

## Sermon followed by Service - September 7, 25 - Philippians 4:6

“Don’t worry. Don’t be anxious ... about anything.” You gotta be kidding. “Don’t worry.” Those are almost fighting words, aren’t they? Most of us have way too much practice being anxious to just give it up. When we’re just starting out as little babies, if mom or dad leave our sight, what do we do? We freak out. Soon we’re dreaming about monsters under the bed. Then it’s time for the first day at school - so many new things to worry about. Then it’s the math test and I just don’t get it. Soon it’s time for braces and then zits. Don’t be anxious? You gotta be kidding me.” And as moms and dads, it’s no easier, is it? It’s your first-born’s first rash, first fever, first day with the babysitter, first day at school, first time driving. Don’t be anxious? Who are you kidding? **Don’t be anxious about anything!** Don’t you watch the news?

**Don’t be anxious about anything.**“ Sometimes when I hear those words come out of my mouth I can feel like such a hypocrite. It starts Monday morning. I need a sermon for Saturday. As the week goes on, I get more and more tense, more and more stressed. I need a sermon. I need an introduction that will keep so and so awake. I need a conclusion that will nail the sermon down tight. I, I, I. And now this week the sermon is on **“Do not be anxious about anything.”** When I hear those words come out of my mouth, I can feel like such a hypocrite. Wednesday night, my Lisa was sharing a bit of her anxiety, but my empathy app wasn’t working right because my own anxiety program was taking control. And I thought, this weekend I’m supposed to preach on: **“Do not be anxious about anything.”**

How in the world am I going to preach: “Do not be anxious,” when I let myself get so edgy?

I have good news for you - those words “**Do not be anxious about anything**” - those words aren’t my words; they aren’t my idea; they aren’t my solution or my cure for our anxiety. Those words come from Paul as a messenger of Jesus Christ. When Paul wrote: “**Do not be anxious about anything,**” he wasn’t thinking as some Ubermensch, some superman who can do anything and makes everything look easy. No, when Paul wrote: “**Do not be anxious about anything,**” he was thinking as someone whose heart and mind were made alive and strong with the Word of God.

How? Paul started early with this [Bible]. From early on, he studied. He learned the lessons of Abraham, Moses, and David. He memorized passages - Christ-Light Memory Treasures - to stick into his heart and mind. He learned right and wrong. In a world filled with different gods, he learned to know the true God. In a world full of empty promises, he heard God’s promises for him over and over. He didn’t always understand, but the more he heard, the more he learned, the more the Spirit was setting him up for life, life with God.

For Paul, this [Bible] wasn’t just a child’s book. This was his teacher, his power, his life as an adult. Even though Paul had dreams from God, visions from God, special messages from God, when times were tough, when life was hard, Paul wanted this book [Bible] close.

Why? For Paul, this wasn't just a story book. This is God's history (his-story) book of how he deals with our world. So, the more Paul read, the more he understood the way God works. The more he read, the more he understood God's plan for us. The more he read, the more he understood God's love for us and for the world. Reading the way God worked with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob showed Paul - we have a God who forgives. Reading about Moses and the Exodus through the Red Sea, David and the giant Goliath, Daniel in the lion's den showed Paul - we have a God who saves. Reading, hearing, soaking in those lessons again and again shaped Paul's heart to know - "God's got me! I don't have anything to worry about! I want to be in on what God is doing. I want to be alive and busy with God."

I said that for Paul this book [Bible] isn't just a story book. There's something else I should say this book is not. For Paul this book wasn't about right and wrong, dos and don'ts - you better get it right or else. Don't get me wrong. Here God tells us what he calls right; here God tells us what he calls wrong. Here God lays out his dos and don'ts. And here God lays out his judgment for those who fail him, those who reject him, those who think they know better than him - **the soul that sins, it shall die.** Paul needed to hear that; I need to hear that - **the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.** I need to learn it early, I need to learn it often - I'm not God; I need God. But for Paul and for us, this book isn't a rule book.

For Paul and for us, this book is a promise book, a life book; this book holds the Good News of life in Jesus. Does the evil out there ever make you afraid or worried? In here, you have

Jesus as God's Champion against evil. Does the sin in here [your heart] ever make you feel guilty and afraid of God? In here, you have the Lamb of God; he's taken your sin to the cross and paid for it, once and for all. Yes, in here you have the Prince of Peace - from Christmas to the cross he stood in for you to make peace with God; now from heaven, he promises you peace with God.

Do you sometimes wonder how practical that is? How relevant that is? Well, do you ever worry about money and making it? In here, with Jesus, you have God as your Father to make sure you have everything you need. **“Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and [everything you need] will be given to you.”** Do you ever worry about sickness and dying and death? In here you have the Jesus who broke the power of death; with Jesus, you don't need to be afraid of death - you get to live with God. Do you ever have days, good days, even great days, when you feel a bit off, anxious that something is about to go wrong? In here, you have Jesus to make life right for you. No matter what goes wrong in this world, with Jesus you have life made right in heaven.

Some of you may be thinking: “That sounds like a bunch of blah, blah, blah.” Some of you may be thinking: “I don't see it. I don't feel it. All I see, all I feel are reasons to worry and be anxious.” In our feelings, in the world around us, that may all be true. But in here [Bible], the Spirit of God gives you something the world can't give you. You might not see it or feel it in you or around you. But in here [Bible], you have the peace of God.

What does that mean? With Jesus, you get to know: “God’s got me! I don’t have anything to worry about.” Amen.

NEW MORNING PRAISE

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... we see many “good” reasons to be anxious. And the more anxiety-provoking something is, the more we see and hear of it.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we are told: “Do not be anxious” (a lot of good that does, right?). But more than just telling us not to be anxious, our God shows us how and why we can leave our anxiety behind.

OPENING HYMN

*“With the Lord Begin Your Task”*

Hymn 776

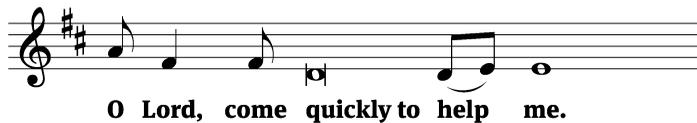
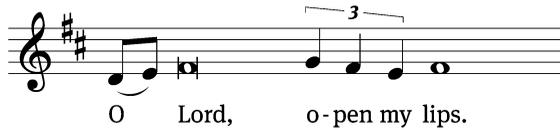
With the Lord begin your task; Jesus will direct it.  
For his aid and counsel ask; Jesus will perfect it.  
Ev’ry morn with Jesus rise, and, when day is ended,  
in his name then close your eyes; be to him commended.

Let each day begin with prayer, praise and adoration.  
On the Lord cast ev’ry care; he is your salvation.  
Morning, evening, and at night Jesus will be near you,  
save you from the tempter’s might, with his presence cheer you.

With your Savior at your side foes need not alarm you;  
in his promises confide and no ill can harm you.  
All your trust and hope repose in the mighty Master,  
who in wisdom truly knows how to stem disaster.

If your task is thus begun with the Savior’s blessing,  
safely then your course will run, naught your soul distressing.  
Good will follow ev’rywhere while you here must wander;  
you at last the joy will share in the mansions yonder.

## OPENING SENTENCES



## CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION OF SINS

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.**

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.**

Give glory to God, our light and our life.

**Come, O come, let us wor - ship.**

**COME, O COME, LET US SING TO THE LORD**

*Refrain*

Come, O come, let us sing to the Lord,  
 let us shout with joy to our saving Rock;  
 come, enter in with our songs of praise,  
 come, enter in with thanksgiving.

You are a great and a wondrous God,  
 cupping in your hands all the depths of earth.  
 You made the hills and the mountains high,  
 you made the seas and the dry land. *Refrain*

Come, let us worship and, bowing low,  
 kneel before the One who has made us all.  
 You are the God whom we call our own,  
 we are the flock that you shepherd. *Refrain*

**SCHOOL CHILDREN SING (SATURDAY) "Do Not Let Your Hearts Be Troubled"**

**Hymn 809**

*Refrain*

*Do not let your hearts be troubled; have faith in God and faith in me.  
 I will go forth to prepare a place for you;  
 then I'll come back to take you with me, that where I am, you may also be.*

*In God's house there are many places for you to dwell in peace and safety.  
You know the way to where I'll lead you; if you are lost, I will show the way.*

***Refrain***

*I am the way, the truth, and the life; only through me can you know what I know.  
If you knew me, you would know the Father; if you see me, you see your God.*

***Refrain***

*The words I speak are not only of myself; it is your God who lives within me.  
If you believe that your God and I are one, I will provide when you call my name.*

***Refrain***

*Do not let your hearts be troubled; have faith in God and faith in me.  
I will go forth to prepare a place for you;  
then I'll come back to take you with me, that where I am, you may also be.*

**FIRST READING**

***Philippians 4:4–9***

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

*“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”*

Hymn 721

**School Children vs. 1, Congregation vs. 2-3**

*What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry ev’rything to God in prayer!  
Oh, what peace we often forfeit, oh, what needless pain we bear,  
all because we do not carry ev’rything to God in prayer!*

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged— take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our ev’ry weakness— take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?  
Precious Savior, still our refuge— take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
In his arms he’ll take and shield you; you will find a solace there.

VERSE OF THE DAY

*Philippians 4:6*

Alleluia. Do not be anxious about anything,  
but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,  
present your requests to God. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

*John 10:27-30*

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

## 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

*"Speak, O Lord"*

Hymn 633

Speak, O Lord, as we come to you to receive the food of your holy Word;  
take your truth, plant it deep in us, shape and fashion us in your likeness,  
that the light of Christ might be seen today  
in our acts of love and our deeds of faith.

Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in us all your purposes for your glory.

Teach us, Lord, full obedience, holy reverence, true humility;  
test our thoughts and our attitudes in the radiance of your purity.  
Cause our faith to rise, cause our eyes to see  
your majestic love and authority.

Words of pow'r that can never fail, let their truth prevail over unbelief.

Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds,  
help us grasp the heights of your plans for us,  
truths unchanged from the dawn of time,  
that will echo down through eternity.

And by grace we'll stand on your promises,  
and by faith we'll walk as you walk with us.

Speak, O Lord, till your Church is built,  
and the earth is filled with your glory.

SERMON

Philippians 4:4-9

HYMN

*"The First Song of Isaiah"*  
Hymn 810

*Refrain*

Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid.  
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense,  
and he will be my Savior.

Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing  
from the springs of salvation.  
And on that day you shall say,  
"Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name." *Refrain*

Make his deeds known among the peoples;  
see that they remember that his name is exalted.  
Sing the praises of the Lord for he has done great things  
and this is known in all the world. *Refrain*

Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy,  
for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel. *Refrain*

OFFERING

*If you prefer to give online, the code at the right will take you to our Online Giving page. We invite our online givers to join in our offering with an "I Give Online" card in the pew racks.*



*(You heard our school children sing today. Tuition Grant Fund envelopes are available in the pew rack to support affordable tuition for our school.)*

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M: Eternal Father, you create our children before they breathe the air around us or see the sun above us; you protect our children in the perils of birth and the dangers of life; you adopt our children through the miracle of Baptism to be your own children forever.

**C: Hear our prayers for our children and all children.**

M: Work in us and lead us to ponder the example of your Son, who showed children the smile of tender compassion, who burned with indignation against those who harm and neglect children, who saw in children the epitome of Christian faith and confident trust.

**C: Help us to imitate our Savior's love for children.**

M: Let them be examples to us of faith and love as we watch their abounding energy, their love of the heroic and adventurous, their candid and generous trust in those around them, and their quick response to calls for love and service.

**C: Through your Spirit, give us the unquestioning faith we find so difficult.**

M: Raise up more parents in our churches who love children, who provide for their needs but protect them from greed, who teach by example as well as with books, and who are convinced that putting the Lord first is the beginning of wisdom.

**C: Lead us to be parents who bring up our children to know the truth that sets them free.**

M: Renew us to be Christians who lead the church to remember and rejoice in the blessing you pour out on your people in our Lutheran schools. Give us wisdom to find value in the pursuit of knowledge, technology, sport, and the arts, but grant us courage to balance the blessings of your creation with the eternal blessings that come with faith in your Son.

**C: Help us to proclaim this truth and then help us to live it in our own lives.**

M: Since our youth, O Lord, you have taught us, and to this day we declare your marvelous deeds.

C: Even when we are old and gray, do not forsake us, O God, til we declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come. Amen.

#### PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

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, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

#### BLESSING



The Lord bless and keep you.



A - men.



The Lord's face ev - er shine up - on you.



A - men.



The Lord grant you peace for all your days.



A - men.

## CLOSING HYMN

## *"I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus"*

### Hymn 816

I am trusting you, Lord Jesus, trusting only you;  
trusting you for full salvation, free and true.

I am trusting you for pardon; at your feet I bow,  
for your grace and tender mercy trusting now.

I am trusting you for cleansing in the crimson flood;  
trusting you to make me holy by your blood.

I am trusting you to guide me; you alone shall lead,  
ev'ry day and hour supplying all my need.

I am trusting you for power; you can never fail.  
Words which you yourself shall give me must prevail.

I am trusting you, Lord Jesus; never let me fall.  
I am trusting you forever and for all.

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## **MORNINGS WITH MOMMY**

St. John is looking into starting a new program called Mornings with Mommy. This would be a program that meets once a month to give moms a fun and easy way to enjoy activities with their children and meet other moms. Each meeting would be about an hour long and include some type of theme or activity for the children. Children ages infant to three or four years old would be welcomed. The goal would be to have a blend of story time, playdate, and learning. This would not only benefit children in their development, but it will also give moms a chance to connect and support one another.

Before we delve too far into this, we would like to see if there are any moms interested in participating. If we have a core group that can help get this going, we can work out further details and get things rolling. If this sounds like something that might be interesting to you, please let us know. You don't need to make a commitment at this time, but your feedback will be valuable to us. Please send an email to Bethany Holter (beths45@hotmail.com). We will see what response we get by mid-September and then determine how to proceed. Thank you for your input!

# Special Upcoming Events

## ***September***

- Monday, September 29: No School, Teacher Inservice

## ***October***

- Sunday, October 19: Luther Play, 6:30 p.m.
- Sunday, October 26: Blood Drive
- Wednesday, October 29: Grandparents Day and Early Dismissal
- Thursday, October 30-Friday, October 31: No School, Teacher Inservice

## ***November***

- Wednesday, November 12: Veterans Day Celebration
- Thursday, November 20: Entertainment Night Grades 3-8, 6 p.m.
- Tuesday, November 25: Prek-Grade 2 Thanksgiving Feast and Early Dismissal
- Wednesday, November 26-Friday, November 28: No School, Thanksgiving Break

### **ST. JOHN COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE**

***Sunday, October 26, 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.***

St. John is hosting a community blood drive in our parking lot on Sunday, October 26. Appointments are appreciated, but walk-ins are welcome! Photo ID is required to donate. Overall donors must be at least 17 years of age, but 16 year olds may donate provided a parent / guardian has signed the consent form, giving approval to donate. To schedule your appointment to donate scan the QR code.

