

SERVICE INFORMATION: November 2, 2025
All Saints Sunday; Pastor Tom Olson;
Minnesota Valley Free Lutheran Church

PRELUDE: Jan Ellingson (Osthus.Reynolds)

CALL TO WORSHIP: *Psalm 149*

LEADER: Praise the LORD.

*ALL: Sing to the LORD a new song,
his praise in the assembly of the saints.*

LEADER: Let Israel rejoice in their Maker;

ALL: let the people of Zion be glad in their King.

LEADER: Let them praise his name with dancing

ALL: and make music to him with tambourine and harp.

LEADER: For the LORD takes delight in his people;

ALL: he crowns the humble with salvation.

LEADER: Let the saints rejoice in this honor

ALL: and sing for joy on their beds.

HYMN #165 “The Son of God Goes Forth to War”

CONFESSION OF SIN: *Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed.*

Therefore, we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy and ask You for Christ’s sake, grant us forgiveness 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 eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Reader: Dave Fischer

FIRST LESSON: *Revelation 7:9-17 After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in*

front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. 10 And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." 11 All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!" 13 Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?" 14 I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore, "they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. 16 Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. 17 For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

GOSPEL LESSON: *Matthew 5:1-12 Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, 2 and he began to teach them, saying:*

*3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*4 Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.*

*5 Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.*

*6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.*

*7 Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.*

*8 Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.*

*9 Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.*

*10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

READER: Here ends the reading of God's Word.

CONGREGATION SINGS: God be praised, for His glad Tidings!

CONFESSION OF FAITH: *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, 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 is seated on the right hand of the Father, And He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; Whose kingdom shall 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 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

GLORIA PATRI: Ambassador Hymnal p. 4 (please put on screen)
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER

PRAISE SONGS: songs chosen by Ruth Antal ("He is Lord" would be a possibility)

SERMON TITLE: "AM I A SAINT?"

I John 3:1-3; Pastor Tom Olson; November 2, 2025

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

THEOLOGY: Today's sermon text demonstrates a great principle I learned in seminary from Dr. Phil Haugen. The principle is "ALREADY BUT NOT YET." It reminds us that in Christ we are ALREADY: healed, sinless, beautiful, seated in heaven, radiant, etc. but in this world and in this body we are NOT YET...we are becoming.

LABELS: Some churches label certain people as SAINTS...just a bit more holy than the average Christian. They pray to saints rather than to God. I don't believe a truly holy person who is dead would want to be labeled as a saint or prayed to. I believe they would want all attention to go to God alone. We are positionally ALL saints but we are ALL experientially still sinners, slowly becoming more like Christ. Even the greatest so-called SAINTS of history had a few good character qualities but several flaws too.

1 John 3:1-3: This "ALL SAINTS" Epistle text is one of my favorite portions of Scripture. I more often than not preach on this ALL SAINTS DAY text. Today we will look at it by asking an important question: "AM I A SAINT?"

Our Epistle Text for this All-Saints Sunday helps us understand what a saint is. Let's look at AM I A SAINT? from 1 John 3:1-3. A SAINT HAS...

I. A NEW CITIZENSHIP

1 John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

CONCEPT: Is there a guiding concept that can transform your thinking? Is there a perspective that can elevate you out of the

most mundane tasks into ecstasy? Yes, there is in this verse.... ***“I am loved by my Heavenly Father,” “He has lavished that love on me through Jesus,” “God calls me His child.”*** That is who we are. That is why the world does not know us. To the world, we are OUTSIDERS, we are not one of them.

DEVIL: We are the children OF LIGHT, of the God, the worldly are children THE DARKNESS, of the devil. Jesus said to the evil religious and political leaders in ***John 8:44 “You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”*** Why do so many politicians compulsively lie? It is because their father is the devil...it is simple as that. They don't know Jesus as their Savior.

ILLEGAL: The ungodly are the illegal aliens on this earth. They have created systems that are contrary to the one who created all things. Believers are aliens to the ungodly world system not of the earth. The meek will inherit a renewed earth, totally repaired of flaws. The ungodly will one day be removed forever. Our presence on earth is a constant reminder of their impending doom. We hate sin, the world loves sin. That is why the world hates us.

SAINTS: We are saints. Not in the sense of being some sort of perfect person that a bunch of church leaders declares to be a saint. Saint means set apart. When you are born of the Holy Spirit through faith in Christ, you are SET APART.

DAILY: This is actually a DECLARATION. Declarations in Scripture are objective and important. They are like laws of nature we count on without wavering. Every morning, we need to look into the mirror and recite the content of this verse;

- God is my Father
- He loves me dearly
- He lavishes his love to me through Jesus

- My sins are forgiven
- I am on my way to heaven
- I am a joint heir, with Christ
- The wealth of heaven is mine
- My future is secure
- The world will hate me because I am not a part of them
- They hated Jesus too
- The way the world treats me is only temporary
- God's kindness is eternal
- I am a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven
- My treasures are stored in heaven, not upon the earth.

All of these truths flow from this one amazing verse of 1 John 3:1.

1 John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

A believer is a SAINT. AM I A SAINT? One day you will have...

II. A BETTER PERSONALITY

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

QUESTION: If someone asked you what you are like, what would you answer? Would you use the words like, happy, smart, grouchy, fun, quiet, serious? What is your personality?

ANSWER: The real answer to that question according to this verse is this: ***“I don't know yet what I am like. God has not revealed who the eternal me is!”*** You could say that currently you are affected by your body, your upbringing, your genetics, the culture you were raised in, your friends and family, your work associates

and so on. But the answer to “what am I like” is this: I WON’T KNOW THAT UNTIL JESUS APPEARS AGAIN.

Let me repeat this verse again: *1 John 3:2 ... what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him...*

TRANSFORMED: This verse tells us that when we enter into the presence of Christ that we will be “transformed.” We will be rescued from our current personality. “WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM.” We will no longer be like our earthly parents, we will no longer be like our culture we grew up in, we will no longer be like what our peer group has molded us to be. We will be transformed by the presence of Christ.

HEAVEN: When someone dies, I often tell their living spouse, “You will not be married to that person in heaven. But you will be better friends than you ever were in this life. You will like them more than you ever did in this life. They will be the person God intended them to be. You will also be amazed at how handsome or beautiful they are when you see their bodies, unaffected by the curse of sin.”

IMAGO DEI: We are saints, forgiven, set apart, children of God. On the basis of this verse, we have the right to say to the question, “Do you want to know what I am really like?” We can say, “Study the life of Jesus. Study the character of God. I have shortcomings for the few brief years of my earthly existence, but for all eternity I will be like Christ. THAT IS WHO I REALLY AM.”

LONGING: We eagerly long for that moment of freedom from this fallen world. That is our great expectation. In a few weeks we will sing the Advent hymn that puts it this way

“Our hope and expectation, O Jesus now appear. Arise Thou Son so longed for, O’er this benighted sphere, With hearts and hands

uplifted, we plead O Lord to see. The day of earth’s redemption, that brings us onto Thee.”

PROCLAIMING: I trust that you are EAGERLY AWAITING YOUR IMPROVED PERSONALITY. Finally, AM I A SAINT? You are if you have this...

III. A NEW GOAL

1 John 3:3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

RESULT: There is natural result of focusing on our adoption as children of God and our amazing life we will have forever in heaven. It is the desire to live a pure life as we wait for the return of Christ. ... right motives, desire to love, generosity, kindness, empathy...

PURITY: I believe this idea of purity is expressed so well by David in **Psalm 51:10** “*create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a RIGHT SPIRIT within me.*” This is the substance of being a SAINT, a life of one that is constantly aware that they are a child of the King and a citizen of heaven. This is the life of one who is longing to see Jesus “face to face” and be transformed by His presence.

COMMUNION: It is the reason we regularly come to the Lord’s table to partake of His body and blood. Communion strengthens our assurance that our sins are forgiven, that we are children of God and that Jesus is coming back to make things right. Communion imparts God’s grace.

REMEMBER: Think about your loved ones who have died in Christ. Our closing hymn says, “WE FEEBLY STRUGGLE, THEY IN GLORY SHINE.” That is what Jesus purchased for us on the cross. We long for that great day when we also will shine with the glory of God! That is the fullness of being a saint. *Now*

may the peace of God that passes all understanding guard your hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus. Amen

HYMN #165 “For All the Saints”

HOLY COMMUNION

CHORAL BENEDICTION: *May the Lord, Mighty Lord, Bless and keep you forever-- Grant you peace, Perfect peace, Strength in every endeavor. Lift up your eyes and see His face, Feel His grace forever. May the Lord, Mighty Lord, Bless and keep you forever.*

POSTLUDE: Jan Ellingson