

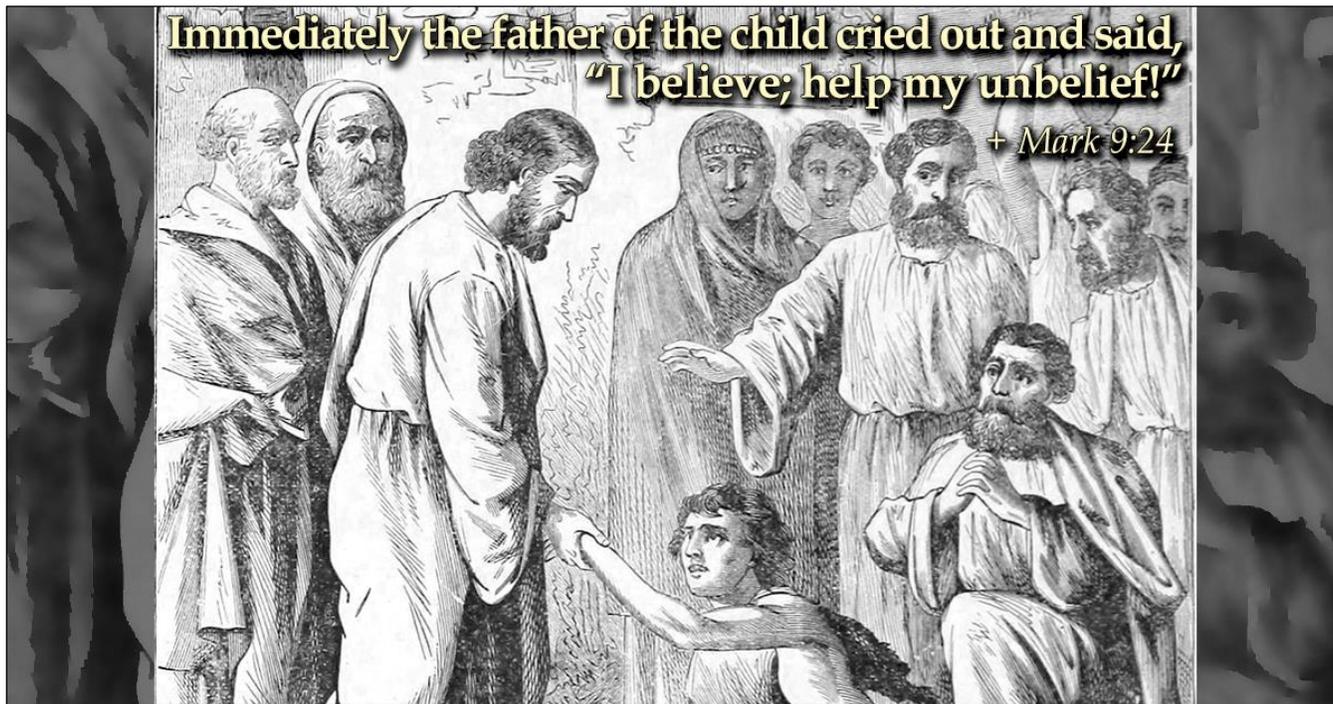


All things are possible for one who believes.

+ *Mark 9:23b*

THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 12, 2021



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Imagine if you were the father in today's Gospel. Since childhood, his son has been plagued by an unclean spirit that makes him mute and throws him down, doing bodily harm. The dad brings his son to Jesus' disciples, and they are of no help. The father comes before Jesus and asks him to help . . . if He can.

Jesus responds, "If you can! All things are possible for one who believes." To which the father cries out, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:23–24 [NKJV]). This father, who is at the end of his rope, cries out in faith mixed with desperation.

Thankfully, his worthiness, and our worthiness, does not depend on the greatness or smallness of faith. Instead, it depends on Jesus, the object of our faith. When we face desperate times, we, too, cry out in prayer and faith, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

Yours in Christ Jesus,
+Pastor Griebenaw

Pastor's Phone: 760-679-3699

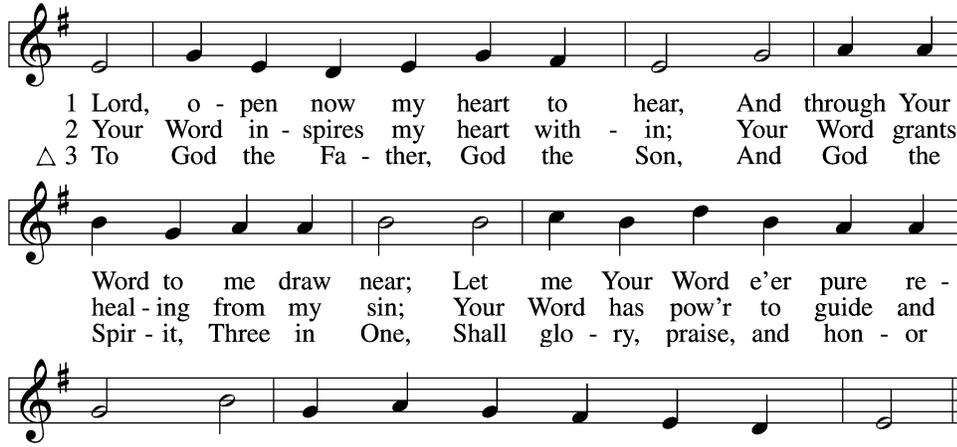
Pastor's Email: pastor@gracelutheranelcentro.org

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✠ DIVINE SERVICE, SETTING THREE ✠

HYMN OF INVOCATION: Lord, Open Now My Heart to Hear

LSB 908



1 Lord, o - pen now my heart to hear, And through Your
2 Your Word in - spires my heart with - in; Your Word grants
△ 3 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, And God the
Word to me draw near; Let me Your Word e'er pure re -
heal - ing from my sin; Your Word has pow'r to guide and
Spir - it, Three in One, Shall glo - ry, praise, and hon - or
tain; Let me Your child and heir re - main.
bless; Your Word brings peace and hap - pi - ness.
be Now and through - out e - ter - ni - ty.

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Stand – The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

LSB 184

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. *Matthew 28:19b; [18:20]*
- C** Amen.
- P** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness. *[Hebrews 10:22]*
- P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,
- C** who made heaven and earth. *Psalm 124:8*
- P** I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,
- C** and You forgave the iniquity of my sin. *Psalm 32:5*

Kneel (or remain standing) — Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

- P** Almighty God, our maker and redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- C** O most merciful God, who has given Your only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
- P** Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe on His name He gives power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.
- Grant this, Lord, unto us all. *Mark 16:16; John 1:12*
- C** Amen.

Stand

SERVICE OF THE WORD

INTROIT

Psalm 31:14-16; antiphon: v. 24

The pastor and congregation chant responsively. The antiphon is chanted by the pastor before and after the psalm.



(Antiphon) Be strong, and let your heart take | courage,*
all you who wait | for the LORD!

¹⁴ But I trust in You, | O LORD,*
I say, "You | are my God."

¹⁵ My times are | in Your hand;*
rescue me from the hand of my enemies and from my perse- | cutors!

¹⁶ Make Your face shine on Your | servant;*
save me in Your | steadfast love!

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

The antiphon is repeated.

KYRIE

Mark 10:47



Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -



on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

Luke 2:14; John 1:29



Glory be to God on high: and on earth peace, good - will toward



men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,



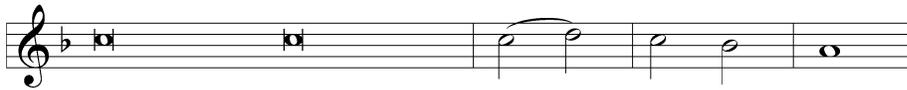
we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.



O Lord God, heav'n-ly King, God the Fa-ther Al - mighty.



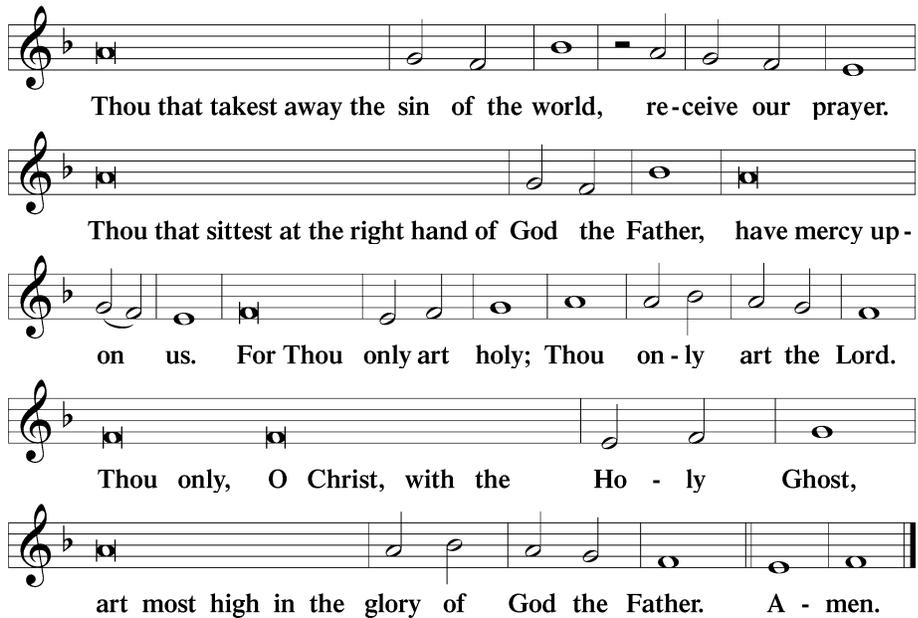
O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,



that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up-on us.



Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re-ceive our prayer.

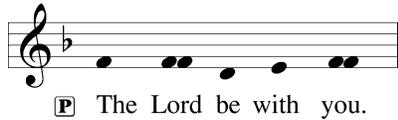
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up-

on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on-ly art the Lord.

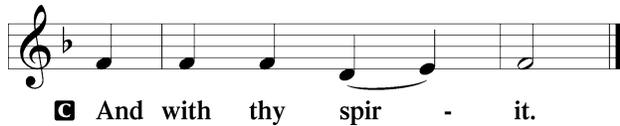
Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho-ly Ghost,

art most high in the glory of God the Father. A-men.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.



P Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, our support and defense in every need, continue to preserve Your Church in safety, govern her by Your goodness, and bless her with Your peace; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

Sit

OLD TESTAMENT

Isaiah 50:4-10

P The Old Testament Reading is from Isaiah, chapter 50.

⁴The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary. Morning by morning He awakens; He awakens My ear to hear as those who are taught.

⁵The Lord GOD has opened My ear, and I was not rebellious; I turned not backward. ⁶I gave My back to those who strike, and My cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not My face from disgrace and spitting.

⁷But the Lord GOD helps Me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame. ⁸He who vindicates Me is near. Who will contend with Me? Let us stand up together. Who is My adversary? Let him come near to Me. ⁹Behold, the Lord GOD helps Me; who will declare Me guilty? Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

¹⁰Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the voice of His Servant? Let him who walks in darkness and has no light trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL

Psalm 34:9, 19, alt.

The pastor and congregation chant responsively by half-verse.



Fear the LORD, | you His saints,*
for those who fear Him lack | nothing!
Many are the afflictions of the | righteous.*
but the LORD delivers him out | of them all.

EPISTLE

James 3:1–12

P The Epistle is from James, chapter three.

¹Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. ²For we all stumble in many ways, and if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. ³If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. ⁴Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. ⁵So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.

How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! ⁶And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. ⁷For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, ⁸but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? ¹²Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

ALLELUIA & VERSE

Mark 9:23b



C Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

Alleluia. All things are possible for one who believes. Alleluia.

The alleluias are repeated.

HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 9:14–29

P The Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark, the ninth chapter.



C Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

¹⁴When they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and scribes arguing with them.

¹⁵And immediately all the crowd, when they saw Him, were greatly amazed and ran up to Him and greeted Him.

¹⁶And He asked them, **“What are you arguing about with them?”**

¹⁷And someone from the crowd answered Him, “Teacher, I brought my son to You, for he has a spirit that makes him mute. ¹⁸And whenever it seizes him, it throws him down, and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. So I asked Your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able.”

¹⁹And He answered them, **“O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to Me.”** ²⁰And they brought the boy to Him. And when the spirit saw Him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth.

²¹And Jesus asked his father, **“How long has this been happening to him?”**

And he said, “From childhood. ²²And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.”

²³And Jesus said to him, “If you can! All things are possible for one who believes.”

²⁴Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, “I believe; help my unbelief!”

²⁵And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.” ²⁶And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, “He is dead.”

²⁷But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

²⁸And when He had entered the house, His disciples asked Him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?”

²⁹And He said to them, “This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

NICENE CREED

C I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Sit

HYMN OF THE DAY: Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness

LSB 849

1 Praise the One who breaks the dark - ness With a lib - er -
 2 Praise the One who blessed the chil - dren With a strong, yet
 3 Let us praise the Word In - car - nate, Christ, who suf - fered

at - ing light; Praise the One who frees the pris - 'ners,
 gen - tle, word; Praise the One who drove out de - mons
 in our place. Je - sus died and rose vic - to - rious

Turn - ing blind - ness in - to sight. Praise the One who preached the
 With the pierc - ing, two - edged sword. Praise the One who brings cool
 That we may know God by grace. Let us sing for joy and

Gos - pel, Heal - ing ev - 'ry dread dis - ease, Calm - ing
 wa - ter To the des - ert's burn - ing sand; From this
 glad - ness, See - ing what our God has done; Let us

storms, and feed - ing thou - sands With the ver - y Bread of peace.
 Well comes liv - ing wa - ter, Quench - ing thirst in ev - 'ry land.
 praise the true Re - deem - er, Praise the One who makes us one.

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SERMON

Rev. Doug Griebenaw

After the sermon, the pastor may say:

- P** The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
- C** Amen.

Philippians 4:7

Stand

OFFERTORY

Psalm 51:10-12

C Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
 new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -
 way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it
 from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -
 tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

Kneel (or remain standing)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

(1 Timothy 2:1-4)

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For faith and its increase, even in the midst of unbelief, that God would sustain us through the many troubles and trials of this world, where unclean spirits often afflict us and those that we love, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For the teachers of our Synod's schools, colleges, and seminaries, who shall be judged with greater strictness, that the Lord would bless them, preserve them faithful to His Word and keep their speech from stumbling, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For our tongues, that our Lord and Father would tame what no human being can tame; that He would turn our tongues from cursing the people made in His likeness to instead speak and bless God; and that He would keep us from stumbling in what we say, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For our governing authorities, especially Joseph, Gavin, and Cheryl; that God would guard their tongues that they not stumble in what they say, but speak wisely, leading in accord with His will, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For all who are in any need of mind, body, or soul, that our God, with whom all things are possible, would not deny their prayers on account of unbelief, but grant them health and healing, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For all who commune, that they may be strengthened by the true body and most precious blood of Christ, who suffered unjustly for our sins and was vindicated in His resurrection; and that they may be united in confession and strengthened by the blessed Sacrament be made certain that no one can contend against or declare guilty those who have been reconciled to God in Christ, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

The live-stream concludes with the following:

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13

P Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

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.

CONCLUDING COLLECT

P Almighty and everlasting God, You would have all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. By Your almighty power and unsearchable wisdom break and hinder all the counsels of those who hate Your Word and who, by corrupt teaching, would destroy it. Enlighten them with the knowledge of Your glory that they may know the riches of Your heavenly grace and, in peace and righteousness, serve You, the only true God; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24-26

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and **✠** give you peace.

C Amen.

The Divine Service continues with the Lord's Supper for those at the church. Please sing/read aloud the closing hymn. If you desire to receive Holy Communion, please text/call Pastor (he is usually at the church for a while on Sundays).

CLOSING HYMN: Almighty Father, Bless the Word

LSB 923

1 Al - might - y Fa - ther, bless the Word Which through Your
 2 We praise You for the means of grace As home - ward
 Δ 3 Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise Him, all
 grace we now have heard. Oh, may the pre - cious
 now our steps we trace. Grant, Lord, that we who
 crea - tures here be - low; Praise Him a - bove, ye
 seed take root, Spring up, and bear a - bun - dant fruit!
 wor - shiped here May all at last in heav'n ap - pear.
 heav'n - ly host: Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

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✠ SOLI DEO GLORIA ✠
(TO GOD ALONE BE THE GLORY)

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS FROM YOUR PASTOR

Brothers and Sisters,

“Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation” (Psalm 146:3).

It has been twenty years since that fateful September morning when our nation was attacked—directly, viciously, and unexpectedly. Each generation seems to have one of those “where were you when...” moments: the attack on Pearl Harbor, the assassination of President Kennedy, 9/11. Some of you have endured all three.

For myself, I had just graduated from college and was living back at home with my parents. That morning, my father had just departed for work and my mother, brother, and I were just rousing and watching the morning news. The live reports cut-in just after the first plane struck one of the Twin Towers in New York, NY. Shock! That was our reaction—shock and wonder: What had happened? It must have been a malfunction!

The thought that such a thing could be deliberate—that this was an act of terrorism—just wasn’t an option! And yet, as I sipped on my coffee and stared at the screen, I saw the second plane in the background as it flew straight into the second tower. And when the fireball burst forth on the other side I just sat there—stunned!

I was just 23 years old, a recent (and unemployed) college graduate. I had nowhere to be, nothing that I needed to do, so I just sat there for a couple hours, transfixed by the news reports coming on every channel. Finally, I pulled myself together and left the house—I just needed to go somewhere, anywhere, and do SOMETHING!

I remember meeting up with my college fraternity brothers as we arranged a caravan of the brothers to go and donate blood. There was also much talk (as is the case with young men when your homeland is attacked) of going instead to the nearest recruiting station and enlisting! I didn’t go to the recruiting station . . . at least not that day. It was May 30, 2002, in the commons of my fraternity house that I took the Oath of Enlistment and joined the United States Navy, much to my mother’s dismay (sorry, Momma).

This is all a rather roundabout way of getting back to the Scripture quote that began this letter . . . but I remember one other effect of the events twenty years ago—namely that my little congregation in Denver (it was almost identical to Grace in size and demographics) was packed to the gills (meaning about 300 people or so in church)! I had never seen so many people at Emmaus! And then, almost as quickly as it began, those people were gone.

I expect much the same happened here at Grace and at churches the world over. In retrospect, it all makes sense: when the seemingly impervious princes of this world (governments) are unmasked and revealed to be vulnerable, fallible, and rather powerless, mankind retreats, almost instinctively, to a “higher power.” And once the immediate danger is past, just as instinctively (or should I say “naturally”), we fall back to our foolish trust in ourselves and the world’s princes. That is our fallen nature—that is Original Sin in us that is perpetually at enmity with God.

The Old Adam within us is strong—so strong that we cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord, or come to Him; rather, the Holy Spirit must call us by the Gospel and enlighten us with His gifts (Small Catechism—the Creed). We cannot place our trust in princes or ourselves, in whom there is no salvation. Thanks be to God that He has given us His only-begotten Son to purchase and win us from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil . . . even such world-shaking evil as the terror attacks of September 11, 2001.

Speaking of sons, I’m including a picture of Sam playing the “Where are You” game with our curtains for two reasons: 1) he is such a cute little guy! and 2) you’ll be asking “Where is Pastor” on Tuesday. I’m not available for our Bible Study this week—I’ll be in Yuma for my final Circuit Meeting and my brother pastors taking me to lunch as a little send-off before I leave. This means that **we will NOT be having Bible Study this Tuesday**. However, **we will have our 7:00pm Prayer Service on Wednesday**, meditating on Psalm 56. I encourage you to read and study the psalm beforehand.

Lastly, I am pleased to announce that **you can now give ONLINE** by going to www.GraceLutheranElCentro.org/give. You can make a one-time gift or set-up a recurring donation to Grace!

Of course, if you are more comfortable with mailing a check, you can continue to mail it to the church's post office box: Grace Evangelical-Lutheran Church, PO Box 1530, El Centro, CA 92244-1530.

Yours in Christ Jesus, +Pastor Griebenaw

