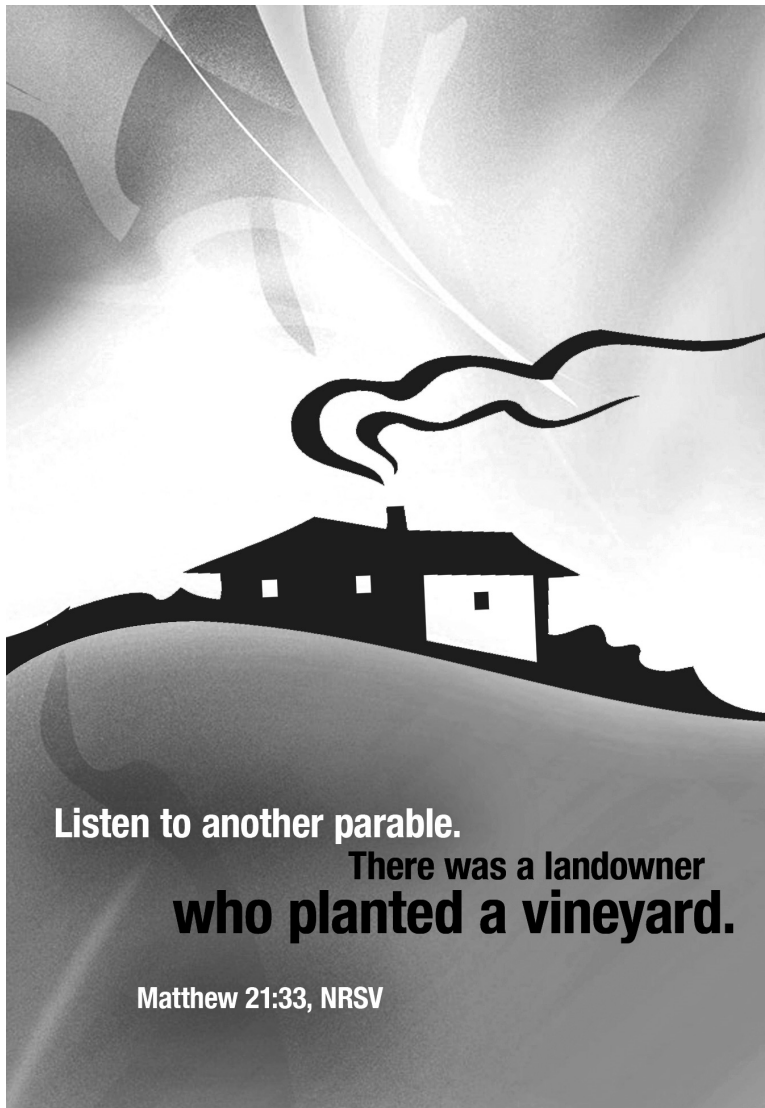


WELCOME TO WORSHIP!



Listen to another parable.

**There was a landowner
who planted a vineyard.**

Matthew 21:33, NRSV

DIFFICULT PARABLES:
THE TENANTS OF THE VINEYARD
The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 20, 2020

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

If you are a visitor to our church, we extend you a warm welcome. For worshippers joining us in person, we are happy you are here. If you have any questions, just ask an usher or other volunteer.

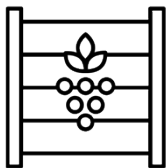
We would love to see just what kind of impact our worship services are making. Please fill out our online Connect Card to let us know where you're worshipping from and how we might continue to serve you. You can find a link at www.stpaulswr.org/watch. You can also contact us via email or phone (churchoffice@stpaulswr.org or 715-421-3634) with any questions or prayer requests.

SPECIAL GUIDELINES DURING THE PANDEMIC

- † **Please practice social distancing whenever possible.** Keep close personal interactions to a minimum, especially when inside the building. There is tape on the floor of the Welcome Center to help assist you in practicing social distancing. Please feel free to worship from the Welcome Center, if you feel uncomfortable with the number of people in the sanctuary. Please refrain from shaking hands or hugging.
- † **Please practice good hygiene.** Masks, hand sanitizer, and kleenex are available in the Welcome Center. Our restrooms are located along the hallway on the west side of the worship space.
- † **Large print service folders, hearing devices, and printouts of the bible readings and hymns** are available on the Information Booth in the Welcome Center, if you need them.
- † **Offering plates and friendship registers will not be distributed.** Our offering can be placed in the slots on the top of the Information Booth in the Welcome Center. Those with smartphones can fill in the online connect card.
- † **The children's quiet activity bags have been removed.** However, children's bulletins can be picked up at the Information Booth in the Welcome Center. If your children become fussy, you can quiet them in the Welcome Center. The Children's Message will still take place. However, the children will not be invited forward. Please keep them with you in your pew.

† **Please wait for the ushers to dismiss you.** Following post-service announcements, pastor(s) will leave down the side aisles and head outside to greet you. Ushers will dismiss worshipers from the back moving forward; and down the center aisle, as well as the side aisles. This is to minimize personal contact. Please take this service folder with you and dispose of it properly.

SERVICE NOTES FOR THIS SUNDAY



God shows his patience to his rebellious people. Patience sounds wonderful, but patience is sometimes filled with earthly nonsense. Such is the case in the parable of the wicked tenants. The owner sends servant after servant—and eventually his son—into the hands of wicked men. And yet, this approach highlights the patience that God has shown to us.

Rebellious though we are, God patiently corrects, patiently seeks, and patiently forgives. Praise God for his patience today and every day!

The liturgical color¹ for this Sunday is green, which represents the growth of our faith in God when we recall his patience in dealing with our sinfulness.

Today's service includes a celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. For personal preparation, consider using the questions on page 11 of this service folder.

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¹ The liturgical color is found on the pastor's stole and the piece of cloth hanging from the pulpit.

DIVINE SERVICE II

A version of the historic liturgy of the Christian Church intended to be used when Holy Communion is celebrated.

WELCOME

HYMN

This Is the Day the Lord Has Made | CW 225
Verse 1-All; 2-Pastors; 3-Women; 4-Men; 5-All

Please stand.

INVOCATION

Minister (M): In the name of the Father and
of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation (C): **Amen.**

*These words are spoken to remind us
of our baptisms. Whenever the
pastor makes the sign of the cross, it
is fitting for any Christian to make
the sign of the cross over the head
and the heart to reinforce the
remembrance of their baptism.*

CONFESSION

M: Dear friends, let us approach God with a true
heart and confess our sins, asking him in the
name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

C: **Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin. For faithless worrying and
selfish pride, for sins of habit and sins of choice, for the evil I have done and the
good I have failed to do, you should cast me away from your presence forever.
O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.**

ABSOLUTION

M: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. In his great mercy, God
made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins. Hear the word of
Christ through his called servant: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the
Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

GLORY BE TO GOD

sung to the tune in CW 334

♪ **All glory be to God on high!
Your name, O Lord, we glorify;
We praise you for your peace and grace,
Your favor toward our fallen race.** ♪

The Word

SALUTATION

M: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Let us pray.

Almighty God, in your bountiful goodness keep us safe from every evil of body and soul. Make us ready, with cheerful hearts, to do whatever pleases you, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Please be seated.

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 5:1-7

What more could God do for his vineyard?

After the reading, the announcement is made:

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

HYMN

Amid the World's Bleak Wilderness | CW 342

Verses 1&2-Pastors; 3&4-All; 5-Pastors

SECOND LESSON - *Philippians 3:12-21*

Let us press on so that we would not squander God's patience.

After the reading, the announcement is made:

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

This hymn is not well-known. However, the beautiful poetry matches the theme for the day, especially in the First Reading.

VERSE OF THE DAY

M: Alleluia. For at the appointed time, while we were still helpless,

C: **Christ died for the ungodly. Alleluia.** *(Romans 5:6)*

Please stand.

GOSPEL - *Matthew 21:33-44*

God shows patience in seeking out fruits of faith.

After the Gospel, the announcement is made:

M: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

Be seated.

“Gospel” (upper-case) refers to the written records of Jesus’ ministry in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The “gospel” (lower-case) is the good news of salvation through Jesus, which is found in every book of the Bible.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

For the time being, please keep children with you in the pews for the Children’s Message.

HYMN OF THE DAY

With Broken Heart and Contrite Sigh | CW 303

Verse 1-Men; 2-Women; 3-All

SERMON

CONFESSION OF FAITH

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.

Be seated.

THANK OFFERING

St. Paul's members offer their first and their best to their Savior in order to support the sharing of the Gospel through our church and our worldwide church body, the WELS. Our guests do not need to feel obligated to participate. 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

Please stand.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

This morning each petition of the prayer will be prayed and then concluded in this way:

M: ...Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

The prayer will be concluded in this way:

M: We pray all these things in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who has taught us also to pray:

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 *(spoken)*

M: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up to the Lord.

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is good and right so to do.

M: 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 has called us to be his own so that we may live under him in his kingdom and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.* Therefore with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY - *Sanctus*

sung to the tune in CW 538

♪ O holy, holy, holy
Lord God of pow'r and might,
Your glory, earth and heaven
In countless ways recite.
Hosanna! Come and save us,
Lord God of hosts on high,
And in your grace and mercy
Receive our fervent cry. ♪

"Hosanna!" means "Savior" or "Rescuer." Jesus has certainly come to save us, showing us his grace and mercy through the gifts of his body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

M: 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.

C: Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: 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."

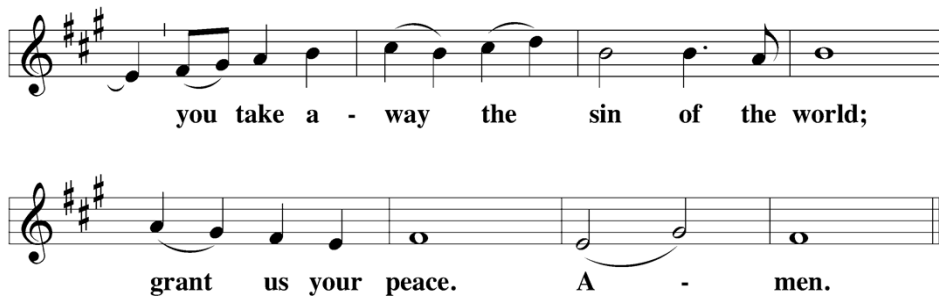
Then he took the cup, gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

LAMB OF GOD - *Agnus Dei*





Please be seated and await the direction of the ushers.

The communicant members of our congregation will be invited to receive the Lord's Supper. Because the Bible has convinced us that Jesus' body and blood are present in the sacrament, and that receiving the sacrament together is a public statement of oneness in our beliefs and commitment, we ask our guests to speak with the pastor prior to communing. We don't want to be presumptuous and put you in the position of stating your agreement with our convictions before we've had an opportunity to explain and prove them from Scripture. The pastor would be happy to explore our convictions with you, on the basis of God's Word, so that you might commune with us in the future!

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Please stand.

SONG OF SIMEON - Nunc Dimittis

sung to the tune in CW 339

♪ **O Lord, now let your servant
depart in peace, assured:
For I have seen your promised
incarnate, saving Word—
A Light that will enlighten
all gloom where Gentiles dwell;
The brilliant, crowning glory
of those in Israel! ♪**



CLOSING PRAYER

M: We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet that you have given us to eat and to drink in this sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

BLESSING

M: 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: Amen.

Be seated

Having received forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation, we thank the Lord for his gifts and pray that he will grant us faith to use them in love toward our neighbor.

CLOSING HYMN

Though Thoughtless Thousands Choose | CW 466

Verse 1-All; 2-Pastors; 3-Women; 4-Men; 5-All

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 not, 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.



TAKE HOME QUESTIONS

1. List the similarities between the First Reading from Isaiah and Jesus' parable in the Gospel. What does this add to our understanding of the parable?
2. The chief priests and the Pharisees to whom Jesus told his parable would have known and studied that section from Isaiah 5, yet that doesn't change what they did to Jesus later that week (Jesus tells this parable on Tuesday of Holy Week). How does this solidify their place in Jesus' parable?
3. In the parable of the wicked tenants, Jesus looks both back to Israelite history and forward to future events that haven't happened yet. What events were still coming? Where do we in the present day fall in the timeline of the parable's interpretation? What events in Jesus' parable still haven't happened yet? What are some reasons this is helpful for us to remember?
4. One of the details in Jesus' parable is the fruit which the landowner desired. That theme of producing fruit is common in Jesus' teaching and the book of Matthew. Read the following passages and diagram what each adds to this concept: Mt 3:8, 10; 7:16-20; 12:33; 13:8, 23, 26; 21:18-20. What are practical ways we can "bear fruit" in our lives? (Hint: read Galatians 5:22, 23)

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

THIS SUNDAY'S BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah – The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly (Chapters 13-33)

Join us in the cafeteria from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m.

SUPPORT THE NEIGHBORHOOD TABLE

We are taking a special offering today for The Neighborhoods Table. This local organization provides free meals to anyone in need. Each fall, our church family usually volunteers for the weekly meal. However, with COVID concerns, the charity is relying on a few dedicated volunteers and providing only to-go meals. Even though we can't serve there, we want to support the Neighborhood Table. You can drop your monetary gifts in the offering plates in the Welcome Center. We will also be providing the cookies for the to-go meals on October 1. Please bring your cookies to St. Paul's by Sept. 30.

YOUTH GROUP TO MEET

Sept. 30 | 6:30 PM

A quick update for all of our St. Paul's Youth, otherwise known as SPYs - If you are in grades 9-12 and have not received our latest email or if you know of a high school student who would be interested in joining, here is the latest. Our first in-person meeting of the year is on Wednesday, September 30 at 6:30 PM right here at St. Paul's. You are welcome to come for bible study, the planning of future activities & events, and an open gym to round out the night. We are hoping you can attend for part or all of the evening. We look forward to seeing you there!

IT IS PIE MAKING TIME

Sept. 24 | 1:30 PM

The Willing Workers will begin making their apples pies this week. Extra help is needed for to wash, peel and cut apples, mix pie ingredients, make crusts, and package for freezing. **Works day** are scheduled for Sept. 24, Oct. 7, Oct. 14, and Oct. 20. Come to the cafeteria at 1:30PM to help out. The pies will be sold at the annual bake & craft sale on Nov. 7 & 8.

WEEKLY ENCOURAGEMENT FOR YOUR MARRIAGE

Whether your marriage is great or struggling, God can use his Word to bless it. Beginning in October, you can receive Marriage Moments videos weekly. The short videos highlight one biblical marriage thought with one follow up question for you to discuss with your spouse. No matter how long you have been married (or even if you are just engaged), these moments will refresh your marriage. Look for the videos on facebook or subscribe to emails at <https://welscongregationalservices.net/subscriptions>.

CLASS FOR CAREGIVERS

Oct. 15 | 10:30-11:30 AM

The Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging is offering a class called Powerful Tools for Caregivers to give you the skills to take care of yourself while caring for someone else. In just six weeks, this class can help you identify and manage the physical, emotional and financial challenges that family caregiving present and connects you with other caregivers who are dealing with the same feelings and problems you are facing. The course will be held at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Wisconsin Rapids starting on Oct. 15. Space is limited. Please call St. Luke's (715-435-5990) for more information and to reserve your spot. There are also virtual classes offered throughout the state. Check the schedule at www.wihealthyaging.org.

THE Four Pillars

Sept. 26 | 8:00-3:00

God has a plan for each us to serve his church and ministry. Dr. Lawrence Olson will go in depth on this topic at his seminar, *The Church & Her Ministry*, at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Schofield, WI on Saturday, Sept. 26 at 8:00AM-3:00PM. Dr. Olson serves as WELS Director of Staff Ministry & Congregational Assistant Program (CAP) and Theology Professor at Martin Luther College. While this seminar is part of the CAP, anyone is welcome to attend. The cost is \$10 per person, plus a free will offering will be taken for lunch. Please register by Sept. 22 by contacting Jim Ellenberger at 715-409-6748 or husker9964@gmail.com.

LITTLE LAMB'S CHILD CARE - HELP NEEDED

Little Lambs is hiring someone to help with after school care, 3:30-5:30PM. Supervise outdoor play, games, and some homework. Your schedule can be flexible. Please contact Carole Melso or Kellie Jensen at littlelambs@stpaulswr.org or 715-421-3634 ext. 1119.99

CALENDAR

September 20-27

SUNDAY	8:00 AM	Worship
	9:15 AM	Bible Study in the cafeteria
	9:15 AM	Catechism Class in the Resource Center
	10:30 AM	Worship
	6:30 PM	Leadership Council in the Resource Center
MONDAY	11:00 AM	Worship for at-risk individuals
TUESDAY	6:45 AM	Men's Bible Study at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
WEDNESDAY	8:55 AM	Chapel Service
	6:00 PM	Contemporary Choir in the Balcony
	6:30 PM	People Close to God in the cafeteria
	6:30 PM	Bible Book Group in the Resource Center
THURSDAY	7:00 AM	Men's Small Group at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
	1:30 PM	Pie Making in the cafeteria
SUNDAY	8:00 AM	Worship
	9:15 AM	Bible Study in the cafeteria
	9:15 AM	Catechism Class in the Resource Center
	10:30 AM	Worship

ATTENDANCE & OFFERING REPORT

Last Week's Attendance: 155

From July 1, 2020 to Sept. 11, 2020

Actual ministry income: \$202,562

Actual cost of ministry: \$206,597

Mortgage balance: \$1,358,048

Upcoming Events



www.stpaulswr.org

311 14th Ave S | Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495 | 715-421-3634 | churchoffice@stpaulswr.org

Pastor Lucas Proeber | 989-780-3184 | pastorproeber@stpaulswr.org

Pastor Peter Plagenz | 920-689-3036 | pastorplagenz@stpaulswr.org