



Worship Program
August 24th & 25th, 2024
Lectionary 21

Introduction

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.

Confession & Forgiveness **Please stand if you are able.*

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy. **C: Amen.**

P: Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance, let us confess our sin. (*Silence is kept for reflection*)

P: God, our provider,

C: Help us. It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn? Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for life in the world. Amen.

P: Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, † the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy. You are forgiven and loved into abundant life. **C: Amen.**

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.**

Gathering Hymn "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" Hymn 858



1 Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre - a - tion!
2 Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is won-drous-ly reign - ing
3 Praise to the Lord, who will pros - per your work and de - fend you;
4 Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me a - dore him!



O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and sal - va - tion!
and, as on wings of an ea - gle, up - lift - ing, sus - tain - ing.
sure - ly his good - ness and mer - cy shall dai - ly at - tend you.
All that has life and breath, come now with prais - es be - fore him!



Let all who hear now to his tem - ple draw near,
Have you not seen all that is need - ful has been
Pon - der a - new what the Al - might - y can do
Let the a - men sound from his peo - ple a - gain.



join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion!
sent by his gra - cious or - dain - ing?
if with his love he be - friend you.
Glad - ly for - ev - er a - dore him!

Prayer of the Day

P: 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. **C: Amen.** **Please be seated.*

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.)

WA: Then 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. And Joshua said to all the people, "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. Now 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."

Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods. For 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. And 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.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalmody: Psalm 34:15-22

WA: The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and God's ears are open to their cry.

C: The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to erase the remembrance of them from the earth.

WA: The righteous cry, and the LORD hears them and delivers them from all their troubles.

C: The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves those whose spirits are crushed.

WA: Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the LORD delivers them from every one.

C: God will keep safe all their bones. Not one of them shall be broken.

WA: Evil will bring death to the wicked and those who hate the righteous will be punished.

C: O LORD, you redeem the life of your servants, and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.

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.)

WA: Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For 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.

Therefore, 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.

Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace.

With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Pray 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.

Pray 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, for which I am an ambassador in chains.

Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

"Alleluia"(Setting 3, ELW pg.142)

**Please stand if you are able.*

Gospel: John 6:56-69

(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?")

P: The holy gospel according to John.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

P: Jesus said, "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This 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."

He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum. When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult. Who can accept it?" But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life. The flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But 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. And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father." Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?"

Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God." The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

**Please be seated*

Sermon - Rev. Ed DeVore



Hymn of the Day "**Blessed Assurance**" Hymn 638

**Please stand if you are able.*



- 1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
- 2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
- 3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.
an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.
watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.

Refrain



This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:



this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

Apostles' Creed

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 power of 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

P: Calling on the spirit of Wisdom to guide our hearts and our minds, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

(Silence is kept for reflection)

P: Holy God, you have the words of eternal life. Lead the church to put its trust in Jesus, the living Word. Direct preachers, teachers, writers, and all the baptized in faithful speech and bold witness.

Merciful God, **C: Receive our prayer.**

P: Creator God, we and all creation are sustained by your Word. We pray for all who remind us of our interconnectedness with all living things. Prosper the work of conservation organizations, ELCA advocacy, and local climate justice advocates.

Merciful God, **C: Receive our prayer.**

P: God of wisdom, as our nation navigates another election cycle, guide our leaders to act justly for the sake of the world. Bring about fruitful conversation among your people and bring about change where you see fit. Sustain all who serve on juries in their deliberations.

Merciful God, **C: Receive our prayer.**

P: God of restoration, bring healing and wholeness to all who cry to you. Where pain is sharp, bring a sense of comfort and relief. Where grief runs deep, bring your tender mercy. Care for those on our hearts *(especially)*. Merciful God, **C: Receive our prayer.**

P: God of new life, protect students and teachers for a new school year. Bring an end to school shootings and cycles of violence. Move us to do all that is necessary to ensure a safe future for our children.

Merciful God, **C: Receive our prayer.**

P: God of every generation, we remember with thanksgiving all who have completed their baptismal journeys. Strengthen us in our baptismal callings to serve you faithfully until our journey's end.

Merciful God, **C: Receive our prayer.**

P: We lift up these prayers to you, gracious God. Receive them into your holy keeping. **C: Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

P: The Peace of Christ be with you always. **C: And also with you.**

**After sharing of the peace, please be seated.*

Offertory Song "We are an Offering" Hymn 692

Offering Prayer

**Please stand if you are able.*

P: Jesus, Bread of life, you have set this table with your very self and called us to the feast of plenty. Gather what has been sown among us and strengthen us in this meal. Make us to be what we receive here, your body for the life of the world. **C: Amen.**

The Dialogue

P: The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts. **C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

“Holy, Holy, Holy” (Setting Three, ELW pg.144)

Thanksgiving at the Table

P: 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. **C: Amen.**

The 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.

Invitation to Communion

P: Christ has set the table with more than enough for all. Come!

**Please be seated.*

“Lamb of God” (Setting Three, ELW pg.146)

Special Music

"Goodness of God" Performed by Rhett Walker

Prayer after Communion *Please stand if you are able.

P: Jesus, Bread of life, we have received from your table more than we could ever ask. As you have nourished us in this meal, now strengthen us to love the world with your own life. In your name we pray. **C: Amen.**

Blessing

P: The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, † be upon you now and forever. **C: Amen.**

Sending Hymn " **Lead On, Oh King Eternal**" Hymn 805



- 1 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal! The day of march has come;
- 2 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal, till sin's fierce war shall cease,
- 3 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal: we fol - low, not with fears,



hence-forth in fields of con - quest your tents will be our home.
and ho - li - ness shall whis - per the sweet a - men of peace;
for glad-ness breaks like morn - ing wher - e'er your face ap - pears.



Through days of prep - a - ra - tion your grace has made us strong;
for not with swords loud clash - ing, nor roll of stir - ring drums,
Your cross is lift - ed o'er us; we jour - ney in its light;



and now, O King e - ter - nal, we lift our bat - tle song.
but deeds of love and mer - cy the heav'n - ly king - dom comes.
the crown a - waits the con - quest; lead on, O God of might!

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. You are the body of Christ. **C: Thanks be to God.**