

**19th Sunday after Pentecost**

**CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH** | Lodi, California

*October 8, 2023*

**WELCOME TO WORSHIP**

Welcome to Christ Lutheran Church. We pray that your soul will be strengthened by the good news about God’s grace, love, and forgiveness given to us. If you would like to learn more about our church, please speak with our pastor or one of our members after the service.

* **Bathrooms** are located in the fellowship hall. A changing table is located in the women’s bathroom.

**WORSHIP THEME**

What makes the Christian joyful? This week, we continue looking at 4 readings from the book of Philippians. As we consider this chapter in God’s Word, we hear Paul speak about his joy again and again. But as we examine the circumstances of his life, we find that his joy comes from a deeper place than mere outward circumstance.

Paul found great joy in seeing the continuation of the work he began in the Philippians: their growing unity in the faith and the humble love that they shared was for him a foretaste of heavenly glory and an echo of Christ’s saving love. The joy of the Apostle is still being made complete as we remain united with God’s people through the centuries and add our voices to the choir that sings the glory of Jesus’ love.

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***The Service of the Word***

*We gather as a congregation to hear God’s Word proclaimed and respond with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.*

**HYMN** *Chief of Sinners Though I Be* **| CW 385**

M: The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

**CONFESSION**

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

**C: Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus my Savior I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin and take away my guilt.**

# absolution

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

**C**: **Amen**

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

**C: ♫ Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed are they who take refuge in him. Your Word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. Your faithfulness continues forever. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed are they who take refuge in him.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

M: Let us pray.

Mercifully grant, O God, that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, for without your help we are unable to please you; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen**

**FIRST LESSON** *Ezekiel 18:1–4,25–32*

*We may question God’s wisdom in how he deals with people. But in the end, we must admit that we have done wrong and need to repent.*

**18**The word of the Lord came to me: **2**“What do you people mean by quoting this proverb about the land of Israel:

“‘The parents eat sour grapes,  
    and the children’s teeth are set on edge’?

**3**“As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, you will no longer quote this proverb in Israel. **4**For everyone belongs to me, the parent as well as the child—both alike belong to me. The one who sins is the one who will die.

**25**“Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Hear, you Israelites: Is my way unjust? Is it not your ways that are unjust? **26**If a righteous person turns from their righteousness and commits sin, they will die for it; because of the sin they have committed they will die. **27**But if a wicked person turns away from the wickedness they have committed and does what is just and right, they will save their life. **28**Because they consider all the offenses they have committed and turn away from them, that person will surely live; they will not die. **29**Yet the Israelites say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Are my ways unjust, people of Israel? Is it not your ways that are unjust?

**30**“Therefore, you Israelites, I will judge each of you according to your own ways, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. **31**Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, people of Israel? **32**For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent and live!

**PSALM** *Psalm 25, page 74*

**SECOND LESSON** *Philippians 2:1–11*

*God’s people rejoice in song at Christ’s humble life of service and his glorious ascension to God’s right hand. The work of Christ continues in our hearts as we reflect him in our lives.*

**2**Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, **2**then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. **3**Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, **4**not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

**5**In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

**6**Who, being in very nature God,  
    did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;  
**7**rather, he made himself nothing  
    by taking the very nature of a servant,  
    being made in human likeness.  
**8**And being found in appearance as a man,  
    he humbled himself  
    by becoming obedient to death—  
        even death on a cross!

**9**Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
    and gave him the name that is above every name,  
**10**that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
    in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
**11**and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
    to the glory of God the Father.

**VERSE OF THE DAY** *Philippians 2:10,11*

**Alleluia. At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Alleluia.**

**THE GOSPEL** *Matthew 21:28–32*

*What does God demand? Mere pious words? No, but a heart that will honestly serve him.*

**28**“What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’

**29**“‘I will not,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

**30**“Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but he did not go.

**31**“Which of the two did what his father wanted?”

“The first,” they answered.

Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. **32**For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

M This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise be to you, O Christ!**

**HYMN OF THE DAY**  *Delay Not! Delay Not!***| CW 337**

**SERMON** *Philippians 2*

**APOSTLES’ CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,**

**maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.**

**The third day he rose again from the dead.**

**He ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.**

**From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,**

**the holy Christian Church,**

**the communion of saints,**

**the forgiveness of sins,**

**the resurrection of the body,**

**and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**OFFERING**

*In response to God’s love and forgiveness, we give back a portion of what he has given us. The members of Christ Lutheran Church have joined to proclaim the gospel to this community. These offerings support that work. While our guests are welcome to participate, they should not feel obligated to do so.*

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

M: Merciful Lord, You founded Your Church upon the proclamation of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Purify the tongues of Your servants, that the tongues of the wicked may be silenced. Turn them from their evil ways, that their sins may be washed away. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

M: Merciful Lord, encourage us by Your Holy Spirit, that we may not lose heart. Make us to be of one mind and will, that we may serve You with gladness, doing the works of Your kingdom here and throughout the world. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

M: Merciful Lord, sustain all fathers, mothers and children; husbands and wives; friends and neighbors; laborers and employers; and teachers and students. Enable us all to serve our neighbors in godly vocations, delighting in the Lord’s lovingkindness. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

M: Merciful Lord, all the might of man is nothing before You, yet You have appointed earthly realms and rulers to punish evil and honor good. Give us faithful leaders who will serve honorably and well. Bless also those who serve in the armed forces to defend us and protect our liberty. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

M: Merciful Lord, grant the encouragement of Christ and the comfort of His love to those who suffer. In every affliction, prove Yourself a ready and worthy Savior, especially to those who believe. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

M: Merciful Lord, the name of Jesus stands above all names. Before it we bow our knees and confess Him as Lord and God. Inspire in us true devotion and worship as we approach His altar to receive our humble Savior in these humble means of bread and wine for our salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

M: Merciful Lord, in You there is no shadow due to change. Enkindle Your divine light in us, that we may stand united as Christ’s own body, holding fast to the word of life and shining brightly in the midst of this world’s darkness; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

**LORD’S PRAYER**

**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.**

M: O Lord God, our heavenly Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep us strong in your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow on us your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

**THE BLESSING**

M**:** The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

The Lord look on you with favor and ✙ give you peace.

**C: Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN** *The Church’s One Foundation* **| CW 538**

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Pastor Tim Leistekow

**WELCOME TO CHRIST EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH!**

We preach a message of forgiveness, hope and peace

through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Families and individuals of all ages will find opportunities

both to grow and to serve.

Our mission statement:

**Look what Christ is doing!**

He binds us together in fellowship

He gathers us in for worship

He builds us up for service

He sends us out with the gospel

*“Now you are the body of Christ,*

*and each one of you is a part of it.”*

*(1 Corinthians 12:27)*