

The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 5, 2021
in the 168th Year of the Parish
St. Mark's Lutheran Church
142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701
stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org
Office (570-323-4619) Fax (570-323-2452)
Rev. Brian D. Vasey, Pastor
bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org



Welcome to Saint Mark's Lutheran Church!

Our Mission: *“To know Christ and to make Christ known.”*

*This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here.
We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace.
Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person—questions,
complexities and all. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the
life of the world.*

Please Note: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has provided revised guidelines with regard to mask wearing. Following these guidelines, and the specific recommendations of our bishop (Bishop Collins of the Upper Susquehanna Synod) Church Council strongly recommends that masks be worn, social distancing followed, and to speak and sing in very low tones when worshipping in St. Mark's church building. Thank You!

An Order for Holy Communion, 9:30 a.m., Lutheran Book of Worship, Setting Two, (LBW, “Green Book”)

**Please stand as you are able.*

PRELUDE

Pastorale

H. Lichmer

WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY

***BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

The pastor leads the congregation in the invocation, the sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their baptism.

P In the name of the Father †, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen**

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen**

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P Most merciful God,

C **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen**

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us and for his sake forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare unto you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen**

***HYMN Praise to the Lord, the Almighty (LBW, "Green" p. 543)**

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!

O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!

Let all who hear now to his temple draw near,

joining in glad adoration!
 Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me adore him!
 All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him!
 Let the amen sound from his people again.
 Gladly forever adore him!

Text: Joachim Neander, 1650-1680; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt./ Tune: LOBE DEN HERREN 14 14 4 7 8

*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.

*GLORY TO GOD



A Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to his peo-ple on earth.



B Lord God, heav-en-ly king, al-might-y God and Fa-ther:



We wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



You are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther; re-ceive our prayer.



For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,



you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,



in the glo-ry of God the Fa-ther. A - men

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray. Gracious God, throughout the ages you transform sickness into health and death into life. Open us to the power of your presence, and make us a people ready to proclaim your promises to the whole world, through Jesus Christ, our healer and Lord.

C **Amen**

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S READINGS

James tells us to stop showing favoritism in the assembly, treating the rich visitor with more honor than the poor one. Jesus himself seems to show partiality in his first response to the Syrophoenician woman in today's gospel. Was he testing her faith in saying Gentiles don't deserve the goods meant for God's children? Or was he speaking out of his human worldview, but transcended those limits when she took him by surprise with her reply? Either way, the story tells us that God shows no partiality. Everyone who brings a need to Jesus is received with equal honor as a child and heir.

THE FIRST LESSON.....Isaiah 35:4-7a

4 Say to those who are of a fearful heart,

“Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.”

5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

6 then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;

7 the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water.

The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 146

1Hal- | lelujah!

Praise the LORD, | O my soul!

2I will praise the LORD as long | as I live;

I will sing praises to my God while I | have my being.

3Put not your | trust in rulers,

in mortals in whom there | is no help.

4When they breathe their last, they re- | turn to earth,

and in that day | their thoughts perish.

5Happy are they who have the God of Jacob | for their help,

whose hope is in the | LORD their God;

6who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that | is in them;

who keeps promis- | es forever;

7who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to | those who
hunger.

The LORD sets the | captive free.

**8The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who | are
bowed down;**

the LORD | loves the righteous.

9The LORD cares | for the stranger;

the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way | of
the wicked.

10The LORD shall | reign forever,

your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. | Hallelujah!

THE SECOND LESSON.....James 2:1-17

1My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? 2For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, 3and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," 4have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? 5Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? 6But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? 7Is it not they who blaspheme the

excellent name that was invoked over you?

8You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 9But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. 10For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. 11For the one who said, “You shall not commit adultery,” also said, “You shall not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. 12So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. 13For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

14What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? 15If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, 16and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? 17So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

***THE HOLY GOSPEL.....Mark 7:24-37**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the seventh chapter.

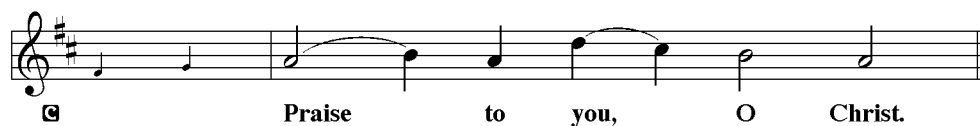
Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

24[Jesus] set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice,25but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his

feet. 26Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophoenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. 27He said to her, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” 28But she answered him, “Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” 29Then he said to her, “For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.” 30So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

31Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. 32They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. 33He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. 34Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” 35And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. 36Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. 37They were astounded beyond measure, saying, “He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”

The Gospel of the Lord.



THE SERMON

*THE APOSTLES' CREED

P Living together in trust and hope, we affirm our faith:

C **I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

**On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:**

After each petition, “Lord, in your mercy/Hear our prayer.”

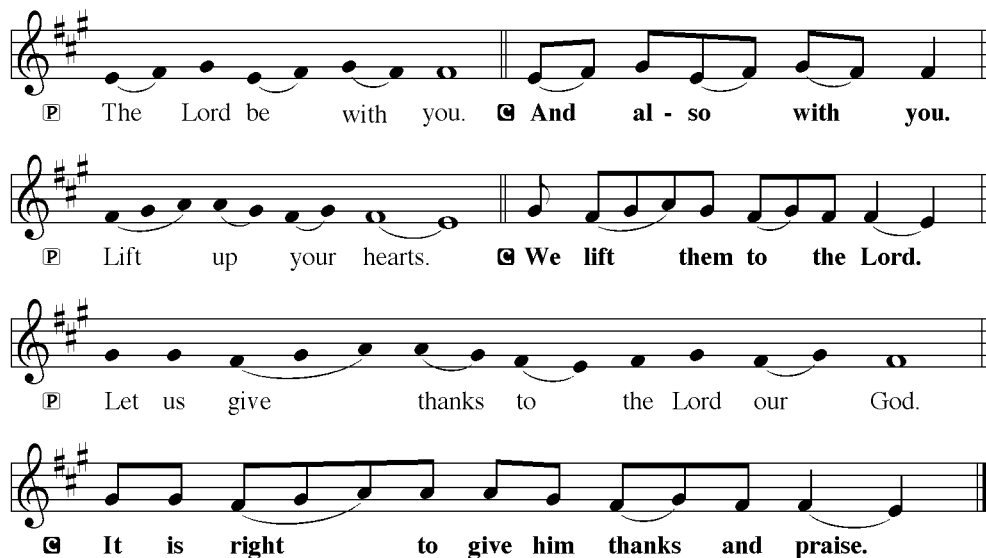
***THE PEACE**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

The ministers and congregation greet one another with these or similar words, and/or gestures of peace, limiting physical touch and contact with one another.

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**



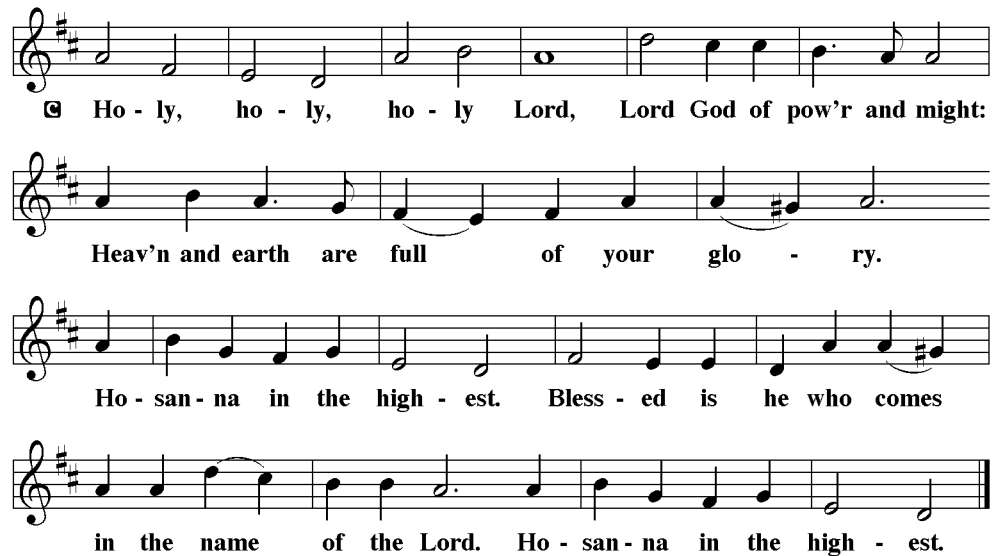
P The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so with you.

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 him thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with the Church on earth and in heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:
 Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

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.

*OUR LORD'S PRAYER

P Let us pray in the words our Savior gave us:

**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



☩ Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Christ has set the table with more than enough for all! Come!
C Thanks be to God!

THE COMMUNION

Persons may come forward to the chancel to receive Holy Communion. This format will be more “continuous” noting the following procedure:

- *Communicants, masked and observing social distancing, are asked to come forward as directed by ushers by way of the center aisle, take a cup from the tray provided and receive the bread from Pastor Vasey.*

- *Once receiving the bread, communicants will proceed to one of two stations (left or right) to receive wine from the pouring chalice.*
- *After receiving wine, communicants will place the empty cup in the designated tray and return to their pew by way of the side aisles.*

Please do not kneel at the rail. Kneeling at the rail will return at a time to be determined by pastor and Church Council.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Let us pray. Jesus, Bread of life,
we have received from your table
more than we could ever ask.

As you have nourished us in this meal,
now strengthen us to love the world with your own life.

In your name we pray.

C Amen

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***THE BLESSING**

P The blessing of God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, be upon you now and forever.

C Amen

***HYMN**

Forth in Thy Name, O Lord, I Go

**Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go,
my daily labor to pursue;
thee, only thee, resolved to know
in all I think or speak or do.**

**For thee delightfully employ
whate'er thy bounteous grace has giv'n,
and run my course with even joy,
and closely walk with thee to heav'n.**

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788
Tune: DUKE STREET

***DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

C **Thanks be to God.**

***POSTLUDE**

Voluntary

G. Merkel

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Prayer List: Victims of COVID-19 and their families, Liz Ruesskamp, Grace Arner, Diane Damaska, Vanessa Morgan, Gary Clark, Doris Brown, Charles Miller, Jerry Miller, Patricia Alexander, Joann Zeigler, Diana Zeigler, Richard Ritter, Ashton Ott, Lucille Sider, April Clark, Lenny Sherlinski, Ruth Sherlinski, Gary Cable, Elsie Sechler, Virginia Pulaskie, Bernadette Jones, Susan Kalabacas, Kay Poliska, Bunny Ditchfield, Judy Fortin, Roy and Gloria Meyer, Mary Lou Doebler, Walt Haussmann, Lou and Linda DeSeau, the victims and family members of COVID-19, the nation and people of Haiti, the nation and people of Afghanistan, victims of Hurricanes Henri and Ida, Forest Fires.

WORSHIP LEADERS

Lector Lou DeSeau

Cantor/Song-leader Karen Mariano

Communion Assistants Gregg Dancho/Kathy Dancho

Organist Sam Robinson

USHERS: September 5

Tim Maggs, Captain. Ushers: Carl Hieber, Charlie Fortin

COVID CONTACT: Please note that your attendance at worship will be recorded. This serves as a precaution in case contact-tracing due to the pandemic is warranted. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

HAPPY LABOR DAY! Please note that the church office will be closed on Monday, September 6, in observance of the Labor Day Holiday.

FALL SCHEDULE. Next Sunday, September 12, St. Mark's begins our fall schedule of two Sunday Worship Services (8 & 10:30 a. m.).

MINISTRIES FAIR, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12. Sunday, September 12, St. Mark's will host our "Ministries Fair" at 9:15 a. m. in Fellowship Hall. The Ministries Fair highlights the many ministries of our congregation. Limited refreshments and fellowship will be offered. Come, celebrate, and learn of the many ways we fulfill our Lord's mandate of ministry to society and the world.

SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL RESUMES! Sunday, September 19, 9:15 a.m., Sunday Church School resumes. All are welcome!

READ ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY? Faith and Fellowship has temporarily "moved some books" from our church library to the Front Lounge in order to make them more accessible. Stop by the Front Lounge and take a look!

HURRICANE IDA: Help support the survivors of Hurricane Ida:
Lutheran Disaster Response
P.O. Box 1809
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

Write "Hurricane Ida" on your check memo line.

Give by phone at **800-638-3522** or online (lwr.org)

OUR STEWARDSHIP

Regular Offering	\$ 2,275.40
Plate Offering	\$ 20.00
Grand Total	\$ 2,295.40

Please note that this total does not include offerings received through electronic giving. These totals were not available at the time of printing.

ALTAR FLOWERS today are given to the glory of God:

+ In memory of Mr. and Mrs. C. Gelbert Lloyd by Carl and Beverly Hieber and Family

+ In loving memory of my father Glenn Means and in honor of mother Pauline Means by Kathy Eshelman

COMEMMORATIONS

Peter Claver, priest, missionary to Colombia, died 1654

Thursday, September 9, 2021

Born into Spanish nobility, Claver became a Jesuit missionary, and served in present-day Colombia. His ministry was focused on the slaves that arrived there. He gave them food and medicine, learned their dialects, and taught them Christianity.

Dear Supporters of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, I wanted to give you a quick update on our work to help our Afghan Allies — the men and women who served alongside our troops and are now facing retaliation from the Taliban.

With support from people like you, we've already welcomed about 2,000 Afghan Allies who arrived here on evacuated flights, many with nothing but the clothes on their backs. We're providing them with food, housing, clothes, and other essential needs, along with connections to programs and services to help them settle into their new communities.

Now, we're preparing to welcome the next wave of nearly 50,000 evacuated Afghans. And unlike the refugees we typically serve, many of the evacuees will enter the U.S. under humanitarian parole, which is a status that limits public benefits or services funded by the federal government after 90 days. Thankfully, the 'Long Welcome' is possible, a mosaic of support that will serve a refugee not just for 30 or 90 days, but for the long haul, making sure families have the resources to live in safety and freedom.

It's a genuinely sobering time, and we're thankful for people like you — people who stand for what's right and just in the face of horrific violence and pain. Together, we will do everything we can to help families who truly need it most.

With sincere gratitude,
Andrew G. Steele

Vice President for Development and Outreach.

P.S. Please visit www.lirs.org/helpnow for updates and ways you can continue to help.