



ST PAUL PINE GROVE MILLS

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

AUGUST 2, 2026

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**.

HOW TO SING HYMNS IN HARMONY

To save space in printing the bulletin, we usually limit what is printed to the melody. If you'd like to sing in harmony, the hymn numbers are listed in our bulletin so you can open the red books in the pews (called ELWs).

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 intolerance 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

God invites everyone who is hungry or thirsty to eat and drink without cost. Jesus takes five loaves and two fish and reveals just how far God's abundance stretches. At this table, we remember everyone in our world still going hungry today. As you share the bread of life, you are also sent out to become bread for someone else's hunger.

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 Compassionate God, **A: we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray, 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 *"Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness"* (ELW 843)



- 1 Praise the One who breaks the dark-ness with a lib - er - at - ing light;
- 2 Praise the One who blessed the chil - dren with a strong yet gen - tle word;
- 3 Praise the one true love in - car - nate: Christ, who suf - fered in our place;



praise the One who frees the pris - 'ners, turn - ing blind - ness in - to sight.
praise the One who drove out de - mons with a pierc - ing, two - edged sword.
Je - sus died and rose for man - y that we may know God by grace.



Praise the One who preached the gos - pel, heal - ing ev - 'ry dread dis - ease,
Praise the One who brings cool wa - ter to the des - ert's burn - ing sand;
Let us sing for joy and glad - ness, see - ing what our God has done.



calm - ing storms and feed - ing thou - sands with the ver - y bread of peace.
from this well comes liv - ing wa - ter quench - ing thirst in ev - 'ry land.
Praise the one re - deem - ing glo - ry; praise the One who makes us one.

Text: Rusty Edwards, b. 1955

Music: NETTLETON, J. Wyeth, *Repository of Sacred Music*, Part II, 1813

Text © 1987 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

*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: Let us pray. Glorious God, your generosity waters the world with goodness, and you cover creation with abundance. Awaken in us a hunger for the food that satisfies both body and spirit, and with this food fill all the starving world; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. A: Amen.

WORD

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 55:1-5

This passage, with its invitation and promise, is reminiscent of the songs of Wisdom (personified as a powerful woman) in Proverbs. It was originally addressed to those returning from exile in Babylon, assuring them of their continuing place in God's mission to the whole world.

¹ Hear, everyone who thirsts; come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. ² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread and your earnings for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. ³ Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. ⁴ See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. ⁵ Now you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

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

PSALM 145:7-9, 14-21

sung to Hyfrydol (ELW 392)

Like the first reading, this psalm proclaims the goodness and dependability of God.

⁷ Grand the mem'ry of Your goodness—righteousness shown from above.

⁸ How the Lord gives grace and mercy—slow to anger, rich in love.

⁹ I'll declare the Lord's great mercies over all His works displayed;
For the Lord is good and gracious, good to all that He has made.

¹⁴ Praise the Lord—His loving care upholds and lifts up all who fall.

Quickly He will come to rescue all bowed down who on Him call.

¹⁵ Raising up those who are bowed down; giving food in proper time;
So the eyes of all look to You, and Your providence they find.

¹⁶ The desire of every creature You provide from Your own hand;
Unto all You give so freely; fill their need on sea or land.

¹⁷ Very righteous is the Lord, and loving, too, in all His ways.

¹⁸ We know that He's near to all who call on Him in truth and praise.

¹⁹ He fulfills the needs of all who fear Him, and He hears their cry.

²⁰ eXtol the Lord's name—He watches o'er them from His throne on high.
You who love Him, He'll keep ever; but the wicked He'll destroy.

²¹ Zealous for His praise, I'll speak—let all flesh praise His name with joy!

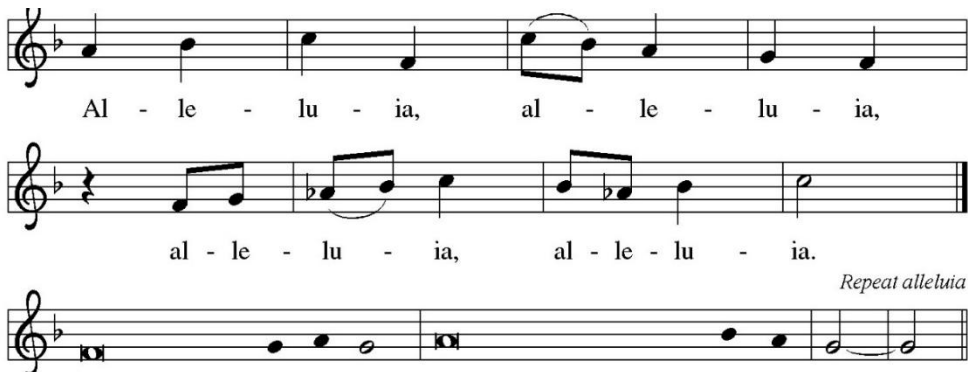
SECOND READING: ROMANS 9:1-5

Until mid-September, we'll be reading most of the book of Romans straight through. In the argument so far, Paul has asserted that, while both Jews and Gentiles are saved by grace, the special relationship between God and the chosen people remains. Now, he provides a radical version of his willingness to "be all things to all people," that he might by all means save some.

¹ I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit—² I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own brothers and sisters, my own flesh and blood. ⁴ They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; ⁵ to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

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

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



One does not live by | bread alone,*
but by every word that comes from the | mouth of God.

*GOSPEL READING: MATTHEW 14:13-21

Jesus has just been rejected by his home town and has heard of the execution of John the Baptist. In today's reading, his attempt to go off by himself (a failure, like almost every other such attempt) is followed by the only miracle reported in all four Gospels.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 14th chapter. **A: Glory to you, O Lord.**

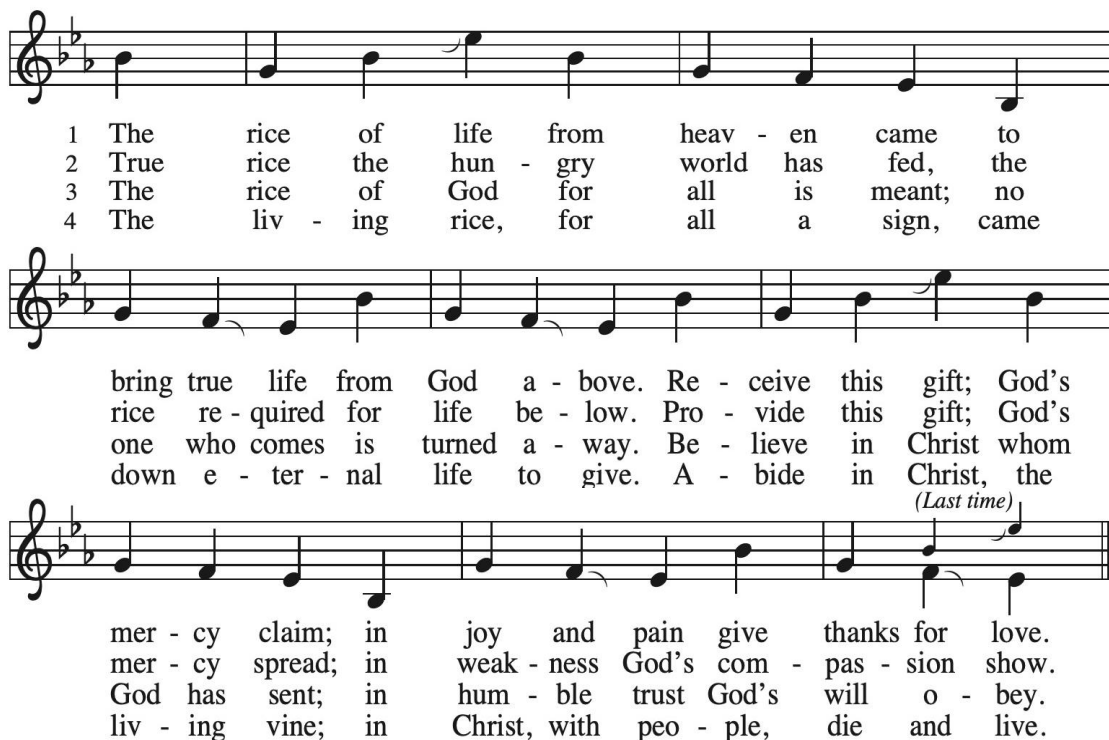
¹³ Now when Jesus heard [about the beheading of John the Baptist,] he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴ When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. ¹⁵ When it was evening, the

disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." ¹⁶ Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." ¹⁷ They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." ¹⁸ And he said, "Bring them here to me." ¹⁹ Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰ And all ate and were filled, and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. ²¹ And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

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

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY: "The Rice of Life" (ACS 965)



1 The rice of life from heav - en came to
 2 True rice the hun - gry world has fed, the
 3 The rice of God for all is meant; no
 4 The liv - ing rice, for all a sign, came

bring true life from God a - bove. Re - ceive this gift; God's
 rice re - quired for life be - low. Pro - vide this gift; God's
 one who comes is turned a - way. Be - lieve in Christ whom
 down e - ter - nal life to give. A - bide in Christ, the
 (Last time)

mer - cy claim; in joy and pain give thanks for love.
 mer - cy spread; in weak - ness God's com - pas - sion show.
 God has sent; in hum - ble trust God's will o - bey.
 liv - ing vine; in Christ, with peo - ple, die and live.

Text: J. Andrew Fowler, b. 1935

Music: BÍ-NÍU, I-to Loh, b. 1936

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*INVITATION TO BAPTISM

*APOSTLES' CREED

A: 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

With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

For your church in every place, that it satisfies those who hunger for your word. Bless the ministry of readers, translators, Bible study leaders, and writers, that God's word is broken open and shared with all. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For your wondrous creation and all the bounty it provides, that your creatures are fed and nourished. Bless the work of farmers, farmworkers, those who fish, and all whose labor brings your abundance to our tables; and bless the land entrusted to our care. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For your children in every nation, that they learn to love justice and live in harmony. As this week we remember the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, keep us mindful of the horrors of war; draw our hearts instead toward your reign of love, hope, and peace. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For all who cry out with great sorrow and unceasing anguish, that they are comforted. Feed all who struggle with food insecurity; have mercy on all who are suffering in body, mind, and spirit (*especially*). Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For this congregation, that it bears faithful witness to the abundance and joy of life in you. Bless all your faithful people gathered here, that they may become blessings for this community. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

With thanksgiving for the faithful who now rest in your mercy, that their witness continues to inspire the church. By their example, may we trust your promises in life and in death; and for the riches of faith and hope which came before us in your saints Leroy Dreibelbis, Leo Ray McGinnis Senior, Sylvia Beverly Burruano, and Fred Ferguson we give you thanks. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

***PEACE**

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

MEAL

OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING

***OFFERTORY**

1 Oh, what shall I ren - der in thanks to my Lord
2 My hands take the cup of sal - va - tion you give;
for all the good gifts by which I am re - stored?
I'll praise you, O God, for as long as I live.
No trea - sure I ten - der could ev - er re - pay
My thanks will rise up as I call on your name,
God's mer - cy and faith - ful - ness, new ev - 'ry day.
with all of your peo - ple your good - ness pro - claim.

Text: Martin A. Seltz, based on Ps. 116

Text © 1998 Augsburg Fortress

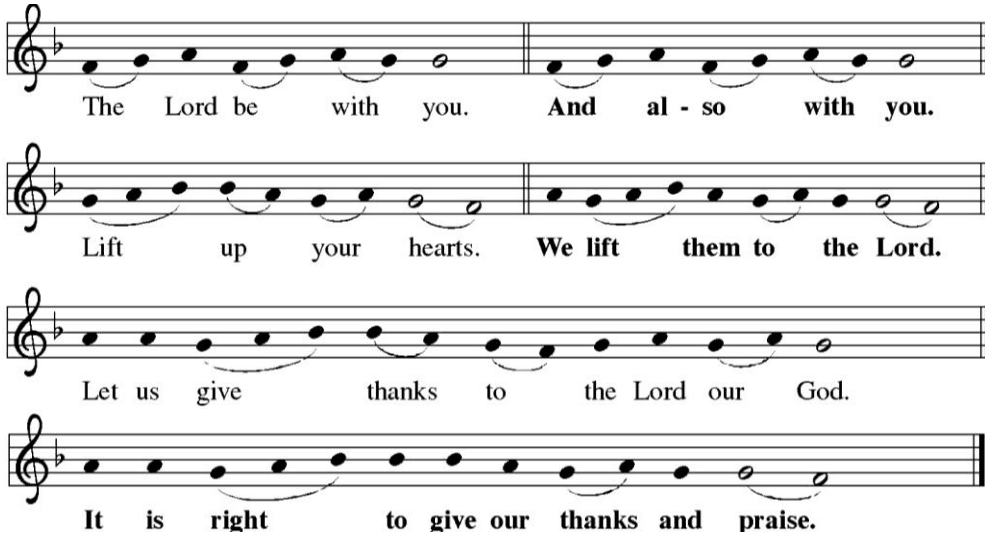
*OFFERING PRAYER

L: Let us pray: Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever.

. **A: Amen.**

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

* DIALOGUE



The Lord be with you. And al - so 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.

*PREFACE

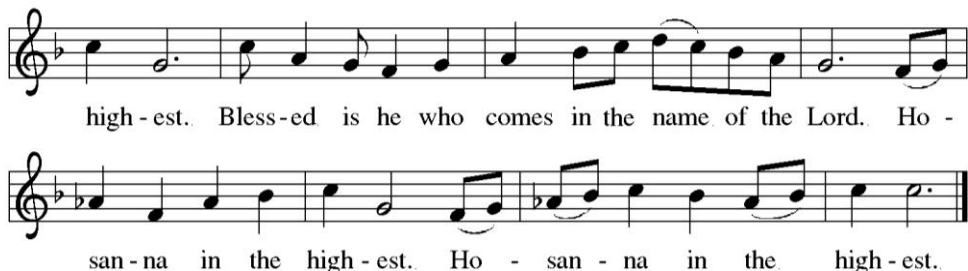
P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,

heav-en and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho - san - na in the



***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P: Holy God, our Maker, Redeemer, and Healer, in the world of your creation,
 you wove all things together in life and praise.
 When sin had broke what you had made, you sent your Son to heal our wounds
 and gather us again into one.
 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 acts of healing,
 his body given up, and his victory over death,
 we await that day when all the peoples of the earth
 will come to the river to enjoy the tree of life.

A: Amen! Come, Lord Jesus.

Send your Spirit upon us and this meal:
 as grains scattered on the hillside become one bread,
 so let your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth,
 that all may be fed with the Bread of life, 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: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

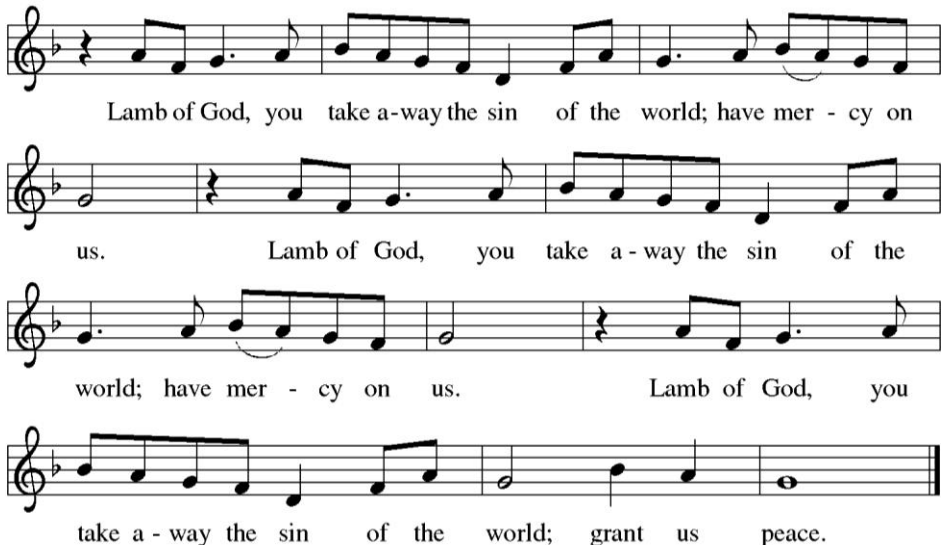
**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is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

**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: Heaven has come near. Come, share in the feast!

*LAMB OF GOD



The musical notation is written on four staves in a single system. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes, with some rests. The lyrics are written below the staves, aligned with the notes. The text is: "Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace." The final note of the fourth staff is a whole note, indicating the end of the phrase.

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you
take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

COMMUNION

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

COMMUNION HYMN: "Come, Let Us Eat" (ELW 491)

Leader or All



- 1 Come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread,
- 2 Come, let us drink, for now the wine is poured,
- 3 In Je - sus' pres - ence now we meet and rest,
- 4 Rise, then, to spread a - broad God's might - y word,

All



come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread.
 come, let us drink, for now the wine is poured.
 in Je - sus' pres - ence now we meet and rest.
 rise, then, to spread a - broad God's might - y word.

Leader or All



Our Lord's bod - y let us take to - geth - er,
 Je - sus' blood poured let us drink to - geth - er,
 In the pres - ence of our Lord we gath - er,
 Je - sus ris - en will bring in the king - dom,

All



our Lord's bod - y let us take to - geth - er.
 Je - sus' blood poured let us drink to - geth - er.
 in the pres - ence of our Lord we gath - er.
 Je - sus ris - en will bring in the king - dom.

Text: Billema Kwillia, b. 1925, sts. 1–3; Gilbert E. Doan Jr., b. 1930, st. 4, alt.; tr. Margaret D. Miller, b. 1927, sts. 1–3, alt.

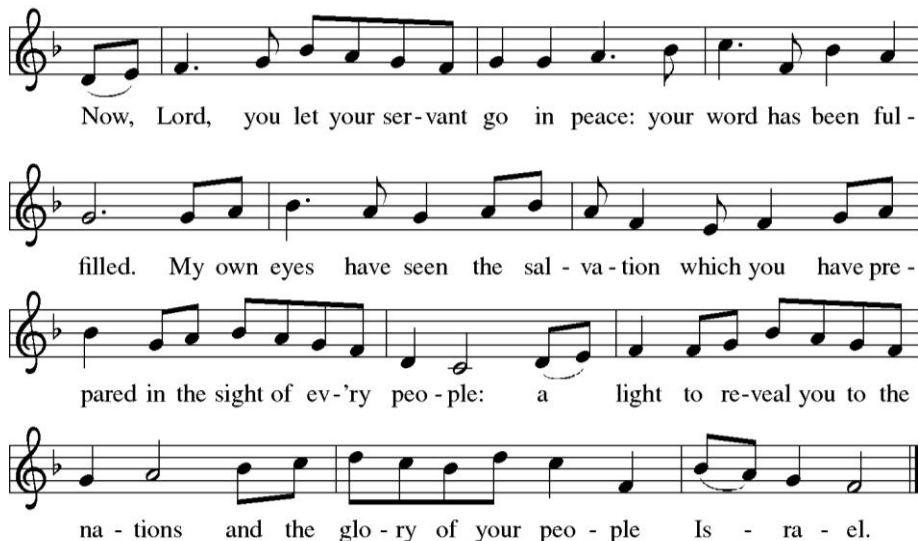
Music: A VA DE, Billema Kwillia, adapt.

Text sts. 1–3 and tune © Lutheran World Federation; text st. 4 and music adapt. © 1972 *Contemporary Worship 4*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

*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)



Now, Lord, you let your ser-vant go in peace: your word has been ful -

filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre -

pared in the sight of ev-'ry peo - ple: a light to re-veal you to the

na - tions and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.

*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

L: Let us pray. Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. . **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

P: 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: "Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises" (ELW 535)

Refrain— sung twice each time



Ha - le - lu - ya! Pe - lo tsa ro - na, di tha -
Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your prais - es, all our



bi - le ka - o - fe - la. Ha - le - lu - ya! Pe - lo tsa
hearts are filled with glad - ness. Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your



ro - na, di tha - bi - le ka - o - fe - la. *End*
prais - es, all our hearts are filled with glad - ness.



1 Christ the Lord to us said: I am wine, I am bread,
2 Now he sends us all out, strong in faith, free of doubt,

Repeat stanza, then sing refrain



I am wine, I am bread, give to all who thirst and hun - ger.
strong in faith, free of doubt. Tell to all the joy - ful gos - pel.

Text: South African; tr. *Freedom Is Coming*, 1984

Music: HALELUYA! PELO TSA RONA, South African

Tr. © 1984 Utryck, admin. Walton Music Corp.

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***DISMISSAL**

L: Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

A: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

REFLECTIONS FOR AFTER WORSHIP

Overview

Abundance from Scraps

Jesus is able to feed us abundantly, even with scraps. He meets earthly needs by feeding the crowds and continues now to offer himself as holy meal, freely given to all, no matter their income or rank in society. Advertisers have trained us that what's proclaimed as "free" usually isn't. More often, it's a ploy to get our money for some other, larger, purchase. Today we are invited to trust and receive Jesus' free gift of love without mistrusting that he's got some scheme up his sleeve.

It can be hard to relax and trust God to take care of us and nourish us with the mere scraps we often see around us. We panic and take matters into our own hands instead of trusting. We experience that crushing sense of responsibility, not just to ourselves, but to our children or parents or other loved ones to keep them fed and clothed and healthy. Trusting as the crowd did that day seems completely foreign to those of us living in North America, abundant in resources.

With food freely given, with quantity enough to feed only a few, Jesus makes this miracle, and there are leftovers to clean up. But for most of us, belief comes slowly and warily when we've been burned by experience: How will there be enough for all of us, when we've been the last one at the lunch line, the late arrival at the party, and everything's gone? What if we see people in the crowd we don't want fed and jostle our way to the head of the line to get first choice? Will it be fair? Trusting that our daily bread and even our very lives are in God's hands is hard to do as we grow older and are burdened by responsibility, but God has compassion for every member of the crowd, and we are blessed and invited to be joyful recipients of that generosity.

COMMENTS FROM THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

Eternal Goodness, I shall contemplate myself in you.

By this light I shall come to know that you, eternal Trinity,
are table and food and waiter for us.

You, eternal Father, are the table that offers us as food,
the Lamb, your only-begotten Son.

He is the most exquisite of foods for us,
both in his teaching, which nourishes us in your will,
and in the sacrament that we receive in Holy Communion,
which feeds and strengthens us while we are pilgrim travelers in this life.
And the Holy Spirit is indeed a waiter for us,
who serves us this teaching by enlightening our mind's eye with it
and inspiring us to follow it,
and who serves us charity for our neighbors
and the salvation of the whole world for the Father's honor.

—*Catherine of Siena* [*The Prayers of Catherine of Siena*, ed. Suzanne Noffke OP (NY: Paulist, 1983), 101-102.]

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

AUGUST 5: LEROY DREIBELBIS, † 2025

AUGUST 6: LEO RAY MCGINNIS, SENIOR, † 2001

AUGUST 7: SYLVIA BEVERLY BURRUANO, † 2003

**AUGUST 8: FREDERICK “FRED” FERGUSON, † 2024; DOMINIC, FOUNDER OF
THE ORDER OF PREACHERS (DOMINICANS), † 1221**

Dominic was a Spanish priest who saw the wealth of the clergy as a stumbling block for the church. He formed the Order of Preachers, commonly called Dominicans, devoted to itinerant preaching and living in poverty.

GOSPEL MESSAGE

True Abundance

In our gospel reading, Jesus hears about John the Baptizer's death and wants to be alone, to withdraw "to a deserted place" (Matthew 14:13). But the crowds follow him, the disciples follow him, and it seems everyone wants something from him. Jesus' response is compassionate, and he meets their needs, healing those who were sick. Then evening falls, and the disciples come to him with a request: "You've healed everyone. Now send them home. They can buy food in the villages for themselves."

Some compassion is needed here for the disciples too. With the twelve of them plus Jesus, there are at least thirteen people to feed with what they have—just five loaves and two fish. That's not enough even for them.

So Jesus does this miracle—he takes what he is given and multiplies it so everyone has something to eat, and there are twelve baskets left over. (Twelve baskets means one for each disciple to carry and then realize that true abundance comes from Jesus!)

The miracle fed the people, but it also taught the disciples that, with Jesus, there is always compassion and always enough to share. After feeding the thousands, each disciple now had a basket full of food. By sharing what they had, through Jesus they received back more than they had to begin with.

This is the true message of Matthew's text today: God gives us what we need, we share what we have with others, and in the end, we are given more than we could ever imagine. This is loving the neighbor. This is being God's grace in the world. At no time is sending people away God's answer. Jesus taught his disciples this important lesson, and we continue to learn and struggle with it today.

FROM: FAITHFUL PROPERTY STEWARDSHIP -

A Bible Study from the ELCA Church Property Resource Hub – (Session 1)

We believe in a God who is always doing a new thing, who can bring even dry bones to life. God invites us to imagine how our hands — and our assets — can do God’s work in our communities. Our congregation’s land and buildings are resources that we can use to live out God’s call for our church, but it’s not easy. Maintenance is expensive. Congregation membership is shrinking. The offering plate and annual pledges don’t always cover our expenses. Our neighbors may not value our church. Yet we know that the Holy Spirit is moving.

The ELCA and our sibling denominations are being challenged to look at church property with new eyes and get creative about how we use, manage and finance our land and buildings. Congregations across the United States are experimenting with new models of stewardship, transforming not only their property but their congregations and neighborhoods. This study invites us into conversation about how our facilities might still facilitate the work of God.

Let us pray: Loving Creator, you call on your people to think beyond obstacles and restrictions, beyond history and tradition, beyond “how it’s always been.” Help us be faithful disciples who dream as big as you do. We give thanks for the land and buildings that you have charged us with, and remind us that they are not ours, but yours. Be with each of us as we open our imaginations about what these resources can be used for. We give thanks for all the people who have called this land home, all who have stewarded it in honor of our shared Creator. May we also be good and faithful stewards. May our thoughts and words be honest, insightful, and faithful. We give thanks for each other as siblings in Christ, help us to strengthen each other in all that we say and do. Amen.



SERVING TODAY

Worship Leader.....Pastor Paul Tomkiel
Assisting Minister.....Eleanor Bird
Musicians..... Jacob Heller
Sacristan..... Karen Magnuson
Reader..... Karen Magnuson

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 Conestoga-Susquehannock people, where we gather. We also acknowledge the Seneca, Cayuga, 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.

Find out more about the Conestoga-Susquehannock at www.conestogasusquehannocktribe.com

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