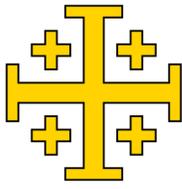


Let the little children  
come to me

MARK 10:14





# Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church

The Reverend Bonnie M. Oplinger, *Pastor*  
Mr. Roger L. Kurtz, *Director of Music*

**Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost**  
**October 3, 2021**  
**9:00 a.m.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### WELCOME

This is the day that the Lord has made;  
**Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**  
Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
**and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.**  
The LORD is in his holy temple;  
**Let all the earth keep silence before him.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PRELUDE:**        *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* – Johann Sebastian Bach

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the ✝ holy Trinity,  
the one who fashions us,  
the one who heals us,  
the one who reforms us again and again.  
**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin, calling for God's transforming power.

*Silence for reflection and self-examination.*

Source of all life,  
**we confess that we have not allowed**  
**your grace to set us free.**  
**We fear that we are not good enough.**  
**We hear your word of love freely given to us,**  
**yet we expect others to earn it.**  
**We turn the church inward,**

**rather than moving it outward.  
Forgive us. Stir us.  
Reform us to be a church powered by love,  
willing to speak for what is right,  
act for what is just,  
and seek the healing of your whole creation.  
Amen.**

God hears our cry and sends the Spirit to change us  
And to empower our lives in the world.  
Our sins are forgiven,  
✠ God's love is unconditional,  
And we are raised up to be God's people  
Who will always be made new,  
In the name of Jesus Christ.  
**Amen**

### **APOSTOLIC GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Sovereign God, you have created us to live in loving community with one another. Form us for life that is faithful and steadfast, and teach us to trust like little children, that we may reflect the image of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **FIRST READING: Genesis 2:18-24 (printed on the back cover)**

*Genesis 2 stresses that people are not meant to live in isolation but in relationship. Out of love for humanity, God creates them male and female, to provide companionship for each other and to become with each other "one flesh." The Hebrew words used here are ish (man) and ishshah (woman).*

*At the conclusion of the reading, the following is said:*

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 8**

<sup>1</sup>O LORD our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!—

<sup>2</sup>**you whose glory is chanted above the heavens out of the mouths of infants and children;**

**you have set up a fortress against your enemies, to silence the foe and avenger.**

<sup>3</sup>When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,

the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,

<sup>4</sup>**what are mere mortals that you should be mindful of them,**

**human beings that you should care for them? R**

<sup>5</sup>Yet you have made them little less than divine;

with glory and honor you crown them.

<sup>6</sup>**You have made them rule over the works of your hands;**

**you have put all things under their feet:**

<sup>7</sup>all flocks and cattle,

even the wild beasts of the field,

<sup>8</sup>**the birds of the air, the fish of the sea,**

**and whatever passes along the paths of the sea.**

<sup>9</sup>O LORD our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth! **R**

**SECOND READING: Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12**

Quoting from the psalms, this passage from Hebrews emphasizes that Jesus, the one through whom God created everything and who sits at God's right hand, is also the one who experienced human suffering and death in order to blaze the path of salvation for us.

*At the conclusion of the reading, the following is said:*

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**HOLY GOSPEL: Mark 10:2-16**

*The congregation stands; then the following is said:*

The Holy Gospel according to Mark. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus announced and enacted in history the new reality of God's surprising activity. These two stories demonstrate this new reality. Women and children are accepted and valued, not dismissed as inferior to adult men.*

At the conclusion of the Gospel, the following is said:

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

In a class session with a group of ninth graders, a pastor posed the question, “Which two commandments out of the ten do you consider of least importance?” Without hesitation, one of these young people responded, “Honor your father and your mother” and “You shall not commit adultery;” these two commandments are the least importance because no one keeps them anyway.”

The pastor then posed the same question with a group of adults. Their response was the two commandments on coveting. When they were reminded that coveting is idolatry, and that idolatry violates the first commandment. The response of one of the adults was, “It doesn’t make much difference how we look at the Ten Commandments anyway. Jesus told us that the minute we break one of them, we have broken all of them.” (*Leslie Golf, Augsburg Sermons Augsburg Publ. 1975*)

This morning, we are going to deal with an elephant in the living room. That means a subject that we walk around, dance around, and never talk about. I married a man who was divorced. His parents divorced when he was a teenager. There were two ministers who married us. They both wrote and edited educational material for what was then the Lutheran Church in America. Both ministers were married with children. One of their wives became a minister in her own right. Some years later, they divorced. My sister-in-law’s mother was divorced, and in her church she was denied the Sacrament of Holy Communion. For many years, the percentage of first marriages ending in divorce has remained constant - approximately 50% - 1 in 2 first marriages end in divorce and the percentage of remarriages ending in divorce is even higher. When I worked in mental health, I attended a seminar on family relationships. The presenter had developed what was known as structural family therapy. Someone asked him a question about his own marriage. I don’t remember the content of the question, but I remember his answer, “My wife and I have been married for 40 years, and we have been divorced many times.”

So, please do not superimpose current divorce laws or current marriage laws on these scriptures. There is no comparison. In the ancient Mediterranean culture, under normal circumstances, individuals really did not get married.

Families did. One family offered a male, the other a female. Their wedding stood for the merger of the large or extended families and symbolized the fusion of the honor of both families involved. It would be undertaken with a view to political and/or economic advantage. Divorce, then, would entail the dissolution of these extended family ties. It represented a challenge to the family of the former wife and would likely result in family feuding.

Also, in the Lord’s day, adultery was punishable by death. Remember, when Joseph found out Mary was with child, yet he had not “known” her in the Biblical sense, he wanted to divorce her. In this case, Joseph would have been dishonored. Could this be why Jesus was so sensitive to this issue? Could Jesus also have been sensitive to his own sorrow that John the Baptist was beheaded because he challenged Herod for marrying his brother’s wife?

It is important to read this text carefully, because in Mark's community, what is prohibited is not divorce, but divorce and remarriage or divorce in order to marry again. And, within Judaism at this time, there was disagreement about the reason the divorce could occur. One group said that only adultery on the part of the woman was grounds for divorce. Another group said that a man could divorce his wife for any reason. The world in which Jesus lived was patriarchal. Women were regarded as property of their father, and then their husband.

But, if we look closer, this passage is not about divorce. It is about another attempt to test Jesus by church leaders who were threatened by his power and popularity. There was a book written a few years ago titled, *The 103 Questions Jesus Asked and the 3 He Answered*. Here is one of the questions, "What did Moses say?" Jesus was not trying to win a debate. Jesus was showing the Pharisees of every age that there are no loopholes in God's law. God's love will always prevail.

But then, Mark moves to even higher ground and Jesus once again defies the conventions of the time by welcoming women and children. Some of the most vulnerable people in society. "Welcome the kingdom of God as you would welcome a child." A child had very low status in society and would not bring you honor or status by welcoming one. But what Jesus is saying is that God is not experienced in honor, status or power. God is experienced in weakness. Entering God's kingdom is not a way to become first or great, but a way to identify with the least and to serve simply for Jesus' sake.

Jesus followers, not just his disciples that followed him to Jerusalem, but us, are completely dependent on the gift of salvation and new life, just as a child is completely dependent. To enter the kingdom of God is to associate with those society considers of no value or who have no status.

So who are the vulnerable, not just in our society, but in the world today? Children especially remain vulnerable today, no different from Jesus day. That is why these mothers brought their children to see Jesus. Many of these little ones would not make it past the first year of life. A woman with children, without a husband and without a viable means of support was at great risk. Women and children then as well as today were vulnerable to human trafficking. This is why Nigerian school girls in Nigeria were kidnapped from their school.

In the movie "Water," set in India in the 20th century, an 8 or 9 year old girl named Nujood is sold to a man by her parents. If she displeases him, he can divorce her. In the movie, later on he dies. She is now a widow and must live in a community apart from the rest of society with other widows.

Jesus laying on of hands signifies healing. This is the role of the church and its purpose throughout history - to be a place of compassion, healing, restoration; a place of acceptance and understanding. It occurred to me that one of the reasons people may not come to the church (and I am talking about the larger cultural context) is because they do not find these qualities in the church. We have no business treating anyone as if they were not made in God's image.

This morning we are dedicating in prayer a number of health care kits, school kits and quilts to simply serve for Jesus' sake for God's children in need around the world, because we do believe that all human beings are created in God's image.

This gospel message is not about our remaining faithful, because we always come up short whether being faithful to God or to each other. This gospel message is about God's faithfulness from the beginning. God has embraced us and remains faithful to us and never lets go and never lets us alone. Even if we are living be-yond the boundaries of God's law, we are never be-yond the boundary of God's love. That is the Good News. Amen.

## APOSTLES CREED

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

Holy One, you have raised up faithful leaders throughout history. Empower those discerning a call to ministry and all seminarians especially Vicar Scott Brubaker, that they continue to be formed for the sake of the gospel. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

You have established a diverse and beautiful creation. Revive declining species and preserve endangered lands. Cultivate in us a sense of wonder for the world you created. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

You desire for us not to be alone and to live in community with one another. Strengthen relationships between nations and peoples, that we celebrate and support one human family.

Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

You share in our experiences and struggles. Bless all who live with any mental or physical disability. Inspire creative communities, spaces, and environments that are accessible and hospitable. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

You have established and nurtured relationships that extend beyond those gathered here today. Bless members who can no longer travel to worship with us (*especially*) Willis Beam, Lynn Beard, Henry Bowman, Jill Clubb and family, Bishop James Dunlop and family, Jacob Garman, Weston Hertzler, Alma Hollingsworth, Amy Kenavan, Hunter Leisey, Lillian Logeman, James Martin, Pastor Royal Olson, Judy Perry, Connie Reight, Norma Rhoads, Lisa Riley, Gerald Styer, Evelyn Wissler, Doris Witwer, Wyatt Wolfe. Be with Military Personnel, First Responders, Healthcare Workers and the helpers and the residents at Nursing Homes and remind us of their continued role in this community of faith. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

You promise eternal life to all your children. Thank you for the people of faith who have gone before us. Strengthen our trust we have in you. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

*Assisting Minister:* Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. **Amen.**

## THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

The congregation responds with, **Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

## FRACTION:

The table of life is spread before us. Receive the goodness and mercy of God. All are welcome at this table where Christ is the host and the meal.

## COMMUNION

*The congregation is seated. Lutherans teach that Christ is truly present with, in, and under the bread and wine of Holy Communion. Those who wish to receive only a blessing should indicate this by crossing their arms over their chest. As the ministers distribute the elements, they say these words: The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you. Each person may respond: Amen.*

## POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen us  
and keep us in God's grace. **Amen**

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

*Assisting Minister:* Let us pray: Holy and compassionate God, in bread and wine you give us gifts that form us to be humble and courageous. May your words come to life in our serving and in our witness, that we might speak a living voice of healing and justice to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our rock and redeemer. **Amen.**

## **BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor ✝ and give you peace.

**Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Proclaim the Good News. **Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE:**     *Menuet (Suite Gothique)* – Léon Boëllmann

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Music Notes:**

This morning's postlude is one of 30 voluntaries written by John Stanley (1712-1786), a blind English organist and composer. At the age of 17, he became the youngest person to obtain a Bachelor of Music degree from Oxford University. In 1734, he was appointed organist at the Temple Church in London - a position he held until his death. It was here that his brilliant playing upon the organ and harpsichord attracted the attention of many fine musicians, including Handel who regularly visited the church to hear him. From 1779 until his death, Stanley served King George III as Master of the King's Music. Léon Boëllmann (1862-1897), the composer of the postlude, was a French musician best remembered for a small number of organ compositions. This morning's postlude is taken from *Suite Gothique*, his most popular work written in 1895. A favored organ student of Eugène Gigout, Boëllmann became known as a dedicated teacher, gifted composer, and successful performer before his untimely death at age 35.

**ALTAR FLOWERS** today are placed by Ken and Janet Craley in honor of October birthdays.

## **FELLOWSHIP AFTER CHURCH AND ADULT FORUM**

Please join us for coffee, tea, etc. in the social hall sitting at socially distanced tables.

For eight weeks during the fall, we will be experiencing a book entitled Honoring Our Neighbor's Faith. A presenter from that faith will be invited to speak about their faith tradition each Sunday during the eight week period in the fall.

## **BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS**

This afternoon at 1:00 PM, please join us for the Blessing of the Animals in commemoration of St. Francis of Assisi feast day, which is actually tomorrow.

The blessing will occur outside under the canopy of the handicapped entrance to the church.

At 2:30 pm, Pastor Oplinger will bless the animals and offer the invocation for the polo match today in Forney Field.

## **HELP NEEDED**

**CHURCH TREASURER** - Beginning 2022, there will be a need for a

Treasurer at Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church. The church treasurer is

responsible for working with the Finance Committee, in the development of an annual budget, paying bills and keeping the debits and credits of the monthly fiscal process. Bookkeeping skills are important as well as computer literacy and willingness to learn the computer program for the church's fiscal operations. Payroll and taxes functions are handled by a third party payor. The current treasurer is willing to be available until the end of 2021 to help train the new treasurer. Please contact Pastor Oplinger if you are interested in learning more about the ministry of the Church Treasurer. Deadline to apply is October 1, 2021.

## **PART-TIME CHURCH OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR** - Jerusalem

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Rothsville, PA seeks an office administrator for a church office for 16 hours a week. Professional appearance and good communication skills important. Typing and computer skills necessary. Preparation of weekly worship bulletins, updating website weekly, monthly newsletter and annual report primary responsibilities. If interested, Please contact Pastor Bonnie Oplinger @ 484-388-0563. (9/2021)

**CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBERS** - There will be a need for two Congregational Council members to be elected in December

One is for a three year term, another is for a one year term.

"The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It provides leadership in long-range planning, is responsible for the financial and property matters of the congregation, the employment and supervision of the staff of the congregation and see that the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws are carried out."

*(Congregational Constitution for Jerusalem Evangelical*

*Lutheran Church of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2017).*

**ZOOM WORSHIP** - Here are the links for worship each Sunday moving forward. We will continue to print them in the bulletin and newsletter and they will also be available on the church's website @ [www.jerusaluth.org](http://www.jerusaluth.org).

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7157358191>

**Call into worship by dialing this number (long-distance fees may apply):**

**+1 929 205 6099**

**Enter Meeting ID: 715 735 8191 (then press # twice)**

***Lititz-Warwick Community Chest Food Bank***

**September** Food Bank Suggestions:

- Instant mashed potatoes
- Jelly
- Laundry detergent (please no "pods" due to risk to families with children)



***Items can be placed in the drop box on the first floor by the elevator - thank you!***

## SERVING IN THE LITURGY

**Pastor.....The Rev. Bonnie Oplinger**  
**Organist.....Roger Kurtz**  
**Assisting Minister.....Dave Carson**  
**Lector.....Dave Carson**  
**Altar Guild.....**  
**Ushers.....Andy Anderson & Claude Grube**  
**Zoom Monitor.....Michael Fetter**  
**Acolyte.....Zachary Fetter**

### **Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church**

36 Church Street, Rothsville (Lititz), PA

717.626.8972 | [www.jerusaluth.org](http://www.jerusaluth.org)

[jerusaluth@windstream.net](mailto:jerusaluth@windstream.net)

Pastor's email: [jerusaluthpastor@windstream.net](mailto:jerusaluthpastor@windstream.net)

**The Reverend Bonnie M. Oplinger**, *Pastor*

**Mr. Roger L. Kurtz**, *Director of Music*

**Joan C. Dull**, *Sexton*

**Congregation**, *Ministers*

**FIRST READING: Genesis 2:18-24**

The LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner."<sup>19</sup> So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.<sup>20</sup> The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner.<sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.<sup>22</sup> And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.<sup>23</sup> Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
this one shall be called Woman,  
for out of Man this one was taken."

<sup>24</sup>Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

**Psalm 8**

**SECOND READING: Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12**

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets,<sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds.<sup>3</sup> He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,<sup>4</sup> having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

<sup>2-3</sup>Now God did not subject the coming world, about which we are speaking, to angels.<sup>4</sup> But someone has testified somewhere,

"What are human beings that you are mindful of them,  
or mortals, that you care for them?"

<sup>7</sup>You have made them for a little while lower than the angels;

you have crowned them with glory and honor,  
"subjecting all things under their feet."

Now in subjecting all things to them, God left nothing outside their control. As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them,<sup>9</sup> but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

<sup>10</sup>It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings.<sup>11</sup> For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters,<sup>12</sup> saying,

"I will proclaim your name to my brothers  
and sisters,  
in the midst of the congregation I will praise  
you."

**GOSPEL: Mark 10:2-16**

Some Pharisees came, and to test [Jesus] they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?"<sup>3</sup> He answered them, "What did Moses command you?"<sup>4</sup> They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her."<sup>5</sup> But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you.<sup>6</sup> But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.'<sup>7</sup> For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife,<sup>8</sup> and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh.<sup>9</sup> Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

<sup>10</sup>Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter.<sup>11</sup> He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her;<sup>12</sup> and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

<sup>13</sup>People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them.<sup>14</sup> But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.<sup>15</sup> Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it."<sup>16</sup> And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

**Next Sunday's Readings:** Amos 5:6-7, 10-15; Psalm 90:12-17; Hebrews 4:12-16; Mark 10:17-31.

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Tracks 1 and 2  
ELCA-R