



Sunday, September 8, 2023
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Service Theme
A CHURCH WILLING TO SAY HARD THINGS

Imagine, late one night, you notice the house across the street is on fire. You see no activity inside. You say to yourself, "Pounding on the door in the middle of the night might scare the family. I'm sure they'll realize what's going on eventually." Ridiculous! You would never do that! To let a family sleep while flames surround them would be cruel. Your inaction would make you a killer. The truth is you would pound on their door at 3:00 AM, screaming. You would throw a brick through their front window if that was what it took to warn them. You would not care if it startled the family. This is a matter of life and death! Love compels you to do whatever it takes. God wants the people of his church to be willing to say hard things to people when that is what is necessary to save them from an even worse type of fire. Warning against sin is not easy. It upsets people, even offends them. But saying hard things is the loving thing to do when it is a matter of eternal life and death.

Order of Service:

Gathering Rite on the Word (CWS p. 11)

Service of the Word (CW p.40)

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

C: *(spoken)* **Amen.**



Bless - ed Je - sus, at your Word We are gath - ered all to
Let our hearts and souls be stirred Now to seek and love and



hear you.
fear you, By your teach - ings, sweet and ho - ly,



Drawn from earth to love you sole - ly.

M: Oh, how I love your law!

C: **I meditate on it all day long.**

M: Your commands make me wiser than my enemies,

C: **for they are ever with me.**

M: I have more insight than all my teachers,

C: **for I meditate on your statutes.**

M: How sweet are your words to my taste,

C: **sweeter than honey to my mouth!**

(Psalm 119:97-99,103)



All our knowl - edge, sense, and sight Lie in deep - est dark - ness
Till your Spir - it breaks our night With the beams of truth un -



shroud - ed
cloud - ed. You a - lone to God can win us;



You must work all good with - in us.

M: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

C: so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

(2 Timothy 3:16,17)

M: Yet so often we have despised God's Word and failed to gladly hear and learn it. For this and all our sins, we bow before God and humbly ask his forgiveness.

C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.



Gra - cious Sav - ior, good and kind, Light from Light, from God pro -
O - pen now our heart and mind; Help us by your Spir - it's



ceed - ing,
plead - ing. Hear the cry your peo - ple rais - es;



Hear and bless our prayers and prais - es.

M: God gave his Word so “that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31). The Scriptures testify about Jesus, who lived a perfect life for you, died on the cross to pay for all your sins, and rose again to assure you of your salvation. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

C: (spoken) Amen.

Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost, Praise to you and ad - o -
Grant that we your Word may trust, Con - fi - dent of our sal -
ra - tion!
va - tion, While we here be - low must wan - der,
Till we sing your prais - es yon - der.

Prayer of the Day

M: Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, preserve the congregation of believers with your never-failing mercy. Help us avoid whatever is wicked and harmful, and guide us in the way that leads to our salvation; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

First Lesson

Ezekiel 33:7–11 EHV

The LORD told the prophet Ezekiel if he didn't warn the Israelites about their sin, he was going to hold Ezekiel accountable for their blood.

⁷But I have appointed you, son of man, to be a watchman for the house of Israel. So whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you are to warn them from me.

⁸When I say to a wicked man, “Wicked man, you shall surely die,” if you do not speak to warn the wicked man against his way, that wicked man will die because of his guilt, but I will also hold you responsible for his blood. ⁹But if you do warn the wicked man to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he will die because of his guilt, but you will have saved your life.

¹⁰So you, son of man, say the following to the house of Israel.

This is what you people are saying: “Certainly our rebellion and our sins weigh us down, and because of them we are rotting away. How then can we live?”

¹¹Say to them, “As I live, declares the LORD God, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from their way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why should you die, O house of Israel?”

Psalm 32
(p. 78)

Refrain

Re - mem - ber your mer - cy, O Lord;
re - mem - ber your mer - cy and love.

Psalm tone

*

Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven,*
whose sins are covered.

When I kept silent, your hand was heavy upon me;*
my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.

Then I acknowledged my sin to you*
and did not cover up my iniquity.

I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,”*
and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Refrain

You are my hiding place;*
you will protect me from trouble.

Many are the woes of the wicked,*
but the LORD’S unfailing love surrounds those who trust in him.

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.

Refrain

Second Lesson

Galatians 2:11-16 EHV

Paul is put in the uncomfortable position of having to confront Cephas (also known as Peter). In doing so, Paul wins Peter over to the truth of the gospel.

¹¹But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly wrong. ¹²For before some people came from James, he ate with the Gentiles. But when those people came, he drew back and separated himself, because he feared those from the circumcision group. ¹³And the rest of the Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴But when I saw that they were not acting according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of all of them, "If you, a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, why do you compel the Gentiles to live like the Jews?"

¹⁵"We are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners. ¹⁶We know that a person is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. So we also believed in Christ Jesus that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law.

Verse of the Day

Alleluia. Alleluia. God wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. Alleluia. (1 Timothy 2:4)

C: (sing) Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

These words are written that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel

Matthew 18:15–20 EHV

Jesus teaches us how to lovingly practice Christian discipline as we seek to win our straying brother or sister over.

¹⁵"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his sin just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have regained your brother. ¹⁶But if he will not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' ¹⁷If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And, if he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as an unbeliever or a tax collector. ¹⁸Amen I tell you: Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹Amen I tell you again: If two of you on earth agree to ask for anything, it will be done for them by my Father who is in heaven. ²⁰In fact where two or three have gathered together in my name, there I am among them."

C: (sing) Praise be to you, O Christ!

I Hear the Savior Calling



1 I hear the Sav - ior call - ing! The gos - pel comes to
 2 I hear the Sav - ior call - ing! He leads a soul to
 3 I hear the Sav - ior call - ing! He gives this charge to
 4 I hear the Sav - ior call - ing! He chang - es hearts for
 5 I hear the Sav - ior call - ing! His call has ur - gen -



me. My eyes once closed in blind - ness Are o - pened
 me, A soul in bit - ter an - guish, One need - ing
 me: To serve the best I'm a - ble, What - e'er the
 me. From door to door I wit - ness To share my
 cy! Each mo - ment souls are dy - ing; Soon comes e -



now to see That I my - self was help - less To
 to be free. The gift I have to of - fer Is
 call may be. Thus hand in hand with oth - ers Who
 Sav - ior's plea; Yet noth - ing can be add - ed, No
 ter - ni - ty. And so, my pre - cious Sav - ior, This



live e - ter - nal - ly, But, dy - ing, Christ did
 Christ, my Lord's de - cree That all have been for -
 share the gos - pel key We spread the gos - pel
 word on bend - ed knee, Be - yond the sim - ple
 is my hum - ble plea: Pre - pare me for my



save me, And now he calls for me!
 giv - en— My Sav - ior calls for me!
 tid - ings— My Sav - ior calls for me!
 gos - pel— My Sav - ior calls for me!
 mis - sion For you are call - ing me!

Sermon Text & Theme

Ezekiel 33:7-11 ... You are a watchman.

- 1) Understand your duty.
- 2) Understand your message.

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.**

Offertory Prayer

INSTALLATION OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Prayer for the Mission of the Church

(Page 129)

M: Eternal God and Father, we give you thanks for the blessings we share as members of your holy Church, for your gracious Word and sacraments, for opportunities to worship and to grow in faith and knowledge, for occasions to serve and be served, for fellowship with believers in our congregation and in our synod.

C: **Help us to rejoice in these blessings, dear Lord, and to use them faithfully.**

M: Jesus Christ, Lord of the Church, you give grace to your people by calling us to be your witnesses in the world. Open our eyes to see the great and noble mission that lies before us. In the hurting eyes of the lonely, in the pained eyes of the sick, and in the searching eyes of the lost, help us to see your face, O Jesus, and to serve others as we would serve you.

C: **Awaken us to the opportunities you give to proclaim your message of love.**

M: Holy Spirit, giver of life, through Word and sacrament bestow on us the wisdom and power we need to witness clearly and to act boldly. Help us to speak the truth in love, to give the reason for the hope we have, and to conduct ourselves with gentleness and respect.

C: Set our hearts on fire as we work and witness for Christ.

M: Hear us, Lord, as we pray for a family member, an acquaintance, a neighbor, or a friend who does not believe in you, or whose faith is weak or troubled.

Silent prayer.

M: Bless the Church with men and women who are willing to proclaim your Word in places where we cannot go. Keep them and their loved ones in your care, and let nothing hinder their work. By the power of the gospel, restore their spirits each day, so that they do not lose heart as they serve us and others.

C: Move us to support them with our sincere prayers and generous offerings.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M: Wherever your Word is proclaimed, O Lord, grant it success. Let your kingdom come to us and others, so that we and many more might join the assembly of saints and angels to sing your praise forever.

C: Savior of all, hear our prayer and help us in our mission. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

M: O Lord God, our heavenly Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep us strong in your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow on us your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

or

Almighty God, we thank you for teaching us the things you want us to believe and do. Help us by your Holy Spirit to keep your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: (sing) Amen.

The Blessing

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and (+) give you peace.

C: (sing) Amen. Amen. Amen.

512 Let Children Hear the Mighty Deeds



1 Let chil - dren hear the might - y deeds
2 Make un - to them his glo - ries known,
3 Our lips shall tell them to our sons
4 Oh, teach them with all dil - i - gence
5 To learn that in our God a - lone



Which God per - formed of old,
His works of pow'r and grace,
And they a - gain to theirs
The truths of God's own Word,
Their hope se - cure - ly stands,



Which in our young - er years we saw,
And we'll con - vey his won - ders down
That gen - er - a - tions yet un - born
To place in him their con - fi - dence,
That they may ne'er for - get his works,



And which our fa - thers told.
Through ev - 'ry ris - ing race.
May teach them to their heirs.
To fear and trust their Lord,
But walk in his com - mands.

DIVINE WORD'S TWO-WEEK CALENDAR

Su (10)	9:00 am 10:30 am 11:30 am	Sunday School and Bible Class Worship First Fellowship
We (13)	6:30 am	“Test the Spirit’s” Bible Information Class.
Th (14)	6:30 am 6:00 pm	Youth Confirmation (W) Illuminé (at St. Paul’s)
Fr (15)	6:30 am	Youth Confirmation (D)
Su (17)	9:00 am 10:30 am 11:30 am 12:00 am 3:00 pm	Sunday School and Bible Class Worship & Communion Coffee Hour Divine Sisters Meeting Worship and Communion in Poltimore
Tu (19)	6:30 am	Elders’ Meeting
We (20)	6:30 am	“Test the Spirit’s” Bible Information Class.
Th (21)	6:30 am 6:00 pm	Youth Confirmation (W) Illuminé (at St. Paul’s)
Fr (22)	6:30 am	Youth Confirmation (D)
Su (24)	9:00 am 10:30 am 11:30 am 11:45 pm	Sunday School and Bible Class Worship Coffee Hour Voters’ Meeting

Announcements

Church Cleaners:

September 3 – Andrew // September 10 – Peter

New Bible Information Class

Do you know someone who wants to learn more about what we teach, or would you want to review the basics to help you share your faith with others? Then please attend our New Bible Information Class entitled: "Test the Spirits" (written by former Divine Word Pasto Allen Lindke). Lessons will be on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm starting September 13th. All are welcome. Feel free to contact Pastor Sullivan for more information.

Divine Sisters Meeting

On Sunday, September 17. All women of Divine Word are encouraged to attend.

Voters' Meeting

On Sunday, September 24. All Voters are encouraged to attend.



Divine Word

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