

The Biblical Practice of Close Communion

Through the apostle Paul, God speaks of his desire for all of us to reach perfect unity (Ephesians 4:12,13). We members of St. John Congregation certainly share his desire. We seek to express that unity – with our current members, with those who desire membership, and also with Christians around the world.

Scripture speaks of two different types of unity. First, Christ has reconciled every single one of us to God through his perfect life and death on our behalf. Even now, God considers us saints and heirs of heaven, clothed with Christ’s righteousness. You might think of this as a “vertical” unity – purely between the individual and his or her God. Through Christ, peace with God has been restored. Then, there’s also an outward and public unity – a “horizontal” unity – as fellow saints worship side-by-side. The celebration of Holy Communion is guided by both types.

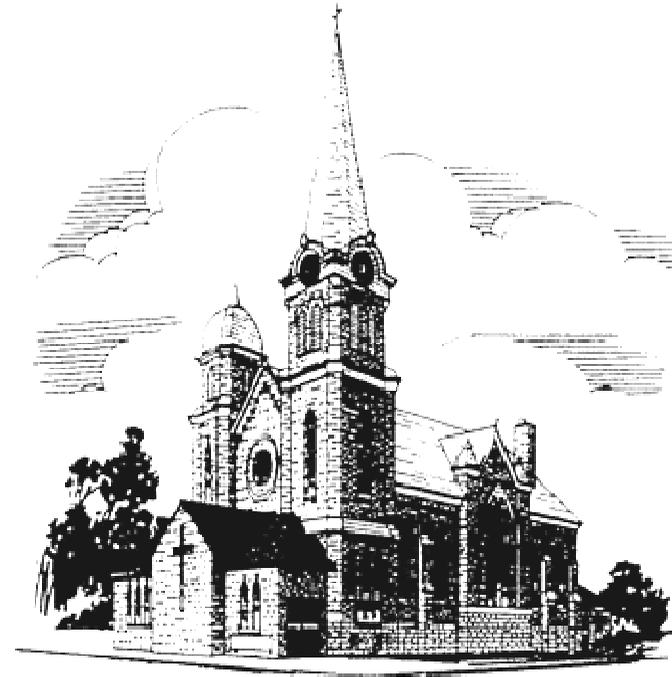
For communion to be celebrated in a beneficial way, those attending will come united with their God and also with their fellow-communicants. The former is established by repentance – a sorrow over sin and a trust in God’s forgiveness – that he himself produces. It’s a matter of the heart. The latter is established by the outward confession of what each of us believes. It’s a matter of the mouth.

We do not presume to look into the heart, for only God is able to do that. We do, however, seek to establish outward unity by studying God’s Word together so that we share a common confession. Our congregation offers a Bible study course that’s designed for just that purpose.

And so, out of love for God and his Word, we kindly ask that all visitors speak with the pastor about how we can establish that outward unity prior to your attending Holy Communion here at St. John. We desire to make that goal a priority, so that you may receive the Sacrament as soon as possible.

May God bless your hearing of the Word today as he reminds you of his full and free forgiveness in Christ!

**The Third Sunday in Lent
March 19, 2017**



St. John Ev. Lutheran Church & School

437 Turner Street, Wrightstown WI, 54180

www.stjlw.com

- Pastor Mike Gehl (pastorgehl@gmail.com)..... (920) 309-5171
- Church Office (church@stjlw.com) (920) 532-4865
- School Office (stjlschool@gmail.com) (920) 532-4361
- Mr. Timothy Raddatz, Principal, Grades 4-8 (920) 636-5007
- Mrs. Jennifer Bunn, Grades 1-3 (920) 217-3405
- Mrs. Rebecca Wicks, Pre-K and K..... (920) 809-8648
- Miss. Jamie Buss, Preschool and Pre-K (920) 538-0470
- Mr. Terry Sieker, Congregation President (920) 864-7307
- Fox Valley Lutheran High School (920) 739-4441

Welcome!

We extend a very warm and friendly welcome to all who've joined us for worship today. We pray that the God of grace, who sent his Son to save you and who proved his love for you by raising him from the dead, will fill your heart with joy in knowing that your salvation has been made sure through Jesus. May God bless your worship!

If you're a guest with us this morning, please sign the Friendship Register in your row, checking any applicable boxes. If you need assistance of any kind, don't hesitate to ask one of the ushers. If you'd like to learn more about St. John congregation or the Bible's teachings, please speak with Pastor Mike Gehl. And if you don't already have a church-home, feel free to return and worship with us again at your earliest convenience.

Our restrooms are located downstairs (through the entryway). Activity bags to help keep children occupied are on a hanger in the entryway. We love having your children sit with you during the service, but if you feel that your infant or toddler is getting a little too fussy, you may briefly step out of the sanctuary until they're ready to come back in.

Today's order of service is displayed on the screen and printed out in the worship folder (with music notes) for your convenience. Hymns are found in the red book in front of you.

St. John also operates an all-day preschool and a full-day kindergarten through eighth grade Lutheran Elementary School. We're a member of the Fox Valley Lutheran High School federation. If you are interested in hearing more about these opportunities for Christian education, please speak with Pastor Gehl or Principal Tim Raddatz.

At Your Service Today:

	<u>7:45</u>	<u>10:15</u>
Greeters:	Bea Ambrosius Brenda Pohlman Betty Schmidt Pat Vickman	Aura Lee Gehl Carol Just Faye Patoka
Ushers:	Chad Schmidt Jesse Schmidt Kevin Vande Hey Bernie Vickman Steve Wierschke	Richard Patton Lloyd Patoka Bart Reschke Les Schmidt Terry Sieker
PowerPoint:	Phil Roberts	Rebecca W
Altar Guild:	Tina D, Betty S, and Pat V	

Mission and Purpose

St. John Lutheran Church exists as part of the Holy Christian Church on earth. We engage in the continuing development of disciples of Jesus Christ by **GATHERING** for worship, education, and fellowship in order to **GROW** in faith and knowledge of our Lord and Savior. By God's **GRACE** we **GO** to proclaim Christ and his Word with our lips and lives. We realize that it's only through the **GOSPEL** in Word and Sacraments that one can be equipped for discipleship and bringing **GLORY** to God.

News & Notes

This Week's Lent Supper – A Request

We thank in advance the St. John Seniors for hosting this week's supper. All members are invited to provide the desserts.

Easter Card Distribution

Do you need to stretch your legs after your winter hibernation? Come on one or both of the next two Saturdays (25th or 1st) to help hang Easter cards on every door in Wrightstown. No door-knocking necessary. Just bring your walking shoes. Maps and cards will be provided.

Education Open Forum

In order to receive input, answer questions, and address any concerns, the Board of Education invites all members to an open forum on March 30th, immediately prior to its monthly meeting. Feel free to share anything on your mind regarding any area of congregational education (pre- / elementary school, Sunday school, youth and adult studies, etc.)

Thrivent Choice Dollar Designation

March 31st is the final day to designate 2016 monies to St. John. If you have a policy with Thrivent, please call (800) 847-4836 to do so before the deadline passes and those funds are lost. We thank those who've benefited our congregation in this way in the past!

Local Synod Schools Choir Concerts

Unfortunately, you'll have to make a choice since both concerts are on the same day, April 1st. Kinda "foolish," but that's the way things go.

The Martin Luther College Choir concert is at St. Paul's, Algoma at 4:00 pm.

The Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Choir concert is at Immanuel, Waupaca at 6:30 pm.

Mormonism Presentation

Pastor Mark Cares has worked among Mormons for 30+ years and has authored two books on reaching out to Mormons. He serves as director of *Truth in Love Ministry* and will be speaking at Immanuel, Greenville on April 2nd. The presentation begins at 1:00 pm and continues throughout the afternoon.

Luther Movie Screening

An advanced screening of a new Luther film: "A Return to Grace: Luther's Life and Legacy" is scheduled for Monday, April 10th at 6:30 pm at the Marcus Valley Grand Cinema (Van Roy Rd. in Darboy). The event is "pending," as a minimum of 75 tickets need to be sold by the April 3rd deadline. More information and links to the event page and movie trailer can be found at...

www.stlukeslittlechute.com/LutherMovie

...or contact Deb in the St. Luke's church office: [920.788.4408](tel:920.788.4408) / office@stlukeslittlechute.com

Online Talent Survey

Watch for an email from the church office with a link to the online form. Please submit this information at your earliest convenience. All confirmed members are asked to submit a form.

Augsburg Confession Study

April 5th and 19th at 7:00 am. Come early for breakfast and fellowship at 6:45.

Upcoming Walks / Runs

St. John LES is hosting an inaugural "color run" in Wrightstown in May. Watch for more details.

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary is also hosting a "Seminary Scurry" run / walk / picnic / open house on April 29th. See Pastor for details or check our church Facebook page.

**Last Week's Stewardship of the Means of Grace
and the Means for His Work**

Worship 146

ABC: 36 SST: 6 YSS: 13

	<u>LW</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>YTD Goal</u>
Church Offerings	\$4,469.48	\$188,565.75	\$252,244.91
St. John LES Tuition	\$0	\$22,000	\$49,807.55
Synod / Missions	\$185	\$10,173.49	\$12,807.55
Fox Valley Luth. HS	\$100	\$6,753	\$7,115.47

The Week+ Ahead as We Live in God's Grace

Today (19th)	7:45 am	Worship w/ Holy Communion
	9:00 am	Sunday School (Jesus Rejected in Nazareth) Adult Bible Class (Holy Land Slides)
	10:15 am	Worship w/ Holy Communion
	2:00 pm	WELS 2017 National Band Festival (at FVLHS)
Tue (21st)	7:00 pm	Bible Study: 2 and 3 John (at the parsonage)
	5:30 pm	Wrestling Club Pizza Party (in the fellowship hall)
Wed (22nd)	3:30 pm	6 th -8 th Grade Catechism Class
	5:00 pm	Lent Supper (sponsored by the St. John Seniors)
	6:30 pm	Midweek Lent Worship
	7:30 pm	Choir Practice
Thu (23rd)	7:00 pm	Handbells Practice (at Trinity, Kaukauna)
Sat (25th)	9:00 am	Easter Card Distribution
Sun (26th)	7:45 am	Worship (WELS Connection)
	9:00 am	Sunday School (Jesus Calls Fishers of Men) Adult Bible Class (Holy Land Slides)
	10:15 am	Worship (WELS Connection)
Mon (27th)	7:00 pm	Long-Range Planning Meeting
Thu (30th)	6:30 pm	Education Open Forum (any and all areas of cong. education)
	7:30 pm	Board of Education Meeting
Sat (1st)	8:30 am	Spring Spruce-Up Day (church cleaning)
	9:00 am	Easter Card Distribution
	4:00 pm	MLC Choir Concert (at St. Paul's, Algoma)
	6:30 pm	WLS Choir Concert (at Immanuel, Waupaca)

Service Theme for the Third Sunday in Lent: The light of the world brings sight to the blind and judgment to the blinded. Faith means seeing Jesus as Savior: like the bronze serpent, we look on him and live (Verse of the Day). We were born in the blindness of sin, and without the light of Christ we could not find a way to safety. Christ comes to shine his light into our darkened eyes that we might see him and live. Yet for those who refuse to see their Savior in Christ, the blindness of unbelief remains. He gives gracious sight to the blind who trust in him; he gives blinding judgment on those who reject him; finally, he displays the work of God in the lives of those who now walk in the light of Christ.

Gathering Rite on Holy Baptism

In the name of the Father and of the Son [✠] and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Bap - tized in - to your name most ho - ly, O Fa - ther,
I claim a place, though weak and low - ly, A - mong your
Son, and Ho - ly Ghost,
saints, your cho - sen host, Bur - ied with Christ and dead to
sin. Your Spir - it now shall live with - in.

I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.

Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

(John 3:5,6)

Surely we were sinful at birth, sinful from the time our mothers conceived us.

(Psalm 51:5)

But we were washed, we were sanctified, we were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

(1 Corinthians 6:11)

My lov - ing Fa - ther, there you took me To be hence -
 My faith - ful Sav - ior, there you let me The fruit of
 forth your child and heir.
 all your sor - rows share. O Ho - ly Spir - it, com - fort
 me When threat - 'ning clouds a - round I see.

As baptized children of God, we confess our sins.

Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

My faith - ful God, you fail me nev - er; Your pro - mise
 Oh, cast me not a - way for - ev - er If words and
 sure - ly will en - dure.
 deeds be - come im - pure. Have mer - cy when I come de -
 filed; For - give, lift up, re - store your child.

ing. My God e - ter - nal dies to
 wood And walk a road of rock and
 law And lets the Ro - man ham - mers
 bleeds. The sin - less Son bears each mis -
 trough, He's ta - ken, dead, from wretch - ed
 ty To lift me to e - ter - ni -
 bring E - ter - nal life to
 blood, A sin - ner's road, for
 draw A rush of blood for
 deed. He pays for all, for
 cross And wrapped a - gain for
 ty. Such grace—sweet grace— for

Last time

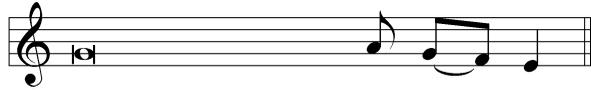
me.
 me.
 me.
 me.
 me.
 me.

This hymn helps us recognize the nature of divine grace, which is entirely independent of anything we are or can offer to God. God's grace willingly acts on behalf of rebellious sinners, as especially displayed in the suffering and death of our Savior.

Text: Laurie F. Gauger, b. 1965 © 2005 Laurie F. Gauger. All rights reserved. Used by permission.
 Tune: WHAT GRACE (44 886) G. A. Hennig, b. 1966 © 2005 G. A. Hennig. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Closing Verses and Blessing

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.



C: And his mercy endures for - ev - er.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this holy supper. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C: A - men.

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: A - men. A - men. A - men.

Closing Hymn "What Grace Is This!" (CWS 715)



1 What grace is this! My Lord and
 2 What grace is this— That ve - ry
 3 What grace is this! Though Lord of
 4 What grace is this! Rude a - gon -
 5 What grace is this! Once wrapped in
 6 What grace is this? How can it



King Has set his face to suf - fer -
 God Would stoop to lift a cross of
 all, He yields to Pon - tius Pil - ate's
 ies! With com - mon thieves he hangs and
 cloths And gent - ly laid in man - ger -
 be? He wears this raw hu - mil - i -

Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless (Ephesians 5:25-27). Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son [✠] and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Rite of Holy Baptism..... Cory Michael Uecker

All that I am and love most dear - ly— Re - ceive it
 Let me con - fess my faith sin - cere - ly, And help me
 all, O Lord, from me.
 your own child to be! Let noth - ing that I am or
 own Serve an - y will but yours a - lone.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Almighty God, look with favor on your humble servants and stretch out the right hand of your power to defend us against all our enemies; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The Word

First Lesson Isaiah 42:14-21 (EHV)

In the Gospel we'll see two kinds of blindness. One cannot see a way to salvation; the other sees the Way, but rejects him. Here, the Lord makes promises to both groups. To his helplessly blind children who cannot find a way out, he promises certain deliverance and rescue. God himself will lead them to safety and will turn their darkness into light. But to those who reject the true God and look to idols, God promises judgment! Like the Pharisees in the Gospel, God promises that though they see, they remain spiritually blind—though they hear, they remain spiritually deaf.

¹⁴I have been silent for a long time. I have kept still. I have restrained myself. Like a woman giving birth, I will scream. I will gasp and pant. ¹⁵I will dry up mountains and hills. I will make all their grass wither. I will turn rivers into islands. I will dry up pools. ¹⁶I will lead the blind on a way they do not know. Along paths they do not know I will direct them. Ahead of them I will turn darkness into light and rough places into level ground. These are the promises I will accomplish for them. I will not abandon them. ¹⁷They will be turned back and be completely disgraced— those who trust in an idol, those who say to molten images, “You are our gods. ¹⁸You deaf ones, listen! You blind ones, watch carefully so you can see! ¹⁹Who is so blind as my servant or so deaf as my messenger whom I sent? Who is so blind as my covenant partner and so blind as the servant of the LORD? ²⁰You see many things, but you do not observe. He opens his ears, but he does not hear. ²¹Because of his righteousness the LORD was pleased to make his law great and glorious.

Choir.....“Yes, My Jesus Loves Me”

Second LessonEphesians 5:8-14 (EHV)

Notice what Paul says. He does not say that once we were in the dark and now we are in the light. No, once we were darkness and now we are light. Our conversion meant a total transformation of what we are, and therefore, it will lead to a total transformation of what we do. No longer producing fruits of darkness, we live in the light and shine the light into the sin--darkened corners of our world. With lines from an early Christian hymn, Paul shares Christ’s call to us and his promise for us. Once you were darkness, but now you are light. Live as children of the light. The difference between darkness and light is dramatic. The difference between believers and unbelievers should be equally so. They are as different as the nursery and the morgue!

⁸For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, ⁹for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. ¹⁰Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord, ¹¹and do not participate in fruitless deeds of darkness. Instead, expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention the things that are done by people in secret. ¹³But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes things visible. ¹⁴Therefore it is said, “Awake, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

Verse of the DayJohn 3:14,15 (EHV)

Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Gospel LessonJohn 9:1-7,13-17,34-39 (EHV)

In God’s plan there are no coincidences, and there is no karma. The man was born blind not because of his parents’ sin; nor was the man lying in Jesus’ path by accident. Both happened that the work of God might be displayed in the life of this man who was doubly blind: he could not see Jesus physically or spiritually. Christ opened the door to the latter by solving the former. It was no coincidence that this happened on the Sabbath. Christ had come not only to give sight to the helplessly blind—he also came to bring judgment on the Pharisees who should have seen him as the Messiah, but who refused to believe even what they saw with their own eyes. Yet for us, born in the blindness of sin, but looking to Christ as Savior, Jesus shines as the light of the world. We believe, and we worship him.

O Christ, Lamb of God.....(Agnus Dei)

C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
 have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,
 you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.
 O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
 grant us your peace. A - men.

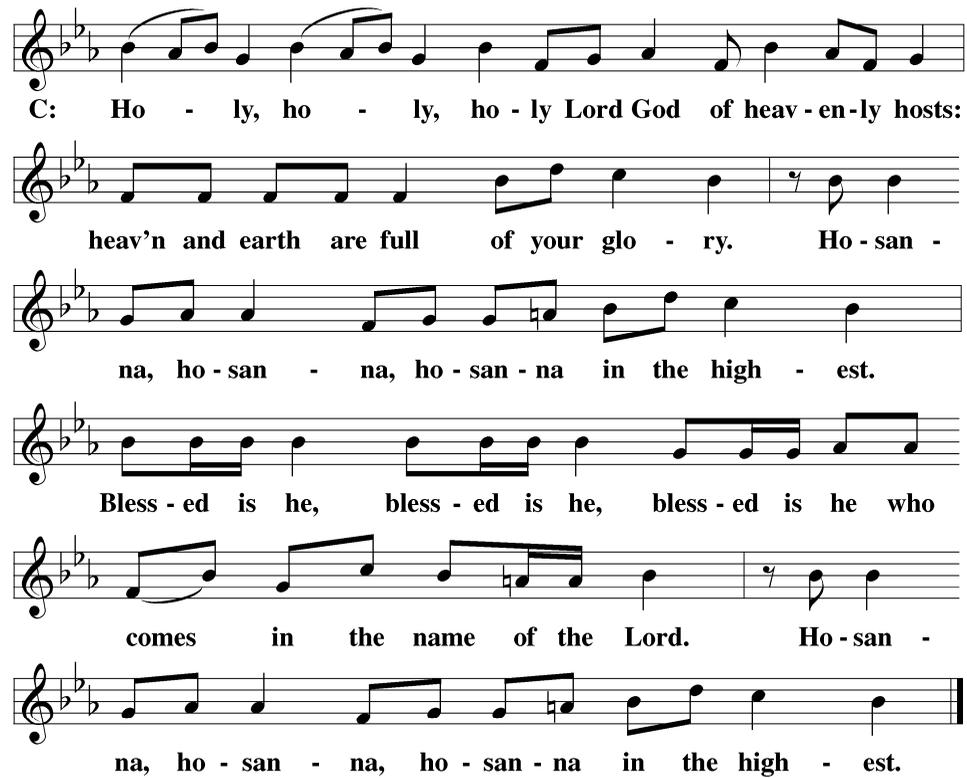
Distribution

Thanksgiving

Song of Simeon(Nunc Dimittis)

C: Lord, now you let your servant de - part in peace ac-cord-ing
 to your word. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have pre-
 pared be - fore the face of all people, a light to light - en the
 Gen-tiles and the glo - ry of your peo-ple Is - ra - el.

Holy, Holy, Holy.....(Sanctus)



C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san -
na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san -
na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

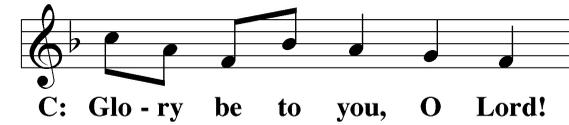
Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." The peace of the Lord be with you always.



C: A - men.

Today's Gospel reading is recorded in the 9th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, beginning at the 1st verse.



C: Glo - ry be to you, O Lord!

¹As Jesus was passing by, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that God's works might be revealed in connection with him. ⁴I must do the works of him who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the World." ⁶After saying this, Jesus spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and spread the mud on the man's eyes. ⁷"Go," Jesus told him, "wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means "Sent"). So he went and washed, and came back seeing. ¹³They brought this man who had been blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵So the Pharisees also asked him how he received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man told them. "I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶Then some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God because he does not keep the Sabbath." Others were saying, "How can a sinful man work such miraculous signs?" There was division among them, ¹⁷so they said to the blind man again, "What do you say about him, because he opened your eyes?" The man replied, "He is a prophet." ³⁴They answered him, "You were entirely born in sinfulness! Yet you presume to teach us?" And they threw him out. ³⁵Jesus heard that they had thrown him out. When he found him, he asked, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" ³⁶"Who is he, sir," the man replied, "that I may believe in him?" ³⁷Jesus answered, "You have seen him, and he is the very one who is speaking with you." ³⁸Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" and he knelt down and worshipped him. ³⁹Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, in order that those who do not see will see, and those who do see will become blind."

[the lesson ends with the words] ...this is the Gospel of our Lord.



C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right

hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Hymn of the Day..... *"Christ Is the World's Light"* (CW 343)

Sermon Ephesians 5:8-14

Dear Christians, You Are Light!

Create in Me

C: Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -
way from your pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of your sal - va -
tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it. A - men.

Thank-Offering / Quartet..... *"Borning Cry"*

*These offerings are used to support the ministries of our church, both locally and worldwide.
Our guests should not feel compelled to give an offering, but may do so if they desire.*

Prayer of the Church

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

The Sacrament

Preface

The Lord be with you.

C: And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up un - to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

C: It is good and right so to do.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who brought the gift of salvation to all people by his death on the tree of the cross, so that the devil, who overcame us by a tree, would in turn by a tree be overcome. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song: