

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Connected

January 20 & 21, 2024

AS WE GATHER

Welcome to National Lutheran School's week! Throughout this week we rejoice and celebrate how God has reached out to so many kids and families through the presence of Lutheran Schools! To honor the work he is doing, this weekend we are reflecting on the School Theme: Be Connected. Throughout the year we have been reflecting on how Jesus has connected us to himself, and through that to one another. Sin wants to drive this connection apart- but Christ continues to bring us closer together. For he is the Vine and we are the Branches.

Reception of Holy Communion: If you are planning to receive Christ's supper today, please read through the words of exhortation in the fellowship folder. For members, it is a good review of important spiritual matters for gathering at the table. For guests, it explains our stance on confession of faith, doctrinal unity, and proper spiritual preparation to receive the Supper for your benefit.

WELCOME

In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said,
"I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,
that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding
and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will."

Luke 10:21

HANDSHAKES & HUGS

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN "Jesus is God's Living Vine"

Jesus is God's living vine; I am His and He is mine,
For my sins were washed away On my bless'd baptismal day.

We're connected to God's vine Of Lord Jesus Christ divine!
In Him we're from sin set free For He died for you and me.

We are branches on God's vine; We are part of God's design.
We can share God's love with all Whether they are great or small.

As His branch we bear good fruit! We're connected to the root
Who from all God's blessings run— Jesus, God's most precious Son!

In God's love we all shall grow And to others we shall show,
In the things we say and do, How Lord Jesus loves them too.

Jesus said, "My joy is yours! I'll be with you through the years!
Your joy will be full and free As you live and trust in Me!"

(Rise)

Praise to God the Father sing; To Lord Jesus praises bring;
Praises to the Spirit be! Praise the Holy Trinity!

Jesus Is God's Living Vine a national Lutheran Schools week hymn for younger Children Based on John 15:1-11 and the NLSW Theme: "Connected" By Jeffrey E. Burkart Sung to VIENNA ("Thine Forever, God of Love" — LSB 687) Jesus Is God's Living Vine VIENNA Text: Copyright © 2023 Jeffrey E. Burkart All rights reserved. Music: Public domain

INVOCATION

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

People: Amen.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Hearing the Word of God, we are called to confess our sin, trusting in the one true God who is faithful and just and who will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for meditation.

Pastor: O Merciful Lord,

People: **We confess to you that we have sinned in thought word and deed. We have failed to do what we ought to have done, and we do what we shouldn't. You work to make us more connected to you and to one another. But through our selfish actions we hurt these relationships that you have made. Forgive us dear Lord.**

Pastor: As a called and ordained servant of the Word, I announce the grace of God to all of you. In the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

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 and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities and stretch forth the hand of your majesty to heal and defend us; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

(Be seated)

10:30 BAPTISM SONG #740 "I Am Jesus' Little Lamb"

I am Jesus' little lamb, Ever glad at heart I am;
For my Shepherd gently guides me. Knows my need and well provides me,
Loves me ev'ry day the same, Even calls me by my name.

Day by day, at home, away. Jesus is my staff and stay.
When I hunger, Jesus feeds me, Into pleasant pastures leads me:
When I thirst, He bids me go Where the quiet waters flow.

Who so happy as I am, Even now the Shepherd's lamb?
And when my short life is ended, By His angel host attended,
He shall fold me to His breast, There within His arms to rest.

10:30 BAPTISM of Jameson Jack Roberts-Frey

Page 268

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Psalms 139* (Fearfully and Wonderfully Made)

O LORD, you have searched me and known me!² You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.³ You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.⁴ Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.⁵ You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.⁷ Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?⁸ If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!⁹ If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,¹⁰ even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,"¹² even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.¹³ For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.¹⁴ I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.¹⁷ How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!¹⁸ If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you.¹⁹ Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God! O men of blood, depart from me!²⁰ They speak against you with malicious intent; your enemies take your name in vain.²¹ Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?²² I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies.²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!²⁴ And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *Galatians 5:22-26* (Fruits of the Spirit)

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.²⁴ And

those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *John 15:1-5* (Jesus is the vine.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fifteenth chapter.

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Be seated)

CHILDREN’S SONG & CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

“This Little Gospel Light of Mine”

This little Gospel light of mine, I’m going to let it shine; (x3)
Let it shine all the time, let it shine.

Hide it under a bushel? NO! I’m going to let it shine (x3)
Let it shine all the time, let it shine.

It will point the way to heaven, I’m going to let it shine (x3)
Let it shine all the time, let it shine.

SERMON HYMN “In Christ We Are Forever Grafted”

In Christ, we are forever grafted; We are the branches, He the vine.

All who abide in Him are crafted Into a branch with fruit divine.

Apart from Jesus none will bear, Fruit that is righteous, true, and fair.

5 continued

In Christ all faithful are connected To God the Father who takes care
Of His creation, though infected By Satan’s sinful, tempting snare.
Yet, we abide in Jesus’ vine To bear the fruits of God’s design.

Apart from Christ we can do nothing. Yet in Him, through the Spirit’s show’r,
We are connected to the wellspring Of all God’s gifts, His grace, His pow’r!
Baptized in Christ, we died to sin, And each day we new life begin.

We are connected to each other And Christ who reigns o’er all the Church.
And with our Lord — as sisters, brothers — United in baptismal birth.
As God’s bless’d children we proclaim Grace to each other in God’s name.

As Jesus loved His gracious Father, May we so love all others too.
When we share Christ’s love with our neighbor Through ev’rything we say and do,
We shall reach people with God’s grace Till Christ’s confessed by ev’ry race.

Rise

Praise to the Father, God Creator; Thanks be to Jesus, God’s own Son;
Hail to the Spirit, our Faith-Bringer; We praise the Holy Three-in-One!
With saints and angels we employ Our songs of thanks and endless joy!

In Christ, We Are Forever Grafted Based on the 2024 National Lutheran Schools Week Theme, “Connected,” and John 15:1–11. By Jeffrey E. Burkart (Sung to “Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices — LSB 811) Text: Copyright © 2023 Jeffrey E. Burkart All rights reserved. Music: Public domain

SERMON

(Rise)

5:00 & 8:00 NICENE CREED

People: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.

6 continued

And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen. (Be seated)

OFFERINGS As your offering is collected, **please sign our fellowship folder** 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 folder along to others in your pew, and return it to the center aisle. You may check the folder to see 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.

Lord God, heavenly Father, you desire not the death of a sinner but that all would repent and believe the Gospel. In the epiphany of your Son, your time of salvation and your kingdom have come near. As this world passes away, give faithfulness and urgency to your Church to proclaim the Gospel of our God to all people. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Eternal Lord, in view of every current distress as the present form of this world passes away, give constancy and contentment to your people in their God-given stations. Give comfort and faithfulness to the married, and strengthen them to pass on the faith to the next generation. Show kindness also to the unmarried and assure them of the holiness of their place in life, that they would be freed from anxiety and attend to holiness in body and spirit, undividedly devoted to you. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Almighty God, preserve our nation with its rulers. Call to repentance those who have forgotten you. Spare Joseph, our president; Tony, our governor; and all who serve for the good of this people. Do not let disaster befall us, but preserve us in peace and quietness. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Blessed Father, continue to bless St. Paul's and all Lutheran Schools. Let the teachers teach the truth with full diligence, and work with the students with your grace. Let the students study hard so that they may see the fullness of your majesty. Lord, in your mercy

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Merciful Father, turn us from every distracting anxiety and the dealings of this world that would draw our hearts away from your blessed Gospel and its end, eternal life. Give us confidence in the resurrection and the peace of a clean conscience by the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name. Graciously behold and help those for whom we pray (Strand family with the passing of Norma) especially Roger, Anna, Jim, Eugene, Charlene, Danielle, Marlene, RoseMarie, Dorothy, Janice, Marga, Ardis, Noah, Guy, Mike, Jill, Don, Pat, Janet, Vern, Cathy, Cindy, Helga, June, Shirley and Sarah. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Sanctifying Lord, we thank you for washing away the sins of Jameson Jack Roberts-Frey in Holy Baptism this weekend. We thank you for bringing him into your family, and we pray that Dustin and Amanda will teach him your ways as they raise him. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Gracious Lord, in your Holy Sacrament you deliver the Gospel proclaimed by your Son and won by His death in His true body and blood. Work repentance and faith in all who commune, and unite them in a sincere confession of your divine truth at this altar. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: All these things and whatever else you know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever.

People: Amen.

5:00 & 8:00 THE LORD'S PRAYER

People: 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.

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

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 HYMNS

HYMN #688 "Come, Follow Me," the Savior Spake"

"Come, follow Me," the Savior spake, "All in My way abiding;
Deny yourselves, the world forsake, Obey My call and guiding.
O bear the cross, whate'er betide, Take My example for your guide."

"I am the light, I light the way. A godly life displaying;
I bid you walk as in the day; I keep your feet from straying.
I am the way, and well I show How you must sojourn here below."

"My heart abounds in lowliness, My soul with love is glowing;
And gracious words my lips express, With meekness overflowing.
My heart, My mind, My strength, My all, To God I yield, on Him I call."

"I teach you how to shun and flee What harms your soul's salvation,
Your heart from ev'ry guide to free, From sin and its temptation.
I am the refuge of the soul And lead you to your heav'nly goal."

Then let us follow Christ, our Lord, And take the cross appointed
And, firmly clinging to His Word, In suff'ring be undaunted.
For those who bear the battle's strain The crown of heav'nly life obtain.

HYMN #839 "O Christ, Our True and Only Light"

O Christ, our true and only light, Enlighten those who sit in night;
Let those afar now hear your voice and in your fold with us rejoice.

Fill with the radiance of your grace The souls now lost in error's maze;
Enlighten those whose inmost minds Some dark delusion haunts and binds.

O gently call those gone astray That they may find the saving way!
Let ev'ry conscience sore oppressed In you find peace and heav'nly rest.

Shine on the darkened and the cold; Recall the wand'ers to your fold.
Unite all those who walk apart; Confirm the weak and doubting heart.

That they with us may evermore Such grace with wond'ring thanks adore
And endless praise to you be giv'n By all your church in earth and heav'n.

HYMN #730 "What Is the World To Me"

What is the world to me With all its vaunted pleasure
When You, and You alone, Lord Jesus, are my treasure!
You only, dearest Lord, My soul's delight shall be;
You are my peace, my rest. What is the world to me!

The world seeks to be praised And honored by the mighty
Yet never once reflects That they are frail and flighty.
But what I truly prize Above all things is He,
My Jesus, He alone. What is the world to me!

The world seeks after wealth And all that mammon offers
Yet never is content Though gold should fill its coffers.
I have a higher good, Content with it I'll be:
My Jesus is my wealth. What is the world to me!

What is the world to me! My Jesus is my treasure,
My life, my health, my wealth, My friend, my love, my pleasure,
My joy, my crown, my all, My bliss eternally,
Once more, then, I declare: What is the world to me!

O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last And our eternal home!

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. 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.

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #733 “O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, And our eternal home.

Under the shadow of Thy throne Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone, and our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God, To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream, Soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten as a dream Dies at the op'ning day.

Preacher
Liturgist
Organist

Pastor Josh Grotelueschen
Pastor Harold Bender
Deaconess Carole King

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