

August 21, 2025
11th Sunday after Pentecost



The Door Is Very Narrow

When it comes to the uncomfortable topic of who goes to heaven and who goes to hell, it is natural to want to avoid the issue. One way we do that is to direct our attention to more theoretical questions. “What is heaven like?” “How old will we be there?” Today someone asks, “Lord, are only a few going to be saved?” Jesus brushes all such questions aside. Instead, he answers the question we should be asking. “How might I be saved?” Jesus explains there is only one way—entering through a very narrow door. Jesus’ words cut deep! For he teaches that it is very easy to develop a false sense of security about our standing before God based on some superficial familiarity we have with him. Jesus warns that many who think they are on the path to heaven will end up shut out. These wounding words of Jesus provide healing, pushing us toward that narrow door: faith in him.



Opening Hymn

Today Your Mercy Calls Us CW²¹ 916



- 1 To - day your mer - cy calls us to wash a - way our sin.
- 2 To - day your gate is o - pen, and all who en - ter in
- 3 To - day our Fa - ther calls us, his Ho - ly Spir - it waits;
- 4 O all - em - brac - ing Mer - cy, O ev - er - o - pen Door,



How - ev - er great our tres - pass, what - ev - er we have been,
shall find a Fa - ther's wel - come and par - don for their sin.
his bless - ed an - gels gath - er a - round the heav'n - ly gates.
what should we do with - out you when heart and eye run o'er?



how - ev - er long from mer - cy our hearts have turned a - way,
The past shall be for - got - ten, a pres - ent joy be giv'n,
No ques - tion will be asked us how of - ten we have come;
When all things seem a - gainst us, to drive us to de - spair,



your pre - cious blood can wash us and make us clean to - day.
a fu - ture grace be prom - ised, a glo - rious crown in heav'n.
al - though we oft have wan - dered, it is our Fa - ther's home.
we know one gate is o - pen, one ear will hear our prayer.

Text: Oswald Allen, 1816–1878, alt.

Tune: Friedrich K. Anthes, 1812–after 1857

Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

INVOCATION AND CONFESSION OF SINS

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen

M: Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

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

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son ☩ and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen**

PRAYER AND PRAISE

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

Hymn

From All that Dwell Below the Skies CW²¹ 605



1 From all that dwell be - low the skies let the Cre -
2 E - ter - nal are your mer - cies, Lord; e - ter - nal



a - tor's praise a - rise. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
truth at - tends your Word. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



Let the Re - deem - er's name be sung through ev - 'ry
Your praise shall sound from shore to shore till suns shall



land, by ev - 'ry tongue. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
rise and set no more. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Prayer of the Day

M: 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.

C: Amen

Be Seated

THE WORD

First Lesson

Isaiah 66:18–24

Many of those closest to God's saving acts will reject them and perish. Meanwhile, many who seemed to be far from the kingdom will hear of God's grace, believe, and be saved.

¹⁸As for me, because of their works and their thoughts,
the time is coming for me to gather people from all nations and all languages.
They will come, and they will see my glory.

¹⁹Then I will set up a sign among them,
and I will send out survivors from among them to the nations,
to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, to those who are archers,
to Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands,
who have not heard my message and have not seen my glory.
Then they will declare my glory among the nations.

²⁰Then they will bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the LORD. They will bring them on horses and chariots and wagons and mules and dromedaries to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD, in the same way that the people of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel to the LORD's house. ²¹Even from among these people I will take priests and Levites, says the LORD.

²²For just as the new heavens and the new earth that I am making will remain standing before me, declares the LORD, in the same way your offspring and your name will stand. ²³As often as one new moon follows another and one Sabbath follows another, all flesh will come to worship before me, says the LORD.

²⁴They will go out, and they will see the corpses of the ones who were rebelling against me, for their worm will not die, and their fire will not be quenched, and all flesh will be horrified by them. (EHV)

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 103 CW⁹³

Refrain



I will hear what the Lord pro-claims: peace to his peo - ple.

Psalm tone



Praise the LORD, O my soul;*
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
He forgives all your sins*
and heals all your diseases;
he redeems your life from the grave*
and crowns you with love and compassion.

Refrain

The LORD is compassionate and gracious,*
slow to anger, abounding in love.
He does not treat us as our sins deserve*
or repay us according to our iniquities.
For as high as the heavens are above the earth,*
so great is his love for those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,*
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Refrain

As a father has compassion on his children,*
so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;
for he knows how we are formed,*
he remembers that we are dust.
Our days are like grass, like a flower of the field;*
the wind blows over it and it is gone.
But the LORD'S love is with those who fear him*
from everlasting to everlasting.

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

Refrain

Second Lesson

Hebrews 12:18-24

Entering the narrow door into eternal life has nothing to do with keeping the Law of Moses. It has everything to do with Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, who paid for our sin with his blood.

¹⁸You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to burning fire, to darkness, to gloom, to a raging storm, ¹⁹to the sound of a trumpet, and to a voice that spoke. Those who heard the voice asked that not one more word be added, ²⁰because they could not endure what was commanded: “If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned.” ²¹The sight was so terrifying that even Moses said, “I am trembling with fear.”

²²Instead, you have come to Mount Zion, the city of the living God; to the heavenly Jerusalem; to tens of thousands of angels in joyful assembly; ²³to the church of the firstborn whose names are written in heaven; to God, who is the judge of all; to the spirits of righteous people who have been made perfect; ²⁴to Jesus, the mediator of a new testament; and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better message than the blood of Abel. (EHV)

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 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

Hymn of the Day

Good News of God Above *CW²¹ 905*



1 Good news of God a - bove is ours to tell a -
 2 The love of Christ pro - claim, who left his home on
 3 The Lord of glo - ry lives! From cross and death and
 4 Hear now the Mas - ter's word to those who bear his



broad, the Fa - ther's ev - er - last - ing love in
 high; to live our hu - man life he came, our
 grave his own a - bun - dant life he gives to
 name: "So send I you," till all have heard, "make



Christ the ris - en Lord. For neigh - bors near and
 hu - man death to die. The Fa - ther's on - ly
 those he died to save. His right - eous - ness and
 known, de - clare, pro - claim!" Go forth in all the



far the seed of life is sown; then spread the
 Son be - came the sin - ners' friend, our lot to
 peace de - clare from sea to sea; his prais - es
 earth; em - brace the path he trod with Christ be -



seed by word and deed to make the Sav - ior known.
 share, our sin to bear, and death's do - min - ion end.
 sound the world a - round for Christ has made us free.
 side as friend and guide to bring good news of God.

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, b. 1926

Tune: Kermit G. Moldenhauer, b. 1949

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Sermon

Luke 13:22-30

Jesus urges, "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door."

²²*Jesus* went on his way from one town and village to another, teaching, and making his way to Jerusalem. ²³Someone said to him, "Lord, are only a few going to be saved?"

He said to them, ²⁴"Strive to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able. ²⁵Once the master of the house gets up and shuts the door, you will begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open for us!' He will tell you in reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from.' ²⁶Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.' ²⁷And he will say, 'I don't know where you come from. Depart from me, all you evildoers.'

²⁸There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown outside. ²⁹People will come from east and west, from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God. ³⁰And note this: Some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last." (EHV)

Stand

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

O God, you are the Judge of all, yet you have sprinkled us with the blood of Christ and count us as your righteous ones.

Your love is with those who fear you; **from everlasting to everlasting.**

You have brought us to yourself by Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant. Keep us near to you that we may confess your name in word and action and finally take our place at the feast in your eternal kingdom.

Your love is with those who fear you; **from everlasting to everlasting.**

Send your Word to distant lands that have not heard of your fame, and gather people of all nations and languages that they may come and see your glory in the kingdom of God.

Your love is with those who fear you; **from everlasting to everlasting.**

You have committed to your holy Church the care and nurture of your children. Give wisdom to those who teach and those who learn, that they may rejoice in the knowledge of your truth and serve you from generation to generation.

Your love is with those who fear you; **from everlasting to everlasting.**

You do not treat us as our sins deserve but have removed our transgressions from us. Let the Word of your grace and love in Christ lift the guilt from those who feel its burden and turn to you.

Your love is with those who fear you; **from everlasting to everlasting.**

You forgive all our sins and heal all our diseases because of your compassion. Have mercy on all who wait for you, [*especially...*]. Give healing to the sick and rest to the weary.

Your love is with those who fear you; **from everlasting to everlasting.**

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

Almighty and eternal God, you are the brightness of the faithful. Fill the world with your glory and show yourself to the nations by the light of Christ; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

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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.

THE SACRAMENT

Because God speaks of communing together as an expression of unity in faith (1 Corinthians 10:17) and warns there are dangers in taking communion in an improper way (1 Corinthians 11:27-29), we practice close communion. WELS, ELS, and members of other churches around the world who are in fellowship with WELS are welcome to commune with us. If you would like to learn more about becoming a member and communing with us in the future, please speak to pastor or an usher.

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.

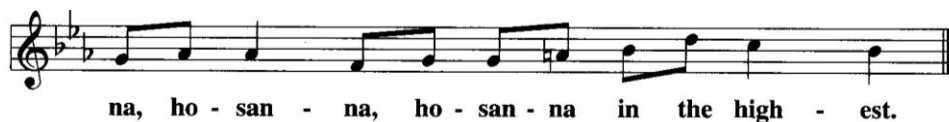
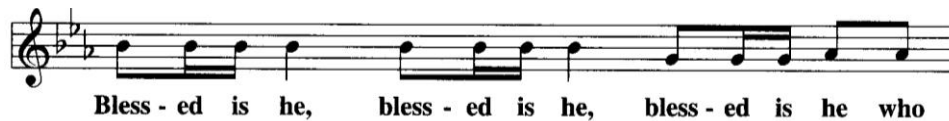
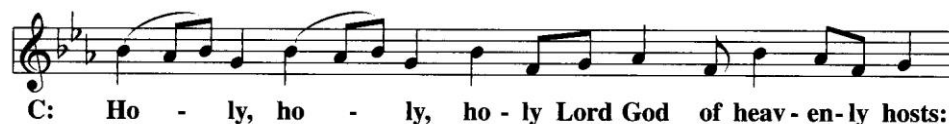
C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Proper Preface

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 promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock till 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

Sanctus



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.**

O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD

Agnus Dei

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

Be Seated

COMMUNION

Please remember to register for communion

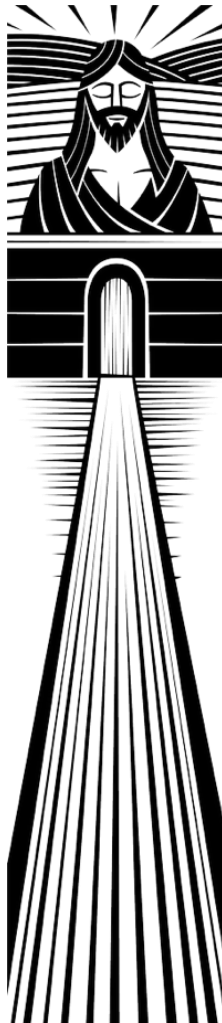
Morrison and Shirley Location: Marking "C" on the communication card in your pew. Please place communication card in basket behind the last pew as your leave today.

Distribution helps:

Morrison Location: 2 individual cups of white grape juice are available in each tray for those who prefer/need to have a nonalcohol alternative to wine. Gluten free wafers are also available. Hold your hand palm down to let the server know you would like the gluten free wafer.

Shirley Location: one individual cup of purple grape juice is available in each tray for those who prefer/need to have a nonalcohol alternative to wine. There are gluten free combination cups also available on the distribution table. Take one from the table if you would like the gluten-free combination cups that has both a gluten-free wafer on one side and wine on the other. **DRIVE IN WORSHIPPERS:** If you'd like communion today, please turn on your hazard lights ◀▶ during the distribution hymn. Leave them on until after Pastor visits your car. He will bring a combination cup which contains a wafer on one side and wine on the other.

You can use the questions on page 295 (blue hymnal), page 156 (red hymnal), on page 16 of this service folder, or the review of Lord's Supper on page 293 (blue hymnal) to prepare for communion.



Distribution Hymn

I Lay My Sins on Jesus CW²¹ 798



1 I lay my sins on Je - sus, the spot - less Lamb of God;
 2 I lay my wants on Je - sus, all full - ness dwells in him;
 3 I rest my soul on Je - sus, this wea - ry soul of mine;
 4 I long to be like Je - sus, meek, lov - ing, low - ly, mild;



he bears them all and frees us from the ac - curs - ed load.
 he heals all my dis - eas - es, my soul he does re - deem.
 his right hand me em - brac - es, I in his arms re - cline.
 I long to be like Je - sus, the Fa - ther's ho - ly child.



I bring my guilt to Je - sus to wash my crim - son stains
 I lay my griefs on Je - sus, my bur - dens and my cares;
 I love the name of Je - sus, Im - man - uel, Christ, the Lord;
 I long to be with Je - sus a - mid the heav'n - ly throng,



white in his blood most pre - cious till not a spot re - mains.
 he from them all re - leas - es, he all my sor - rows shares.
 like fra - grance on the breez - es his name a - broad is poured.
 to sing with saints his prais - es, to learn the an - gels' song.

Text: Horatius Bonar, 1808–1889, alt.
 Tune: Samuel S. Wesley, 1810–1876
 Text and tune: Public domain

M: Hear the prayers of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of your Son, may long for his coming again, and that all who have received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Benediction

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

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

Closing Hymn

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow CW²¹ 617

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all
creatures here below; praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711

Tune: Trente quatre Pseaumes de David, Geneva, 1551, ed. Louis Bourgeois

Text and tune: Public domain

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From All that Dwell Below the Skies

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.

Tune: Geistliche Kirchengesäng, Köln, 1623

Text and tune: Public domain

PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION

Q: What does God tell me about myself in his holy Word?

A: *He says that I am a sinner and deserve only his punishment.*

Q: What should I do if I am not aware of my sins or am not troubled by them?

A: *I should examine myself according to the Ten Commandments and ask how well I have carried out my responsibilities as a husband or wife or single person, as a parent or child, an employer or employee, a teacher or student. Have I loved God with all my heart, gladly heard his Word, and patiently endured affliction? Have I been disobedient, proud, or unforgiving? Have I been selfish, lazy, envious, or quarrelsome? Have I lied or deceived, taken something not mine, or given anyone a bad name? Have I abused my body or permitted indecent thoughts to linger in my mind? Have I failed to do what is right and good?*

Q: When I realize that I have sinned against God and deserve his punishment, what should I do?

A: *I will confess before God all my sins, those which I remember as well as those of which I am unaware. I will pray to God for his mercy and forgiveness.*

Q: How do I receive his gracious forgiveness?

A: *His Word assures me that Jesus led a pure and holy life for me and died on the cross for me to pay the full price for all my sins. Through faith in Jesus, I have been clothed in my Savior's perfect righteousness and holiness.*

Q: What further assurance do I have that Jesus is mine and I am his?

A: *In Holy Communion he gives me his body and blood together with the bread and wine as a truly life-giving food and drink to unite me with him and my fellow believers. By means of this sacrament, Jesus not only forgives my sins but sweeps away all my doubts about his love for me, gives me his own strength to live a God-pleasing life, and grants me a joyful foretaste of heaven.*

Q: How can I be sure that I receive all these blessings in the Lord's Supper?

A: *I have his own word spoken as his last will and testament on the night before he died. There he tells me: "Take and eat; this is my body. Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me."*

Q: How will I respond to this priceless gift from Jesus?

A: *I will daily thank and praise him for his love to me. With his help I will fight temptation, do my best to correct whatever wrongs I have done, and serve him and those around me with love and good works.*

Lord Jesus, with joy and gratitude I now come to your table to receive the precious food of your life-giving body and blood. May it strengthen me to remain in you as you remain in me, so that I bear much fruit in devoted service to you and in acts of kindness to others. Amen.