



Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost August 22, 2021

The following worship service may be used on its own or along with the video found on the Swamp Lutheran YouTube page.

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.

Hymn "How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds"

ELW 620

- 1 How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
in a believer's ear!
It soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds,
and drives away all fear.
- 2 It makes the wounded spirit whole
and calms the heart's unrest;
'tis manna to the hungry soul
and to the weary, rest.
- 7 Till then I would thy love proclaim
with every fleeting breath;
and may the music of thy name
refresh my soul in death!

The Apostolic Greeting and Prayer of the Day

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.

Let us pray:

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.**

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.

¹Then 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. ^{2a}And Joshua said to all the people, ¹⁴“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. ¹⁵Now 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.”

¹⁶Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷for 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; ¹⁸and 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.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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.

¹⁰Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For 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. ¹³Therefore 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. ¹⁴Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸Pray 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. ¹⁹Pray 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, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: JOHN 6: 56-59

The Holy Gospel according to John
Glory to you, O Lord.

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?”

[Jesus said,] ⁵⁶“Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This 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.” ⁵⁹He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” ⁶¹But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶²Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴But 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. ⁶⁵And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

⁶⁶Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” ⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Homily The Rev. Kurt S. Strause

Prayers of Intercession

Each petition ends “Lord, in your mercy,” and the response is “**Hear our prayer.**”

Lord's Prayer

Let us pray together

Our Father in heaven,

**hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as is in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and forever.**

Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace;

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

Hymn

"When Morning Gilds the Skies"

ELW 853

1 When morning gilds the skies,
my heart awaking cries:
may Jesus Christ be praised!
When evening shadows fall,
this rings my curfew call:
may Jesus Christ be praised!

5 Sing, sun and stars of space,
sing, all who see his face,
sing, "Jesus Christ be praised!"
God's whole creation o'er,
today and evermore
shall Jesus Christ be praised!

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE "You Are the Way"

Austin C. Lovelace

Altar Flowers given in memory of James I, and grandparents, Verna and Walter by John and Jerry.

Sanctuary Candle given in memory of his parents, James and Nancy Frantz and grandparents, Verna and Walter by John and Jerry.

NOTE – Please contact Joyce Stoner if you want to sponsor the Sanctuary Candle or Altar Flowers – 717 336-7077. Sundays in August available.



Michael A. Crowther
Margaret Elser
Clyde Showalter
Betty Hornberger
Charles Moyer
Josie Reitz

Alverta Showalter
Clarice Haws
Pastor Jim Miller
Mary Ann Weitzel
Ella Shirk

Katie Houck
Sue Kittler
Katie Mera
Family of Patricia Gress
Nancy Kulp
Mary Kring (aunt of Linda Ream)
Clair Sweigart
Janice Moyer Kelly
Josie Reitz
Judy Sauder
Pastor Jim Miller
Debbie Myers
Lisa Buckles (friend of Sue Ellen Knauer)
Family)
Phyllis Miller (cousin of Jen Weitzel)
Glenn Beard, Sr.
Taylor)

Sharon Fremont – (friend of Sue Kreitz)
Shirley Achey – (neighbor of Sue Kreitz)
Hunter Leisey
Susan Levan
Jean Wolf
Ashton Faust
John Frantz
Earl Myers
Joan Long
Margaret Elser
Shirley Martzall (friend of Ranck family)
Kelly O'Hara (friend of Jen Weitzel)
Matt Hollinger (friend of Weitzel)

Marie McQuate
Janice Ballenger (friend of Connie



When someone is put on the prayer list, we will keep them on for four weeks. After that time, they will be taken off unless you make another request to have them put back on.

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS – Our distribution of food continues on an ongoing basis. We specifically are short of canned meat items – except tuna! We have plenty of tuna but could use corned beef, Spam, chicken, canned ham. **Canned fruit**, toilet paper and paper towels (individually wrapped), **pasta (other than macaroni)**, **cereal, soups and snacks (including cookies, graham crackers, crackers)** are also in short supply. Watch the newsletter for a more comprehensive list. Thank you to the congregation for your continued support!

ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC – The Annual Church Picnic will be held September 12th after church. Meal will be served at 11AM. Join us for a delicious pig roast and all the trimmings. Food and drink will be provided. **Bring a dessert to share.** Bocce ball and corn hole to enjoy.

FLOWER DELIVERY – As we return to a full functioning church mid-September, we will need volunteers to deliver flowers to our shut-ins after service. The church secretary, Brenda, will coordinate this effort for the worship team. Please call the church or email Brenda at secretary@swamplutheran.org if you are willing to be part of a rotating group of volunteers for this vital outreach.

SCHOOL KITS - We are presently accepting donations of items for school kits through the end of September for this year's LWR school kit project. The items most needed are the **notebooks, rulers, and pens.** No backpacks are needed thanks to Jane! All items are listed below. Donations may be given to Jane Leshner, Denise Null and Connie Taylor. Last year, despite the obstacles, we put together 54 backpacks and delivered to the LWR pick-up site. Thank you to all who donated supplies and a special thanks to Beatty Gress for helping us achieve this amount. Thanks for all the help! While we still have a surplus of pencils, we depleted most of our other supplies last year, so we are starting from "scratch". We appreciate everyone following the guidelines listed below, as Lutheran World Relief will not send anything that does not adhere to these guidelines.

Thanks so much! Debbie Carvell

70-80 sheet notebooks of wide or college ruled paper approximately 8" x 10 ½" – 4 per backpack

30-centimeter ruler or a ruler with centimeters on one side and inches on the other side – 1 per backpack

Pencil sharpeners – 1 per backpack

Blunt scissors (safety scissors). (They must say this on the packaging) – 1 per backpack

Unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers – 5 per backpack

Black or blue ink pens – 5 per backpack

Packs of 16 or 24 crayons – 1 pack per backpack

2 ½" erasers – 1 per backpack