



**Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost**

**Bible Sunday II**  
**September 17, 2023 + 9am**

**Zion-Public WiFi password: Zion54484**  
**Congregational responses are in BOLD.**

All are welcome to receive Jesus' unconditional gift of God's grace through the sacrament of Holy Communion. Regardless of your church membership or affiliation, all are encouraged to participate in communion or to come forward for a blessing.

*\*The communion bread is homemade by congregation members and contains gluten and honey. For those with allergies or sensitivities, an alternative will be provided upon request.\**

Children of all ages are encouraged to worship with the whole community in Christ. Children's worship bags are available in the back of the sanctuary.

Page numbers that are listed are found in the front of the cranberry-colored hymnal at the bottom of the page. Hymn numbers are listed in bold, large print on the top of the page.

If you would like home communion, a hospital visit, or a conversation with the pastor, please contact the church office at 715.687.4110 or at [office@zionstratford.org](mailto:office@zionstratford.org) or Pastor Amy Heinz at 608.498.5772 or [pastoramy@zionstratford.org](mailto:pastoramy@zionstratford.org).

**Ministers:** All the People of God through the love of Jesus and the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit

**Pastor:** Rev. Amy Heinz

**Administrative Assistant:** Kathy Busche

**Organists:** Judy Polege, Marge Redetzke, Ryan Huther

**Custodian:** Rod Huther

**Missionaries:** Steven & Bethany Friberg, Tanzania

\* From Sundays and Seasons, copyright 2023 Augsburg Fortress,  
License #23254, One License #A-715097

\*\*Reprinted and adapted for local use by permission from *The Worship Sourcebook, Second Edition*, ©2013, Faith Alive Christian Resources.

## PRELUDE

## CENTERING AND BELLS' CALL TO WORSHIP

## WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

### We Gather in Grace

## OPENING LITANY

Almighty God, we pray for your blessing on the church in this place.

Here may the faithful find salvation  
**and the careless be awakened.**

Here may the doubting find faith,  
**and the anxious be encouraged.**

Here may the tempted find help,  
**and the sorrowful find comfort.**

Here may the weary find rest,  
**and the strong be renewed.**

Here may the aged find consolation,  
**and the young be inspired.**

We pray in Jesus' name.

**Amen\*\***

**HYMN**

*"Gather Us In"*

**ELW 532**

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

We begin in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the aid of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that, attentive to your word, we may confess our sins, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.  
Gracious God,

**have mercy on us. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone. Uphold us by your Spirit so that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

**Amen.\***

## **GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**God of Promise,**

**Abraham scoffed and Sarah laughed when they were told of your plans for them and their family. Yet you remained faithful to your promise, and gave them a son, Isaac. Help us to trust in your promises for our lives, and to live according to your will. In Jesus' name we pray.**

**Amen.**

## We Hear the Word of God

### COMPLEMENTARY READING

Mark 10:27

<sup>27</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, “For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.”

### READING

Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7

The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. <sup>2</sup> He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them and bowed down to the ground. <sup>3</sup> He said, “My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. <sup>4</sup> Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. <sup>5</sup> Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.” <sup>6</sup> And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah and said, “Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.” <sup>7</sup> Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. <sup>8</sup> Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared and set it before them, and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

<sup>9</sup> They said to him, “Where is your wife Sarah?” And he said, “There, in the tent.” <sup>10</sup> Then one said, “I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. <sup>11</sup> Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. <sup>12</sup> So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I be fruitful?” <sup>13</sup> The LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’” <sup>14</sup> Is anything too

wonderful for the LORD? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son.” <sup>15</sup> But Sarah denied, saying, “I did not laugh,” for she was afraid. He said, “Yes, you did laugh.”

The LORD dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as he had promised. <sup>2</sup> Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. <sup>3</sup> Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him. <sup>4</sup> And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. <sup>5</sup> Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. <sup>6</sup> Now Sarah said, “God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me.” <sup>7</sup> And she said, “Who would ever have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON**

**Who’d a Thunk It?**

Rev. Amy Heinz

**HYMN**

*“My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness”*

**ELW 251**

**BIBLE PRESENTATION**

**APOSTLES’ CREED**

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s 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 to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
    he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
    and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
    the holy catholic church,  
    the communion of saints,  
    the forgiveness of sins,  
    the resurrection of the body,  
    and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Almighty God, in the presence of your bounty keep us humble,  
and in the presence of all people's needs make us compassionate  
and caring.

*A brief silence.*

We pray for all unhappy lives, those who are bitter and resentful,  
those who are sensitive to criticism and quick to take offense,  
those who desire their own way, whatever the inconvenience or  
cost to others.

May your judgment and mercy be for their healing.

**Hear our fervent prayer.**

We pray for those who are lonely, who are shy and self-conscious,  
who find it hard to make friends, whoever feel themselves  
strangers in a world they can scarcely understand.

May your presence inspire confidence and ensure companionship.

**Hear our fervent prayer.**

We pray for those who live with bitter regrets, for loving  
relationships brought to ruin, for opportunities freely given and  
woefully abused, for the bitterness of defeat or betrayal at  
another's hand, or for failure in personal integrity.

May your grace give new hope to find victory at the very scene of failure.

**Hear our fervent prayer.**

We pray for all in illness and pain, weary of the day and fearful of the night. Grant strength to those who suffer and to those who provide care. We pause now to speak their names either aloud or silently in our hearts.

*A brief silence.*

May your touch, embodied in our care, bring healing and wholeness.

**Hear our fervent prayer.**

Bless the company of Christ's body, the church in every land. Make her eager in worship, fearless in the proclamation of the gospel, and passionate for caring.

May your Holy Spirit pour out on all people a living faith in you.

**Hear our fervent prayer.**

Bless our country with compassion for others. Bless our leaders with wisdom and patience. Bless our children with passion for service.

May your loving example bring an end to unhappy divisions and inspire us to live for others.

**Hear our fervent prayer.**

Bless each of us in the communion of the saints, and keep us ever mindful of the great cloud of witnesses who have gone before us and who will come after us. Make our imperfect faith perfect so that we may, at the last, receive the fulfillment promised to your people.

We pray in the great name of Jesus Christ.

**Amen.\*\***



## SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

## We Share the Meal

### OFFERING

### OFFERTORY

*"We Are an Offering"*

ELW 692

### OFFERTORY PRAYER

Ever-present God,

with this offering we present also ourselves:

all that we have been,

all that we are,

all that we shall become,

and our resolve to walk in your way.

Accept us and our offering, and nourish us at your table for service in Jesus' name.

Amen. \*\*

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Almighty and everlasting God, we bless you for your continual love and care for every creature. We praise you for forming us in your image and calling us to be your people. We thank you that you have not abandoned us in our rebellion against your love, but sent prophets and teachers to lead us into the way of salvation.

Above all, we thank you for sending Jesus, your Son, to deliver us from the way of sin and death by the obedience of his life, by his suffering upon the cross, and by his resurrection from the dead. We thank you for the Holy Spirit, who leads us into truth, defends us in adversity, and out of every people unites us into one holy church.

Therefore with the whole company of saints in heaven and on earth we worship and glorify you, God most holy, and we sing with joy:\*\*

**SANCTUS**

*“Holy, Holy, Holy”*

**ELW 191**

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

## **DISTRIBUTION SONGS**

*“Lamb of God”*

**ELW p. 146**

*“You Satisfy the Hungry Heart”*

**ELW 484**

*“Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness”*

**ELW 488**

## **BLESSING AND PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

### **We Serve the World in God's Name**

## **BENEDICTION**

May the grace of Christ, which daily renews us, and the love of God, which enables us to love all, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, which unites us in one body, make us eager to obey the will of God until we meet again, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

**CLOSING SONG**    *“Now Thank We All Our God”*

**ELW 840 v1,3**

**DISMISSAL**

We go in peace to love and serve our neighbors,  
**with open doors, open hearts, and open hands.**  
**Thanks be to God!**

**POSTLUDE**

# Notes, Prayers, and Thoughts

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **Zion Lutheran Church**

*Open Doors, Open Hearts, Open Hands*

213501 Legacy Street

Stratford, WI 54484-5908

715.687.4110 + <https://zionstratford.org>