ST PAUL
PINE GROVE MILLS
A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 21, 2025

Welcome to Saint Paul!

We are happy to have you here!

How to know when to stand, sit, or speak

Whenever you see an asterisk (*) at a heading, you are invited to stand as you are able. You are not required to stand, so if, for health or emotional reasons you cannot or do not wish to stand, that is okay.
You are invited to speak the words printed in **bold type**.

We are an Open Communion Congregation

This means that any Christian who has received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism is invited to receive Holy Communion.

How to financially support us

Offerings can be made online at **stpaulpgm.org/give,** mailed to St. Paul Lutheran Church, PO Box 200, Pine Grove Mills, PA 16868, placed in the mail slot (outside door to Pastor Paul's office), or in the offering plate located in the lobby/narthex near the entrance of the sanctuary.

A note on Communion Wafers

To topple barriers that prevent participation in worship, we want to make it possible for individuals with Celiac Disease or gluten intolerant to be able to eat the Body of our Lord. Our default wafers are made by Parish Crossroads and are known as "Low Gluten Wafers" because they contain trace amounts of gluten. However, the wafers are tested at least once a year for how much gluten is in them. Since 2020, the wafers have routinely tested to contain 15ppm gluten or less (The US FDA defines most food products with 20ppm or less as "gluten free"). Use the QR Code and look for the link that gives the most recent test results.
If you still have concerns, we have some truly gluten-free wafers available upon request.

Gathering

The Gathering for worship began when you started readying yourself for worship

An Introduction to the day

As we are invited today to consider what it means to be managers (rather than owners) of all that we have, it is crucial to recognize that we are bought with a price. "Christ Jesus, himself human, . . . gave himself a ransom for all." Apart from the generosity of God we have nothing—we are nothing. By God's gracious favor we have everything we need.

Prelude – *Out of consideration for our musicians, please refrain from talking during the prelude.*

*Confession and forgiveness

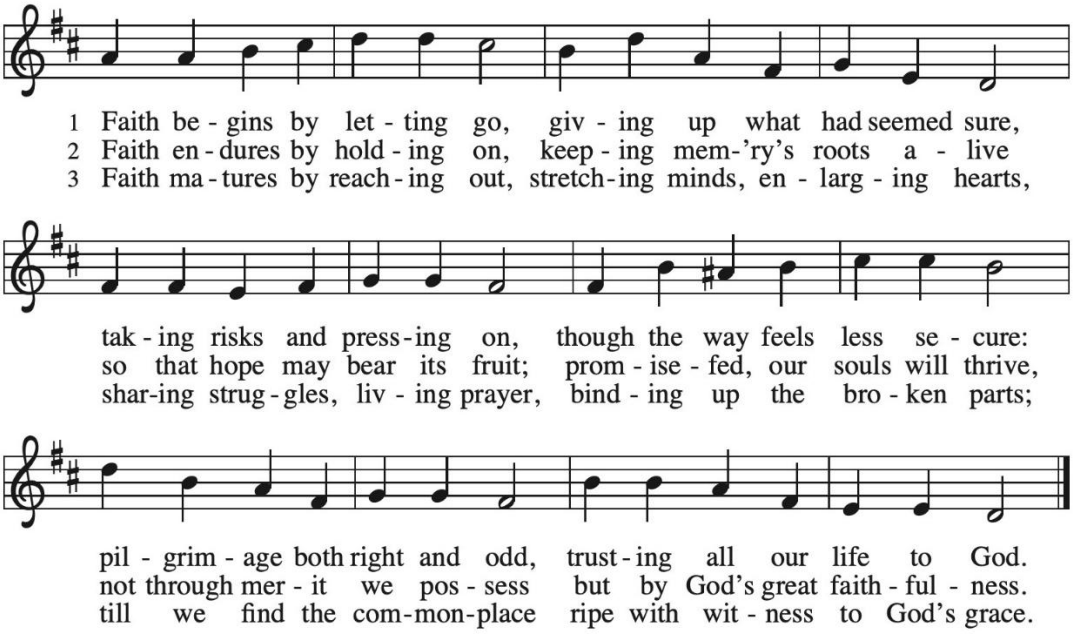
P: In the name of the Father, and of the ☩Son, and of the Holy Spirit. A: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin, in the presence of God and of one another.

P Most merciful God, **A: 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: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **A: Amen.**

*Gathering Hymn " *Faith Begins by Letting Go"* *(ACS 1004)*



Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944
Music: RATISBON, J. G. Werner, *Choralbuch*, 1815
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*GREETING

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

*Prayer of the Day

P: God among us, we gather in the name of your Son to learn love for one another. Keep our feet from evil paths. Turn our minds to your wisdom and our hearts to the grace revealed in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **A: Amen.**

Word

First Reading: Jeremiah 8:18—9:1

Because Luke often presents Jesus as carrying on the ministry of the Old Testament prophets, our first readings during these weeks is from several of those figures. Today we continue reading through the book of Jeremiah. Much of Jeremiah's preaching warns against the defeat, suffering, and exile which Israel's injustice and idolatry bring upon themselves. Today's reading shows that the prophet does not enjoy making these condemnations, but weeps in his love for his nation

18 My joy is gone; grief is upon me;
my heart is sick.
19 Listen! The cry of the daughter of my people
from far and wide in the land:
"Is the LORD not in Zion?
Is her King not in her?"
("Why have they provoked me to anger with their images,
with their foreign idols?")
20 "The harvest is past, the summer is ended,
and we are not saved."
21 For the brokenness of the daughter of my people I am broken,
I mourn, and horror has seized me.

22 Is there no balm in Gilead?
Is there no physician there?
Why then has the health of the daughter of my people
not been restored?
9:1 O that my head were a spring of water
and my eyes a fountain of tears,
so that I might weep day and night
for the slain of the daughter of my people!

L: The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God**.

Psalm 79:1-13

(sung to the tune King's Lynn)

This psalm is set in the midst of the suffering Jeremiah warned against and like him pleads to God for mercy and restoration.

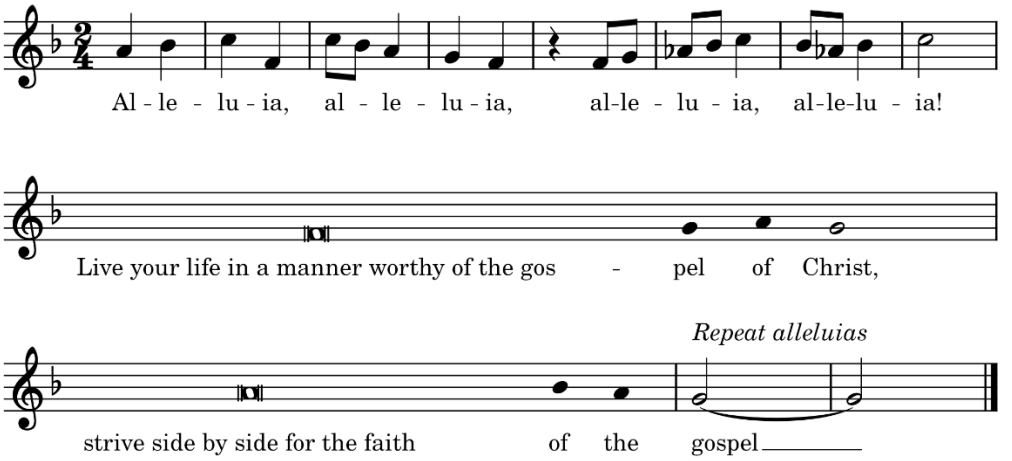
Second Reading: 1 Timothy 1:12-17

Today we continue reading through the letters addressed to Timothy. Purporting to be written by Paul to his young colleague, whom he left behind as pastor of the church at Ephesus, they give advice to pastors and congregations about how to minister together. Because the letter began by acclaiming Christ as Lord and God as King, it might have been understood as working to disturb the peace of the empire.

[1] First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be
made for everyone, [2] for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a
quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. [3] This is right and acceptable before
God our Savior, [4] who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of
the truth. [5] For
there is one God;
there is also one mediator between God and humankind,
Christ Jesus, himself human,
[6] who gave himself a ransom for all
—this was attested at the right time.[7] For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I
am telling the truth; I am not lying), a teacher of the gentiles in faith and truth.

L: The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God.**

*Gospel Acclamation



*Gospel Reading: Luke 16:1-13

Jesus' parables almost always describe the kingdom of God as fundamentally different from this world in expectation and attitude. The stories (this one in particular) are meant to be cryptic, surprising and even offensive, not simple and clear.

L: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the sixteenth chapter.
A: Glory to you, O Lord.

[1] Then Jesus said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and
charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. [2] So he
summoned him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give me an
accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.' [3] Then
the manager said to himself, 'What will I do, now that my master is taking the position
away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. [4] I have
decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me
into their homes.' [5] So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first,
'How much do you owe my master?' [6] He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said
to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.' [7] Then he asked another, 'And
how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said to him,
'Take your bill and make it eighty.' [8] And his master commended the dishonest manager
because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing
with their own generation than are the children of light. [9] And I tell you, make friends for
yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone they may welcome you
into the eternal homes.

[10] "Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest
in a very little is dishonest also in much. [11] If, then, you have not been faithful with the
dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? [12] And if you have not been
faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? [13] No slave can
serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted
to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

L: The gospel of the Lord.
A: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

*Hymn Of the Day *"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy* *(ELW 588)*

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, alt.
Music: LORD, REVIVE US, North American, 19th cent.

*Invitation to Baptism

*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 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

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

A brief silence.

L: O God, teach your church to act in solidarity with the poor, frustrating the efforts of those who trample on the needy and practicing justice in our own life and community. God of grace,
A: receive our prayer.

L: Almighty Creator, we pray for an end to the misuse of the earth and its resources, that all people may benefit from your abundant gifts and that our stewardship of creation would be marked by justice and sustainability. God of grace,
A: receive our prayer.

L: Holy One, embolden elected leaders to pursue policies of economic justice for the benefit of all, especially those who are most vulnerable and marginalized. Persuade them by your example of generosity and compassion. God of grace,
A: receive our prayer.

L: Compassionate God, we pray for all facing illness, those near death, or those grieving the loss of loved ones (*especially*). May they find comfort and strength in your love. Prepare us to surround them with your healing care. God of grace,
A: receive our prayer.

L: God of love, motivate our congregation to enact economic justice through tangible action, prioritizing the needs of our community and sharing resources generously through our outreach and justice ministries. God of grace,
A: receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: Gracious God, we give thanks for the saints especially Matthew, Ruth Showers, and all who now join the heavenly chorus in praising your name. Lift us up from the dust of grief and remind us of your promise of new life. God of grace,
A: receive our prayer.

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

*Peace

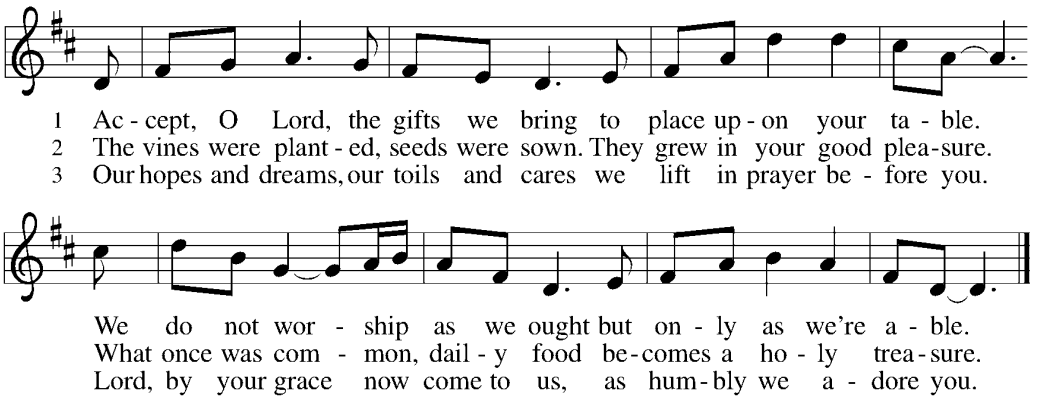
P: The peace of Christ be with you always. **A: And also with you.**

Meal

Offering

Musical Offering

*Offertory: *"Accept, O Lord, the Gifts We Bring"* *(ELW 691)*



Text: Beth Bergeron Folkemer, b. 1957
Music: BARBARA ALLEN, English folk tune
Text © 1990 Augsburg Fortress

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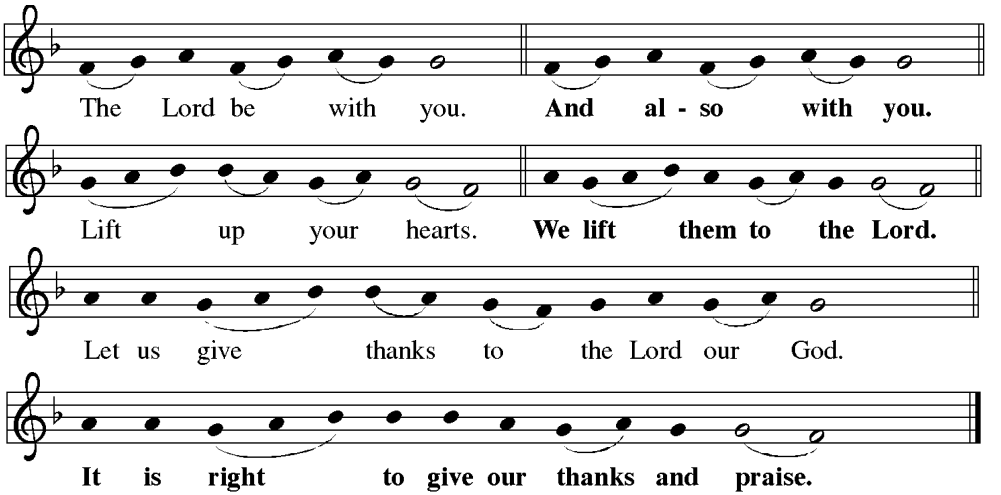
*Offering Prayer

L: 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. **A: Amen.**

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

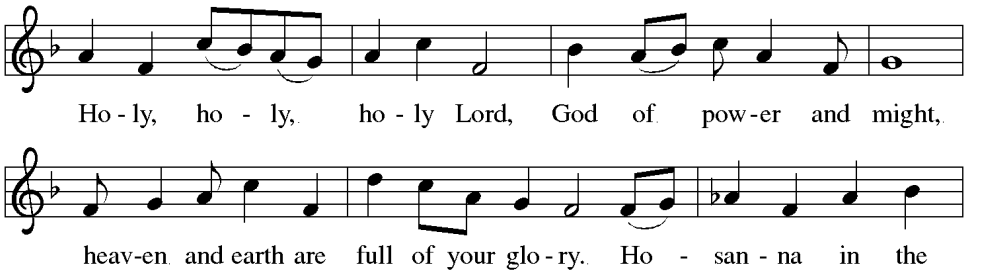
* DIALOGUE

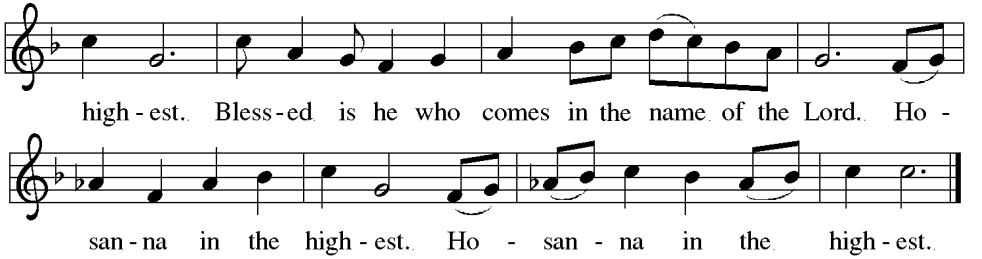


*PREFACE

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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:

*SANCTUS





*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P: Holy God,
our Bread of life, our Table, and our Food,
you created a world in which all might be satisfied by your abundance.
You dined with Abraham and Sarah, promising them life,
and fed your people Israel with manna from heaven.
You sent your Son to eat with sinners
and to become food for the world.

In the night in which he was handed over,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and 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.

We proclaim the mystery of our faith:
A: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.
Remembering, therefore,
his life given for us
and his rising from the grave,
we await his coming again to share with us the everlasting feast.
A: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

By your Spirit nurture and sustain us with this meal:
strengthen us to serve all in hunger and want,
and by this bread and cup make of us the body of your Son.
A: Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

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

*Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

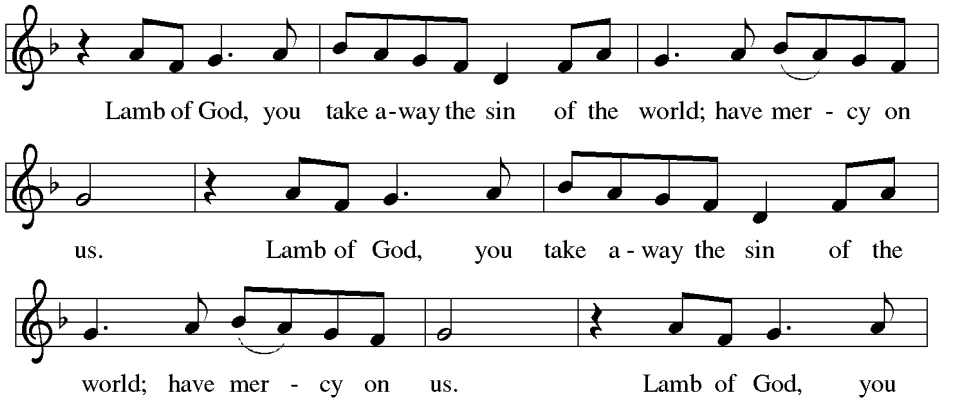
Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Lead us not into time of trial,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
forever and ever. Amen.

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. Come to this meal of mercy.

*Lamb of God



Communion

P: The body of Christ, given for you. L: The blood of Christ, shed for you. **A: Amen.**

Communion Hymn: *"Baptized in Water"* *(ELW 456)*

Text: Michael Saward, b. 1932
Music: BUNESSAN, Gaelic tune
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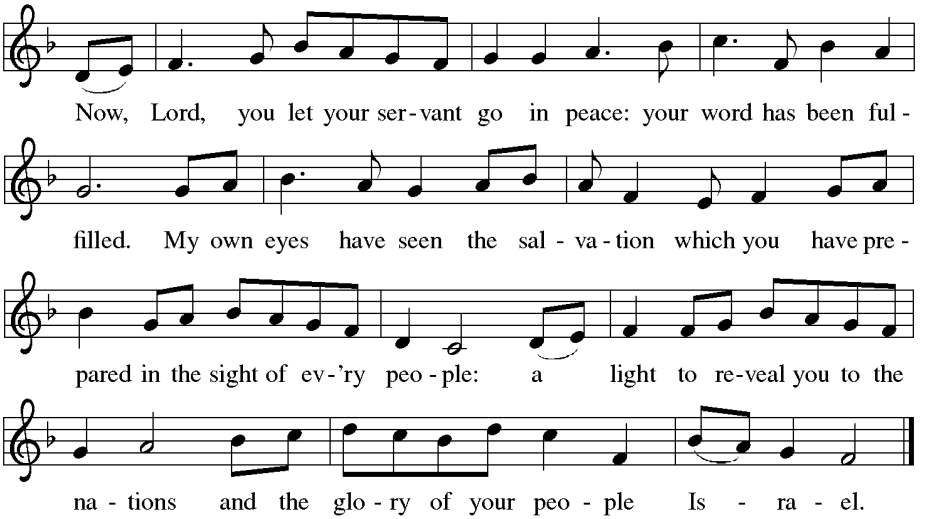
*Post-Communion Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you, body, mind, and soul, now, and unto eternal life**. A: Amen**

*Post-Communion Canticle – *Nunc Dimittis* (*Now, Lord)*



*Post-Communion Prayer

L: 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. **A: Amen.**

Sending

*Sending of communion

P: Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are *sick, homebound, and imprisoned*. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **A: Amen.**

Announcements

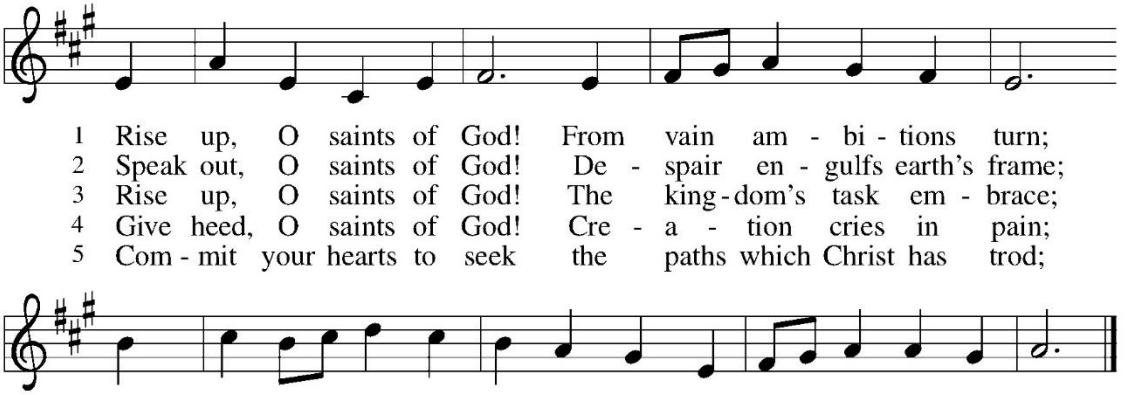
You may be seated.

*Charge to the People

*Blessing

L: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the name of the Father, and the Son, ☩ and the Holy Spirit. **A: Amen.**

*Sending Hymn: *"Rise Up, O Saints of God!"* *(ELW 669)*



Text: Norman O. Forness, b. 1936
Music: FESTAL SONG, William H. Walter, 1825–1893
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*Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Do not lose heart.
A: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Daily Readings for the week

Sunday, September 21
Amos 8:4-7
Psalm 113 (7) 1
Timothy 2:1-7
Luke 16:1-13

Monday, September 22
Proverbs 14:12-31
Acts 4:1-12
Psalm 12

Tuesday, September 23
Proverbs 17:1-5
1 Corinthians 9:19-23
Psalm 12

Wednesday, September 24
Proverbs 21:10-16
Luke 20:45—21:4
Psalm 12

Thursday, September 25
Proverbs 22:2-16
2 Corinthians 8:8-15
Psalm 146

Friday, September 26
Proverbs 28:3-10
Ephesians 2:1-10
Psalm 146

Saturday, September 27
Proverbs 28:11-28
Luke 9:43b-48
Psalm 146

ST PAUL
PINE GROVE MILLS
A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Serving Today

Presiding Minister.....Pastor Paul Tomkiel
Assisting Minister..... Eleanor Bird
Pianist.....Michelle McMullen
Sacristan.....Delorse Homan
Reader.....Jeff Muthler

About St. Paul

Purpose

We are a beacon, boldly sharing the light of Jesus' grace and love.

Mission

Guided by Jesus, we strengthen faith, deepen compassion, extend generosity, and serve community.

Core Values

Faith ♠ Compassion ♠ Generosity ♠ Community

Our Bible Verses

As Paul was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. [Jesus said,] 'Paul is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before the nations.'– Acts 9:3,15

Land Acknowledgement

St. Paul is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Susquehannock people, where we gather for worship this morning. We also acknowledge the Seneca, Cayuga, Lenne Lenape, as well as all of our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to care for this place – this land – and call it their home.

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