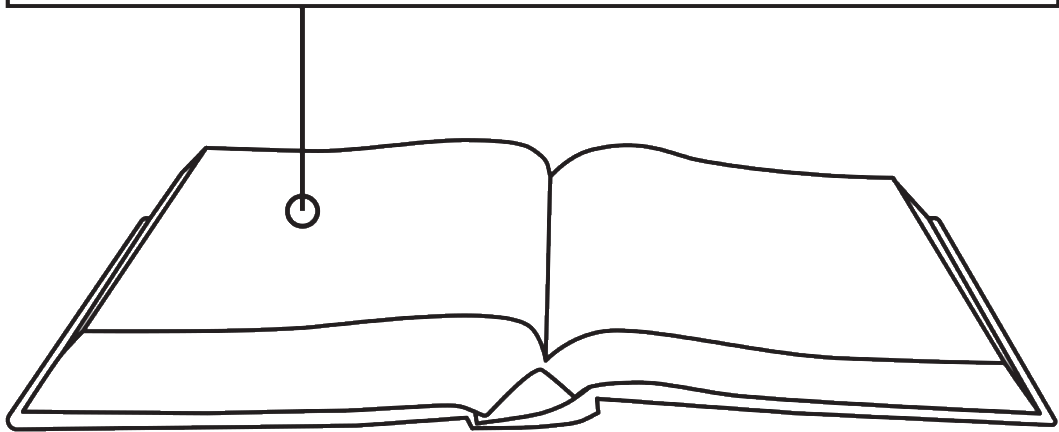


Define: Christian



THE CHRISTIAN ANSWERS DOUBT WITH FAITH

The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | York, Nebraska

August 13, 2023

SERIES THEME: DEFINE CHRISTIAN

Ask ten different people to define Christian and you may get ten different answers. One might say, "A Christian is someone who believes in Jesus." Okay. But the demons believe that Jesus exists and is the Son of God. So is that definition adequate? Another person might have a more negative view. He says, "A Christian is someone who believes he is better than others." Is that completely false? And if you aren't humble, does that mean you aren't Christian? In our next worship series Christ himself defines the term Christian and describes what Christians do. We will be struck by how often we do not do all those things. There likely are times when people could look at our behavior and assume we were unbelievers. Yet throughout this series Jesus will demonstrate that ultimately a Christian is one who runs to Christ for forgiveness precisely because he has failed to live like what he is—a Christian. As we receive the mercy of Christ, it moves us to strive with all our being to better fit Christ's beautiful definition, doing all the things Jesus says that Christians do.

THEME OF THE DAY: THE CHRISTIAN ANSWERS DOUBT WITH FAITH

Wherever faith clings to the promises of God, doubt is always lingering in the back of our mind, constantly asking the serpent's garden question, "Did God really say?" How striking to think that one must have faith in God before it is even possible to doubt him! It is not uncommon that, in times of adversity, doubt rears its ugly head—doubts about God's care, God's promises, God's providence. In those times, the true answer to doubt is not found in some great miracle that removes adversity, but in the still small voice of our Savior God whispering to us in his Word. Through that Word Christ reaches out to us with nailscarred hands, proof of his great love. Jesus gently says, "Why did you doubt?" Our faith is restored. The Christian answers doubt with faith because Jesus makes it so.

Worship Leader
Organist/Pianist

Pastor Justin Wilkens
Quinton Corwin

Acknowledgments

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The Service, Setting Three (page 188 in Christian Worship 21)

Hymn: 805 Eternal Father, Strong to Save

sts. 1–4

Stand

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

Amen.

Confession

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. 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.

Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

CW 213

Hear my voice when I call, O Lord; be merciful and answer me.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory Be to God on High

CW 157



Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor - ship you, we glorify you,



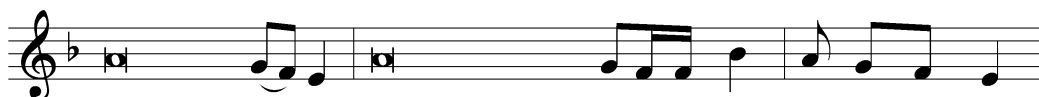
we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther Al - mighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world;



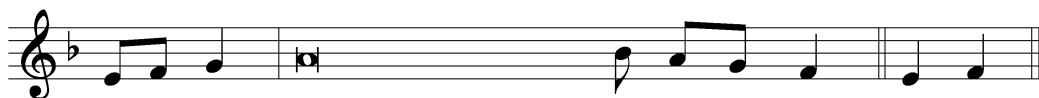
have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; re-ceive our prayer.



You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us.



For you on-ly are holy; you on-ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the



Ho - ly Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

THE WORD

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty and most merciful God, preserve us from all harm and danger that we, being ready in both body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish what you want done; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

1 Kings 19:9–18

The Lord answers Elijah's doubt not with a great show of power but with the gentle whisper of God's gracious promise

The LORD Appears to Elijah

⁹ He came to a cave and spent the night there.

Then the word of the Lord suddenly came to him, saying, "Why are you here, Elijah?"

¹⁰ He said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of Armies, but the people of Israel have abandoned your covenant. They have torn down your altars and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking to take my life."

¹¹ Then the Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is passing by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains and shattered rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind.

After the wind came an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake.

¹² After the earthquake there was a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire.

After the fire there was a soft, whispering voice.

¹³ When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak, and he went out and stood at the entrance to the cave. Then a voice came to him and said, "Why are you here, Elijah?"

¹⁴ He said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of Armies, but the people of Israel have abandoned your covenant. They have torn down your altars and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking to take my life."

¹⁵ Then the Lord said to him, "Go back the way you came and go to the Wilderness of Damascus. When you get there, you are to anoint Hazael as king over Aram. ¹⁶ You will also anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel and Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah as prophet in your place. ¹⁷ Whoever escapes the sword of Hazael, Jehu will kill, and whoever escapes the sword of Jehu, Elisha will kill. ¹⁸ But I have preserved in Israel seven thousand whose knees have not bent to Baal and whose lips have not kissed him."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Romans 8:28–39

Paul teaches that in all things, good times and bad, we can trust that God is carrying out his perfect plan for his glory and our salvation.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose, ²⁹ because those God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called. Those he called, he also justified. And those he justified, he also glorified.

More Than Conquerors

³¹ What then will we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² Indeed, he who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also graciously give us all things along with him?

³³ Who will bring an accusation against God's elect? God is the one who justifies! ³⁴ Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus, who died and, more than that, was raised to life, is the one who is at God's right hand and who is also interceding for us! ³⁵ What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will trouble or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ Just as it is written:

For your sake we are being put to death all day long.

We are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor rulers, neither things present nor things to come, nor powerful forces, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation*Hebrews 11:1***Refrain**

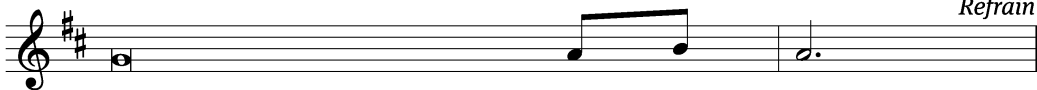
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Tone

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for



and assurance about what we do not see.

Refrain

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Gospel*Matthew 14:22–33*

In the account of Peter walking on the water, we see how quickly doubt challenges faith. And we see how graciously Jesus responds to our doubt.

Jesus Walks on the Water

²² Immediately Jesus urged the disciples to get into the boat and to go ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. ²³ After he had dismissed the crowd, he went up onto the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone. ²⁴ By then the boat was quite a distance from shore, being pounded by the waves because the wind was against it. ²⁵ In the fourth watch of the night, Jesus came toward them, walking on the sea. ²⁶ When the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified and cried out in fear, "It's a ghost!" ²⁷ But Jesus spoke to them at once, saying, "Take heart! It is I! Do not be afraid."

²⁸ Peter answered him and said, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."

²⁹ Jesus said, "Come!"

Peter stepped down from the boat, walked on the water, and went toward Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw the strong wind, he was afraid. As he began to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!"

³¹ Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand, took hold of him, and said to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" ³² When they got into the boat, the wind stopped. ³³ Those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God!"

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Hymn of the Day: 847 Be Still, My Soul

Sermon: Romans 8:28-39

Stand

Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
and became truly human.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.

**He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who in unity with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

Loving God and Lord, you created the universe that surrounds us and the globe on which we live. You control all things through your Son, who sits at your right hand in glory.

Comfort us with the promise of your eternal presence.

Give your Word power as it works in our hearts and minds. Clear away our confusion, and demolish our doubts. Send your Spirit to strengthen both our confidence in your promises and our desire to live according to your will.

Take away our love of sinning, and restore us each day by your grace.

The signs of the times warn us that the end of time is near. Protect us from scoffers who sneer at your truth. Spare us and Christians around the world from all forms of hate and persecution.

Give us courage to carry the cross with patience and joy.

Instill in the hearts of our children a desire to follow you as they prepare for future days. Help them distinguish between what is passing and what is eternal, between instant thrills and lasting joy. Encourage more young people to prepare for service in the public ministry of the gospel.

Mold us and move us to be good examples for our youth.

Hold in your care, Lord, those who are experiencing physical or emotional pain and all who are afflicted by disease or facing death. [Especially bless . . . *here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Pour out your compassion on the grieving, and comfort the mourners who miss someone they loved.

Move us to pray for these brothers and sisters and to help when we can.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

Whether we pray together or alone, you have promised to hear and answer us. Give us patience to accept your blessings in whatever way you send them. In your love and wisdom, prepare us for the day when you will take us to be with you forever.

Hear us for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Offering

Offering Hymn: 819 If God Himself Be for Me

sts. 1–2

THE SACRAMENT

Stand

Preface

CW 199

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock until he comes again in glory. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 200



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of hosts,
heav - en and earth are full, full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Tune: David Kauffman; William Gokelman

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Prayer of Thanksgiving

Blessed are you, Lord God, eternal King and gracious Father. In love you made us the crown of your creation. In mercy you planned our salvation. In grace you sent your Son to redeem us from sin.

We remember and give you thanks that your eternal Son, Jesus Christ, became flesh and made his dwelling among us, that he willingly placed himself under law to redeem those under law, that he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death on a cross, that he has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Bless us as we receive your Son's body and blood in this Sacrament. Forgive our sins, increase our faith, strengthen our fellowship, and deepen our longing for the day when Christ will welcome us to his eternal feast. Praise and thanks and honor and glory be to you, O God our Father, and to your Son and to the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

**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.

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my + body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my + blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

Lamb of God

CW 202



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; grant us, grant us peace.

Tune: David Kauffman; William Gokelman

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Be seated

Distribution

Close Communion *We ask that only those who have previously spoken to our pastor or are members in good standing of this or another WELS or ELS congregation come to Holy Communion today. Our practice of Close Communion (which has been the practice of the Christian Church throughout the ages) is in no way trying to judge anyone's faith. What we are trying to do is follow the Bible's clear teaching (1 Corinthians 11) to first study God's Word together. As we do so, we can share with/review with you what the Lord's Supper is all about. You, then, also have an opportunity to examine what we believe and teach before you come to the Lord's Supper and make a public profession that you agree with what we teach.*

Distribution Hymn: 676 Take and Eat

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

O God the Father, source of all goodness, in your loving-kindness you sent your Son to share our humanity. We thank you that through him you have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament. We also pray that you will not forsake us but will rule our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit so that we willingly serve you day after day; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Blessing

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.

Amen.

Hymn: 849 Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: 10:30 AM Worship Communion

Sunday: 10:30 AM Worship

Council Meeting August 20th

Bethel will have its next council meeting on August 20th following our worship service.

NELHS Updates

NELHS' opening service for the 23-24 school year will be today at 4:00 PM

NELHS has the opportunity to welcome six international students, but need host families to house the students. If you would be willing to serve as a host family, please contact Pastor Andrew Frey (afrey@nelhs.org) or Mandy Wellman (mwellman@nelhs.org).

CONNECTION CARDS: Visitors or members with changes in contact information, please fill out a connection card online at www.bethelyork.com on the member connect tab or scan this code.



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Personal assisted listening devices are available.

Given to the Lord: Attendance: Worship 54, Offerings: Operating: Needed 2,920.37, Given \$1,945.25. **To God be the glory!**

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