

Service of Holy Communion

13th Sunday after Pentecost

September 7th, 2025



INTRODUCTION

Called to contemplate the cost of discipleship, we might be helped by translating Paul's request to Philemon into our prayer of the day: Refresh my heart in Christ. Strengthened by the company and forgiveness of Christ in holy communion and recalling God's grace in remembrance of baptism, we can be strengthened in this hour to "choose life"—to choose life in God as our own.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The congregation stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P. Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, our maker, our helper, and our keeper. **Amen.**

P. Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

The congregation is seated. Silence is kept for reflection.

P. Merciful and loving God, **we are your stiff-necked people. We trample on the needy. We grumble about your grace to others. We turn away from the poor. Have mercy on us and forgive our sins. Rejoice over us as ones who were lost and have been found. Amen.**

P. Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. You who were lost have been found. In the name of ✠ Jesus, your sins are forgiven! **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

Will You Come and Follow Me

ELW 798

THE 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.**

KYRIE

A. In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

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

C. Lord, have mercy.

A. For the peace of the whole world, for the well being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

A. For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

A. Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C. Amen

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise God, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711, alt.

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P. Direct us, O God, in all our doings with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

WORD

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 30:15-20

¹⁵ “See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. ¹⁶ If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. ¹⁷ But if your heart turns away and you do not hear but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸ I declare to you today that you shall certainly perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹ I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, ²⁰ loving the Lord your God, obeying God, and holding fast to God, for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

A. Word of God, word of life.

C. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 1 (*read responsively*)

¹ Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!

² **Their delight is in the law of the LORD,
and they meditate on God’s teaching day and night.**

³ They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season,
with leaves that do not wither; everything they do shall prosper.

⁴ **It is not so with the wicked;
they are like chaff which the wind blows away.**

⁵ Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes,
nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

⁶ **For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked shall be destroyed.**

SECOND READING: Philemon 1-21

¹ Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,
To our beloved coworker Philemon, ² to our sister Apphia, to our fellow
soldier Archippus, and to the church in your house:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I thank my God always when I mention you in my prayers, ⁵ because I hear of

your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. ⁶ I pray that the partnership of your faith may become effective as you comprehend all the good that we share in Christ. ⁷ I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

⁸ For this reason, though I am more than bold enough in Christ to command you to do the right thing, ⁹ yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. ¹⁰ I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. ¹¹ Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me. ¹² I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. ¹³ I wanted to keep him with me so that he might minister to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel, ¹⁴ but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. ¹⁵ Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for the long term, ¹⁶ no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. ¹⁷ So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸ If he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to me. ¹⁹ I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. ²⁰ Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹ Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

A. Word of God, word of life.

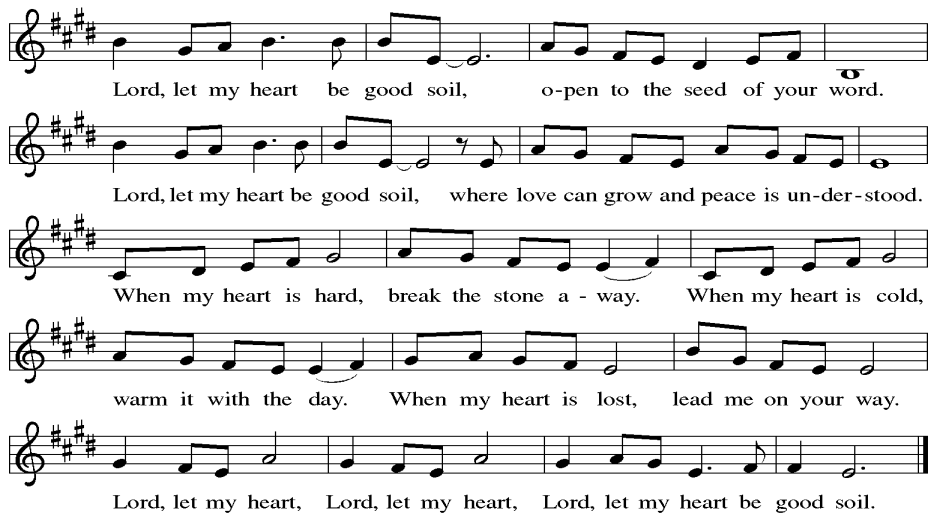
C. Thanks be to God.

A TIME FOR THE CHILD IN US ALL

Children & Youth are invited forward for a special sermon time with Pastor Peggy.

Congregation stands

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. 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.

GOSPEL: Luke 14:25-33

P. The holy gospel according to Luke. **C. Glory to you, O Lord.**

²⁵ Now large crowds were traveling with [Jesus], and he turned and said to them, ²⁶ "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸ For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, ³⁰ saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' ³¹ Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³² If he cannot, then while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. ³³ So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions."

P. The gospel of the Lord. **C. Praise to you, O Christ.**

Congregation is seated

SERMON

Freedom to Follow

Congregation stands

APOSTLE'S 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 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 THE CHURCH

A. Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

A. We pray for the church to follow in your ways, that it may be a witness to your love for all people. Help us choose all that is life-giving and confront the forces of death. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

A. We pray for creation, that it may be cherished and nurtured. Sustain farmlands, animals, and waters; restore places affected by calamities; and shield coastlands from rising seas. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

A. We pray for those in authority. Grant them wisdom to govern justly and compassion to care for the marginalized. Equip them for actions that further the common good. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

A. We pray for those who are sick, hungry, unhoused, or lonely. We pray especially for.....those we now say aloud...and those we hold in our hearts...

May they find healing through your love and the care of those around them. Lead us to be your hands and feet in the world. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

A. We pray for this congregation, that we may be united in love and faith. Refresh our hearts in Christ, and deepen our support of one another. We pray that our sharing of faith may transform lives. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

A. We thank you for those who have died and now dwell with the saints. Surround them with your divine mercy, that they find peace and rest in your loving embrace. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

P. We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend. **Amen.**

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS & TECHNOLOGY

Students, Teachers, and Staff are invited forward with their bags & tech for a special blessing.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P. The Peace of Christ be with you always.

C. And also with you.

P. Let us share with each other a sign of Christ’s peace.

Congregation is seated

MEAL

OFFERTORY INVITATION

*Scan to give
via Venmo*



Offering can be given by putting it in the offering plate when it is passed, online directly via the QR codes for Tithely or Venmo, or by requesting your bank to send a check to the church. Find more details on our website.

Thank you for your generous gifts!

*Scan to give
via Tithely*



Congregation stands

OFFERTORY SONG

Refrain

As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread; so may all your peo-ple from
all the ends of earth be gath-ered in - to one in you.
1 As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst,
may we share the pres - ence of your love.

Refrain

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A. Let us pray... Lord of the harvest, we return to you a portion of what you have given to us. Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches, but on you, who richly provides for us. Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are suffering and in need, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

DIALOGUE & PREFACE OF THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

P. The Lord be with you.

C. And also with you.

P. Lift up your hearts.

C. We lift them to the Lord.

P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P. It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we

cannot see. And so with all the choirs of angels, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy (*Sing 2x—English 1st time; Spanish 2nd time*)



San - to, san - to, san - to, mi co - ra - zón te_a - do - ra.
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, my heart, my heart a - dores you.



Mi co - ra - zón te sa - be de-cir: San - to_e-res Se - ñor.
My heart is glad to say the words: You are ho - ly, God.

Text: Argentine traditional

Music: ARGENTINE SANTO, Argentine traditional

Congregation kneels or sits

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P. Holy, living, and loving God, we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth.

We bless you for bringing Noah and his family through the waters of the flood, for freeing your people Israel from the bonds of slavery, and for sending your Son to be our Redeemer.

We give you thanks for Jesus who, living among us, healed the sick, fed the hungry, and with a love stronger than death, gave his life for others.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life-giving death and glorious resurrection, we await your promised life for all this dying world.

Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup: carry us in your arms from death to life, that we may live as your chosen ones, clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

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

Believing in the real presence of Christ, we practice Eucharistic hospitality. All baptized persons are welcome to Communion this morning. Please come forward, guided by the Ushers, to receive the bread and wine. Children are invited to the table for a blessing.

Gluten free and traditional wafers are available, please note this to Pastor Peggy when you come up. The bread is dairy and egg free. Grape juice is available in the second communion plate. As you return to your seat via the side aisles you can place your empty cup in the baskets on either side.

P. The risen Christ is made known to us in the breaking of the bread. Come and eat at God's table.

COMMUNION SONG

Refrain

“Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and nev - er be hun - gry.
OR Je - sus Christ, bread of life, those who come to you will not hun - ger.

Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst.”
Je - sus Christ, ris - en Lord, those who trust in you will not thirst.

Text: Taizé Community
Music: BERTHIER, Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994
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DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

After all have received Communion the congregation stands.

TABLE BLESSING

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

SONG AFTER COMMUNION

Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise



Thank-ful hearts and voic - es raise; tell ev-'ry-one what God has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and bear Christ's ho - ly name.



Send us with your prom-is - es and lead your peo-ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks-giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923

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PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A. Let us pray...O God, through this meal you have strengthened us and appointed us to be your servants. Send us to do good and to share our possessions with all in need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

SENDING

BENEDICTION

P. The God of righteousness, who gives justice to the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry, who sets the prisoners free, ✠ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Lift High The Cross

ELW 660

DISMISSAL

A. Go in peace. Do not lose heart. **C. Thanks be to God.**

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Announcements for September 7th, 2025

Welcome to Holy Counselor Lutheran Church. May you experience the joy of God’s presence in our worship!

If today is your first time worshipping at Holy Counselor, please be sure to fill out the “Guest Book” on the table in the narthex and take a welcome bag.

Please ask our ushers any questions you may have regarding worship this morning. Large print bulletins are available.

Worship is live streamed to our church Facebook page, but the camera is pointed away during Communion and is not on the children when they come forward during A Time for the Child in Us All.

~~~~~  
***Altar flowers are for a happy heavenly birthday to mom,  
from Dawn McCormick***

***Thank you, Kucks Family, for this morning’s refreshments***  
~~~~~

Volunteers for today’s Worship

- Lay Asst.** Pam Kucks
- Ushers** Diane Rossi
- Comm. Asst.** Nancy Knecht
- Tech** Mark Rossi
- Tellers** *Volunteer needed*
- Refreshments** Kucks Family

Volunteers for next Sunday, Sept 14th

- Lay Asst.** Nancy Knecht
- Ushers** *Volunteer needed*
- Comm. Asst.** *Volunteer needed*
- Tech** John Heeren
- Tellers** *Volunteer needed*
- Refreshments** Church Picnic

******* Join us for refreshments after worship*******

THIS WEEK AT HOLY COUNSELOR

- Sunday, Sept. 7:** Worship w/Communion & Backpack Blessing, 9:30am
Choir Rehearsal following worship
- Monday, Sept. 8:** Mindfulness Walk, Maple Grange, 4pm
- Wednesday, Sept. 10:** Adult Ed, Zoom, 10am
- Saturday, Sept. 13:** Sisters in Prayer, Zoom, 8:30am
- Sunday, Sept. 14:** Worship w/Communion & Baptism, 9:30am
Choir Rehearsal following worship
Church Picnic following worship

Choir: Choir rehearsals resume **TODAY after worship**. Talk to June if you are interested in joining the choir! All skill levels are welcome.

Mindfulness Walks: Join Pastor Peggy for a rejuvenating mindfulness walk at Maple Grange Park **TOMORROW, Monday, September 8th from 4-5 pm**. We will meet in the first parking lot and determine our route based on the group. Save the date for Wednesday, September 24th for our next walk. You're invited to **wear your 'Live Generously T-shirt'**. All ages are welcome!

Adult Ed: Adult Ed will resume **THIS Wednesday, September 10th at 10am** on Zoom, with the Study of Hebrews. Please reach out to Pam Kucks if you plan to attend. All are welcome.

Church Picnic: Come celebrate at our Church Picnic **NEXT Sunday, September 14th following worship!** Everyone is invited—bring a friend! There will be food, games, music, and fun!

Sunday School & Confirmation: Sunday School resumes **Sunday, September 21st**! Sunday School is from **8:45-9:15am** Sunday mornings before worship for ages 3yrs old-6th grade. **Register** for the new program year [via this link](#). **Confirmation** is for 7th and 8th graders held on Sunday evenings, approximately twice a month, **beginning in October**. Please talk to Diane Rossi or Pastor Peggy with questions about either program.

Community Office Hours: Join Pastor Peggy for her upcoming Community Office Hours! She will be at the **Daily Bean on Tuesday, September 16th from 10am-12pm** and **Scout Goods on Thursday, September 25th from 10am-12pm**.

College Addresses Needed: Pam Kucks is requesting addresses for students that are in college for their annual fall care package. Please **reach out** to her with this information or email the church office.

Auction of the Gifts-Save the Date: Our annual Auction of the Gifts, which will be held on **Saturday, October 4th**. Mark your calendars! **Dinner is at 5pm and the auction begins at 6pm**.

Sisters in Prayer: Sisters in Prayer resumed on Saturday, September 6th at **8:30am on Zoom** and continues **weekly** with Breath of Prayer study sessions. Please reach out to Pam Kucks if you plan to attend. Open to all women of the church.

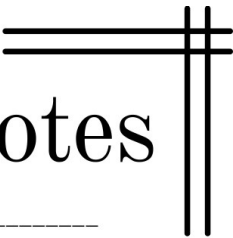
Food Pantry Donations: The Food Pantry is low on **canned chili, canned green beans, pasta, pasta sauce, canned soup, canned baked beans, macaroni & cheese, boxed rice, mayonnaise, tuna helper, cereal, instant pudding & jello, snacks and juice packs for kids, deodorant, shampoo, toothpaste, and 4-pack toilet paper.** You can always bring donations of canned goods, paper goods, and hygiene products. All donations can be placed in the blue bin by the sanctuary doors. Thank you!



For God's Children of all ages!

Worship Notes

Sunday's Date: _____





My Favorite Song:



This week, I'm praying for:






I'm curious or have a question about:



Today's Focus Scripture: _____

I would draw it like: _____



Word Count

How many times did you hear each of these words today? Make a tally.

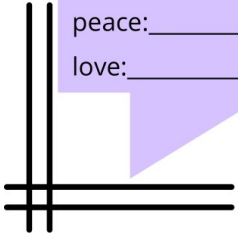
grace: _____

joy: _____

peace: _____

love: _____

||||| ||





Contact Information

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www.hc-lutheranchurch.org

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Director of Music: June Tarantino: music@hc-lutheranchurch.org

Office Administrator: Cathy Nemecek: office@hc-lutheranchurch.org

Bookkeeper: Wynn White: accounts@hc-lutheranchurch.org

MISSION STATEMENT

***As Children of God,
we are called to share and serve
Christ's love and bring God's word to all.***

CHURCH COUNCIL

Pastor Rev. Peggy Ludlow

President Nancy Knecht

Vice President Frank Urbaniak

Treasurer Claire Speroni

Recording Secretary Dawn McCormick

Financial Secretary John Heeren

Outreach Coordinator Francine Vince

Nurture Coordinator Fred Schoenagel

Administration Coordinator Diane Rossi

Youth Representative Kevin Drache

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Kristina Heeren

Pam Kucks

Matt Moller

Aileen Donovan

Holy Counselor is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Munsee people, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

