

## Order of Worship for October 20, 2024

### Prelude

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

**Opening Hymn: “Christ Sits at God’s Right Hand” - Hymn #564**

**Confession and Absolution p. 203**

### Service of the Word

#### Entrance Psalm:

P: Be strong, and let your heart take courage,

**C: all you who wait for the LORD!**

P: But I trust in You, O LORD;

**C: I say, “You are my God.”**

P: My times are in Your hand;

**C: rescue me from the hand of my enemies and from my persecutors!**

P: Make Your face shine on Your servant;

**C: save me in Your steadfast love!**

**ALL: 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.**

P: Be strong, and let your heart take courage,

**C: all you who wait for the LORD!**

**Kyrie** (*Lord, Have Mercy*) p. 204

**Hymn of Praise** (*Glory to God in the Highest*) p. 204

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray... Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, cleanse us by the power of Your redeeming blood that in purity and peace we may worship and adore Your holy name; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

#### Old Testament Reading: Jeremiah 33:14-18

R: “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and He shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: ‘The LORD is our righteousness.’”

“For thus says the LORD: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, and the Levitical priests shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings, and to make sacrifices forever.”

R: This is the Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God**

**Epistle Reading:** Hebrews 9:11–22

R: When Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) He entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Therefore He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, “This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you.” And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

R: This is the Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Alleluia and Verse** p. 205

**Holy Gospel: John 2:18-22**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the second chapter.

**C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

P: So the Jews said to Him, “What sign do You show us for doing these things?” Jesus answered them, “Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise It up.” The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?” But He was speaking about the temple of His body. When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

P: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

**C: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**Sermon Hymn:** *“Not All the Blood of Beasts”*- Hymn #431

**Sermon:** *“Sacrificed for Us”*- Hebrews 9

Sacrificing of animals—that can sound so crude to us. How can anyone believe that by killing an animal and offering it to a god anything will happen? Sacrifices are not part of our world. Yes, 10 billion animals are slaughtered each year in this country for food and other things, but who of us sees that? It wasn't too long ago that people were used to slaughtering their own animals and butchering and smoking them for meat. In 1950 this church celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary with women in the congregation going to a member's farm and having the farmer catch and chop the heads off chickens so the women could put them in boiling water to take off the feathers. Those chickens provided the meat for the congregational dinner. But today we tend to keep “messy” things away from us like washing clothes in a tub with our arms, cleaning our chamber pots, and scooping manure by hand. Butchering is done at packing plants. Other than having to wash off our hands after opening the package containing the meat, we don't have to mess with anything. And who does the work of butchering at those packing plants? It used to be skilled workers who got decent wages. Now workers are needed, but for unskilled work that pays low wages. Over 40% of the workers are immigrants. Messy things like butchering are not often a part of our lives.

But the sacrificing of animals was a very important part of the life of God's people in the Old Testament. Even before the specific laws given to the people of Israel by God through Moses we already see Cain and Abel making sacrifices to God. Abraham was to sacrifice his own son, Isaac. The law given to Moses described four types of sacrifices-- burnt-offerings, sin-offerings, the guilt-offerings, and the peace-offerings. Animals were also slaughtered when an agreement, a “covenant,” was made. In the Hebrew of the Old Testament you literally “cut” a covenant as animals are cut in two and the two parties make the covenant walk through that blood to show that if you don't keep your side, it is your blood the next time. Sacrifice was so important that it is estimated that 18,000 animals during the time of Jesus were sacrificed each day at the temple in Jerusalem. (Compare that with the 7,200 that could be processed in a big plant today going 24 hours.) But why do something so gruesome?

Can you imagine what Jerusalem and the temple was like with that many animals slaughtered each day? We build packing plants in more rural areas, where they used to be in cities like Chicago and Kansas City. People from there can remember the days when Sioux City was filled with slaughterhouses. You could tell from the smell. Along with the smell is the gore, the bloodiness of all that sacrifice. The valley outside Jerusalem where they threw away the remains was called “Gehenna,” which Jesus used to describe hell. It was known for its stench and spontaneous combustion.

All of that shows the filth and gruesomeness of our sins, the reason why there was sacrifice. Though it would seem that in our sanitized world that the last thing we would want to do is wallow in filth. But that is what we do with our sins. We become like the dogs that not only search out the filthy smells; they want to roll in it. Why do dogs do that? So their prey

won't notice their smell. In that sense they want to fit in. In the same way we want to "fit in" with everyone else.

And the filthiness of sin involves blood. Blood is one of the most difficult stains to remove. In the famous scene in Shakespeare's *MacBeth* we hear Lady Macbeth's curse at not being able to remove a blood spot. In Leviticus 17 we are told about importance of blood. Blood is life. To this day Jewish butchers follow the commands of the Old Testament and bleed out the animals to be killed. The blood was to be offered to God. In other words, life was offered to Him. Our debt to God for our sin is our very lives. The animals were to be sacrificed, their blood, their life force, given to God in our place. In Leviticus 16 this is described in the Day of Atonement, that day once a year when the high priest entered the Holy of Holies in the temple and poured the blood of the sacrificial animal over the Ark of the Covenant. The idea was that the blood "covered" our sins.

But all of that was just a shadow. The real thing is described in Hebrews 9: But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, He went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by His own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

The writer of Hebrews is not giving us an object lesson on how Jesus took away our sins. No, this is really what happened. Jesus sacrificed Himself in our place, not as an animal that can only figuratively save us, but as the Son of God far more worthy and valuable than all of us put together. It is like we owed God \$1 million and He paid \$1trillion in our place. And as we often confess, "The blood of Jesus Christ covers us from all sins."

Not only that, the sacrifice of Jesus confirms God's covenant with us. By sacrificing His own son, God had paid the price we should have paid for not keeping the covenant. It is not a partial covenant, one that might run out, but a full, permanent covenant sealed by the blood of Christ Jesus.

It is that very blood that Jesus offers to us in Holy Communion. The words he used that night before He died were, "This is the new testament in My blood." A testament is given as a last will. It is what is bequeathed. None of that comes true until the person who gives the will dies. Jesus died on the cross for us. His blood is bequeathed to us. We receive it. So what? He says, "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." We receive the full forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus sacrificed for us.

Why is this so important to us? Couldn't God have just waved a magic wand and taken away our sins. He could have, but this is the way God chose to do it. And this way makes it certain that this is the only way. We can look for answers in ways that may seem more attractive, sensible, or "nicer" to us, ways not so harsh as bloody sacrifice. But they are false hopes. No picture of God is more open and clear than Him naked on the cross, shedding His blood for you and me.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Article of Creed**

### **Prayer of the Church:**

P: Lord, in your mercy,  
C: **hear our prayer.**

### **Stewardship Message:**

### **Sharing Our Ministry:**

### **Offering-Voluntary:**

## **Service of the Sacrament**

### **Preface:** p. 208

P: It is truly good, right, and proper that we should in all times and in all places give thanks to You, almighty God, heavenly Father, for You sent Your Son Christ Jesus to be both the High Priest and the eternal sacrifice for our sins. There with angels and all the army of heaven we praise and make great Your holy name, evermore praising You and singing . . .

### **Sanctus:** (*Holy, Holy, Holy*) p. 208

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving:**

P: Blessed are You, O God, King of the universe for You have sealed Your promises to us in the very blood on our Your own Son, Christ Jesus, who was sacrificed on the cross to take away the guilt of our sin. We pray that You send Your Holy Spirit so that in true faith we come to the Sacrament of Jesus true body and blood, which seals Your covenant with us and is the last will and testament Jesus left to us of the forgiveness of sins. All this we as Jesus taught and in His name . . .

### **Lord's Prayer and Words of our Lord, and Peace of the Lord:** p. 209

### **Agnus Dei** (*Lamb of God*): p. 210

**Distribution of Holy Communion:**

“Alleluia, Sing to Jesus” – **Hymn #821**

“To Your Temple, Lord, I Come - **Hymn #981**

**Song After Communion:** ( *Nunc Dimittus*—“*Song of Simeon*” p. 211

**Prayer After Communion:**

P: Christ Jesus, You entered into the heavenly temple and sacrificed Yourself to provide eternal forgiveness for us. As You have blessed us in Holy Communion, go with us into the world as we are Your living temples to show Your love to others. We pray this in Your name.

**C: Amen.**

**Benedicamus and Blessing:** p.212

**Closing Hymn:** “*Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*” – **Hymn #686**

**Postlude:**