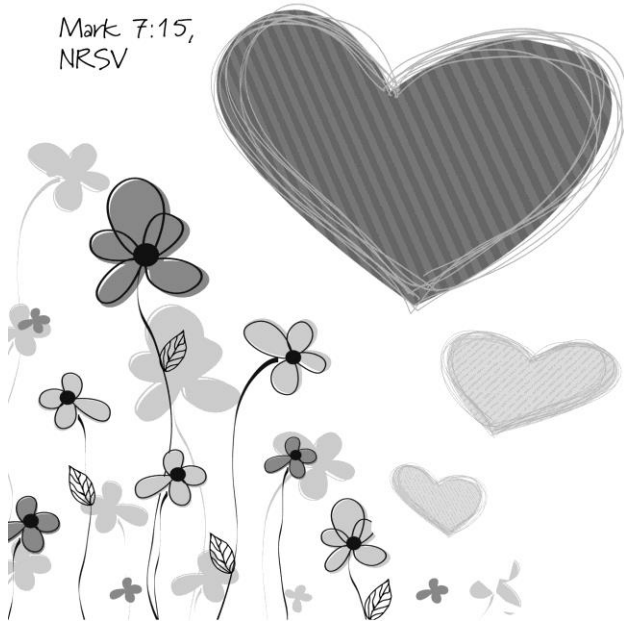


WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

There is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.

Mark 7:15,
NRSV



THE NEED FOR FOLLOWERSHIP:
Christ's Followers Obey His Law from the Heart
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 1, 2024



Welcome To Worship

If you are a visitor to our church, we extend you a warm welcome! We are happy you are here. Please fill out a Connect Card to let us know how we can continue to serve you.

Restrooms are located in the hallway outside the gym. If you would like one, large print copies of the service folder or a children's bulletin for kids are available from the ushers. One of our ushers can also help you find the restrooms or answer any other questions you may have.

Service Notes For This Service



A loving father gives his son and daughter a list of rules and regulations. Chores, curfews, civilities, dress code—the father makes his will clearly known. The son strives to follow the rules for two reasons. 1) He wants to get his allowance. 2) He is afraid that if he breaks the rules, his father will punish him. The daughter strives to follow the rules, also for two reasons. 1) She believes her father established those rules not to control her but for her safety and blessing. 2) She wants to demonstrate how much she loves and trusts her father. Those two children's actions might look almost identical. Their hearts are very different!

Likewise, following Christ is not simply a matter of outward observance of laws. It is a matter of the heart. The Law was given so we could see God's heart and demonstrate how his heart has affected our own. The followership Christ seeks flows from hearts that have been radically transformed by God's law and gospel. Christ wants his followers to be less like the son described above, and more like the daughter.

This week we see that followers of Christ obey his law from the heart. Today's service includes a celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. For personal preparation, consider using the Questions for Examination on page 11 of this service folder or Christian Questions on page 295 of the blue hymnal.

Those Serving in Worship

Preacher: retired pastor, Rev. Michael Plagenz; Accompanist Kristi Perry; Offering Music by Rev. Peter Plagenz

Acknowledgements

Setting Two from Christian Worship. Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, Evangelical Heritage Version® (EHV®) © 2017 Wartburg Project. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Liturgical and musical settings of Scripture based on text from The Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

The Service: Setting Four

Setting Four is not found in the hymnal.

Welcome

Hymn

697 *May We Your Precepts, Lord, Fulfill*

Stand

In the name of the Father and of the \mathcal{T} Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Confession

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.
If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father, I am sinful by nature and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have not loved you with my whole heart; I have not loved others as I should. I deserve your punishment both now and forever. But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins with his innocent suffering and death. Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. 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 \mathcal{T} Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

In peace let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

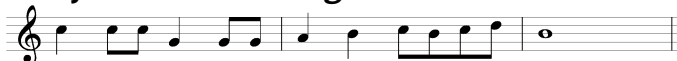
Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



A - men.

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Glory to God in the Highest



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



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. Glo - ry to God in the high - est and peace to his

peo - ple on earth. 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, re - ceive our prayer.
 Glo - ry to God in the high - est and peace to his peo - ple on
 earth. 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.
 Glo - ry to God in the high - est and peace to his peo - ple on earth.
 Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God.

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The Word

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, give us an increase of faith, hope, and love; and that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Deuteronomy 4:1-2,6-9

God is serious about his law because he knows that when his children follow the law carefully, the result is blessing and honor.

¹So now, Israel, listen to the statutes and the ordinances that I am teaching you, and carry them out so that you may live and so that you may enter the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving to you and take possession of it. ²Do not add to the word that I am commanding you, and do not subtract from it, so that you keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you.

⁶Keep them and put them into practice, because in this way your wisdom and your understanding will be recognized by all the people who hear about all these statutes; and they will say, “This great nation is certainly a wise and understanding people,” ⁷because what other great nation is there that has a god as close to it as the LORD our God is to us whenever we call on him? ⁸What other great nation is there that has statutes and ordinances as righteous as this entire law that I am presenting to you today? ⁹But guard yourselves and guard your whole being^{la} diligently, so that you do not forget the things that your eyes have seen and so that those things do not disappear from your heart all the rest of the days of your life. Make them known to your children and to your children’s children. (EHV[®])

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day

119D Teach Me, O LORD

Refrain

Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes.

Tone

Oh, how I / love your law!

I meditate on it / all day long.

Your commands are always / with me
and make me wiser than my / enemies.

I have more insight than all my / teachers,
for I meditate on your / statutes. *Refrain*

I have kept my feet from every / evil path
so that I might o- / bey your word.

How sweet are your words / to my taste,
sweeter than honey / to my mouth!

I gain understanding from your / precepts;
therefore I hate every / wrong path.

Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain*

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Second Reading

Romans 9:30—10:4

Followers of Christ obey the law, not to attempt to become righteous, but to show heartfelt love to the God who declares us righteous through faith in Jesus.

³⁰What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who were not pursuing righteousness, have obtained righteousness, a righteousness that is by faith. ³¹But Israel, while pursuing the law as a way of righteousness, did not reach it. ³²Why? Because they kept pursuing it not by faith, but as if it comes by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone.

Jesus, "Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders? Instead they eat bread with unclean hands."

⁶He answered them, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites. As it is written:

These people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

⁷They worship me in vain, teaching human rules as if they were doctrines.

⁸"You abandon God's commandment but hold to human tradition like the washing of pitchers and cups, and you do many other such things."

¹⁴He called the crowd to him again and said, "Everyone, listen to me and understand.

¹⁵There is nothing outside of a man that can make him unclean by going into him. But the things that come out of a man are what make a man unclean. ²¹In fact, from within, out of people's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual sins, theft, murder, ²²adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, unrestrained immorality, envy, slander, arrogance, and foolishness. ²³All these evil things proceed from within and make a person unclean." (EHV®)

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Children's Message

Hymn of the Day

740 O God, My Faithful God

Sermon

Let's Not Play Games with God's Word

Stand

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 truly 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.

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

Creator God, we give thanks for all the work you give us to do: for work that sustains and work that fulfills, for work which, however tiring, also satisfies and resonates with your work in creation.

Lord, we give you thanks.

As we give thanks to you we also pray for those who have no work, who have too much or too little work, who work at jobs that involve great danger, work that others are willing to do in our behalf.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Extend your guidance and grace in the many and varied places of our work: in factory or field, in sheltered office or under open sky, using technical knowledge or physical strength, working with machines or with people or with the earth itself.

Lord, direct us with your love.

Lead us, O Lord, to bring the full weight of our intelligence and strength to our work and to make our place of work a place of safety and respect for all with whom we labor.

Lord, make us faithful and helpful in all we do.

Keep us from engaging in work that harms others, that promotes injustice or violence, that affords individual gain but ignores the common good.

Lord, forgive us when we fall into sin.

Protect us from greed that elevates our work above that of others, from discontent when we see the successes of others, and from pride when we view the disappointment of others.

Lord, give hearts that are pure and alive in your love.

Give us faith to use the wages we gain as gifts of your grace, for supporting our families, for helping those less fortunate, for sustaining good government, and for promoting the ministry of the gospel in our city and world.

Lord, make us faithful stewards of all your gifts.

Provide healing and health to those who have been injured at work, those who have been hurt by the negligence of others, those who have been harmed by unfair practices, and all who are enduring pain in body or mind. Protect all people at work or at play.

Lord, fill us with compassion for all your people.

Special Prayers and intercessions

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

In our labor and in our laughter, O Lord, in our work and in our rest, pour out on us the blessings of your Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Special Prayers This Week

- † For Charles Schroeder who will celebrate his 94th birthday on Sept. 3
- † For Dave & Ann Lepak who are celebrating their 42nd anniversary
- † For Judy Evenson who is fighting an infection and not doing well.
- †
- †
- †

Connect Card & Offering

Moved by God's love in Christ, we offer him our first and best gifts, purely out of thanks to him. Guests, please don't feel obligated to take part in the offering. We're just happy you're here as our guest to hear and take to heart the message of Jesus. If the gospel message has moved you to give and you would like an electronic option, you can scan this QR code with your mobile phone. It will connect you with our website's giving page.



Musical Offering

Questions for Examination

- † Do I believe that I am a sinner in need of forgiveness?
- † Do I believe that Jesus died on the cross to win forgiveness for me?
- † Do I believe that Jesus offers his true body and blood with the bread and wine in this sacrament?
- † Do I believe this sacrament strengthens my faith and strengthens me to live a God-pleasing life?
- † Am I a member of a church that belongs to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) or Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS)?
- † If you answered "no" to any of these questions, please hold off on communing with us today. Following worship, one of the pastors would be happy to explain why we ask you to do this.

The Sacrament

Stand

Preface

The Lord be with you.



And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts.



We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



It is right to give him thanks and praise.

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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 promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock until he comes again in glory. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er, God of 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, ho - san - na in the high - est!

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Prayer of Thanksgiving

Blessed are you, O Lord of heaven and earth. We praise and thank you for sending your Son, Jesus Christ, and we remember the great acts of love through which he has ransomed us from sin, death, and the devil's power.

By his incarnation, he became one with us. By his perfect life, he fulfilled your holy will. By his innocent death, he overcame hell. By his rising from the grave, he opened heaven.

Invited by your grace and instructed by your Word, we approach your table with repentant and joyful hearts. Strengthen us through Christ's body and blood, and preserve us in the true faith until we feast with him and all his ransomed people in glory everlasting.

Amen.

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.

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 \mathcal{T} 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 \mathcal{T} 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.
Amen.

O Christ, Lamb of God

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. A - men.

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Be seated

Distribution

Distribution Hymn

626 My Heart Is Filled with Thankfulness
Join to sing beginning with verse 2.

Stand

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. 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.

Amen.

Blessing

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 \mathcal{T} give you peace.

Amen.

Be seated.

Hymn

705 *Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways*



Take Home Questions

1. Based on verse 6 in our first reading from Deuteronomy 4, complete the following sentence: God's law leads to _____ and _____.
 - a. List some things our sinful hearts try to convince us of when it comes to God's law?
 - b. If we cannot keep the heart of the law, as Jesus opens our eyes to in the Gospel, in what ways does the law draw us close to God, as Deut. 4:8 talks about?
2. In the verses from our second reading from Romans 9 and 10, Paul explains how, humanly speaking, the Jews had every advantage for seeing that Jesus was the Messiah. God chose them to be his special people, gave them his law, and sent them the prophets. Yet in what ways had they tripped and fell over Jesus, the stone in Zion?
 - a. Our Lutheran theology which grounds us in the firm foundation of the Scriptures gives us many advantages, too, when it comes to knowing and believing that we are saved by faith alone apart from works. Recognizing this tragic history in the nation of Israel, what are some dangers we must be aware of for ourselves and our church body?
 - b. In what ways might those same pitfalls worm their way into our hearts, minds, and church?
3. Reread the selected verses from Mark 7 in today's Gospel reading. In what ways had the Jews lost sight of the purpose of God's law?
 - a. Put into your own words the lesson Jesus tried to teach them about the law.

News & Announcements



This Sunday's Bible Study: Foundations of the Christian Faith

Join us in the cafeteria from 9:15 to 10:15 AM

Sunday School Starts Next Weekend

Sept. 8 | 9:15 AM

Sunday School for ages 3K-5th grade begins next Sunday, Sept. 8. Classes are from 9:15-10:15 am. Our Sunday School Ministry Team has lots of fresh ideas to make Sunday School more engaging for the children. To help with planning, please sign up at the Ministry Table. If you forget to sign up, your children will still be welcome.

Wisdom Is Found in Those Who Take Advice

Sept. 4 | 7:00 PM

The book of Proverbs has lots of advice on how to lead a godly life, and how to avoid the pitfalls of doing things to world's way. The Bible Book Group will be studying this book this Wednesday. This first meeting will start after the monthly Compline Service, but the group usually meets on Wednesday from 6:30 to 8:00 pm. We hope you can come.

Ever Feel Lost, Alone, and Unlovable?

Sept. 8 | 6:00 PM

Next Sunday, Sept. 8 at 6:00 pm, the WELS national online teen Bible study will look at the parable of the prodigal son. Teens can join this zoom-style study on their phones and connect with other Christian teenagers. Learn more at wels.net/serving-you/christian-life/discipleship/national-teen-bible-study/

The Roles of Men & Women

Sept 7/9

The Women's Ministry Titus 2 Team is offering the online class: "Heirs Together of God's Gracious Gift of Life." Learn what the Bible says about men and women and God's design for them. This 11-week online course is offered on Saturday mornings from 8-9:30 am and Monday evenings at 7-8:30 pm, beginning September 7th/9th. Choose the time that works best for your schedule. If you cannot attend a given week, the video will be recorded so you can watch on your own. Class "seats" are limited! Register at gf.wels.net/heirs-together/

New Women's Group Starting in Fall

Sept. 9 | 6:30 PM

Get to know other Christian women at the new St. Paul's Women's Group. The main focuses will be on spiritual growth and Christian fellowship. We also hope to learn about and to support the mission work happening in our synod. The first meeting will be on Monday, Sept. 9 in the cafeteria and should last about an hour and a half.

WAYS YOU CAN SERVE THIS MONTH

Be a Sunday School Teacher or Helper

Help share the love of Jesus with young children. Be a teacher or helper in our Sunday School. You can serve weekly, every other week, or once a month. See the Ministry Table for more information and to sign up.



Clean School Classrooms

Volunteers are needed to clean the classrooms twice a week. Tasks include vacuuming and emptying garbage and recycling. Help is needed on Wednesdays and on Friday (or Saturday), before or after school hours. Volunteer alone, as a family, or with a friend. You can volunteer on a regular basis (once a week, once month), or just try it one time. There are signup sheets on the Ministry Table and a link to online signup on the school website, stpaulswr.org/school.

Officiate Volleyball Games

The school is looking for line judges for our home volleyball games. They have seven home games that would each need two line judges each. Anybody interested in helping out can reach out to Mr. Micah Biesterfeld at mbiesterfeld@stpaulswr.org.

Make Apple Pies

This year's Craft & Bake Sale will held Oct. 19-20. That means it is time to start making pies! Pie making is scheduled for Sept. 18, 26, 30 and Oct. 9 at 1:30 pm. Help with peeling apples or with assembling the pies. A signup sheet and further details can be found on the Ministry Table.

Donate Apples

If you have apples to donate to the pie-making, you can start bringing those in beginning Sept. 9. If you want to donate, please sign up at the Ministry Table, so they have an idea of how many apples to expect.

Help at the Neighborhood Meal

Sept. 19 | 4:00-6:30 PM

Assist the staff at FOCUS Neighborhood Meal as they help address food insecurity in our community. About 20 volunteers are need on Thursday, Sept. 19 to serve, clean up, greet guests, or carry out other tasks. Teens can serve if accompanied by parents. See the Ministry Table for more information and to sign up.



Use Your Musical Talent

Our handbell choir needs one more person to play the low range (big bells). Contact either Marilyn Foley (715-697-1511) or Kristi Perry (715-721-1344) to volunteer. Choir begins at the end of the month. Watch the bulletin for future announcements. The Sunday School would love to have someone accompany the children once a month for singing. Sign up at the Ministry Table or contact Darci Knuth at 715-316-8250.

Sunday	8:00 AM	Worship
	9:15 AM	Bible Study in the cafeteria
	10:30 AM	Worship
Tuesday	6:45 AM	Men's Bible Study at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
	9:45 AM	Women Walking in the Word in the Resource Center
	6:30 PM	Unified Board Meetings
Wednesday	8:55 AM	School Chapel Service
	6:30 PM	Compline Service
	7:00 PM	Bible Book Group in the Resource Center
	7:00 PM	Catechism Class
Thursday	7:00 AM	Men's Small Group at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
Sunday	8:00 AM	Worship
	9:15 AM	Bible Study in the cafeteria
	9:15 AM	Sunday School for grades 3K-5th
	10:30 AM	Worship

Attendance Report

Last Week's Attendance: 184

Next Sunday

Theme: The Need for Followership: Christ's Followers

See the True Purpose of His Power

Readings: Isaiah 35:4-7a; Acts 3:1-10; Mark 7:31-37

Upcoming Events

Sept. 8	Sunday School Begins for grades 3K-5
Sept. 9	New St. Paul's Women's Group
Sept. 18	Pie Making Begins
Sept. 19	HOME Panthers Volleyball Game
Sept. 19	FOCUS Neighborhood Meal
Sept. 28	NLHS Homecoming and 5K Run/Walk



HIRING
Part-time Janitorial
Contact Larry Wesenberg
715-204-7685



www.stpaulswr.org

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