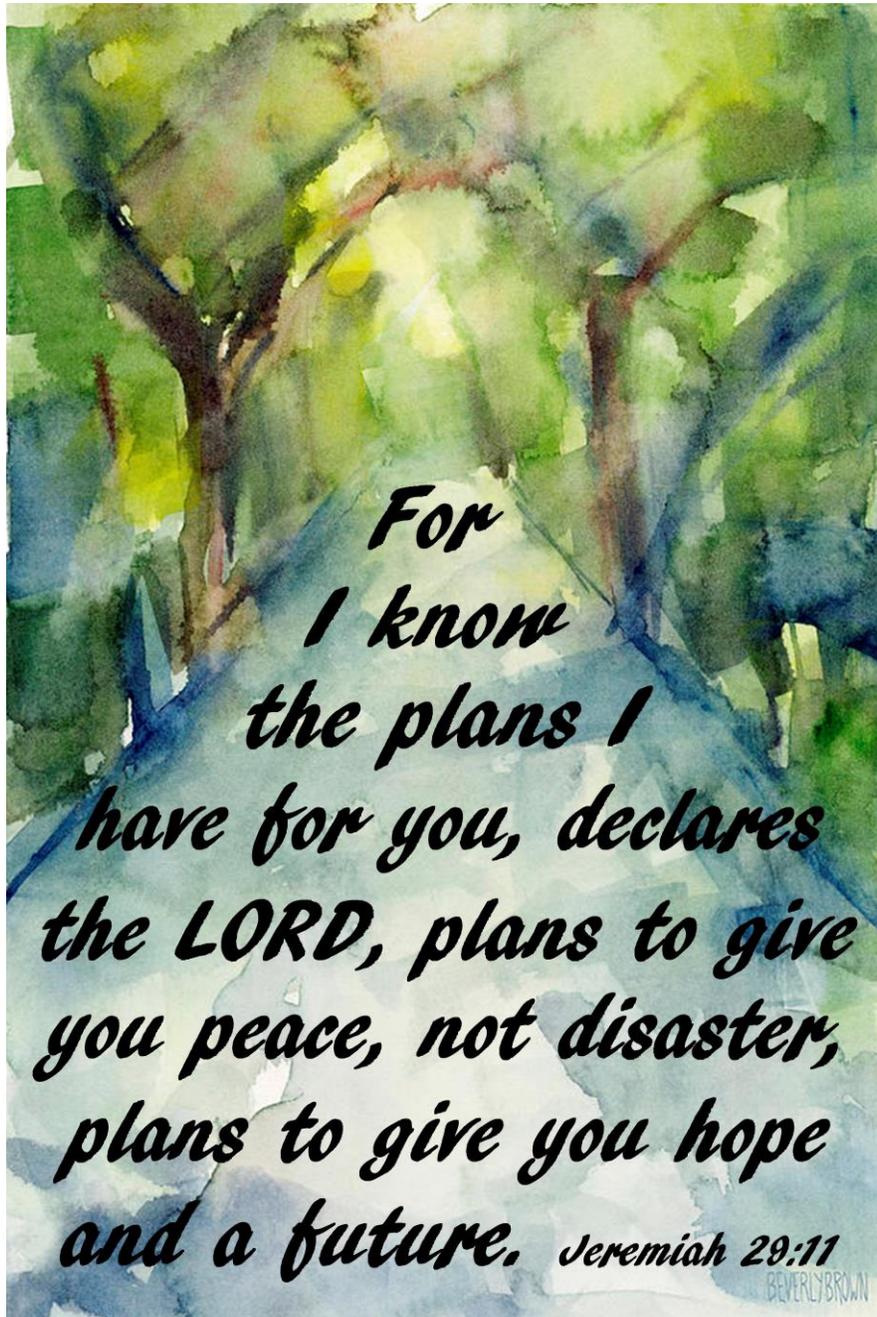


St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
A Family Connecting in Christ



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WELCOME TO ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

At this time our services are for people wearing masks and social distancing!

Please know that even as we experience this awkwardness, your Good Shepherd holds you close to his heart and goes with you to share his love!

To Our Guests

- We pray that you receive a warm welcome and are blessed by the message of God's Word in our lessons and hymns. If you have questions, please ask!
- Our service is designed to focus us on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit does that by exposing our need for Christ and by showing us the wonders of God's grace in Christ – forgiveness and peace, help and hope for life in this world, and life forever with God in heaven.

Our Communion Practice

We practice close communion, the Biblical and ancient practice of the church.

We invite our congregation members and visitors from sister WELS or ELS congregations to join us, but ask Christians from other denominations to kindly respect our practice. Further explanation is in the pew racks or from our pastor.

We Care about Your Children

We love to have children with us in worship.

- If your children are crying loudly, our nursery, Gathering Area (back of church), and downstairs Fellowship Hall are audio-equipped for you and your young children. When your children are ready, come back so we can worship together.

We Care about Your Special Needs

- **Large Print** Service Folders are available from an usher.
- **Hearing Assistance** for those with hearing aids is provided through our Hearing Loop or personal hearing devices available at the "sound table."
- A **wheelchair lift** is available for your assistance; please ask an usher.



Our Facilities

Restrooms are in our Fellowship Hall, downstairs and to the right of the kitchen.

Our Ministry

St. John offers an excellent preschool-8th grade school program. We are members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) - www.wels.net.

November 22, 2020

CHRIST THE KING

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... we see people play petty power-games and politics so they can exercise their power. And how often don't we wonder: "For whom?" (And how often don't we do the same?).

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we see a most unusual exercise of power - for us!

OPENING HYMN

"Beautiful Savior"
Hymn 369

Beautiful Savior, King of Creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I'd love thee,
Truly I'd serve thee,
Light of my soul, my Joy, my Crown.

Fair are the Meadows, Fair are the Woodlands,
Robed in flow'rs of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer;
He makes our sorr'wing spirit sing.

Fair is the sunshine, Fair is the moonlight,
Bright the sparkling stars on high;
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer;
Than all the angels in the sky.

Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, Praise, adoration
Now and forevermore be thine!

DIALOGUE

- P: To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father - to him be glory and power for ever and ever.
- C: **Christ is the King. He has shown us his glory and majesty.**
- P: He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him and by his wounds, we are healed.
- C: **Death has been swallowed up in victory.**
- P: He is the First and Last, the Living One. He was dead, and behold he is alive forever and ever. And he holds the keys of death and hell.
- C: **Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**
- P: Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ.
- C: **And he will reign forever and ever.**
- P: Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him. Every knee shall bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- C: **Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!**
- P: Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever.
- C: **Sing to the Lord a new song. Proclaim his salvation day after day!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Lord Jesus Christ, by your victory you have broken the power of the evil one. Fill our hearts with joy and peace as we look with hope to that day when every creature in heaven and earth will acclaim you King of kings and Lord of lords to your unending praise and glory; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Jeremiah 23:1-6

“Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!” declares the LORD. Therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to the shepherds who tend my people: “Because you have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done,” declares the LORD. “I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number. I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing,” declares the LORD.

“The days are coming,” declares the LORD,
“when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch,
a King who will reign wisely
and do what is just and right in the land.
In his days Judah will be saved
and Israel will live in safety.
This is the name by which he will be called:
The LORD Our Righteousness.”

LESSON

Matthew 27:27-31

Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. “Hail, king of the Jews!” they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

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.**

HYMN

"Jesus, Your Blood and Righteousness"

Hymn 376

Jesus, your blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Mid flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

Bold shall I stand in that great day--
Who can a word against me say?
Fully through you absolved I am
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

Lord, I believe your precious blood,
Which at the very throne of God
Forever will for sinners plead,
For me -- e'en for my soul -- was shed.

Lord, I believe were sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
You have for all a ransom paid,
For all a full atonement made.

When from the dust of death I rise
To claim my mansion in the skies,
E'en then this shall be all my plea:
Jesus has lived and died for me.

Jesus, be worshiped endlessly!
Your boundless mercy has for me,
For me and all your hands have made,
An everlasting ransom paid.

SERMON

Jeremiah 23:1-6

Have you ever been disappointed? Silly question, isn't it? We've all had those greasy, cold, soggy fries at you-name-the-place. And here we have the Cubs, Sox, Bears, Bulls, Blackhawks. And where I come from, let's not go there. What I'm thinking about is something more, something worse. Have you ever been disappointed by someone you looked up to? Someone who was supposed to look out for you; who was supposed to guide you; who was supposed to take care of you - but they didn't. It hurts, doesn't it? Perhaps it was someone you voted for. Perhaps it was a teacher, a pastor, an older brother or sister, a parent or grandparent. Someone you looked up to, someone who was supposed to make life right for you, but they didn't. Instead, perhaps they made something go horribly wrong; perhaps they just let something go horribly wrong. Either way, it was wrong and it hurt. Maybe it still hurts. It might not seem like it, but God knows. And God will right your wrong.

At the time of our lesson, God's people in Judah and Jerusalem were in a world of wrong, and they hurt. Their kings, one after another, instead of looking out for their

people, they just looked out for themselves. They didn't care what happened to their people. They let their people get bullied and stepped on, ripped off and robbed. At the same time, the prophets and priests, instead of telling the truth, the truth that could save their people - they just told the people the lies they wanted to hear. And the people believed those lies, even when the truth was right in front of their faces. Sadly, it didn't stop there. What do hurting, disappointed people do? They hurt and disappoint the people next in line. Like dominoes knocking more and more dominoes over. Parents and grandparents, instead of raising their children to walk with God, they showed their children and grandchildren how to ignore God. And now they were all about to find out how hurt and disappointed God was with them.

“Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!” declares the LORD. ... “Because you have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done,” declares the LORD.

When people don't look out for the people they're supposed to look out for, look out! God will step in and step up for his people. And he will right the wrong!

How? In the chapters before our lesson, in the chapter after our lesson, it's all judgment on the kings, the prophets and priests, the people who were supposed to look out for God's people but didn't. Yet, in the midst of that judgment, we have a set of promises. First, the LORD promises faithful shepherds for his sheep. Let me drop some names - Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Malachi; jumping into the New Testament, John the Baptist, the apostles. You might have some names that come to mind for you. Shepherds who have looked out and cared for God's people with the heart of God. God knows who and how many. And the Church says: “Thank you, LORD!” Thank you, LORD, for faithful pastors and teachers. Thank you, LORD, for faithful elders and Sunday School teachers. Thank you, LORD, for faithful parents who don't just show and tell the ways of the world, but who show and tell the ways of God. Yes, thank you, LORD, for stepping in and stepping up for us so that we don't have to be stuck in a cycle of hurting and disappointing.

And then the LORD adds an even better promise: **“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.”**

Our lesson takes us back almost 400 years to King David. God had promised David a son who would rule after him. (If you're thinking Solomon, you're right.) And even better, the LORD promised David: **“Your house and your kingdom will endure**

forever before me; your throne will be established forever.” (If you’re thinking Jesus, you’re right.) For almost 400 years God worked to keep his promise. A few times, David’s family tree enjoyed a growth spurt with a godly king; most of the time David’s family tree was rotting on the inside with wicked, ungodly kings spreading their wicked, ungodly rot throughout the kingdom. Finally, God had enough; he couldn’t hold his nose any longer. In the chapter before our lesson, he took the axe to David’s family tree. King Coniah would be the last in David’s family tree to rule as king in Jerusalem; he wouldn’t get to pass the throne on to his son. That might sound like the end of God’s promise. But notice what God promises here in our lesson: **“I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.”**

That word for Branch doesn’t mean the kind of branch or limb that grows off a healthy trunk or off some other branch or limb high in the tree. No, this kind of branch is that shoot that sprouts new life from a rotten stump. Yes, God would work his judgment on his faithless shepherds, but God would also keep his promise to David with a new shoot, a new King in the family.

Jeremiah tells us a bit about this new King. After years of wicked fools for kings, God’s people could look forward to a King who would reign wisely and do what is just and right. Sounds kind of novel, doesn’t it? But as good as that is, this King would do even better. He wouldn’t just do the right thing; he would establish justice and righteousness on the earth. How? Jeremiah gives us a clue in the last line of our lesson - **“And this is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.”**

For millennia, kings and rulers have done wrong by their people. For just as long, prophets and priests have done wrong by their people. For generations, parents have passed on their wrong to their people, their children and their children’s children after them. And what do we have? A world gone wrong in so many ways. A world so wrong, we might wonder: “Where are you, God? What are you up to, God? Don’t you see?”

Yes, he sees. He sees how we’ve been wronged. And He sees how we’ve done wrong, even how we still do wrong. And he doesn’t just close his eyes, plug his ears, and turn his back. No, the LORD rights our wrong. He doesn’t expect or wait for us to right our own wrong. He doesn’t expect or wait for the world around us to right its own wrong. Instead he rights our wrong. He takes my wrong, your wrong, the wrong of this whole wide world, and he makes it his own. With Jesus, the wrong you’ve done, the wrong done to you, the wrong you feel - it’s not yours anymore; and their wrong - with Jesus, it’s not theirs anymore either. He took it all as his own and he took it all to the cross where God judged him with all the anger our wrong and the wrong of this world deserves. And so Jesus rights our wrong, not by ignoring it, but by taking it away. He rights the wrong in this world, not by saying “it’s ok,” but by judging and forgiving. For

you and for me, he rights the wrong, by covering us with his perfect, right life - the perfect, right life of Jesus.

Yes, the LORD rights our wrong. In this world, we don't always feel it. We don't always live it. But "the days are coming, says the LORD." The days are coming when we won't have to feel or fight the wrong inside us. The days are coming when we won't have to feel or fight the wrong around us. Why? The days are coming where there will no wrong in us or around us. Instead, we'll be at home in heaven, at home with the LORD. And **"he will wipe every tear from [our] eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."** And we will never be hurt or disappointed again. Amen.

HYMN

"In Christ Alone" Hymn 752

In Christ alone my hope is found.
He is my light, my strength, my song;
This cornerstone, this solid ground,
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My Comforter, my all in all,
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone— who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones he came to save.
Till on that cross, as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied;
For ev'ry sin on him was laid.
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground his body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain;
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave he rose again!
And as he stands in victory,
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me.
For I am his and he is mine—
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the pow'r of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No pow'r of hell, no scheme of man
Can ever pluck me from his hand;
Till he returns or calls me home,
Here in the pow'r of Christ I'll stand.

PRAYER

- M: We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. Come with your mighty power to break and defeat every evil plan and purpose of the devil, of the ungodly influences and ideas of the world, and of our own sinful nature. Use your power to calm the unrest among nations and peoples so that your kingdom may spread and grow.
- C: Strengthen our confidence in knowing that your kingdom will never be destroyed.**
- M: O Christ our King, you have supremacy over all. You will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity. You have destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Reign in our hearts that we may serve you faithfully and speak more boldly to others of your saving love.
- C: Praise be to the Lord God, who alone does marvelous deeds. May the whole earth be filled with his glory.**

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Special prayers

M: Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him. The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever, King of kings and Lord of lords.

C: The Lord God Almighty reigns! Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! Amen.

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. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

"The Head that Once Was Crowned"
Hymn 217

The head that once was crowned with thorns
Is crowned with glory now;
A royal diadem adorns
The mighty victor's brow.

The highest place that heav'n affords
Is his, is his by right,
The King of kings and Lord of lords
And heav'n's eternal light.

The joy of all who dwell above,
The joy of all below
To whom he manifests his love
And grants his name to know.

To them the cross, with all its shame,
With all its grace, is giv'n;
Their name, an everlasting name;
Their joy, the joy of heav'n.

They suffer with their Lord below;
They reign with him above,
Their profit and their joy, to know
The myst'ry of his love.

The cross he bore is life and health,
Though shame and death to him;
His people's hope, his people's wealth, Their everlasting theme.

OFFERING (Please fill out friendship pads on pews)

If you prefer online giving, you may scan this code with your mobile device.



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