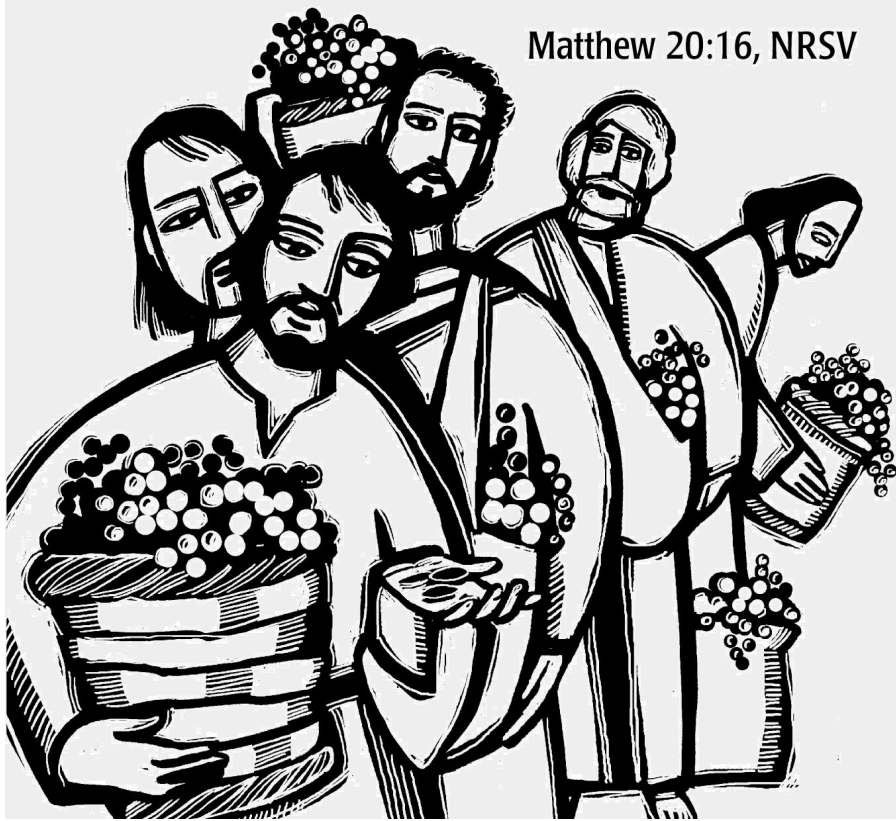


So the **last**
will be **FIRST**,
and the
first
will be **LAST**.

Matthew 20:16, NRSV



Immanuel Lutheran Church & School

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As We Gather

We find it hard not to notice others—what they have, what they earn, and how they live. What is worse, however, is that we constantly compare ourselves to others. Most of the time we figure that we are on the short end of the stick. But when it comes to the kingdom of God, there is no room for quick comparisons. Instead, we stand in awe of God’s rich mercy and generous grace. This is far more than we deserve. If we insist upon comparing our situation to others and complaining, God’s response is clear. Take what you have been given and leave. But if we let go of the comparisons, we find ourselves blessed beyond measure with His forgiveness, life, and salvation.

✠ Preparation for Worship ✠

Hymn 373 (1-5) – By Grace I’m Saved, Grace Free and Boundless

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Confession and Absolution

P We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve Him as His dear children. But we have disobeyed Him and deserve only His wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to Him and plead for His mercy.

C **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against You and do not deserve to be called Your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to Your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

P God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, He has removed your guilt forever. You are His own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to His will.

C Amen.

✠ The Service of the Word ✠

Lord, Have Mercy

Kyrie

Lord, have mer-cy on us. Christ, have mer-cy
on us. Lord, have mer - cy on us.

Glory to God in the Highest

Gloria in Excelsis

Glo - ry to God, we give you thanks and praise; Of
Lord Je - sus Christ, the Fa - ther's on - ly Son, You
A - lone, O Christ, You on - ly are the Lord, At
heav'n - ly joy and peace on earth we sing. We wor - ship
bore for us the load of this world's sin. O Lamb of
God's right hand in maj - es - ty most high: Who, with the
You, to You our hearts we raise, Lord God, al -
God, Your glo - rious vic - t'ry won, Re - ceive our
Spir - it wor - shiped and a - dored, With all the
might - y Fa - ther, heav'n - ly King.
prayer, grant us Your peace with - in.
heav'n - ly host we glo - ri - fy.

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray...

... who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 55:6-9

⁶ Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.
⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. ⁸ “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. ⁹ “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Psalm of the Day

Psalms 27:1-9

P The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear?

C **The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?**

P When the wicked came against me To eat up my flesh,

C **My enemies and foes, They stumbled and fell.**

P Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear;

C **Though war may rise against me, In this I will be confident.**

P One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life,

C **To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.**

P For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me;

C **He shall set me high upon a rock.**

P And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle;

C **I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.**

P Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice!

C **Have mercy also upon me, and answer me.**

P When You said, “Seek My face,”

C **My heart said to You, “Your face, LORD, I will seek.”**

P Do not hide Your face from me; Do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help;

C **Do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation.**

Epistle Reading

Philippians 1:12-14, 19-30

¹² But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, ¹³ so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; ¹⁴ and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

¹⁹ For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, ²⁰ according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

²² But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³ For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. ²⁴ Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. ²⁵ And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith,

²⁶ that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again. ²⁷ Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. ²⁹ For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, ³⁰ having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.

Alleluia

P Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it.



Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le-lu - ia! These words are
writ - ten that we may believe that Je-sus is the Christ, the
Son of God. Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le-lu - ia!

Confession of Faith

Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

Hymn

377 (1, 6-7, 9-10) – Salvation unto Us has Come

Sermon Text

Matthew 20:1-16

¹ “For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ and said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. ⁵ Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. ⁶ And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day?’ ⁷ They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.’ ⁸ “So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.’ ⁹ And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. ¹⁰ But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. ¹¹ And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner, ¹² saying, ‘These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.’ ¹³ But he answered one of them and said, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?’ ¹⁴ Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. ¹⁵ Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?’ ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.”



Sermon

Rejoice in God's Unfairness

- I. Because Fairness Mean Death
- II. Because God Wants to Give Us What We Don't Deserve

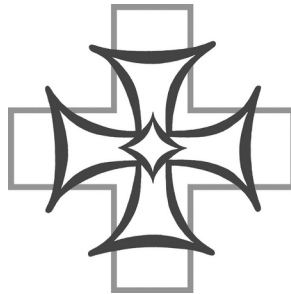
Offertory

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
 new a right spir-it with - in me. Cast me not a -
 way from Your pres - ence. Take not Your Ho - ly
 Spir-it from me. Restore to me the joy of Your sal -
 va - tion. Up - hold with Your Spir - it free.

Hymn

778 - Grace Has a Thrilling Sound

Offering



Offering Hymn

442 (2)

Grant us hearts, dear Lord, to yield Thee Glad - ly,
free - ly, of Thine own; With the sun - shine of Thy
good - ness Melt our thank - less hearts of stone
Till our cold and self - ish na - tures, Warmed by
Thee at length be - lieve That more hap - py
and more bless - ed 'Tis to give than to re - ceive.

General Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

C 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.

Benediction

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.
- C** Amen.

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✠ Announcements ✠

Upcoming Schedule

September 24	8:00 am	Worship Service (Orlando)
	10:15 am	Worship Service (Winter Haven)
October 1	9:15 am	Bible Class
	10:15 am	Worship Service w/ Holy Communion
	11:30 am	Fellowship Meal
	12:15 pm	Trustees/Church Council
October 8	8:00 am	Worship Service (Orlando)
	10:15 am	Worship Service (Winter Haven)

Mission Festival: This year’s Mission Festival is scheduled for next Sunday, October 1. The school children will sing during the service. There will be a fellowship meal following the service.

Upcoming Meetings: The following is our schedule of meetings through the annual meeting in January:

- **October 1** – Board of Trustees/Church Council
- **November 5** – Quarterly Voters’ Meeting
- **November 19** – Board of Education
- **December 3** – Board of Elders/Church Council
- **December 17** – Board of Trustees/Church Council
- **January 7** – Annual Voters’ Meeting

MDF Shortage: When the convention approved the calling of our third foreign missionary, it determined that the funding of that missionary would come fully from the MDF for the first year. The cost of funding that missionary is about \$80,000 and has had an impact on other planned MDF projects. Currently the balance of the MDF is enough to cover the cost of our third foreign missionary for the rest of this fiscal year and a few other

essential projects, but without additional funds, we will not be able to fund other planned projects. We have already put a hold on all other projects including all funding of Bibles and other Christian literature, church building assistance, and many planned outreach projects. We pray that the members of the CLC will remember this work in their prayers and their offerings that we might continue to carry out the work the LORD has set before us and which we have decided to do as a church body.

Weekly Sermon Podcast: For nearly 65 years, the CLC’s Ministry by Mail has been producing print sermons for distribution. Originally this was done by postal mail, especially for members living at a distance from their home church or serving in the military. With the arrival of the internet, sermons began being sent by email and posted online (www.lutheransermons.org). This past Advent, Ministry by Mail began offering audio versions of their sermons through weekly Podcast services. You can find these sermons on most major podcast platforms such as Google, Apple Podcasts, and Spotify by searching “CLC Ministry by Mail.” Hit “subscribe” or “follow” to receive notifications of weekly uploads. Contact Ministry by Mail editor, Nathan Pfeiffer, for more information – editor@lutheransermons.org

Chapels from ILC: With school back in session we are once again blessed with a wonderful resource for our spiritual growth and nourishment. Daily chapel services from Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary in Eau Claire, WI feature devotions based on God’s Word that are a great way to start your day, or take a break from your busy schedule and refresh your soul. You can access these chapel services anytime by visiting <https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/morning-chapel-from-ilc>.

2024 CLC Mission Helper Trip: Applications are being accepted for the 2024 Mission Helper Trip to Africa. Find more information and apply online: www.mht.lutheranmissions.org

CLC Call News: Messiah Lutheran of Eau Claire, WI has called Neal Radichel of Immanuel Lutheran in Mankato, MN to be their third pastor. <> Pastor Frank Gantt of Zion Lutheran in the Atlanta, GA area has returned the call from Calvary Lutheran of Marquette, MI. <> Professor Mark Kranz will be retiring at the end of the current school year.

Fruits of Faith	September 17, 2023	WH: 29
Immanuel Home		\$706.75
<u>Property Improvement</u>		<u>\$200.00</u>
Total		\$906.75

✠ Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions ✠

September 25 - September 30

Monday: Matthew 11:25-30 – Jesus is thankful to His Father in heaven that repentance and faith do not depend upon human wisdom and cleverness. Even little children, who cannot take care of themselves, can trust in Him and have everlasting life.

Tuesday: Hebrews 12:18-24 – Jesus invited those who are weary and burdened to come to Him. Such coming to the heavenly joy of God’s own people is here contrasted with the sights and sounds of Mt. Sinai, which did not bring rest.

Wednesday: Job 5:17-26 – Jesus promised spiritual rest to those who came to Him (Mt 11:28). Such peace with God means great blessing, even when He corrects us. He will rescue His children from the many threats that face them.

Thursday: Luke 17:11-19 – Coming to Jesus brings countless blessings whether we are young or old, learned or uneducated, Jew or Gentile. Here God worked faith in the heart of a Samaritan, who returned to glorify Him with a loud voice.

Friday: Psalm 147:1-6 – Praise God for calling His people together and healing all their wounds. He who can number the stars that He has created surely has the power and understanding also to sustain the humble and overcome the wicked.

Saturday: Psalm 147:7-11 – Not only has God created all things, but He also preserves His creatures, sending rain to the earth and producing food even for the birds and beasts. His strength is greater than all, but it is most seen in connection with His great mercy.



