your email, make up a password, and walk through the choices to give the church an electronic donation by check or debit/credit card. People were asking if they could give electronically by debit/credit card. Now this feature is available. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Aucker.

**Give+ Text:** Simply send a text message to 570-865-1101 with the amount you would like to contribute. Within a few minutes, you’ll be sent a text with a link to register. Click on the link and enter your cardholder name and credit or debit card information. Once your registration is complete, you will receive a text verification and a receipt of your donation via email.

McElhattan United Methodist church is having their free Thanksgiving dinner on Saturday, November 21, 11 am until they are out of food. They will need donations of chocolate chip cookies.

Woolrich and McElhattan United Methodist Churches are conducting their annual Christmas stocking stuffer for area families. They are asking for donations of small items for a stocking: slinky’s, match box cars, hair ties, stickers, crayons, toothbrushes, anything small that one would fit in a stocking by November 8. Either leave at St. John or Woolrich United Methodist Church. They will have a drive-by distribution before Christmas.

**Christmas-at-Sea**

Would you like to bring joy to seafarers who will not be home with their families for Christmas? Our port chaplains deliver satchels filled with gifts to the seafarers they meet in port in the weeks prior to Christmas. Later, on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, when the ship is in the middle of the ocean, the captain will hold a celebration, and all the crew will open their satchels, each containing:

One sweatshirt – hooded or unhooded (size L-XL)

Three pairs of socks – thermal or white gym

One casual pullover T-shirt (size M-L)

Knit hat or scarf

One can of nuts or bar of chocolate, and

A Christmas card from you.

We invite you to participate in a memory of Pastor Martha McCracken by purchasing the items needed for a Christmas Seafarer’s bag. Bags are available in the office. Please return by Nov. 1. for many years Pastor McCracken was President of Seafarers Ministry.

***THIS WEEK’S EVENTS***

Sunday, October 11, 2020 *19th Sunday after Pentecost*

*Blanket Sunday*

9:00 a.m. Nave Worship Service

1:00 p.m. Crop Walk

7:00 p.m. AA meeting

Monday, October 12, 2020

PB&J Day

6:30 p.m. Boy Scouts

Tuesday, October 13, 2020

9:30 a.m. Conference Clergy

7:30 p.m. A.A. and N. A. meetings

Sunday, October 18, 2020 20*th Sunday after Pentecost*

9:00 a.m. Nave Worship Service

2:00 p.m. Catechism

7:00 p.m. AA meeting