

Order of Worship for October 6, 2024 (8:30 AM)

Prelude

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

Opening Hymn: *“This Is the Day The Lord Has Made”* – Hymn #903

Sacrament of Holy Baptism: Rudolf Matthew Wandschneider

Confession and Forgiveness: p. 151

Service of the Word

Entrance Psalm:

P: Oh come, let us worship and bow down;

C: **let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!**

P: For He is our God,

C: **and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.**

P: Today, if you hear His voice,

C: **do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,**

P: when your fathers put Me to the test

C: **and put Me to the proof, though they had seen My work.**

P: or forty years I loathed that generation

C: **and said, “They are a people who go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways.”**

P: Therefore I swore in My wrath,

C: **“They shall not enter My rest.”**

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: Oh come, let us worship and bow down;

C: **let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!**

Kyrie (*“Lord, Have Mercy”*) p. 152-3

Hymn of Praise (*“This Is the Feast”*) p. 155

Salutation p. 156

Prayer of the Day:

P: Father in heaven, You call us now to hold fast to You. Free us from anything that would lead us to put that off and move us today to place our lives in Your hands, through Your

Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

Old Testament Lesson: Numbers 14:20-30

R: Then the Lord said, "I have pardoned, according to your word. But truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these ten times and have not obeyed my voice, shall see the land that I swore to give to their fathers. And none of those who despised me shall see it. But my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and has followed me fully, I will bring into the land into which he went, and his descendants shall possess it. Now, since the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valleys, turn tomorrow and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea."

And the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, "How long shall this wicked congregation grumble against me? I have heard the grumblings of the people of Israel, which they grumble against me. Say to them, 'As I live, declares the Lord, what you have said in my hearing I will do to you: your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness, and of all your number, listed in the census from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against me, not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would make you dwell, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Epistle Lesson: Hebrews 3:7-19

R: Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear God's voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, where your fathers put Me to the test and saw My works for forty years. Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart; they have not known My ways.' As I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'"

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. As it is said, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was God provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel – Luke 19:1-10

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 19th chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord

P: [Jesus] entered Jericho and was passing through. And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.” And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C. Praise to You, O Christ

Sermon Hymn: “*Today Your Mercy Calls us*” – **Hymn #915**

Sermon: “*Today*” - **Hebrews 3:7-19**

What day is it? It’s Sunday, October 6, 2024. It’s the day after Iowa State played Baylor. It’s week 5 of the NFL regular season. It’s the first day of the National League Division Series. It’s 30 days until the election. It’s 80 days until Christmas. That’s what day it is.

What day is it? It is . . . today. And since it is today, that means that this is the most important day for you to hear God’s voice. To hear God’s voice means to receive it and respond to it in repentance and faith. Today we look at examples of those who had the voice of God speaking to them, but they did not repent or believe. Examples from a nation, a people that fell in the wilderness because they did not listen to God’s command. My prayer for you, though, is that you will hear—really hear, and take to heart—what God is saying to you today, so that you will go away from here rejoicing.

Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.” The author of Hebrews is pointing back to the times the Israelites didn’t listen to God’s voice while they were on the Exodus. As they wandered through the wilderness, they had chances to listen to God, but didn’t. They built the golden calf while Moses was up on Mount Sinai receiving the 10 Commandments. When Joshua and Caleb and the ten other spies returned from scouting out the land, they listened to reports of giants in the land instead of the opportunities of a land flowing with milk and honey.

They had their chances to repent, to turn back to God, to follow the God who had saved them from slavery in Egypt. But once they hit a certain point, they had to choose. They had to choose if they were in or out. Just like for us, the day of the test will come, whether you’re ready for it or not. The project will come due, the bill will need to be paid, the scan or surgery will have to happen, the baby will be born. There is a day that is Today.

Today comes with that note of warning. But it also comes as encouragement. In Scripture the word “today” is most notably used in the speeches of Moses in Deuteronomy, his farewell sermon to the people of Israel before they enter the Promised Land. Today reminds them of the demands of the covenant on them today. It also appears at the end of Joshua, when they reaffirm the covenant after they’ve entered and conquered the promised land.

The ancient Greeks had two words for time. Chronos meant the ongoing march of time, day to day, week to week. But the Greek word Kairos meant “the right, proper, favorable time”. Kairos is, like when the tomato is ripe for you to pick, when it’s smart time to buy or sell, or now, Kairos means an opportune time to summon faith's resources in affliction. Kairos is

“Today.” The time and season for carrying out this duty is given as “Today.” “Today, if you hear his voice.” Using the words of Psalm 95 quoted in Hebrews, we’re reminded to make use of the present time, through faith and obedience, to be preserved from hardness of heart and final unbelief.

If you’ve ever seen the musical Rent, there’s a line that makes its way throughout the musical, appearing in multiple songs.

“There’s only us/ There’s only this/ Forget regret/ or life is yours to miss
No other road/ No other way/ No day but today”

Perhaps this sounds a little nihilistic. To give a little context, the people singing these lyrics have been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. In order to escape the fear of the future and what their sickness will bring to them, they focus instead on the here and now. They focus not on whatever they wish they could’ve done, but instead on what they still have time to do. No other route lets them have hope or positivity. Anything else would probably send them into a depression, simply waiting for the end. But no. Today we stand together. Today is the day to live. No day but today.

In this way, the rebellion of Israel serves as a negative example for the church, to which we should listen, unless we fall as they did. That’s the point the writer to the Hebrews is making when he says, “Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.”

To prevent that, we exhort one another, we admonish one another, we encourage one another, to keep on in the way of faith: “But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called ‘today,’ that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.”

Christ is at work in His Church for each individual, but individuals cannot survive on their own. Christ has given us His Church and calls us to give each other His gifts “every day, as long as it is called ‘today,’ that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin”. To be in the Body of Christ, receiving His gifts, is what it means to “share in Christ”. It is there, with His Word placed in your ears and His body and blood placed on your lips, where He sustains you into life everlasting.

Today. The occasion when this duty, coming together to praise God, to remember all that has been done for us, is to happen. It is to be Today, or every day. A day is often used to indicate a period of time, so to do a thing daily is to do it at the right time. Although the expression denotes every day as a separate and distinct day, its sense does not mean that a day should never go by when we do not discharge this duty to each other. We should always encourage each other, pray for one another, spend time in prayer and the Word. It is always the right time. It is always today.

We are people who live in “Today.” We live in God’s day of grace, a time of unparalleled opportunity, the time for hearing the voice of our Heavenly King and receiving the good things he gives us through His word.

Perhaps you’ve heard the anonymous inspirational saying, “Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That’s why we call it the present.” Sometimes today is all we have.

Today I don’t know what tomorrow will bring. Today is right here, I can see it and I can feel it. I embrace it and I know that each breath I take is part of today. I can see today what I could not see then.

Today we share in Christ and embrace his call to journey with soft hearts, not hardened by yesterday’s pain or arrogant by yesterday’s triumph. We are confident in his work for us and in us; we are confident that if today we breathe our last breath we will rest in him alone, just as we do today and every day. We know that Jesus is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. Our lives will not ever be the same, but our hope, our rest and our confidence today is in Christ.

How will we hold our confidence in Christ firm to the end? By hearing God’s voice today. Every day it is called “today” we are called to hear and receive and respond to the voice of the Lord. To respond in repentance and in faith.

Prayer of the Church

P: Lord, in Your mercy;

C: hear our prayer.

Sharing our Ministry

Offering

Service of the Sacrament

Preface p. 160

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 have given us the time now to Your call to follow Your Son, Christ Jesus, who has prepared the way before us. Therefore 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.161

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

P: Blessed are You, Lord God of heaven and earth for You have sent Your salvation to us in Your Son, Christ Jesus. Lead us to accept right and now His invitation to come to the wonderful supper of His true body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins. Send us Your Holy Spirit so we live all our todays as Your people. Hear us as we pray in Jesus' name.

Words of our Lord p.162

Pax Domini (*"Peace of the Lord"*) and **Agnus Dei** (*"Lamb of God"*) p. 163

Distribution of Holy Communion:

"Lead Me, Guide Me" - **Hymn # 721**

"Jesus Comes Today with Healing" - **Hymn # 620**

Dismissal:

Song after Communion: *"Thank the Lord"* p. 164

Prayer After Communion:

P: Let us pray... Christ Jesus we thank You for coming to us in this precious meal to forgive our sins and strengthen our faith in You. Be with us all our todays so that we remain faithful to You, the Father, and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Blessing: p.166 (sung)

Closing Hymn: *"Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer"* - **Hymn # 918**

Postlude