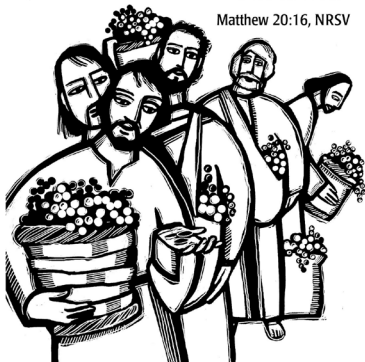


So the **last** will be **FIRST**,
and the **first** will be **LAST**.

Matthew 20:16, NRSV



Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost:
**TELL US A STORY:
A STORY OF PERPLEXING GENEROSITY**

Pastor Zietlow's Sermon:
Matthew 20:1-16 "Grumbling About Grace"

WELCOME! WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

We pray that you find comfort, peace, and motivation through God's Word today. In our worship bulletin, you will find an outline of **today's order of worship**. The entire service can be found in the hymnal, up on the screen on Sunday at St. John's and Emmanuel and livestreamed at www.stjohnsmontello.org and also at St. John's in the Lower Level. At St. John's, the **restrooms** are located in the link way, out the church entry way, to the left and down the stairs. At Emmanuel, they are located in the Parish Hall. You may also find a **nursery changing station** in the lower level of St. John's.

**ST. JOHN'S & EMMANUEL LUTHERAN
CHURCHES**

September 23rd & 24th, 2023

SERIES THEME TELL US A STORY

Much of what Jesus has to say to you and me is contained within his parables. Parables are simple little stories that contain profound truths about life and eternity. For the believer, a parable takes a challenging spiritual fact and makes it clear. However, since the parable conveys spiritual truth, for someone without faith, the story remains only that—a story. Therefore, our prayer for this worship series is that Christ would send us his Holy Spirit, so that we might receive the peace and power Jesus offers us in his parables. Tell us a story, Jesus!

THEME OF THE DAY: A STORY OF PERPLEXING GENEROSITY

Give a single bag of M&Ms to two four-year-olds and tell them to share. You will witness counting done with accountantlike precision. Each child will get an equal amount of candy because that is fair. Human beings have an incredibly strong sense of fairness. That is why it can be so perplexing when we see how God dispenses blessing and grace. We see people who mock God who are more prosperous than believers. We see people who convert on their deathbed, and Scripture tells us they obtain the same salvation as someone who has been Christian all his life. How is that fair? Through a simple story, Jesus teaches us a profound truth. We need to stop expecting God to be fair. God is not fair. He does not give us what we deserve, and that's called mercy. In fact, he gives us what we don't deserve, and that's called grace. No, God is not fair. He is breathtakingly generous.

ORDER OF SERVICE: Setting One, Hymnal Pages 154-164, 171

HYMNS: 602, 575, 560, 582 (Hymns also posted on the screen)

PSALM: Psalm 115 "Not to Us, O LORD"

SERMON: Matthew 20:1-16 "Grumbling About Grace"

SPECIAL MUSIC: Sunday at St. John's: Sunday School sings "Do You Really Love Me?" before Opening Hymn

OPENING HYMN: 602 "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

ORDER OF SERVICE: Hymnal page 154 (also on the screen)

FIRST READING: Jonah 3:10—4:11

(Jonah is perplexed by the generous forgiveness God showed to the people of Nineveh.)

¹⁰When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened. ¹But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry. ²He prayed to the LORD, "Isn't this what I said, LORD, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity. ³Now, LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴But the LORD replied, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵Jonah had gone out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city. ⁶Then the LORD God provided a leafy plant and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the plant. ⁷But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah's head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, "It would be better for me to die than to live." ⁹But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?" "It is," he said. "And I'm so angry I wish I were dead." ¹⁰But the LORD said, "You have been concerned about this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. ¹¹And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals?"

PSALM: Psalm 115 "Not to Us, O LORD"

SECOND READING: Romans 9:6–16

(God is perplexingly generous. He shows mercy and grace to those he chooses, regardless of any merit or worth.)

⁶It is not as though God's word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. ⁷Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." ⁸In other words, it is not the children by physical descent who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring. ⁹For this was how the promise was stated: "At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son." ¹⁰Not only that, but Rebekah's children were conceived at the same time by our father Isaac. ¹¹Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in

election might stand: ¹²not by works but by him who calls—she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” ¹³Just as it is written: “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.” ¹⁴What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! ¹⁵For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” ¹⁶It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.

Gospel Acclamation

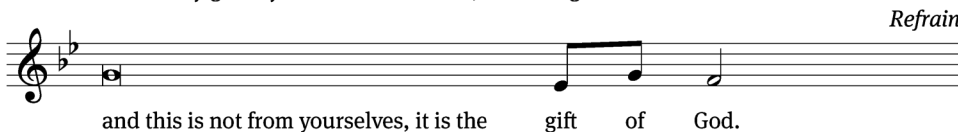
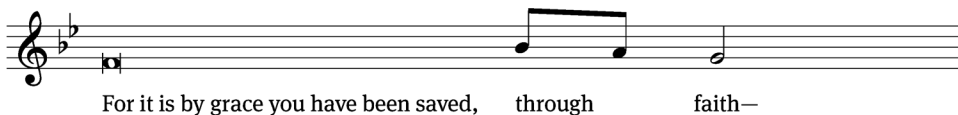
Ephesians 2:8



Refrain



Tone



Refrain

Tune: © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 722228

GOSPEL: Matthew 20:1-16 (Sermon Text)

(Jesus tells us a story of God’s perplexing generosity.)

¹“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. ²He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard. ³About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. ⁴He told them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ ⁵So they went. “He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. ⁶About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, ‘Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?’ ⁷“ ‘Because no one has hired us,’ they answered. “He said to them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard.’ ⁸“When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.’ ⁹“The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each received a denarius. ¹⁰So

when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. ¹¹When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. ¹²These who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.' ¹³But he answered one of them, 'I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius?' ¹⁴Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. ¹⁵Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶"So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

HYMN OF THE DAY: 575 "By Grace I'm Saved"

SERMON: Matthew 20:1-16 "Grumbling About Grace"

NICENE CREED: Hymnal Page 162

PRAYER OF PRAISE TO GOD FOR BEING SO GRACIOUS AND MERCIFUL TO ME & INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

OFFERING AND PRAYER

COMMUNION LITURGY: Hymnal page 165

DISTRIBUTION HYMN: 560 "Your Works, Not Mine, O Christ"

CLOSING HYMN: 582 "Not unto Us"

ST. JOHN'S QUARTERLY VOTERS' MEETING

SUNDAY OCTOBER 1ST at 11:00am (following Worship) there will be a very important Quarterly Voters' Meeting. Packets will be given out today for your review before the meeting. Many topics of vital importance to St. John's will be discussed and voted on. Some of these topics are: The Ratification of the updated Bylaws, and whether or not to call a Second Pastor and/or a CALA Mission Pastor. **These are very important decisions that need to be made, please attend, and participate in the meeting. YOUR VOICE MATTERS!!!**

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

- For the sick and others facing trials, including: Gale "Blackie" Boyd, Bob Buehrens, Michael Cox (Marjorie Fabian's brother), Vicki Davis (Marilyn Riemer's sister), Edith Duesterhoeft, Reinold Eckelberg, Ken Elmer (Sally's husband), Earl Ewert, Judy Fandrey, John Gaedke (Dan Finger's uncle), Donna Gatzke, Dennis Gray (Mary Dahlke's brother), Dennis Gromowski (Josh's father, Harvey Rudolph's neighbor), Kelleen Grucza (Judy Fandrey's daughter), Kim Hanko (Judy Fandrey's daughter), Del Henke, Drake Hunter, Jerry & Darlene Hunter (Bonnie Chapman's parents), Xzander Jahr, Kris Kemp (Diane Hintz' daughter), Bob Klapper, Dale Kozlowski, Jeff Krueger (Diane Hintz's son), Debbie & Steve Parrish, Darlene Phillips (Ken Elmer's mother), Melissa Prater, Karen Radke, Roxanne Schmanke, Eloise Schultz, Bob Sluga (Sherry's husband), Annette St. Onge, Amanda Stalker, Tom Stempniak, Dominick Thoman (the father of Janessa Roberts, Harvey Rudolph's neighbor), Betty, James, & Suzanne Weber, Paul Weldon, Willie Wollschlager (Dustin's father) (added this week: Amanda Stalker)
- For those who are under spiritual attack
- For this month's Befriend A Missionaries and their families

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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MEDITATIONS Daily Devotional This Week

It's back to the Old Testament this week and the first book of the Bible, Genesis. Joseph knows about forgiveness - learned the hard way. The week's theme, "Divine Forgiveness" can help us review and remember this easily taken for granted act of God. Forgiveness and Joseph's famous descendant, Jesus, go hand in hand.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This Week: September 24-30, 2023

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost TELL US A STORY: A STORY OF PERPLEXING GENEROSITY

Today	11:00 a.m.	Ladies Aid Pie Social SJ
Monday	6:30 p.m.	Adult Choir SJ
	7:30 p.m.	Adult Bible Study SJ (NO ABS on 10/2)
Tuesday	6:30 p.m.	Worship Mtg SJ
	10:30 a.m.	Bible Study SJ (NO ABS on 10/4)
	3:45 p.m.	Public School Catechism SJ (NO PSC on 10/4)
Thursday	6:00 p.m.	GriefShare SJ
Saturday	4:30 p.m.	St. John's Worship

Next Sunday: October 1, 2023

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost TELL US A STORY: A STORY OF SPIRITUAL INSINCERITY

8:00 a.m.	Emmanuel Worship
8:30 a.m.	St. John's Sunday School
8:45 a.m.	Adult Bible Study St. John's
10:00 a.m.	St. John's Worship CALA 3-8 sing
11:00 a.m.	SJ Voters' Meeting

ST. JOHN'S USHER'S SCHEDULE

Attendance

Date	EM	SJ
9/16/23	-	11
9/17/23	58	77

Saturday 9/30/23 & Sunday 10/1/23	Saturday 10/7/20 & Sunday 10/8/23
Jerre Duerr, Joe Zauner, Sr. Gordon Krause, Kevin Kaul, Corey Kaul	Ben Jaster, Jacob Jaster, Matt Neuhauser, Jeff Reimer, Mark Emond

ACH Deposits*	Plate Offerings	Total Offerings	Budget Needs	August Expenses
\$4891.71	\$14218.00	\$19109.71	\$33939.58	\$27696.22

*ACH Deposits are the offerings made online or via direct withdrawal.

*Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. **2 Corinthians 9:7***

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, October 1st 11:00AM: ST. JOHN'S VOTER'S MEETING (SEE PAGE 5)

Monday, October 2nd 3:30PM: Hands in Prayer Meeting at St. John's.

Thursday, October 5th NOON: Ladies' Aid Dessert and Meeting at St. John's

Tuesday, October 17th 6:30PM: St. John's Council Meeting



SUBSTITUTE SCHOOL CUSTODIAN NEEDED!

For roughly 2 weeks in mid-late November, the Montello school campus is searching for a custodian willing to fill in for Jackie as she will be out of town temporarily. If you are interested or need more details on the job itself, please call the school office 920-481-9002 or email secretary@crystalonelutheranacademy.net. Thank you for your willingness to serve!

SINGING SCHEDULE:

10/1/23	CALA 3-8	SJ Montello
10/8/23	Adult Choir	Emmanuel
	Sun. School	SJ Montello
10/15/23	LL-2	SJ <u>PRINCETON</u>
10/29/23	Adult Choir	Emmanuel & SJ Montello
10/29/23	Sun. School	SJ Montello

GRIEF SHARE

Green Lake: Mondays 6:00pm
Princeton: Tuesdays 6:00pm
Montello: Thursdays 6:00pm

Please text Mark at 608-697-1600 for information and if you plan to attend.

The Evangelism Team is asking for donations of apples and apple sauce pouches for the upcoming Trunk or Treat on Wednesday, October 25th. Please drop them off at Church between the dates of October 14-24. Thank You! Any questions contact Matt at the office scsecretary@stjohnsmontello.org or 608-297-2899/608-494-0167.

LWMS FALL RALLY at Good Shepherd, Beaver Dam, on SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21. *Have you ever wondered what we do at an LWMS mission rally? CHEER! That's right! LWMS women are the cheerleaders for WELS missions! Our entire rally focuses on missionaries and our WELS home & world missions and how we can help with our prayers, encouragement, & gifts! Featured speaker Professor John Brug will update us on our sister synod in Ukraine by exploring the history leading to the present crisis and sharing its impact on the church. PLAN TO ATTEND! Register at 9:30 a.m. Enjoy morning refreshments, mission displays, and "lend us your hand" to create an encouragement poster for our Befriended mission, East Fork Lutheran School, Whiteriver, Arizona. Service Project: Bring monetary gifts to the rally to help East Fork purchase needed technology & physical education items. Bible study 10:25 a.m. Business Meeting 11:10 a.m. Lunch 12:00 noon. Devotion/Speaker 12:55 p.m. Come for the whole day or just part of it! Anyone with a heart for missions—women, men, even kids—all are invited! Car pool signup in the Information Room or contact your LWMS reporter: Helen Stelter 608-297-7116 or Linda Wachholz 608-369-2635.*

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN SEPTEMBER BEFRIEND A MISSION MONTH AT ST. JOHN'S During the month, our assigned missions/missionaries—Staff at East Fork Lutheran School, White River, Arizona, the Rothes in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and the Bergers in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania—have enjoyed hearing from parish members of all ages. Thank you for including them in your prayers and for your gifts to our fall mission collections at St. John's & Emmanuel. The Lutheran Women's Missionary Society (LWMS) supports WELS missions by prayer, encouragement, & giving. They work to increase interest in and support mission endeavors of the WELS.

FALL MISSION OFFERINGS are still being collected through Sunday, October 1! HAVE YOU GIVEN A GIFT YET? Our supported projects count on us. Collection container in the church entrance. *Be a friend to missions!*

PLEASE VISIT THE BEFRIEND A MISSION MONTH DISPLAY IN THE ST. JOHN'S LINKWAY Highlighted are the current LWMS BAM assignments, Beaver Dam Circuit fall mission projects, & the Kids C.A.R.E. project supported by CALA, Little Lambs, & St. John's Sunday School. *Please stop and share a brief encouragement with our Befriended missions by signing the autograph sheets for East Fork Lutheran School, the Rothes in Virginia, and the Bergers in Pennsylvania.*

TENTATIVE BEAVER DAM CIRCUIT BUS TRIP TO LWMS CONVENTION IN SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA, June 26-30, 2024 INTERESTED? A preliminary quote from Son Shine Travelers in Beaver Dam includes: **1)** Motor Coach transportation; pickup points to be determined. **2)** 4 nights lodging with breakfast at the hotel each morning; DEPART: Wednesday, June 26, (Leaving on Wednesday allows you to participate in the convention tours or mission journey opportunities on Thursday morning.) RETURN: Sunday, June 30. **3)** Transportation to and from the hotel and convention center each day. **4)** Cost *per person* (based on a 26- person minimum): \$750 for Single hotel occupancy; \$460 per person for Double hotel occupancy; \$365 per person for Triple hotel occupancy; \$315 per person for Quad hotel occupancy. If interested, please sign up on the sheet located at St. John's linkway display or in the fellowship hall at Emmanuel or contact Reporter Helen Stelter 608-297-7116 or Linda Wachholz 608-369-2635, lwmsreporter@stjohnsmontello.org If you sign, you will be kept informed.

Never been to a convention? The Beaver Dam Circuit will help you get there by assisting you with your expenses! Ask your church's reporter for a Send One Sister application (deadline January 15, 2024).

TODAY!! PIE & ICE CREAM SOCIAL AFTER THE ST. JOHN'S SERVICE. Come celebrate Befriend A Mission Month with the women of the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society. Enjoy dessert before you go home or out to lunch! Your **freewill offering will help women who apply for SOS funds to attend their first LWMS Convention, by assisting them with registration, meals, and lodging expenses for the 61st LWMS Convention, coming in Summer 2024 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.** . Help us send first-time attendees to the LWMS International Convention to hear firsthand about God's amazing work in our WELS home & world missions! It could be YOU, Ladies!!

Who can apply for SOS funds? Any confirmed woman or girl at St. John's or Emmanuel is eligible to apply for SOS funds due to our congregational memberships in LWMS. All who apply will receive *some* financial assistance to do so! SOS applications will be available at the Social, at the linkway display, Information Room, or anytime from Reporter Linda Wachholz (608-369-2635) or Reporter Helen Stelter (608-297-7116). **Application Deadline: Monday, January 15, 2024.**

Note: Christa Van Treeck received SOS funds to attend the 2023 Convention in LaCrosse this past June. Ask her about her experience!

The Ladies Aid is going to be cleaning the refrigerators and freezers in the St. John's Lower Level. **PLEASE, if you have anything in them, label them with a date, or remove them by Sunday, October 15th.** Thank You.

Church Council News:

- The Joint Emmanuel and St. John's Church Councils met for their Joint Meeting Tuesday, Sept. 19th. At the meeting, there was discussion of the calling of a second Pastor/primary replacement Pastor, or possibly putting that on hold until July of 2024. There was also discussion and clarification about the possible calling of CALA Mission Pastor. Pastor John Stelter from Princeton was at the Joint meeting and made key points as to what the Mission Pastor would be doing for the congregations of Emmanuel, St. John's Montello, and St. John's Princeton. The Mission Pastor's role would focus on ministering to the student families and possibly conducting services on occasion at all three parishes. This position would not fulfil the need for a parish Pastor to replace Pastor Zietlow when he retires. There was also discussion regarding the possibility of future consolidation of area churches.
- At the St. John's Council meeting, the updated By-laws were distributed and will be presented to the Voters at the upcoming meeting for them to ratify.
- There is a Stewardship Committee being formed to encourage the congregation to use their time, talents, and treasures to Glorify God through serving in the church. Members for that committee are needed. If you are able and willing to help serve on that committee, please contact Jerre Duerr, Martin Schmanke, Pastor John Dolan, or Matthew Kath.
- At the St. John's Council Meeting, Jacob Jaster went over the maintenance projects that were done, as well as what is still needed to be done. Some of the projects needed to get done are costly, but necessary.

Help us stay in touch!

Scan the code below using your smartphone camera and fill out the prompted information. Don't have a smartphone? That's ok! Fill out an attendance card located at the end of each pew and place it in the offering plate located at the entry of each church.



Welcome to our visitors!

Find & Like us on Facebook

Visit our website: www.stjohnsmontello.org

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Principal & 6-8 Grade Teacher: Larry Sellnow: 616-822-6689

Email: principal@christalonelutheranacademy.net

3-5 Grade Teacher: Beth Barenz: 262-705-5312

1-2 Grade Teacher: Shelley Myers: 920-285-7554

Kindergarten Teacher: Lynn Sellnow: 616-826-0816

Little Lambs Director: Barbara Stelter: 816-853-9029

CALA Secretary/Office: Ciara Neuhauser: 920-481-9002

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