

Old Testament Reading:
Ecclesiastes 5:10–20

¹⁰He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity. ¹¹When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes? ¹²Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.

¹³There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, ¹⁴and those riches were lost in a bad venture. And he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. ¹⁵As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand. ¹⁶This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go, and what gain is there to him who toils for the wind? ¹⁷Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness in much vexation and sickness and anger.

¹⁸Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. ¹⁹Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. ²⁰For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.

Epistle: Hebrews 4:1–13

¹Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. ²For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. ³For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said,

“As I swore in my wrath,
“They shall not enter my rest,”

although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. ⁴For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.” ⁵And again in this passage he said,

“They shall not enter my rest.”

⁶Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, ⁷again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,

“Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts.”

⁸For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. ⁹So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, ¹⁰for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

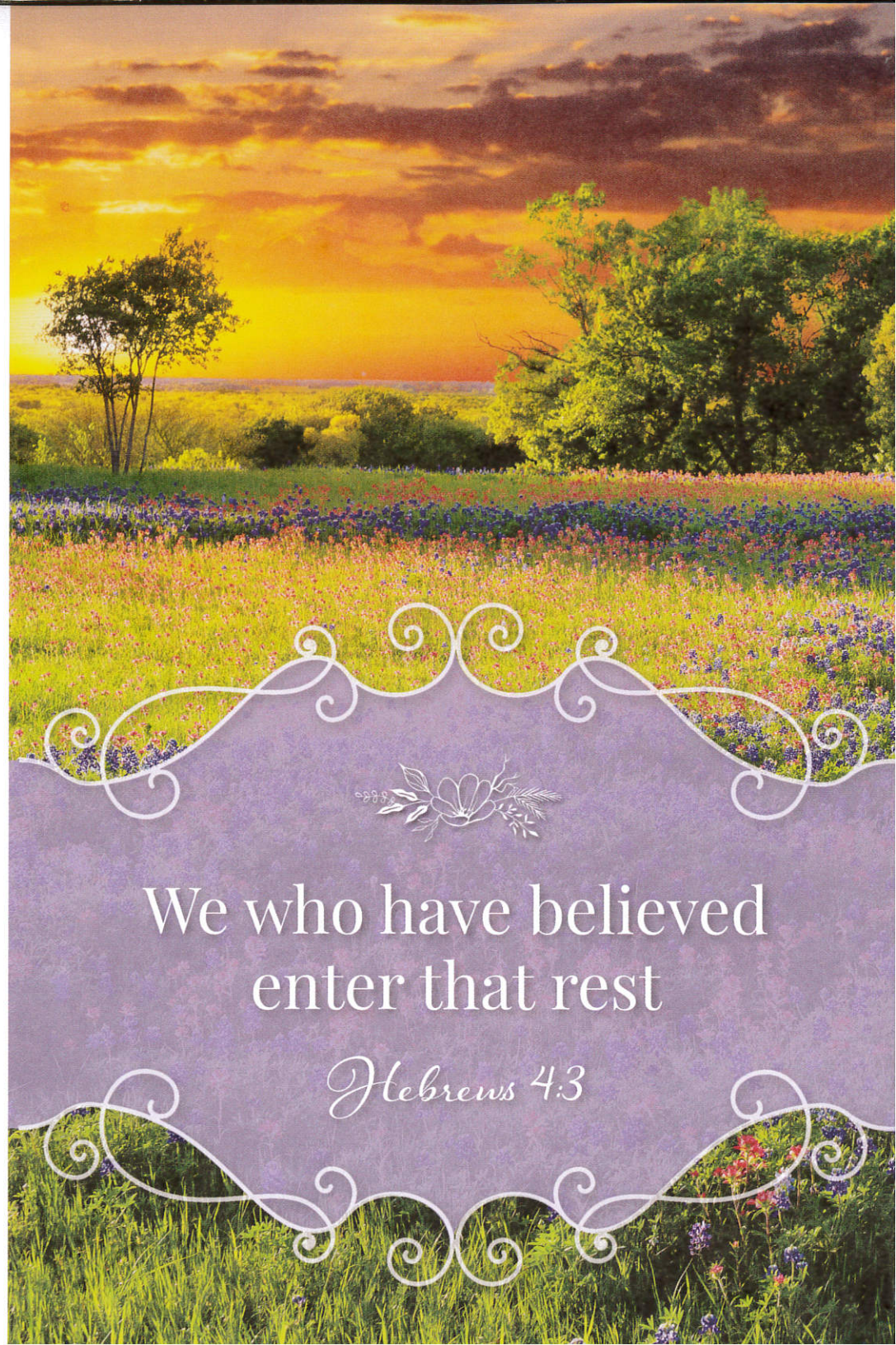
¹¹Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. ¹²For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. ¹³And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Holy Gospel: Mark 10:23–31

²³Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” ²⁴And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” ²⁶And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, “Then who can be saved?” ²⁷Jesus looked at them and said, “With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.” ²⁸Peter began to say to him, “See, we have left everything and followed you.” ²⁹Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, ³⁰who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. ³¹But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”



About the Cover: The occasional glimpse of the beauty of blooming flowers at the golden setting of the sun testifies to the work of our amazing Creator. After creating this world with all of its splendor, God rested on the seventh day (the Sabbath). Our sin, however, introduced death into this world, and no amount of our work can merit salvation and rest. Yet, in Christ we have eternal Sabbath rest in God for all the work He has done on His cross, in the tomb, and upon His resurrection to accomplish our salvation.



We who have believed
enter that rest

Hebrews 4:3

St. John's Lutheran Church (LCMS)
8948 N 1900 Ave Geneseo, IL 61254
815-989-2025

October 20, 2024 Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

Divine Service Setting Four (Lutheran Service Book, p. 203)

Hymn of Invocation 816 From All That Dwell Below the Skies

Invocation and Versicles (p. 203)

Psalm 119:9-16

BETH

⁹How can a young man keep his way pure?

By guarding it according to your word.

¹⁰**With my whole heart I seek you;**

let me not wander from your commandments!

¹¹I have stored up your word in my heart,
that I might not sin against you.

¹²**Blessèd are you, O Lord;**
teach me your statutes!

¹³With my lips I declare
all the just decrees of your mouth.

¹⁴**In the way of your testimonies I delight**
as much as in all riches.

¹⁵I will meditate on your precepts
and fix my eyes on your ways.

¹⁶**I will delight in your statutes;**
I will not forget your word.

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.

Kyrie and Gloria in Excelsis (p. 204)

Salutation and Collect of the Day (p. 205)

P O God, Your divine wisdom sets in order all things in heaven
and on earth. Put away from us all things hurtful and give us
those things that are beneficial for us; through Jesus Christ,
Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the
Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Readings (on back of bulletin)

Gradual

Psalm 91:11; 103:1

He will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways.

Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless his holy name!

Alleluia and Verse (p. 205)

Nicene Creed (p. 206)

Hymn of the Day 685 Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus

Sermon

Prayer of the Church

The prayer concludes:

P ...one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Presentation of the Offering

Service of the Sacrament (p. 208)

*(Please see the Communion statement in the pew pads for receiving the
Sacrament at St. John's.)*

Distribution Hymns

665 Be Strong in the Lord

627 Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior

674 Jerusalem, O City Fair and High

Nunc Dimittis (p. 211)

Hymn to Depart 532

The Head That Once Was Crowned with Thorns

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH-LCMS

churchoffice@stjohnsgeneseo.org
Website: www.stjohnsgeneseo.org
<https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo>

**HEARING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE
HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE**

Rev. Timothy Nerud Pastor
815-989-2025 (Office) 612-940-8138 (Cell)

Elder: Aaron Raschke

Greeter: Janet Bertso

Videographers: Joel Werling, Nicole Nerud, or Heidi Nerud

WE PRAY: Holy Spirit, who by the Word of God exposes our innermost being, by the same Word close and heal our wounds that it may be said of us that the surgery was successful and the patient lived; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with You and the Father are one God with dominion over us forever. Amen

WELCOME TO ALL!

We are anxious to share with you the Christ-centered ministry at St. John's. Our Liturgy follows closely the pattern of Word and Lord's Supper handed down from the ancient Church. It is our hope that you will make the Church's life of prayer your own. If you have difficulty following our order of service, please ask someone sitting near you for assistance. We pray that you will receive rich spiritual blessings from your presence here. May the peace and power of our risen Christ be yours always.

OFFICE HOURS

Terri's hours (Monday—Friday, please call ahead) 8 am—12 pm
Pastor's hours (Monday, Pastor's day off)
(Tuesday— Friday) please call ahead

STREAM SERVICES <https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo/> and on the website: www.stjohnsgeneseo.org.

DAILY DEVOTIONS FROM LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES - use this website (www.lhm.org) to receive daily devotions sent to your email or phone. You never have to be without God's word.

All bulletin announcements need to be in the Office by Wednesday mornings.

ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY

Sunday school—0 Adult Bible Class—11 Worship—44

OFFERING

Offering last Sunday \$3,295.00
Weekly giving needed per 2024 Budget \$4,481.54

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES AT ST JOHN'S

Today	8:45 am	SS, Adult/Youth Bible Study
	10:00 am	Divine Worship/Holy Communion
Thursday	6:30 pm	SS Teachers' meeting
Next Sunday	8:45 am	SS, Adult/Youth Bible Study
	10:00 am	Divine Worship
	11:00 am	Quarterly Voters' meeting

*I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD."
Psalms 122:1*

MARK 10:29–30 – “Jesus said, ‘Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the Gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life.’ This is Jesus’ encouragement for every faithful disciple — let it encourage you today.

ATTENDANCE BOOK—We ask everyone attending this morning to sign the red attendance book found at the end of each pew, then pass it back.

SPECIAL COLLECTION—For the **next 2 Sundays** you have the opportunity to help those affected by the hurricanes in Florida. Please put your gifts in the offering plate on the table in the center of the Narthex. Please make checks out to ‘St. John's Lutheran Church’ with the word hurricane in the memo. It has been brought to my attention that Thrivent will give a dollar for every two given through the Thrivent website. We will try and utilize this opportunity for added funds.

2025 PROPOSED BUDGET is available for you to preview. They are on the table under the Office window. If you take a copy, **PLEASE BRING IT WITH YOU** to the Voters' meeting Sunday, October 27th, which will be held after the worship service.

THANKSGIVING FOOD BASKETS—We will again be gathering pantry items for those in need. We currently have the names of 3 families. If you know of a family needing help, please let Linda Aper or Marilyn Woods know. We are asking that our congregation bring pantry items of food, paper, cleaning etc. to create a ‘Thanksgiving Box’ for each family. You may also give a monetary gift. Your gift can be brought now through Sunday, November 10th. There is a table next to the office to place your gifts. Thank you for loving your fellow man.

PHONE NUMBER CHANGE—The church phone number is changed. Please make a note of this change. **The new church number is: 815-989-2025.** This will connect you to either the church office or Pastor's office.

CHRISTIAN LIVING—Mark 10:23-31: When the disciples asked Jesus who can be saved, He answered by telling them that with man alone this is impossible but all things are possible with God! We may not understand why God chose us to be His own, but we rejoice that He did. We who have tasted the goodness of God have a powerful story to share with those who are still searching for meaning in their lives.

ALL SAINTS DAY - We will again be displaying the crosses for our loved ones who have joined the Church Triumphant on All Saints' Day. If you have a 'name' you wish included this year, please add it to the listing on the table outside the coat room.

DOLLAR FOR MISSIONS: The current Dollar for Missions project is for replacement of furnaces at Immanuel Lutheran Student Center, Macomb, which is expected to cost some \$25,000. The Student Center was built 55 years ago. Equipment replacement like this is important so the Gospel can continue to be proclaimed and students can go on being reached there for years into the future. For more information visit <https://www.cidlcms.org/ministry-dfm-current-project.html>. **(Thank you to those at St. John's who consistently support the work of Missions on the District and Synodical level. You are a blessing!)**

ALTAR FLOWERS—The **2023 Flower Chart is now on the bulletin board next to the restrooms.** Cost for weekly flowers are \$30 for two arrangements. We greatly appreciate those who help with providing flowers for Sunday worship services. **Please sign up for a Sunday.**

PRAYER MINISTRY

Remember God's gift of Baptism as you pray:

MISSION—*Pray for preparation before receiving the Sacrament, that all might receive it trusting in the Words of Christ.*

ST JOHN'S—**Mrs. Janelle Gibson**—We offer before You our common request for the well-being of Your church throughout the world that it may be so guided and governed by Your good Spirit that all who profess themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth and hold the faith in unity of spirit in the bond of peace, and the righteousness of life. Specifically, we pray for Janelle and Jay asking Your blessings upon them.

ST. JOHN'S FAMILY—O Lord, You are the great Physician of soul and body. We pray that You would show mercy to Your servants:

Elizabeth Bjork	Paula Chapa	Joyce DeFauw
Betty Firch	Arlyn Helke	Jessica Johnson
Lynne Johnson	Linda Lundquist	Aaron Raschke
Drew Schillinger	Carolyn Wildermuth	Marilyn Woods
Dawn Daebellienn		

Brandon & Shaeli Streeks & family (Adopted Seminarian)

Jon/Anita Clausing (missionaries in Kenya)
Don Eggers (son of friend of Marilyn Woods)
Jodi Martins (daughter of Gary & Darla Johns)
Shandel Loenser

Paul Werner (brother of Dan Werner)
Ron Powell (friend of Brad Gehn)
Justin Rittenhouse (grandson of John/Nancy Wickwire)
Marty Cavato (cousin of Mary Jo Gehn)
Ellen Bauer (grandmother of Joel Werling)
Don Lutz (husband of an LWML friend of Liz Neumann)
Carol Eggers (friend of Marilyn Woods)
Gary Kilstom (friend of Brad Gehn)
Kenneth Cullison (son of Kevin and Stacie Rahn)

MILITARY—We pray for those serving in our military and their families:

Mandy Davila (daughter of Linda Aper)
Luke/Nicole Thompson (son/daughter-in-law of John/Kindra Thompson)
Karl Flynn (son of Mr/Mrs Paul Flynn)
Casey Powers Jr. (step son of Lisa Powers)
Brittany Loenser (daughter of Gabe Loenser)
Rylie Hallendorff (grand-daughter of Carolyn & Dan Werner)

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

“God's grace is costly (the Cross is the best symbol of all) and God is ‘for us, not against us’ because God is the God of creation and nature, history and eternal destiny (Romans 8). Here St. Paul reminds us that we are all adopted into Christ. Just as we are all transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12), so the Gospel has shaped our earthly adoptions and our families—now including three beautiful granddaughters! In our Triune God we are born to a new and living hope, a pro-life and pro-adoption one!” *Pastor Leon and Terri Rosenthal – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

GENESEO INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM invites you to participate in the Thanksgiving program November 27—December 1. Willing hosts will invite international college students into their homes for the Thanksgiving holiday. The guest will arrive in Geneseo by bus approximately 3:45 on Wednesday, November 27. They depart from Geneseo at 2 pm December 1. This is a wonderful opportunity to show the love of Christ to a stranger. For more details, contact the church office ASAP. Application deadline is November 11.

THE COMMUNITY CHOIR has been invited to sing at the Community Thanksgiving service in the HS Fine Arts Commons on Sunday, Nov. 24. Rehearsal begins at 3:00 in the HS choir room and the service begins at 4:00. We will sing "Hymn to Joy" (Comm. choir sang this summer) and "Cantate Domino" by Althouse.

Please reply to Pam Edwards (singplay53@gmail.com) by Oct. 31. All are welcome to join us!

Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

October 20, 2024

Text: Hebrews 4:1-13 (Epistle)

Other Texts: Ecclesiastes 5:10-20 (Old Testament); Mark 10:23-31 (Gospel)

“Entering the Lord’s Rest”

Grace, mercy and peace be yours from God our Father through faith in the Lord Jesus

Christ.

The Epistle to the Hebrews was first written to Jewish Christians who were wavering in faith due to persecution for being disciples of Jesus with some considering returning to Judaism. This seemed to have two positive effects as on one hand it would restore their friendships with their fellow Jews as well as return them to the larger Jewish fellowship within the synagogue, while on the other hand it would stop any Roman persecution since Judaism was a legal religion in the empire while Christianity would not. And so it is written, “Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.”

The first thing this teaches is that Christianity and Judaism are not both saving religions. For why warn these Jewish believers against returning to Judaism if it could save too? The Bible is clear, one must believe that Jesus of Nazareth is both Yahweh (the LORD) in human flesh and blood, the eternal Son of the Father and the promised Christ, trusting His substitutionary life, death, and resurrection (that is, all done *for us*, in our place) in order to be enter Lord’s rest. For never forget, the Judaism that the author of Hebrews is dealing with is *not* the Old Testament faith, but of the Pharisees who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, what Judaism is still today.

This then presents us with two critical truths: 1) As was already the case in the days of the holy apostles, mission work *must include* reaching out to Jewish people for they are not automatically saved either by believing in the religion of Judaism or by having Jewish blood, and 2) whatever we may, on a political level, think about the current nation of Israel, *as Christians* we do not see it or its citizens as “the chosen nation/people” for the true Israel, Israel fulfilled, is the Christian Church composed of both Jews and Gentiles *who believe in Jesus and are baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity* for it is they, as St. Peter both reminds and assures us, who “are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession.”

Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.

Now we come to the next major considerations of our text, that of the Lord’s rest and our

entering it. What exactly is the Lord's rest? The first idea that might pop into our head is the Promised Land. Truly God had promised to bring His people into Canaan to be their own land where they would not be oppressed by others and so have rest from their enemies. Yet, at least two things in today's text alone speak against Canaan as the fulfillment of the Lord's rest.

First, the author writes, "For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on." Joshua led the people into Canaan, but he had not given the people the rest of which God spoke. Second are the repeated exhortations to enter the Lord's rest, which would be meaningless to these first century Jewish believers as the Promised Land was no longer a land of freedom from outside oppression, but was under Gentile Roman Empire rule. Thus the Lord's rest *is not the earthly Promised Land*. But it did foreshadow it, as did other things as well.

The first thing that confirms the Lord's rest as well as illustrating it is the very first rest recorded in the Bible, as the author writes, "For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: 'And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.'" We note that he writes "somewhere" because this is, in fact, written in three different places.

Now obviously God wasn't tired after creating, needing a nap. And just because He stopped creating new things doesn't mean He took a vacation, for He continues to uphold, preserve, and direct His creation ever since, what we call Providence. No, this was a rest of perfect contentment and infinite satisfaction for everything was "very good." Remember, each of the first six days had an end, "And there was evening and there was morning." But not the seventh. Of course, the *actual* seventh day was still twenty-four hours, ending when the eighth day began. But the lack of these words indicates that this seventh day *symbolized* the rest of God. The eternal, blessed rest of that life in and with God that He desires His children to enjoy.

So this rest is nothing less salvation! It is the fullness of life in the Holy Spirit who is the Lord and giver of life. St. Paul writes that our resurrected bodies will be *spiritual* bodies. Of course, that doesn't mean that they will be ghost-like or some such thing. For Jesus's body also rose to that fullness of spiritual life and yet it remained a physical body able to touch and be touched, even able to eat food. And we know that in the resurrection we will be like Him.

So the Promised Land of old was not an end of itself, but also a promise of a greater gift yet to come. The heavenly promised land, the New Jerusalem, the city of our God where He will dwell with us forever. Where we will never again be oppressed by any enemy. For there all evil, the devil and the demons, and all their human dupes, will be forever separate from the redeemed, trapped in the eternal prison of hell never again able to harm or molest God's people in body or soul. That is the rest that the saints of old truly pressed on towards. And so it is with us.

Dear Christians, this heavenly rest in the new heavens and earth, where faith will be

replaced by sight as God Himself will be visible, where our dear Savior Christ Jesus will no longer care for us through the means of grace, the Word and Sacraments, nor via ministers whom He calls to administer them, but directly in His glorious yet tender fullness, *that* is the goal of our faith. Truly it is the goal of our faith because our faith is a gift from God whose goal it is to bring us into His rest. But we must be sober, watchful, alert, and ready, for not everyone who is called is chosen, as our text records, “As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest.’”

Dear fellow redeemed, we have been called to the eternal rest, called to faith by the Holy Spirit through the good news of the Gospel of Christ crucified and risen, the promise of sins fully forgiven and new life truly given, life now in the Spirit, life forever in that same Spirit. But the Israelites of old were called by that same Gospel and many of them failed to believe. And if we rightly realize that it was not as clear to them as it is to us on the other side of the cross, that only makes our unbelief all the more contemptible and condemnable, God’s wrath all the more just.

The Holy Spirit calls us to fear lest we should fail to reach the eternal rest, to keep striving to enter that rest so that we do not fall by the same sort of disobedience as the Israelites of old did, whose bodies were scattered in the wilderness, and many whose souls were sent to driest land of all. It is clear that they failed to enter because of unbelief, the greatest sin. For where there is either no faith or wrong faith in the soul, there the forgiveness of sins and salvation that Christ Jesus won on the cross is rejected and so lost. It is that terrible sin of unbelief, of not trusting in the Lord Jesus crucified and risen, that damns a person, even as the rest of their sins, since they remain on them, then determine the degrees of torment.

But faith in Christ Jesus is no mere thought without effect. It is living, bearing good fruit: holiness of life, love for God and others, sacrifice of the self, forgiving others, producing virtue and good works. And so too unbelief, that sickly tree, produces its own rotten fruit: breaking the commandments in the heart and mind (the soul!), and with the body, love of self, using others for our own gain, whether emotional, financial, physical, or any combination thereof, hypocrisy, withholding forgiveness by holding grudges, producing vice and sin. We strive to enter Lord’s rest by striving against the devil and his temptations, the world and its sick ways, the selfish self with its wicked desires. We do not give sin an inch, for we know full well it will take a mile, plunging our soul further into the darkness until the light of Christ is gone.

Instead, we fear God’s righteous wrath knowing that those who follow such ways, who do these things, will not inherit His kingdom. We hear His warning, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” So yes we hear, and in true faith we *heed*. And already then there is some relief, “For we who have believed enter that rest.”

Yes, already our spirit has some rest, for in Christ Jesus the devil’s claim on us is undone since our sins are forgiven. That’s why his temptations *can* be resisted, for sin no longer rules us; we are new creations for Christ is in us! Now the flesh can be overcome by the

spirit, for the Holy Spirit fills our spirit and makes our body His holy temple. And we receive His aid every time our soul enjoys that time of rest in His Word, for He forgives us again and so fills us with peace and contentment, empowering us to strive on in this time of diligent duty and painful labor as, once again, our heavenly home, the fullness of the Lord's rest, is assured to His faithful ones.

“So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.” Already now, through faith in Christ Jesus, we can rest from our works in the sense of not needing to strive to earn salvation by them as His redeeming work has already saved us. Yet, labor we still must, lest we lose the prize by our faith being lost through disobedience, love of the world, of money, of sin, or just spiritual laziness. But the one who labors in faith now shall finally fully rest in glory and, more, shall even have their labors of faith, their good works of righteousness follow them.

God keep us faithfully striving now that we might enter the fullness of His rest in the world to come. Amen!

**Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 24B)
20 October 2024**

Collect of the Day

O God, Your divine wisdom sets in order all things in heaven and on earth. Put away from us all things hurtful and give us those things that are beneficial for us; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Prayer of the Church—General Prayer 2

Almighty and eternal God, worthy to be held in reverence by all people everywhere, we give You humble and sincere thanks for the innumerable blessings that You have bestowed on us without any merit or worthiness on our part.

We praise You especially for preserving for us Your saving Word and the holy Sacraments. Grant and preserve to Your holy Church throughout the world purity of doctrine, and provide faithful pastors to preach Your Word with power. Help all who hear the Word rightly to understand and truly to believe it. Send laborers into Your harvest, and open the door of faith to those who do not know You. In mercy, bring to repentance the enemies of Your Church, and grant them amendment of life. Protect and defend Your Church in all tribulation and danger, stopping those who will not turn away from their evil against Your people. Strengthen us and all fellow Christians to set our hope fully on the grace revealed in Christ, and help us to fight the good fight of faith that in the end we may receive the salvation of our souls.

Bestow Your grace on all nations of the earth that peace may prevail and Your Gospel go forth unhindered. Bless especially our country, its inhabitants, and all who are in authority. Let Your glory dwell in our land that mercy and truth, righteousness and peace may abound in all places. We commend to You the care of our schools so that our children may grow in useful knowledge and Christian virtue and thus bring forth wholesome fruits of life.

Graciously defend us from all calamity by fire and water, from war and pestilence, from scarcity and famine, and from every other evil. Heal and restore in body, soul, and earthly goods those who have suffered loss due to the hurricanes and any calamity. Protect and prosper all who labor in their rightful callings, and let all useful arts flourish among us. Be the God and Father of the lonely and the forsaken, the helper of the sick and needy, the comforter of the distressed and those who sorrow. We especially lift up before You: Ellen, Elizabeth, Marty, Paula, Kenneth, Dawn, Joyce, Carol, Don, Betty, Arlyn, Jessica, Lynne, Clint, Gary, Shandel, Linda, Don, Jodi, Ron, Aaron, Justin, Drew, Paul, Carolyn, and Marilyn. Bless Jay and Janelle Gibson in body and soul with all things needful for this life and eternity.

Accept, we implore You, our bodies and souls, our hearts and minds, our talents and powers, together with the offerings we bring before You as our humble service.

Grant Your Holy Spirit to those who come to the Lord's Table this day that they may receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ in sincere repentance and firm faith and to their abundant blessing.

As we are strangers and pilgrims on earth, help us by true faith and a godly life in

accord with Your commandments to prepare for the world to come, doing the work You have given us to do while it is day, before the night comes when no one can work. And when our last hour comes, support us by Your power, and receive us into Your heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Presentation of the Offering

Dear God, how generous You are, providing us with all that we need for our souls and bodies. Instill and increase in us, Your baptized children, a spirit of generosity and unselfishness like Your own that makes us willing to spend and be spent in Your service. Satisfy our personal needs and ever provide the means whereby we may help our neighbor and give rich offerings for Your work. May Christ, who placed His very life in our service, dwell in us, causing us to live our lives and give ourselves for You. In His name we pray. Amen.