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HEBREWS 12:1B



**NORTHWESTERN
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Star of
Bethlehem Lutheran Church

4465 South Blosser Road
Santa Maria, CA 93455
Office: 805-937-0339
www.starlutheran.org
Pastor Michael Foley

Worship Service

Sunday, September 8, 2019 10:00 a.m.

Thirteenth Sunday after PENTECOST

Theme of the day: Four weeks of warnings for Christians begins on this Sunday that the life of faith will be marked by difficulties. These warnings are given so that the believer will be prepared to meet these challenges with the confidence of the cross. Today we see that the Word of God doesn't always unite — it also divides. The living and active Word of God doesn't bring peace between believers and unbelievers, but division.

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our friends and visitors! Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church is eager to share with you the blessings of its Christ-centered ministry. If you are a new or long-time resident of the Central Coast looking for a church home, we invite you to meet with us at the close of this worship service or at your convenience. All are welcome to stay for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Families are encouraged to worship together. If you need to step out with your children, the service can be seen and heard in the fellowship hall or narthex area. Feel free to enter and return at any time.

OUR MISSION

Our congregation exists for the purpose of "HOLDING OUT THE WORD OF LIFE." This is accomplished by faithfully preserving and proclaiming all of God's inerrant word, and administering the Sacraments as they were instituted by Christ.

OPENING HYMN: # 541 “Lord Jesus Christ, with Us Abide”

♪ **Lord Jesus Christ, with us abide,
For round us falls the eventide,
Nor let your Word, that heav’nly light,
For us be ever veiled in night.**

**O God, how sin’s dread works abound!
Throughout the earth no rest is found,
And falsehood’s spirit wide has spread,
And error boldly rears its head.**

**In these last days of sore distress
Grant us, dear Lord, true steadfastness
That pure we keep, till life is spent,
Your holy Word and sacrament.**

**Lord Jesus, help, your Church uphold,
For we are sluggish, thoughtless, cold.
Oh, prosper well your Word of grace,
And spread its truth in ev’ry place.**

**Oh, keep us in your Word, we pray;
The guile and rage of Satan stay!
Oh, may your mercy never cease!
Give concord, patience, courage, peace.**

**The cause is yours, the glory, too,
So hear us, Lord, and keep us true.
Your Word alone is our defense,
The Church’s glorious confidence.**

Please stand for last verse:

**Oh, grant that in your holy Word
We here may live and die, dear Lord,
And when our journey’s ending here,
Receive us into glory there.**

Minister: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Congregation: And also with you. (*spoken*)

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: **Amen.**

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

C: Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Bless - ed are
they who take ref - uge in him. Your Word, O Lord, is e -
ter - nal; it stands firm in the heav -
ens. Your faith - ful - ness con - tin - ues for -
ev - er. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.
Bless - ed are they who take ref - uge in him.

M: Almighty and merciful God, it is only by your gift of grace that we come into your presence and offer true and faithful service. Grant that our worship on earth may always be pleasing to you, and in the life to come give us the fulfillment of what you have promised; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C:  Amen.

Please be seated.

FIRST LESSON: Hebrews 12:1–13

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us get rid of every burden and the sin that so easily ensnares us, and let us run with patient endurance the race that is laid out for us. ²Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who is the author of our faith and the one who brings it to its goal. In view of the joy set before him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of God's throne. ³Carefully consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinful people, so that you do not grow weary and lose heart.

⁴You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood in your fight against sin. ⁵Have you also forgotten the encouragement that addresses you as sons?

My son, do not regard the Lord's discipline lightly,
and do not become weary of his correction.

⁶For the Lord disciplines the one whom he loves,
and he corrects every son he accepts.

⁷Endure suffering as discipline. God is dealing with you as sons.

Is there a son whose father does not discipline him? ⁸If you are not disciplined (and all of us have received it), then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

⁹In addition, we have earthly fathers who disciplined us, and we respected them. Should we not submit even more to the Father of the spirits and live? ¹⁰They disciplined us for a little while, according to what seemed best to them, but God disciplines us for our good, so that we may have a share in his holiness.

¹¹No discipline seems pleasant when it is happening, but painful, yet later it yields a peaceful harvest of righteousness for those who have been trained by it.

¹²Therefore strengthen your weak hands and feeble knees,
¹³and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated but rather healed.

PSALM OF THE DAY: Psalm 139a



O LORD, you have searched me and you know me;*
you perceive my thoughts from afar.

You discern my going out and my lying down;*
you are familiar with all my ways.

Refrain

Where can I go from your Spirit?*
Where can I flee from your presence?

If I go up to the heavens, you are there;*
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn,*
if I settle on the far side of the sea,

even there your hand will guide me,*
your right hand will hold me fast.

**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

VERSE OF THE DAY

M: Alleluia, alleluia. Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; they will tell of the power of your awesome works, and I will proclaim your great deeds. Alleluia. (*Psalm 145*)

C: The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, discerning thoughts and intentions of the heart. Alleluia. (Hebrews 4:12)

SECOND LESSON: Luke 12:49–53

⁴⁹“I came to throw fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already ignited. ⁵⁰But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is finished! ⁵¹Do you think that I came to bring peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. ⁵²Yes, from now on there will be five divided in one household: three against two, and two against three. ⁵³They will be divided: father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against mother; mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”

HYMN: # 280 “Thy Strong Word”

**♪ Thy strong word did cleave the darkness;
At thy speaking it was done.
For created light we thank thee
While thine ordered seasons run.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise to thee who light dost send!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia without end!**

**Lo, on those who dwelt in darkness,
Dark as night and deep as death,
Broke the light of thy salvation,
Breathed thine own life-giving breath.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise to thee who light dost send!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia without end!**

**Thy strong Word bespeaks us righteous;
Bright with thine own holiness,
Glorious now, we press toward glory,
And our lives our hope confess.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise to thee who light dost send!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia without end!**

**From the cross thy wisdom shining
Breaketh forth in conqu'ring might;
From the cross forever beameth All thy bright redeeming light.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise to thee who light dost send!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia without end!**

**Give us lips to sing thy glory, Tongues thy mercy to proclaim,
Throats to shout the hope that fills us,
Mouths to speak thy holy name.
Alleluia! Alleluia! May the light which thou dost send
Fill our songs with alleluias, Alleluias without end!**

**God the Father, light-creator, To thee laud and honor be.
To thee, Light from Light begotten, Praise be sung eternally.
Holy Spirit, light-revealer, Glory, glory be to thee.
Mortals, angels, now and ever Praise the holy Trinity!**

SERMON: Jeremiah 23:23-29

**²³Am I a God who is only nearby, declares the LORD,
and not a God far away?**

**²⁴Can anyone hide in secret places
so that I cannot see him? declares the LORD.**

Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the LORD.

**²⁵I have heard what the prophets who prophesy lies in my name
have said. They say, "I have had a dream! I have had a dream!"**

²⁶How long will this be in the hearts of these lying prophets? These prophets proclaim the fantasies of their own hearts. ²⁷They think they can make my people forget my name with the dreams each one tells his neighbor, the way their fathers forgot my name because of Baal. ²⁸Let the prophet who has a dream tell his dream. But let the one who has my word speak my word faithfully.

What has chaff to do with grain? declares the LORD. ²⁹Is not my word like a fire? declares the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?

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.**

Hymn: # 284 "How Precious Is the Book Divine"

**♪ How precious is the Book divine, By inspiration giv'n!
Bright as a lamp its doctrines shine To guide our souls to heav'n.**

**Its light, descending from above Our gloomy world to cheer,
Displays a Savior's boundless love And brings his glories near.**

**It shows to us our wand'ring ways
And where our feet have trod
But brings to view the matchless grace Of a forgiving God.**

**This lamp through all the dreary night
Of life shall guide our way
Till we behold the clearer light Of an eternal day.**

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

C: 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.

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: ♪Amen. Amen. Amen.

HYMN # 504 "Bless Our Loved Ones, Holy Father"

**♪ Bless our loved ones, Holy Father; Hear our anxious prayer;
By your mercy keep them always In your care.**

**Jesus, Savior, let your presence Be their light and guide;
Keep, oh, keep them in their weakness At your side.**

**When in sorrow, when in danger, When in loneliness,
In your love look down and comfort Their distress.**

**May the joy of your salvation Be their strength and stay!
May they love and may they praise you Day by day!**

**Holy Spirit, let your teaching Sanctify their life;
Send your grace that they may conquer In the strife.**

**Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God forever true,
Bless them, guide them, save them, keep them Close to you.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FLOWERS for today's service are given to the glory of God by
Carol Powell.

MEDITATIONS are on the ledge in the narthex.

PRAYERS Pray for: Gordon Hillberg, Shawn Lozano, John Velasques, Ruth Fabian, little Elias, Albert Nunez, Judy Moore, Don (Turk) Oberg and his wife, Shawna Bushey, Rose Marie Hillberg, Atalia (Moore's' grand-daughter), Austin Barnard, Dennis Douglas, Julieanna Saenz, and Rylie Lopez.

THIS WEEK

Monday	Circuit, Tarzana Voters, 7:30 p.m.
Tuesday	ESL, 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m.
Thursday	Bible Class, 10:00 a.m. ESL, 6:00 p.m.
Saturday	Catechism Class, 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	Sunday School & Bible Class, 9:00 a.m. Worship with Communion, 10:00 a.m.

AREA REFORMATION SERVICE, November 3, 4:00 p.m.
It is Star of Bethlehem's turn to provide the luncheon.

Special Mission Offering for this season is the Central Africa Medical Mission.

Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus...



- Hebrews 12:2