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Saint James Lutheran Church

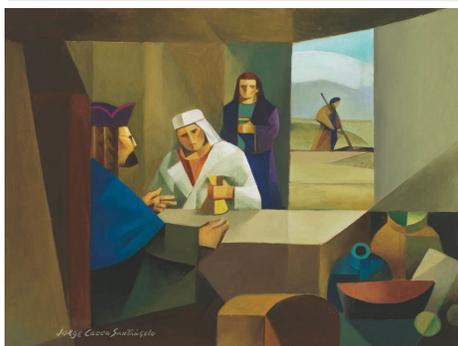


A Parish of the North Carolina Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



"Growing in Christ Through Worship, Learning, Fellowship, and Service"

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST NOVEMBER 15, 2020



Our readings during November speak of the end times. Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the LORD will be filled with wrath and distress. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread, and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Faithful God,
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.

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.

Amen.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: *Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18*

Zephaniah (like the prophet Amos in last week's first reading) presents the day of the LORD as one of judgment and wrath. Descriptions of the last day in the New Testament include details taken from Old Testament accounts of the day of the LORD.

A reading from Zephaniah, the first chapter.

Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is at hand; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests. ¹²At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their hearts, "The LORD will not do good, nor will he do harm." ¹³Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them. ¹⁴The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there. ¹⁵That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, ¹⁶a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements. ¹⁷I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against the Lord, their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. ¹⁸Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the LORD's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed; for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM: *Psalms 90: 1-8 [9-11] 12*

So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom. (*Ps. 90:12*)

A reading from Psalm Ninety.

- ¹Lord, you have been our refuge
 from one generation to another.
- ²Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the earth were born,
 from age to age you are God.
- ³You turn us back to the dust and say,
 "Turn back, O children of earth."
- ⁴For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past
 and like a watch in the night;
- ⁵you sweep them away like a dream,
 they fade away suddenly like the grass:
- ⁶in the morning it is green and flourishes;
 in the evening it is dried up and withered.
- ⁷For we are consumed by your anger;
 we are afraid because of your wrath.
- ⁸Our iniquities you have set before you,
 and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.
- ⁹When you are angry, all our days are gone;
 we bring our years to an end like a sigh.
- ¹⁰The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength even eighty;
 yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow, for they pass away quickly and we are gone.
- ¹¹Who regards the power of your wrath?
 Who rightly fears your indignation?
- ¹²So teach us to number our days
 that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: *1 Thessalonians 5:1-11*

Though we do not know and cannot calculate the day of Christ's return, we live faithfully in the here and now as we anticipate the day when we will be given eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

A reading from 1 Thessalonians, the fifth chapter.

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! ⁴But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; ⁵for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. ⁶So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; ⁷for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 25:14-30*

Jesus tells a parable about his second coming, indicating that it is not sufficient merely to maintain things as they are. Those who await his return should make good use of the gifts that God has provided them.

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the twenty-fifth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to the disciples: ¹⁴"For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' ²¹His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²²And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' ²³His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' ²⁶But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN

O Christ the Same

Glenda Poole, Organist / Betsy Ellington-Boynton / Keith Sutton, vocalist



1 O Christ the same, through all our sto - ry's pag - es—
 3 O Christ the same, se - cure with - in whose keep - ing



our loves and hopes, our fail - ures and our fears;
 our lives and loves, our days and years re - main;



e - ter - nal Lord, the king of all the a - ges,
 our work and rest, our wak - ing and our sleep - ing,



un - chang - ing still a - mid the pass - ing years:
 our calm and storm, our plea - sure and our pain:



O liv - ing Word, the source of all cre - a - tion,
 O Lord of love, for all our joys and sor - rows,



who spread the skies and set the stars a - blaze;
 for all our hopes when earth shall fade and flee;



O Christ the same, who wrought our whole sal - va - tion,
 O Christ the same, be - yond our brief to - mor - rows,



we bring our thanks for all our yes - ter - days.
 we bring our thanks for all that is to be.

APOSTLES' CREED

God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we profess our faith.

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary,

He 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, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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 PEOPLE

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Lord of the church, ignite your people with the passion of your love. By the fire of your Holy Spirit, unify us across ministries, congregations, and denominations, and refine us to participate in your activity throughout the world. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of creation, we stand in awe at the works of your hands and praise you for the beauty of nature. Bless the earth for your glory and restore its integrity where exploitation has caused ruin. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of the nations, sound forth your justice in the ears of all leaders. Increase concern for those who are most vulnerable, especially as international leaders forge trade agreements and cooperate to end human rights abuses. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of all in need, search out all who cry to you in distress. Scatter the heavy clouds of depression, chronic illness, unemployment, and loneliness with your radiant light. Send us as encouragement and signs of your healing. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of the stranger, stir up holy restlessness in us to extend love to those at the margins. Release our desire for control and open us to learn from the perspectives of others. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of the living and the dead, we give you thanks for all the saints at rest from their labors. Rouse us to live by their example, that saints yet to come may also know your love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold 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.

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Amazing Grace

NEW BRITAIN

The Liturgy Has Ended; The Service Begins!

Music Copyright Information

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WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please e-mail all information to the church office at keith@sjnc.net

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PRAYER LIST

Ray Faggart
Brad Baker

All health care professionals and first responders including:

Deb Bradshaw
Lauri Fowler
DeeDee Gilbert
Annette Propst
Meagan Lambert
Alison Monk
Jason and Stephanie Matthews
Dr Bradley Propst, son of
Kenny and Annette Propst
Sam Hurley, son of *Elizabeth Hurley*
Julie Greathouse, friend of
Lois Marlow
Betsy Waselovich, sister of
Golda Jay
Lauren, daughter of *Angie Buchanan*
Dr. Stephanie Garrison,
daughter-in-law of Margaret Garrison
Dr. Kevin Burns, son-in-law of Margaret Garrison.

If you have someone you would like to add to the prayer list, please contact Keith. 704-786-0166 and leave a message or email at keith@sjnc.net

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

15-Nov. Douglas McAnulty
15-Nov. Jimmy Summers
16-Nov. Heidi Patterson
16-Nov. Noah Pittard
17-Nov. Jane Craver
17-Nov. Buddy McEachern
18-Nov. Emerson Baker
19-Nov. LeeAnn Miller
20-Nov. Ralph Barnhardt

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Lector/Intercessor:

Kim Haberman

Vocalist:

Betsy Ellington-Boynton / Keith Sutton

OUR STEWARDSHIP

Contributions and Receipts
for November 08, 2020
\$5,289.00
(\$8,414.00 needed for weekly)

SPENDING PLAN Q&A

There will be a Spending Plan Question and Answer on Sunday, November 15 at 10:00 am. It will be led by Kenny Propst and Frank Irvin. You should have received a link in your email to join this meeting if you desire.

Join Saint James Lutheran Church Facebook and Instagram groups—send Jeremy Jay any pictures and/or articles you would like to have posted at jeremy@pbnjay.com

St. James YouTube Channel
Search for St. James Lutheran Church Concord NC and subscribe.

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The Rev. Dr. Timothy M. Smith.....Bishop

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Mac Mullins
Mark Murphy
Al Pieschel
Jodi Ramirez



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OFFICE HOURS

M-Th 8:30-4:00, F 8:30-1:00
Closed for lunch 12:30 - 1:00