



Wisconsin Rapids Moravian Church

310 First Avenue South 715-423-0180 www.wrmaravian.org
"Sharing Christ, Serving People"

Sunday, September 1, 2024
15th Sunday after Pentecost

PRELUDE: “Spirit of the Living God”

SHARING OF PRAYER JOYS AND CONCERNS

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Each day offers the opportunity to put our faith into action, doing the work entrusted to us by God.

C: We seek to be doers of the Word, and not hearers only.

L: Let us come before our God, opening our ears to hear what God would teach us through his word and through his Word.

C: We gather to offering our act of worship as we open ourselves to continue to learn and grow in faith and in relationship.

WELCOME & NEWS OF THE CHURCH ALIVE

(Please sign Welcome Pad)

HYMN #564

“God Is Here”

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE WITH PASTORAL PRAYER

LITURGY for Labor Day – the Rt. Rev. Kay Ward

We stand before you, O God of creation, as those who have inherited the right to be caretakers of this world, your gift to us.

We stand as people of faith who want to live and share in this life as your children.

We are proud of our heritage as workers, for we are engineers, bankers, nurses, mill workers, mechanics and lawyers.

We have homemakers, teachers, artists, poets and carpenters.

We know that there are many gifts, many ways of serving, and many forms of activity, but the same God is at work through and in them all. We are members of the same Body, each part working for the good of the whole.

Therefore, whether we work in factories or in fields, whether we work in the office or we work at home, we are one in God, through Christ Jesus who lived, worked and died for us.

Gracious God, we are thankful for our work, and we celebrate our physical, mental and spiritual labors. Still, our work is not the sum total of our life.

Our life is more than our work and our work is more than our jobs!

Christ has set us free from the powers that bind us to this world. Through His resurrection, we know that what matters is faith working through love.

Remembering Jesus' words, we will not labor for what is perishable, but for that which is imperishable, which only God can give.

And whatever we do, let it be in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, always rejoicing in God through Him.

(HUS (22F) #169)

**Here in the name of Christ our Lord;
We stand as one and God adore.
Abiding in His name may we
Live, work and play in harmony.
As sisters, brothers lab'rs all;
Each one responding to God's call.
God's gifts are our diversity
And God's love is our unity!**

SCRIPTURES Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. ²You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God with which I am charging you.

⁶You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!" ⁷For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is whenever we call to him? ⁸And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today? ⁹But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children—

James 1:17-27

¹⁷Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

¹⁹You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. ²¹Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. ²²But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. ²³For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; ²⁴for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. ²⁵But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing. ²⁶If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Mark 7:1-15,21-23

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, ²they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. ³(For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; ⁴and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) ⁵So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" ⁶He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

‘This people honors me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
⁷in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.’

⁸You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

⁹Then he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition! ¹⁰For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die.’ ¹¹But you say that if anyone tells father or mother, ‘Whatever support you might have had from me is Corban’ (that is, an offering to God)— ¹²then you no longer permit doing anything for a father or mother, ¹³thus making void the word of God through your tradition that you have handed on. And you do many things like this.”

¹⁴Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.”

²¹For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, ²²adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. ²³All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

HYMN #769

“God Is My Strong Salvation”

MESSAGE

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

“O How I Love Jesus”

*RESPONSE

**Praise God, who blesses from above;
Praise Jesus Christ, God’s living love;
Praise God, whose Spirit in us lives;**

We praise you God through what we give. Amen.

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

*HYMN #460

“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Amazing Art”

*Stand as able

WATCHWORD FOR THE WEEK

Let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger.

James 1:19

IN OUR WORSHIP THIS MORNING

Ministers..... All who serve Jesus Christ
Pastor.....Rev. Beth Rohn-Habegger
Liturgist & Scripture Reader.....Diane Renner
Keyboardist.....Karen Buchholz
POP Musicians.....John Gunn & Jill Kemp

IN THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION THIS WEEK

TODAY at 9:30 am.....Worship
MONDAY.....Church Office Closed
TUESDAY at 4:30 pm.....TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)
THURSDAY at 9:30 am.....Alanon
NEXT SUNDAY at 9:00 am.....Church School
10:15 am.....Worship
11:30 am.....Church Potluck Picnic
(Drinks and barbecue will be provided)

PRAYER CONCERNS

Prayers for peace for our country and our world; those who have been affected by the violence in the Holy Lands that all people, everywhere, are seen as a beloved child of God.

Patty (Schoechert) Beyer, Jan Baker's daughter (Natalie), Ashley & Kolby Kelnhofer, Marie Kaszuba, Alice Lavin, Jim Laufenberg, Lorraine Abbott, Linda (Behrend) Nelson, Jaden (Patty Beyer's granddaughter), Dave Plummer, Beth Sowatzke, Neil

Nursing/Assisted Living Residents: Deb Maier, Bill & Laniece Haferman, Diane Klawikowski, Marilyn Hutter, Lucy Severt, Barb Scholl, Olaf & Rita Andersen

At home: Lloyd Young, Paul & Marie Knipple, Marion Bailey

Servicemen: Paul & David Eklund, Mason Fellowes, Elias Thelemann

Mike Barnes on the death of his sister

The family of Mary Lou Ecklund

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Our **Joyful Noise** gifts this month will go to You Belong.
- “**The Story of Us**” is coming up. The retreat will be held September 13, 14 & 15 at Mt. Morris. Registration deadline is September 3.
- **We are in need of more cleaners.** Please contact the church office if you are interested in helping us out.
- Just a reminder that a signup sheet for **Coffee Hour hosts** is located in the Social Room. Call the church office (715) 423-0180 or Kathy Plante (715) 459-1110 if you have any questions.
- **POP (Prelude, Offertory and Postlude) musicians** are needed. To schedule a date or check availability, you can call Diane Renner (715-325-5300) or just talk to her at church.
- The Board of Trustees has established a **Donation List** of items that we use around the church. You can find the list on our website or on the bulletin board in the south hallway. You are invited sign up for those items you would be willing to donate.
- As part of the **Moravian Day of Giving** (September 15), we are collecting supplies for the jail ministry of Wood County:
 - Composition books (standard size)
 - Reading glasses (all powers except 2.0, male or unisex preferred - NO prescription)
 - Books (only the following)
 - * Broken Like Me Workbook
 - * Finding God: It’s Easier Than You Think
 - * Dictionaries (paperback only, no staples)
 - Board games (Monopoly, Sorry, Checkers)
 - Playing cards
 - \$10 Fuel only Kwik Trip cards (so inmates can get home after release)

Hand Washing

At first glance, the Pharisees' question for Jesus regarding hand washing before meals seems valid. It evokes the *Far Side* cartoon of the man exiting the bathroom and a “did not wash his hands” alarm going off. There are certain public health considerations that we perform in common, and hand washing is the bare minimum.

But the last thing this passage is about is hand washing. A common phrase goes, “You are rarely upset for the reason you think.” And Jesus points that out to the religious leaders. If the Pharisees were truly honest, they would see that Jesus and his disciples were far surpassing them when it comes to the commands of God. The Pharisees instead have chosen to focus on merely human rules. Jesus underscores that elsewhere: “You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel” (Matthew 23:24).

What about today? Are we so concerned with being rule followers that we forget that the gospel message is ultimately about grace and justice? When our communities look at how we conduct ourselves, do they see a people so concerned with “right living” that we have neglected the things closest to the heart of Christ? Or do they see a people who have decided to place first things first and prioritize love over law?

Wash your hands? Yes, please. Feed the hungry, and shelter the homeless poor? Do that above all else.

Jason Andersen, pastor, Christian Faith Moravian Church, DeForest, Wisconsin

The Moravian Church

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