



Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
Commitment Sunday
October 18, 2020



SAINT PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
3383 EAST LAKE LANSING ROAD
EAST LANSING, MI 48823
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Welcome to Worship!

Please keep in mind this is not a departure from social distancing. Congregants must wear masks (*they are provided if you do not have one*) covering both your nose and mouth. Please remain at least six feet apart from other family groups. (3 empty chairs)

The Praise Team will be sharing in music, and you are invited to read along. Recommendations currently advise not to sing together as a group.

We have provided a bulletin, mask, hand sanitizer, and Kleenex to any who do not already have them.

When sharing the peace, please do so by waving – not touching, hugging, or shaking hands.

We will not be passing the offering plate but have provided an offering box for those who would like to use that to tithe.

Those wishing to partake in Holy Communion may pick up a contactless host and wine that is provided on the table with the bulletins. The host is under a clear seal on top of the foil that covers the wine. You will be the only one to touch the celebration cup's contents.

If at any time you have the following symptoms, please remain home and worship with us in spirit: fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, and/or new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, and diarrhea. If you become sick during worship, kindly make your way to your car. If you need assistance, please make this known by hand gestures or speaking up; your safety is important.

Please observe social distancing and coronavirus prevention guidelines when using restrooms.

We are excited for the opportunity to gather together and feel a deep gratitude for the volunteers that have made everything possible.

Thank you for your cooperation during this time.

In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

BRIEF ORDER OF CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross in remembrance of baptism as the presiding minister begins:

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

(Silence is kept for reflection.)

P: Faithful God,

C: have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

P: God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims:

Your sins are forgiven in the name of † Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world.

C: Amen.

GATHERING SONG

**When in Our Music God Is Glorified
Praise Team**

*When in our music God is glorified,
and adoration leaves no room for pride,
it is as though the whole creation cried:
Alleluia!*

*How oft, in making music, we have found
a new dimension in the world of sound,
as worship moved us to a more profound
Alleluia!*

*So has the church, in liturgy and song,
in faith and love, through centuries of wrong,
borne witness to the truth in ev'ry tongue:
Alleluia!*

*And did not Jesus sing a psalm that night
when utmost evil strove against the light?
Then let us sing, for whom he won the fight:
Alleluia!*

*Let ev'ry instrument be tuned for praise;
let all rejoice who have a voice to raise;
and may God give us faith to sing always:
Alleluia!*

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.

KYRIE

Praise Team

*Have mercy on us, Lord,
and hear our solemn prayer.
We come to hear your living word;
it saves us from despair.*

*Have mercy on us, Christ,
and wash away our sin.
Pour out your grace and make us whole
that new life may begin.*

*Have mercy on us, Lord;
make sin and shame depart.
Renew us with your saving pow'r;
create in us new hearts!*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

C: Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Christ, Be Our Light (chorus)

Praise Team

*Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*

THE WORD

God speaks to us in scripture, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 45:1-7

The prophet announces that Cyrus the Persian emperor is the one the Lord has anointed to end Israel's exile. The Lord makes this choice so that the whole world will recognize this Lord as the only God. Persia had a god of light and a god of darkness; the Lord claims sovereignty over both light and darkness.

¹Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus,
whose right hand I have grasped
to subdue nations before him
and strip kings of their robes,
to open doors before him—
and the gates shall not be closed:

²I will go before you
and level the mountains,
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron,
³I will give you the treasures of darkness
and riches hidden in secret places,
so that you may know that it is I, the LORD,
the God of Israel, who call you by your name.

⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel my chosen,
I call you by your name,
I surname you, though you do not know me.

⁵I am the LORD, and there is no other;
besides me there is no god.

I arm you, though you do not know me,

⁶so that they may know, from the rising of the sun
and from the west, that there is no one besides me;

I am the LORD, and there is no other.
⁷I form light and create darkness,
I make weal and create woe;
I the LORD do all these things.

Word of God, word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]

Ascribe to the Lord honor and power. (Ps. 96:7)

¹Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.

²**Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD;
proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

³Declare God's glory among the nations
and God's wonders among all peoples.

⁴**For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised,
more to be feared than all gods.**

⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;
but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.

⁶**Majesty and magnificence are in your presence;
power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

⁸**Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.**

⁹Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness;
tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

[¹⁰**Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king!
The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved
will judge the peoples with equity."**

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all
that is therein.

¹²**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD,
for you come to judge the earth.**

¹³You will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with your truth.]

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

Word of God, word of life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Praise Team

*Alleluia! Lord and Savior: open now your saving word.
Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred.
Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.*

GOSPEL ANNOUNCEMENT

Matthew 22:15-22

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the twenty-second chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" ²¹They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." ²²When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Jim Couser

HYMN OF THE DAY

When Our Song Says Peace Praise Team

*When our song says peace and the world says war,
we will sing despite the world.
We will trust the song, for we sing of God,
who breaks the spear and sword and stills the storm of war.*

*When our song says free and the world says bound,
we will sing despite the world.
We will trust the song, for we sing of God,
who opens prison doors and sets the captives free.*

*When our song says home and the world says lost,
we will sing despite the world.
We will trust the song, for we sing of God,
who brings us home at last, and gives a song to all.*

APOSTLES' CREED

**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 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.**

THE PRAYERS

A: With confidence in God's grace and mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

(A brief silence)

A: Gracious God, you call us by name and invite us to share your good news. Send your Holy Spirit among preachers, missionaries, and evangelists. We give thanks for the witness of your servant Luke, the evangelist, whom the church commemorates today. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God of praise, the heavens and all creation declare your salvation. From the rising of the sun to its setting, may the whole universe show forth your goodness. Raise up devoted stewards of all that you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God of all, may your word of justice sound forth in every place. Restore divided nations and communities with reconciling truth. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God of care, watch over those serving in our armed forces, protecting and assuring them of your never-failing strength. We pray especially for *Beth & Ryan, Jonathan, Noah, Irene, and Alex*. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God of light, we pray for those living with pain, illness, isolation, grief, anger, or doubt. We pray especially for those whom we silently lift before you now (*a brief moment for those names to be shared in prayer*). Join their voices in a new song, assuring them that you call them each by name. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

(Ahren, Bev, Pastor Carl & Mary, Charles, Cindy, Coppernall family, Deb, Gary, Harrison & Sara, Jane, Jason, Jeff, Jon, Joanne, Kay, Kris, Lawton, Lynne, Marge, Mary, Bev & family, Adam, Shani & Ezra, Sharon, Rob & Tara, Stacy & Char)

A: God of truth, you show no partiality. May your spirit guide the work of justices, magistrates, court officials, and all vocations of the law, that your promise of restoration may be known. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God of direction, we pray for the leaders for your church who will tend to your harvest. We especially lift up to you Presiding Bishop Elizabeth, our Synod Bishop Craig, Pastor Carl, and Pastor Jim. We ask that you be with their respective staffs as they live out their callings to serve. As we are called to be one, even as Jesus and the Father are one, be with the leaders and the congregation of St. John's Lutheran Church in Three Rivers. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: Living God, as you raised Jesus from the dead, so raise up those who have died in you. We give thanks for their witness, confident of your rescuing welcome for all. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Listen as we call on you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

GREETING OF PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you. (*Please remember no contact at this time.*)

THE MEAL

P: God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

We Give Thee but Thine Own Praise Team

*We give thee but thine own, whate'er the gift may be;
all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.*

*May we thy bounties thus as stewards true receive,
and gladly, as thou blessest us, to thee our firstfruits give.*

*The captive to release, to God the lost to bring,
to teach the way of life and peace—it is a Christlike thing.*

*And we believe thy word, though dim our faith may be:
whate'er we do for thine, O Lord, we do it unto thee.*

OFFERING PRAYER

P: Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. You have set before us these gifts of your good creation. Prepare us for your heavenly banquet, nourish us with this rich food and drink, and send us forth to set tables in the midst of a suffering world, through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

PROPER PREFACE

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. Fulfilling the promise of the resurrection, you pour out the fire of your Spirit, uniting in one body people of every nation and tongue. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim, and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY

Praise Team

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glory.*

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

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.

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.**

LAMB OF GOD

Praise Team

*O Lamb of God,
you bear the sin of all the world away;
you suffered death our lives to save:
have mercy now, we pray.*

*O Lamb of God,
you bear the sin of all the world away;
you set us free from guilt and grave:
have mercy now, we pray.*

*O Lamb of God,
you bear the sin of all the world away;
eternal peace with God you made:
give us your peace, we pray.*

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

All baptized, communing Christians are invited to celebrate Holy Communion with us.

P: Come to the banquet table where Christ gives himself as food and drink.

P: The body of Christ, given for you.

C: Amen.

P: The blood of Christ shed for you.

C: Amen.

COMMUNION HYMN

**Lord, Be Glorified
Praise Team**

*In my life, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;
in my life, Lord, be glorified today.*

*In our song, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;
in our song, Lord, be glorified today.*

*In your church, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;
in your church, Lord, be glorified today.*

*In your world, Lord, be glorified, be glorified.
In your world, Lord, be glorified today.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare, the body and blood of Christ. Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven, into your beloved vineyard to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst, guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C: Amen.

BLESSING

P: Mothering God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.

C: Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Lift Every Voice and Sing Praise Team

*Lift ev'ry voice and sing till earth and heaven ring,
ring with the harmonies of liberty.*

*Let our rejoicing rise high as the list'ning skies,
let it resound loud as the rolling sea.*

*Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;
sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
let us march on till victory is won.*

*Stony the road we trod, bitter the chast'ning rod,
felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet
come to the place for which our parents sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered;
we have come, treading our path through the blood of the
slaughtered,
out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last
where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.*

*God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
thou who hast by thy might led us into the light,
keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met thee;*

*lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget thee;
shadowed beneath thy hand, may we forever stand,
true to our God, true to our native land.*

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C: Thanks be to God.

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<i>Ministers:</i>	All the people of St. Paul Lutheran Church
<i>Presiding Minister:</i>	Pastor Jim Couser
<i>Assisting Minister:</i>	Steve Opp
<i>Reader:</i>	Pat Cramer
<i>Music Director:</i>	Elene Kobulashvili
<i>Music Ministers:</i>	Kathy Griffin, Steven Opp, James Tavadze, Stacy Turke

St. Paul Lutheran Church uses Vanco eGiving tools, to provide the opportunity for on-line giving. You may use the free GivePlus App (Google Play or Apple Store). On-line giving may also be accomplished on our website at <https://stpaul-el.org/donations/>

Meijer / Simply Give

The Fall Simply Give campaign will run **now through Saturday, October 24, 2020.**

Our Meijer location is: 1350 W. Lake Lansing Road

Purchases of the \$10 donation card must be made at this location to benefit the St. Paul Food Pantry.

The Church Directory LAST CALL! Please kindly provide any changes or corrections. Thank you.

November Newsletter deadline is October 29th.

Annual Reports for all committees are due to the office by October 30th!

Readers and Assisting Ministers

Date	Assisting Minister	Reader
10/25/20	Mary Ballard	Kay Seppala
11/01/20	Kathy Griffin	Steve Opp
11/08/20	Jim Cramer	Bev Johnson
11/15/20	Steve Opp	Kathy Griffin
11/22/20	Mary Ballard	Mary Hoffmann
11/29/20	Kathy Griffin	Chuck Nelson