

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

You Will Live Forever

August 15 & 16, 2015

AS WE GATHER

In Luther's Small Catechism, we are reminded in the Third Article of the Creed of the fact that faith is not something we can conjure up, figure out, or decide on our own, "by my own reason or strength." The fact that faith is the work of God in your heart through God's Word, through the Gospel, is what lies behind our Readings today. At first we may think that Joshua and Jesus are contradicting this fact. Joshua bids the people, saying, "Choose this day whom you will serve," the Lord or the other, foreign gods. In the Gospel many of Jesus' disciples quit following Him because they couldn't figure out what He meant by eating His flesh and drinking His blood. Jesus turns to His inner circle of disciples, the Twelve, and asks, "Do you want to go away as well?" We are relieved to hear Peter's response and even sing it ourselves in some of our liturgies, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." We agree with Peter's choice.

But was it the Israelites' choice when they vowed, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods"? As for Peter, we know his reputation of declaring strong words of faith but then not understanding and then even denying his Lord. So on what does our faith and hope depend? Not that we have chosen God "by my own reason or strength," but that God has chosen us. The more we remember our inability to believe, the greater we can recognize the miracle when we confess, "I believe."

WELCOME

Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. (Psalm 90:12, 14, NIV)

HANDSHAKES & HUGS

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN #868 "Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun"

Rise for the last stanza

Awake, my soul, and with the sun Thy daily stage of duty run;
Shake off dull sloth and joyful rise To pay thy morning sacrifice.

In conversation be sincere, Thy conscience as the noon day clear;
Think how the all seeing God thy ways And all thy secret thoughts surveys.

All praise to Thee, who safe hast kept And hast refreshed me while I slept;
Grant, Lord, when I from death shall wake, I may of endless light partake.

Lord, I my vows to Thee renew; Disperse my sins as morning dew;
Guard my first springs of thought and will And with Thyself my spirit fill.

Direct, control, suggest this day All I design or do or say
That all my pow'rs with all their might In Thy sole glory may unite.

(Rise)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Joshua 24:15, 18–19, 24*

Pastor: As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

People: We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God.

Pastor: But you are not able to serve the Lord.

People: The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey.

Pastor: Then let us return to the covenant of our Baptism.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

People: I confess to almighty God our Father that I have sinned by allowing other things to become more important to me than God. I have trusted more in myself, my possessions, my works, and my own desires. I confess that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him. Therefore I pray that He come to me in His Word and Spirit to forgive me and enlighten and keep me in the true faith. Amen.

Pastor: Almighty God has had mercy on you and has come to you in the person of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. For the sake of His death and resurrection for you, God forgives you all your sins and gives you the

strength of faith to serve Him in all faithfulness. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE

“This Is The Feast”

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Refrain: This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God. *Refrain*

Power, riches, wisdom, and strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are His.

Refrain

Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation:
Blessing, honor, glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. **Amen. Refrain**

For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia.
This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty God, whom to know is everlasting life, grant us to know your Son, Jesus, to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow His steps in the way that leads to life eternal; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

(Be seated)

✠ **WORD** ✠

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Joshua 24:1–2a, 14–18* (Choose whom you will serve.)

Then Joshua assembled all the tribes of Israel at Shechem. He summoned the elders, leaders, judges and officials of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. Joshua said to all the people, "Now fear the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers

served 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." Then the people answered, "Far be it from us to forsake the LORD to serve other gods!

EPISTLE *Ephesians 5:6–21* (Walk as children of light.)

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *John 6:51–69* (Jesus, the bread of eternal life)

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever." He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?" Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you? What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! The Spirit gives life; the flesh

counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him." From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

(Be seated)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON HYMN #461 "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" Stanzas 1,2,7,8

I know that my Redeemer lives; What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was dead; He lives, my ever-living head.

He lives triumphant from the grave; He lives eternally to save;
He lives all glorious in the sky; He lives exalted there on high.

He lives and grants me daily breath; He lives and I shall conquer death;
He lives my mansion to prepare; He lives to bring me safely there.

He lives, all glory to His name! He lives, my Jesus, still the same;
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives; I know that my Redeemer lives!

SERMON "To Whom Shall We Go?" John 6:51-69

(Rise)

APOSTLES' CREED (*found on the inside back cover of the hymnal*)

(Be seated)

OFFERINGS As your offering is collected, ***please sign our attendance book*** located at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone. After you are finished, please pass the book along to others in your pew, and return the book to the center aisle. You may check the register to see the names of those to greet after the service.

(Rise)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all

people according to their needs. Father in heaven, we pray for faithful Christian households, that our families would fear and serve our Lord in sincerity and faithfulness.

People: Help us to acknowledge and put away all idols that would distract us from worshiping and serving you, the one true God.

Pastor: Lord of the family, we pray for husbands and wives, that they would faithfully fulfill their marriage vows to one another.

People: Grant all your people to humbly submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Pastor: Lord of the Church, we pray for the disciples of Jesus around the world, that we would faithfully listen to Him who has the word of eternal life.

People: Grant us all to trust in Christ and His promises of forgiveness, life and salvation.

Pastor: Almighty God, we pray for missionaries all around the world, and especially our Together in Mission partner, Pastor Chuck Ferry and family. Bless, guide, and protect them.

People: Give to Pastor Ferry and all your servants a boldness in sharing the gospel along with the humility to speak the truth in love.

Pastor: Lord of all, we pray for faithful hearts and minds, that we as God's people would follow your commandments and seek to do your will.

People: Move us to go where you lead us and to forsake all paths that would cause us to stray from your holy and gracious will.

Pastor: Lord God, we pray for those studying to be pastors, teachers, deaconesses and other workers in Christ's Church, that you would bless their studies and give them the training and skills necessary to do their work.

People: grant them diligence, a servant's heart, and the leading of your Spirit that they would one day serve faithfully in Christ's church.

Pastor: Almighty God, the giver of every good gift, we rejoice with Bill and Berta celebrating their 55th anniversary, Russ and Marlene celebrating 34 years together, and the Zimmerman family as they celebrate the birthdays of Amanda and Sarah.

People: Grant us all to treasure the people you place in our lives and to daily be thankful for all the blessings you bestow upon us.

Pastor: Lord of life, we pray for all who partake of Christ's precious body and blood in the supper this day.

People: Grant us all to faithfully receive this precious gift, trusting in God's promises and seeking forgiveness and mercy for our sins.

Pastor: Lord of healing and compassion, we pray for all those who are sick, hospitalized, or facing difficult days, including Russ, LuEva, Eleanor, Linda, Gladys, Ron, Russ, Kathleen, Gretchen, Jack, Marge, Sharon, Helen, Shirley, Marion, Jack, Gretchen, Lois and Sarah

People: In your mercy, bring them peace in their afflictions and patience as they await healing and blessing from your hand.

Pastor: Lord of the living, we give you thanks and for all those who have departed this life in the saving faith, who now enjoy the blessing of dwelling in your presence.

People: When our final day comes, grant us strength to stand firm in the faith and graciously give us our portion with all your saints in light.

Pastor: Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

WORDS OF OUR LORD

THE PEACE OF THE LORD

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

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI Page 163

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.

(Be seated)

DISTRIBUTION Those guests who desire to commune who are members of another LCMS congregation may do so; if you are coming from another church background, please see the pastor or an elder first.

HYMN #761 "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me"

Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood, From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure: Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.

Not the labors of my hands Can fulfill Thy Law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know, Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone; Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring; Simply to Thy cross I cling.
Naked, come to Thee for dress; Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly: Wash me, Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath, When mine eyelids close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown, See Thee on Thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee.

HYMN "The Old Rugged Cross"

W & R #260

On a hill far away stood the old rugged cross,
the emblem of suffering and shame;
I love that old cross, where the dearest and best
for a world of lost sinners was slain.

**Refrain: So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,
till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
and exchange it some day for a crown.**

O that old rugged cross, so despised by the world,
has a wondrous attraction for me;
for the dear Lamb of God left his glory above
to bear it to dark Calvary. **Refrain**

In the old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine,
a wondrous beauty I see; for 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died
to pardon and sanctify me. **Refrain**

To the old rugged cross I will ever be true,
its shame and reproach gladly bear;
then he'll call me some day to my home far away,
where his glory forever I'll share. **Refrain**

HYMN #798 "The God of Abraham Praise"

The God of Abr'ham praise, Who reigns enthroned above;
Ancient of everlasting days And God of love.
Jehovah, great I AM! By earth and heav'n confessed;
I bow and bless the sacred name Forever blest.

The God of Abr'ham praise, At whose supreme command
From earth I rise and seek the joys At His right hand.
I all on earth forsake, Its wisdom, fame and pow'r,
And Him my only portion make, My shield and tow'r.

The God of Abr'ham praise, Whose all sufficient grace
Shall guide me all my pilgrim days In all my ways.
He deigns to call me friend; He calls Himself my God.
And He shall save me to the end Through Jesus' blood.

He by Himself has sworn; I on His oath depend.
I shall, on eagle wings upborne, To heav'n ascend.
I shall behold His face; I shall His pow'r adore
And sing the wonders of His grace Forevermore.

Though nature's strength decay, And earth and hell withstand,
To Canaan's bounds I urge my way At His command.
The wat'ry deep I pass, With Jesus in my view,
And through the howling wilderness My way pursue.

The goodly land I see, With peace and plenty blest:
A land of sacred liberty And endless rest.
There milk and honey flow, And oil and wine abound,
And trees of life forever grow With mercy crowned.

There dwells the Lord our king, The Lord our righteousness,
Triumphant o'er the world and sin, The Prince of Peace.
On Zion's sacred height His kingdom He maintains
And glorious with His saints in light Forever reigns.

The God who reigns on high The great archangels sing,
And "Holy, holy, holy!" cry, "Almighty King!
Who was and is the same And evermore shall be;

Jehovah, Father, great I AM! We worship Thee!"
The whole triumphant host Give thanks to God on high.
"Hail, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!" They ever cry.
Hail, Abr'ham's God and mine! I join the heav'nly lays:
All might and majesty are Thine And endless praise!

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: We give thanks to you, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore you that of your mercy you would strengthen us through the same in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: 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.

CLOSING HYMN #919 "Abide, O Dearest Jesus"

Abide, O dearest Jesus, Among us with your grace
that satan may not harm us Nor we to sin give place.

Abide, O dear Redeemer, Among us with your Word,
And thus now and hereafter True peace and joy afford.

Abide with heav'nly brightness Among us, precious Light;
Your truth direct and keep us From error's gloomy night.

Abide with richest blessings Among us, bounteous Lord;
Let us in grace and wisdom Grow daily through Your Word.

Abide with Your protection Among us, Lord, our strength,
Lest world and satan fell us And overcome at length.

Abide, O faithful Savior, Among us with Your love;
Grant steadfastness and help us To reach our home above.

Preacher
Liturgist
Lectors
Acolytes
Organist
Music Coordinator

Pastor Gregg Stanton
Pastor Harold Bender
Jodi Drew, John Ficken
Claire Igielski, Thomas Kadolph
Roger Gottschalk
Kim Woller