**St. John’s Lutheran Church**

**Saginaw, MN**

**April 2, 2025**

**6:30 pm**

***“Seekers”***

**Prelude**

**Welcome**

**Opening Hymn *“Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil”*** WOVHymn #713

Lord, let my heart be good soil, open to the seed of your

Word. Lord, let my heart be good soil, where

love can grow and peace is understood. When my heart is hard,

break the stone away. When my heart is cold, warm it with the day.

When my heart is lost, lead me on your way. Lord, let my heart,

Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

**Greeting**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

***C: And also with you.***

**Call to Worship**  
P: Who among you is seeking the wisdom of God?  
***C: We long to hear God’s Word spoken to our hearts.***

P: Who among you is seeking God’s bright and holy truth? ***C: We long to learn the ways of wisdom and righteousness.***

P : Who among you is seeking a Spirit-filled life? ***C: We long to live lives of holiness and light.***

P: God grants God’s wisdom generously to all who ask. Come near, people of God! Let us worship in wisdom and truth.

***C: Amen.***

**Prayer**

P: God of holy wisdom, we are seekers on the way to a deeper wisdom and a wider vision. Our lives are full of information and opinions, but in the midst of it all we long to hear the voice of wisdom – Your wisdom, God – cutting through the noise and teaching us how to live, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

**Lesson: James 1:12-18**

12Blessed is anyone who endures temptation. Such a one has stood the test and will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. 13No one, when tempted, should say, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no one. 14But one is tempted by one’s own desire, being lured and enticed by it; 15then, when desire has conceived, it engenders sin, and sin, when it is fully grown, gives birth to death. 16Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers and sisters. 17Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.18In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave birth to us by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

**Lesson: Luke 12:13-21**

13Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.” 14But he said to him, “Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?” 15And he said to them, “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.” 16Then he told them a parable: “The land of a rich man produced abundantly. 17And he thought to himself, ‘What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?’ 18Then he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’ 20But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ 21So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.”

**Message *“Seeking Self-Justification”***

**Hymn of the Day *“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”***ELWHymn #803

Vs.1 When I survey the wondrous cross on which the

prince of glory died, my richest gain I

count but loss and pour contempt on all my pride.

Vs. 2 Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast save in the

death of Christ, my God; all the vain things that

charm me most, I sacrifice them to his blood.

Vs. 3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and

love flow mingled down. Did e’er such love and

sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Vs. 4 Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a

present far too small; love so amazing,

so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

**Offering**

**Offering Prayer**

P:Lord God, we give these offerings in gratitude, rejoicing in the abundance of your gifts to us. We give these offerings in faith, trusting that you will provide for our needs. We give these offerings in hope, knowing you can use them to spread your love in this world. And with these offerings, we give ourselves; may we live with generous hearts, with openhands. Amen

**Prayers**

P: There is no one who is wise until we are enlightened by your Holy Spirit. So come, Holy Spirit, and make us children of the truth. Hear us, O God;

***C: your mercy is great.***

P: Loving God, we pray for your wisdom in our church family. Teach us how to better serve one another and the world. Hear us, O God;

***C: your mercy is great.***

P: Loving God, we pray for your wisdom in our streets and apartment buildings and neighborhoods. Teach us to seek your truth and embody your compassion with all we meet. Hear us, O God;

***C: your mercy is great.***

P: Loving God, we pray for your wisdom in our treatment of your earth. Teach us to be better caretakers of our planet and its beautiful animals and plants. Hear us, O God;

***C: your mercy is great.***

P: Loving God, we pray for your wisdom for our world. Teach all of who belong to a Christian community to show greater tolerance and love to Jews, Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists. Lord, teach us compassion and understanding, so that all of your children may share this world in peace. Hear us, O God;

***C: your mercy is great.***

P: Holy and wonderful God, we thank you for our visitors this morning. May they go from this service refreshed and renewed, having felt the touch of your loving Holy Spirit. Hear us, O God;

***C: your mercy is great.***

P: We pray for those ill and injured in our community. Loving God, touch them with your tender care, reassuring them of your presence, and speeding their journeys to wholeness and wellness. Hear us, O God;

***C: your mercy is great.***

P: God, your love is true and bright, and guides us on our way. May we go forth from here with new wisdom, new joy, and a new hope. Give us this week the grace of your presence and your love, to carry us through our days until we meet again in this fellowship.

**C: Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer**

P: Let us pray as Jesus has taught us.

***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.***

**Blessing**

P: May the holy wisdom of God guard your ways and guide your paths. May the living truth of God enlighten your hearts and open your minds and may the living Spirit of God give you life, and life to the full!  
***C: Amen***

**Sending Hymn *“Now the Day is Over”*** ELWHymn #570

Vs. 1 Now the day is over; night is drawing nigh;  
 shadows of the evening steal across the sky.

Vs. 2 Jesus, give the weary calm and sweet repose;  
 with your tend'rest blessing may our eyelids close.

Vs. 3 Comfort ev'ry suff'rer watching late in pain;  
 those who plan some evil, from their sin restrain.

Vs. 4 Through the long night-watches may your angels spread  
 their bright wings above me, watching round my bed.

Vs. 5 When the morning wakens, then may I arise  
 pure and fresh and sinless in your holy eyes.

Vs. 6 Glory to the Father, glory to the Son,  
 and to you, blest Spirit, while the ages run.

**Dismissal**

P: Go now in peace and seek justice.

***C: Thanks be to God.***

**Postlude**