APOSTLES LUTHERAII CHURCH

THE REVEREND JAY SERAFIN

7092 Main Street, Gloucester, VA 23061 (804) 693-9098 | apostles-elca.org | facebook.com/ApostlesELCA



NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10, 2025 | 10:00 AM

Our Mission is to be a Caring Inclusive Christian Community responding to God's grace through Worship, Service, and Sharing the Gospel.





WELCOME TO APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH!

It is an honor to worship God with you this morning. We pray you experience the Spirit's loving presence as we share our words, our actions, and the Holy Meal.

If this is your first time worshipping with us, please fill out a card in the pew rack with your contact info. A restroom can be found by exiting the rear door of the worship space. It is directly in front of you to the right. Additional restrooms can be found in the back corner of the fellowship area, near the Pastor's office.

RECONCILING in CHRIST

We, the people of Apostles Lutheran Church, follow Paul's message to the Galatians (3:28): "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Believing that because we are all one in Christ, and created in God's image, all are welcome as beloved children of God. We welcome into the full life of the church all those whom God sends us. **Rejoicing in God's amazing diversity, we welcome people of all ages, races, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, and physical and mental abilities.** Centered in Christ, we commit ourselves to racial equity, breaking down dividing walls and building a community where all are beloved.

FOR PASTORAL CARE

The Reverend Jay Serafin is our pastor. Pastor Jay's **schedule is noted in the calendar on the back of this bulletin.** Call Pastor Jay at 570-205-7506 or email him at <u>j80j84@msn.com</u> (preferred) or <u>pastor.apostles@gmail.com</u>. Messages can also be left on the Apostles answering machine 804-693-9098.

PRAYGROUND

Welcome to our youngest members! The area in the front of our sanctuary is for families and young children. There are quiet toys, books and drawing materials. We ask two things:

1) sit in the front pews near your children and 2) please sit with your children in the pews during the sermon. They may return immediately after. Thank you and welcome!

NAME TAGS

Please wear your nametag! Guests: please fill out and put on a name tag before worship today. Blank nametags are in the baskets located in the pews.

GATHERING

Jesus says, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." It is God's promise from the beginning—to Abraham, to the early church, and to the "little flock" of which we are a part in today's assembly. Faith, God's baptismal gift, trusts the promises of God. Have no fear.

PRELUDE AND SILENT PRAYER

Martin Luther said of music: "Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world." Please take a moment to **silence all cell phones.**

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please rise in body or in spirit. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Amen.

Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,

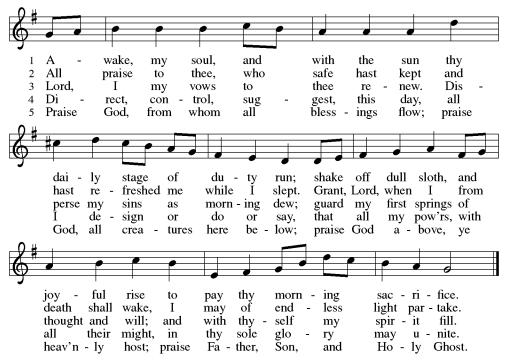
you free us to love others, but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way. You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace, but we turn away from the abundant life you offer. You surround us with patience, kindness, and generosity, but we grow weary in doing what is right. In your mercy, forgive us. Do not give up on us. Heal us, break our bonds, and show us the path of life. Amen.

You belong to Christ Jesus and you are God's children through faith. In the cross of + Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN ELW #557

"Awake, My soul, and with the Sun"



Text: Thomas Ken, 1637-1711, alt.

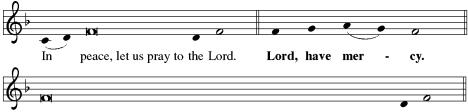
Music: MORNING HYMN, François H. Barthélémon, 1741-1808

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

And also with you.

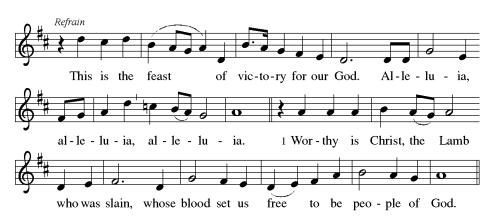
KYRIE



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



CANTICLE OF PRAISE







PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Almighty God, you sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your church. Open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may be ready to receive you wherever you appear, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

Sit

FIRST READING GENESIS 15:1-6

God promises childless and aging Abram that a child of his own will be his heir and that his descendants will number as many as the stars. Abram trusts God's promise, and through this faith he is considered righteous.

¹ After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ² But Abram said, "O LORD God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." ⁴ But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." ⁵ He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶ And he believed the LORD, and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Response after the First Reading
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

- ¹² Happy is the nation whose God ¹ is the Lord! Happy the people chosen to ¹ be God's heritage!
- ¹³The Lord looks | down from heaven, and sees all | humankind.
- ¹⁴ God sits firmly en- [|] throned and watches all who dwell [|] on the earth.
- ¹⁵ God fashions | all their hearts and observes | all their deeds. R
- ¹⁶ A king is not saved by the size [|] of the army, nor are warriors rescued by [|] their great strength.
- ¹⁷The horse gives vain | hope for victory; despite its great strength it | cannot save.
- ¹⁸Truly, your eye is upon those who fear ¹ you, O Lord, upon those who wait for your ¹ steadfast love,
- ¹⁹ to deliver their | lives from death, and to keep them alive in | time of famine. R
- ²⁰ Our innermost being waits for ¹ you, O Lord, our helper ¹ and our shield.
- ²¹ Surely, our heart rejoic- | es in you, for in your holy name we | put our trust.
- ²²Let your lovingkindness, O Lord, ¹ be upon us, even as we place our ¹ hope in you. **R**

SECOND READING

HEBREWS 11:1-3, 8-16

Abraham and Sarah exemplify the vision of faith that people of God enact in every age. Their hope and trust in God's promise allowed them to face an unknown future and to receive the promise of God.

¹ Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ² Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. ³ By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance, and he set out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he stayed for a

time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹ By faith, with Sarah's involvement, he received power of procreation, even though he was too old, because he considered him faithful who had promised. ¹² Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, "as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore."

¹³ All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, ¹⁴ for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better homeland, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

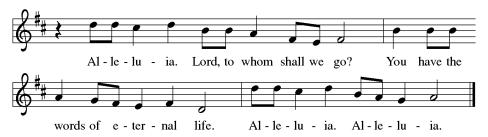
Response after the Second Reading

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please rise in body or in spirit.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



The gospel is announced.

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the 12th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL LUKE 12:32-40

Jesus encourages disciples to invest their hearts and live fully into God's reign. Instead of facing life with fear, those who know God's generosity are always ready to receive from God and to give to others.

[Jesus said:] ³² "Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell your possessions and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. ³⁴ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

³⁵ "Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; ³⁶ be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. ³⁷ Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸ If he comes during the middle of the night or near dawn and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

³⁹ "But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁰ You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

The gospel concludes:

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

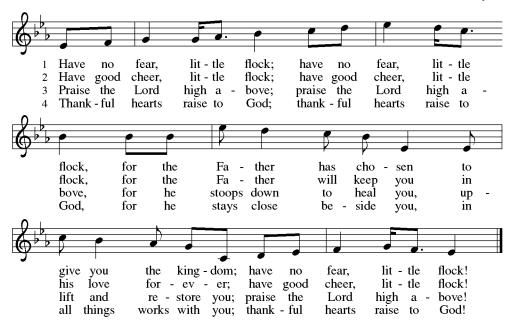
PASTOR JAY SERAFIN

Silence is kept after the reflection.

HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW #764

"Have No Fear, Little Flock"



Text: Luke 12:32, st. 1; Marjorie Jillson, b. 1931, sts. 2–4 Music: LITTLE FLOCK, Heinz Werner Zimmermann, b. 1930 Text and music © 1973 Concordia Publishing House.

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APOSTLES CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith in the words of the Apostles Creed.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the

power of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;

he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In solidarity with all creation, we join our voice to the voice of the whole church and pray for the needs of the world.

Each portion of the prayers ends with these words: God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Trusting in your lovingkindness, we place our prayer and hope in you, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

We share a sign of Peace with our neighbors saying **Peace be with you** to which we respond **And also with you**. Please know that it is fine if you do not want to shake hands but would rather just share a sign of peace.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Sit

OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. To give online:

- + Visit apostles-elca.org/contributions
- \pm From your mobile phone, text the word GIVE to 844-215-5453

Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of

them with the prayers we

of - fer.

and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

Grace our

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980 Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927

all;

Text and music @ 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

with your pres - ence,

ELW #184

Please rise in body or in spirit

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. Creator God, in your wisdom you bring forth all that is good and the harvest is plentiful. Strengthen us at your table with these gifts of the earth and our labor, that we may work for the good of all; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

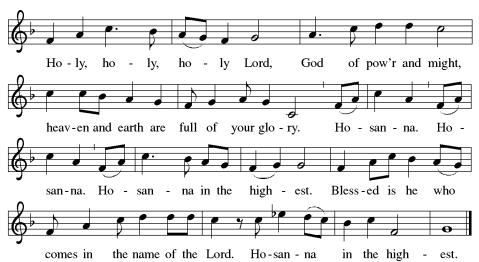
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



The great thanksgiving continues.

... with every breath.

We praise you, O God.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... into the future

We bless you, O God.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... with us now.

We thank you, O God.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The great thanksgiving concludes.

... in your church without end.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.

Invitation to Communion

The kingdom of God is set before you. Eat and rejoice.

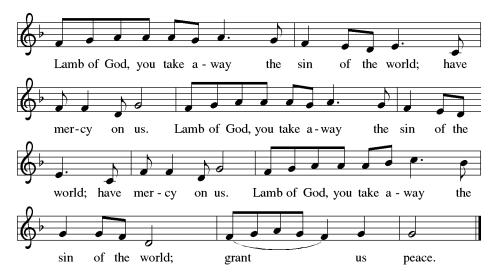
Sit

COMMUNION

All are invited to join us at the Lord's table to receive the presence of Jesus through the bread and wine. Jesus himself invites you and Jesus turns no one away.

You will be invited to come forward either to receive the elements or to receive a blessing. For those receiving the elements, after receiving the bread, please take a glass from the tray held by the acolyte. There are pre-filled glasses of grape juice in the tray for those who do not drink wine. Gluten free wafers are also available upon request.

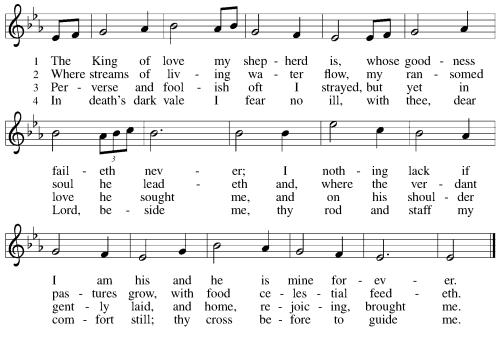
LAMB OF GOD



HYMN DURING COMMUNION

ELW #502

"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"



- 5 Thou spreadst a table in my sight; thine unction grace bestoweth; and, oh, what transport of delight from thy pure chalice floweth!
- 6 And so, through all the length of days, thy goodness faileth never. Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise within thy house forever.

Text: Henry W. Baker, 1821–1877 Music: St. Columba, Irish tune

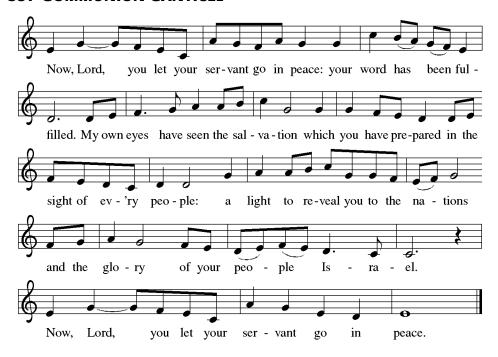
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After all have returned to their places, all rise in body or in spirit.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. Mothering God, you gathered us to your table and we drank deeply of your grace. Send us out by your Spirit to love our neighbors as ourselves and proclaim your love in Jesus' name.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission back into the world.

BLESSING

The love of God abound in you; the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ fill your hearts; and the life of the Spirit

→ bless you and give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN ELW #632

"O God, Our Help in Ages Past"



- 1 O God, our help in a ges past, our hope for years to come,
- 2 Un der the shad ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se cure;
- 3 Be fore the hills in or der stood or earth re ceived its frame,
- 4 A thou-sand a ges in your sight are like an eve-ning gone,



our shel-ter from the blast, and storm - y our e - ter - nal home: de - fense is suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our sure. from ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end-less years the same. short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

- 5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears all our years away; they fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the op'ning day.
- 6 O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, still be our guard while troubles last and our eternal home.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt. Music: St. Anne, William Croft, 1678–1727

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Live by the Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP LEADERS

	Serving Today	Serving Next Week
Worship Leader/Preacher	Pastor Jay Serafin	Pastor Jay Serafin
Lay Assisting Minister	Doug Dalager	Linda Hodges
Lector	Chase Ambrose	Judy Wright
Acolyte	Chase Ambrose	Ray Scholz
Accompanist	Janet Gomez	Janet Gomez (Recorded)
Altar Care	Janet Gomez	Judy Wright
Communion Bread	Janet Gomez	Donna Ambrose
Greeter/Usher	Karen Johnston	Judy Wright
Technology	Chris Hawkins	Doug Dalager

SERVANTS FOR THE WEEK

	Serving This Week	Serving Next Week
Cleaning Team	Gomez/Grimes	Liljebergs
Tellers	Ben Grimes/Chris Hawkins	Barbara Runk/Don Garfield
Fellowship Set Up	Scholzs	Jennie Hawkins
Fellowship Food	Janet Gomez	Judy Wright/Donna Ambrose
Fellowship Clean Up	Jamie Serafin	Donna Ambrose/Barbara Runk

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY

First Reading: Jeremiah 23:23-29

God's word is like fire, like a hammer that breaks rocks

Psalm 82

Arise, O God, and rule the earth

Second Reading: Hebrews 11:29-12:2

The faith of the Hebrew people, a great cloud of witnesses

Gospel: Luke 12:49-56

Jesus brings fire on earth and has a baptism with which to be baptized

THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

"Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Jesus promises the kingdom to us, his little flock, straining our minds with this uninhibited generosity. Even to us, so little and undeserving? Even to us, in the face of so many things to be afraid of? Suddenly everything we hold dear in this world is repriced, and the true value of things becomes plainly clear. We are being given the kingdom! So why not sell our possessions and give to those in need? We are being given the kingdom! So why not wait on expectant tiptoes for the master? When he comes he will wait on us! The Father's free generosity calls forth in us a generosity we have never before known. Fear is now met with anticipation, and tightfistedness with open hands. We are being given the kingdom, so now we know what true treasure looks like. And yet, like our fathers and mothers in faith that the Hebrews reading speaks of, we too "desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one." But in Christ our heavenly country has already arrived. In him, God has freely given us the kingdom.

This Sunday's reading from the letter to the Hebrews provides an eloquent testimony to the power of faith. However, what, exactly, is faith? Is faith synonymous with belief or a cognitive assent to a set of confessional statements? The respected German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was hanged by the Nazis at age thirty-nine near the end of World War II in Europe, argued in his book *The Cost of Discipleship* that Christian faith always requires *action*. "We think we understand when we hear that obedience is possible only where there is faith. Does not obedience follow faith as good fruit grows on a good tree? . . . If however we make a chronological distinction between faith and obedience, and make obedience subsequent to faith, we are divorcing the one from the other. . . . For faith is only real when there is obedience, never without it, and faith only becomes faith in the act of obedience"

APOSTLES LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Today we gather on the original and ancestral homelands of the Pamunkey, Mattaponi, Chickahominy, Rappahannock, and Nansemond peoples and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

NEW MEMBERS

We will be taking in new members in the near future – if you are interested in becoming a member of Apostles Lutheran Church, please talk to Pastor Jay.

VIRGINIA SYNOD HUNGER TEAM UPDATE

Recent voting in the House of Representatives and Senate resulted in an increase in requirements and a decrease in funding for SNAP recipients. SNAP is the supplemental nutrition assistance program of the federal government which helps low income families purchase food. The ELCA Witness in Society Office is working on a policy memo for the Presiding Bishop's office, detailing the full range impact to programs after the passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (HR 1). In totality, over 3 million families are expected to lose SNAP assistance due to paperwork and work requirements, and we are concerned that less wealthy states may be forced to drop out of SNAP entirely if they can not make new required cost expectations in late 2027. It is now more important than ever to support our local food pantry, homeless shelter, and Lutheran World Hunger. Please keep those experiencing hunger and food insecurity, including the people in Gaza, in your prayers.

WORLD HUNGER SUNDAY - NEXT SUNDAY

Please remember your offering for world hunger next Sunday. UNTIL ALL ARE FED!

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Rich Bitting, Manning Freeman, Don Garfield, Ellen Kendzierski, Doug Leip, Ellen Quirk, Michael Schlemmer, Keith & Juanita Sturdy, George Thomas, Jewel

Thomas, Lena Woodlief, and Nancy Wagner

OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Patricia Armentor, Paul Bauer, Karen Bell (Pam Moore's sister), Bob & Dixie, Calli Bonfey, Patricia Boyd & Brad Zelmer, Amanda Brown, David Brown, Dennis & Dorothy Brown, Sally Burkholder, Amy Carter, Laura Clodfelter, Jackie Collier, Ben Davis (friend of Donna Ambrose), Tommy & Kathie Davis, Jenny DeSha, Al DeWitt, Linda Edwards, Colton Elliot (Michael Schlemmer's cousin), Laura Fleige (Janet Gomez's sister), Teresa Floersheim-Miller (Ingrid Peterson's mother), Suzanne and Frank Gibson, Steven Godwin (Juanita Sturdy's grandson), Jimmy & Fay Gray (Chris Hawkins' family), Karen Guire, Mike Hall, Melvin Hawkins (Chris Hawkins' father), Chaneice Hayden (Daniel Hayden), Rosie Heins, Carl & Kaleb Hess, Aris Hibbs (friend of Ray Scholz), Spencer Hodges, Ray Hughes, Wendy Isernia (Heinz and Irene's daughter), Suzanne Kinkade (friend of Ellen Quirk), Legend, the Little Family, Marion Lucier, Manuel, Lotte Mathias, Wayne Mathews, Wayne McCormick, Michael, Sylvia Midgette (Krystle McMahan's grandmother), Debbie Minteins, Keith Morgan, Gary Mowery, Jamie Mullaney, Carol Pascale (Lynn Jaeger's mother), Chastity Perkins (co-worker and friend of Donna Ambrose), Brad Person (Lilly Frost's uncle), Dick Peterson & his brother, the Prusa Family, Joan Ritter, Glen Robertson, Carol Schlemmer, Daniel Schmidt, James Schollian (friend of Nancy Wagner), Michael Scholz (Ray Scholz's nephew), Joseph Serafin (Pastor Jay's father), Kathy Shackleford, Elana Sierson, Fred Smith, Tammy Smith, Jean Sterling, Dave Wagner (Nancy's husband), Wayne McCormick, Chuck Webb (Tina Britt's father), Makenzie Webb (Tina Britt's niece), Elizabeth & Steven White, Vicki Williams, Cory Woodlief, Jim Wright (Judy Wright's husband), Logan & Shannon Wymer, Greg **Yvonovich** (friend of Margaret & Ben Grimes), **Derek Zwiers** (friend of CK Ambrose)

OUR SPONSORED CHILDREN IN GUATEMALA Amayra, Hugolino, Manuela, and Pablo

PRAYER REQUESTS

There is a book located at the rear of the worship space for you to write any prayer requests you have for today. Fill out a "Prayer Request" (on the back of each pew) and place it in the offering plate to add a prayer request to the "Prayer List" included in the bulletin and the newsletter. **Please print legibly!**

THIS WEEK AT APOSTLES

AUGUST 10, 2025 - AUGUST 17, 2025

TODAY 10:00 AM Worship Service

11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship

MONDAY 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM Pastor Jay in the office

7:00 PM AA

TUESDAY 7:00 PM Al-Anon/AA

WEDNESDAY 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM Pastor Jay in the office

FRIDAY Girl Scouts

SATURDAY 6:30 PM Young and Sober

SUNDAY 10:00 AM Worship Service – World Hunger

11:00 AM Summer Picnic

HAPPY BIRTHDAY To ...

Samantha Good – August 11th | **Donald Jaeger** – August 12th | **George Thomas** – August 15th

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