

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 13, 2026 10:30 a.m.



*"Touched by the Gospel, we seek to be instruments of God's Peace,
for the sake of the World."*

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
1747 W. Milham Avenue ♦ Portage, MI 49024
Pastor Rachel Laughlin
Church phone: 269/343-3453 ♦ fax: 269/343-2025
Website: popportage.org
Prayer-mail: prayer@popportage.org
Find us on Facebook: *Prince of Peace, Portage, MI-ELCA*

WELCOME IN THE NAME OF CHRIST!



Entering Worship

- Fully accessible restrooms (men's, women's, single-stall) are located behind you as you face the altar. The women's room and nursery have changing tables.
- People of all ages and stages are encouraged to worship together. A staffed nursery is available 9 AM – Noon.
- Many people enjoy prayerful quiet in the Sanctuary before worship begins to help center themselves. By keeping conversation in the Gathering Space before worship, you are giving the gift of this peace to your neighbors.
- All are welcome to share Christ's communion regardless of age or faith tradition. The bread is gluten, nut, and dairy free. Wine and grape juice are available.

Embodying Praise

- Postures are a way in which we engage the body in worship. These movements (sitting, standing, making the sign of the cross) are optional; please engage in them only as you are comfortable or able.
- Some brains need a quiet activity to help them learn. Feel free to borrow a worship bag or a fidget toy to help your brain and body stay engaged. Ask an usher for assistance.
- If your body would benefit from extra motion during worship, you are welcome to get up and move about during the service. The Playground in front of the left pews is equipped with quiet activities and soft toys for little ones. Parents are invited to sit nearby to assist children in engaging in worship in an age-appropriate manner. The service is audible in the Gathering Space, if you need to step out for a time. For children who need a louder place to play, the staffed nursery is available to the left as you exit the sanctuary.
- Hearing assistance devices direct clearer sound directly to your ears. They are available from the ushers. If you use Bluetooth-enabled hearing aids, see the back of the bulletin for instructions on connecting to the assistive listening system in our sanctuary.

Engaging in Community

- Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we strive to be an open, welcoming place for all people. Please join us in the Gathering Space after worship for snacks, coffee, and fellowship.
- This bulletin may be recycled in the basket on the floor near the glass door to the front parking lot. We invite you to take home the *Peace Proclamations* page with announcements and upcoming events.
- If you'd like to learn more about our community you can: greet Pastor Rachel at the door by the baptismal font after worship, visit the welcome table to pick up informational brochures or staff business cards, or visit our website: www.popportage.org.

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP

MUSIC FOR THE BEGINNING OF WORSHIP

Bellsong - Douglas E. Wagner
Handbell Choir

WELCOME

Stand

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Pastor: Remembered by ancient and living waters, we give thanks for the gift of baptism.

*Water may be poured into the font at this time.
The congregation may be sprinkled with water during the Thanksgiving for Baptism.*

P: In the beginning the Spirit moved over the deep, stirring one big nothing into so many somethings.
Damp molecules burst apart and fused together in a trillion transformations.
If you listen closely, you can still hear them sweep beneath the sea, swirl across the sky,
saturate the soil and satisfy the cells of every living thing. We give thanks to God
for the waters and the sound waves of original blessing:

All: God called you good. You are a good creation.

P: Since the beginning the waters have been raising arks, carving mountains and filling seas.
They rain down on farm fields, are drawn up from wells, and satisfy the thirst of generations.
Our bodies are made of water that remembers every death and resurrection, and still it moves.
We give thanks to God for the water we carry, oceans of wisdom for becoming one body:

All: Nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus.

P: It begins before it ends, new life unwilling to wait its tidy turn, bursting forth and crying out so that
it can feel like drowning, like breaking and dying. Baptism knows that beauty and pain interrupt one another.
It is a wild and messy flowage, an ice jam melting, rapids running, a womb's water breaking - even while
the love keeps stretching. We give thanks to God for a promise that lasts and life that overflows:

All: You are my child, my beloved one. With you I am well pleased.

P: This is a beginning, a people remembered and rejoicing in the waters of baptism,
loved and liberated by the Spirit of God.

All: The old has passed away. See? God is doing a new thing. Thanks be to God! Amen.

GATHERING SONG

God Is Doing a New Thing

Carol Meier
Hans Peterson



1 God is do - ing a new thing,	God is do - ing a new thing,
2 Christ is ris - ing with new life,	Christ is ris - ing with new life,
3 Now the Spir - it is mov - ing,	now the Spir - it is mov - ing,
4 Go and wit - ness the glor - y,	all crea - a - tion a - dor - ing



God is do - ing a new thing in this world.
Christ is ris - ing with new life in this world.
now the Spir - it is mov - ing in this world.
God's own beau - ti - ful stor - y in this world.



We all have a part in God's won - drous work of art.
Love will be the seed that can heal a world in need.
Com - for - ter and friend, ev - er with us to the end.
Trees shall clap their hands; joy shall ring a - cross the lands.



God is do - ing a new thing in this world.
Christ is ris - ing with new life in this world.
Now the Spir - it is mov - ing in this world.
Praise! For God is re - stor - ing all this world!

Last time



God is do - ing a new thing in this world!
--

GREETING

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

All: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray,

All: **O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Sit

THE CHILDREN'S SERMON

WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD

FIRST READING Genesis 50:15-21

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

R: Word of God. Word of Life.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM Psalm 103:1-13

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

All: **Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all God's benefits—**

Low: *who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases;*

High: *who redeems your life from the grave and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;*

Low: *who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.*

Reader: O Lord, you provide vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.

You made known your ways to Moses and your works to the children of Israel.

All: **Lord, you are full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love; you will not always accuse us, nor will you keep your anger forever.**

You have not dealt with us according to our sins, nor repaid us according to our iniquities.

High: For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

Low: *As far as the east is from the west, so far have you removed our transgressions from us.*

All: **As a father has compassion for his children, so you have compassion for those who fear you, O Lord.**

SECOND READING Romans 14:1-12

Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God. For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

R: Word of God. Word of Life.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

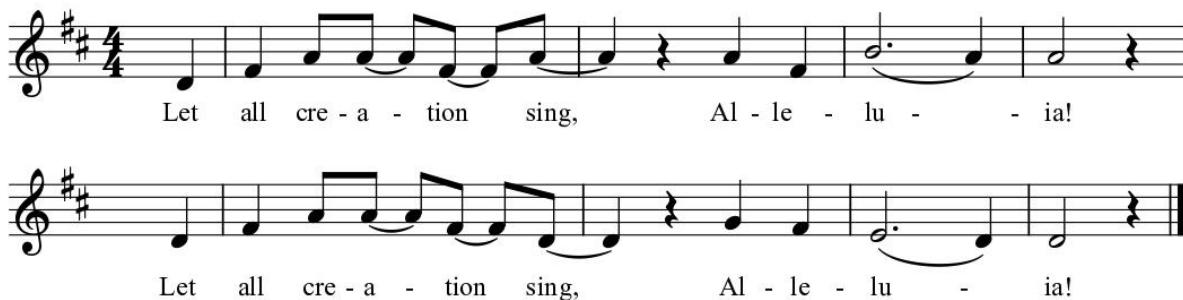
Stand

GOSPEL ACCLIMATION

Sung first by Choir, then by All

Let All Creation Sing Gospel Acclamation

Hans Peterson
Carol Meier



GOSPEL READING Matthew 18:21-35

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 18th chapter.

All: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Peter came and said to [Jesus,] "Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sit

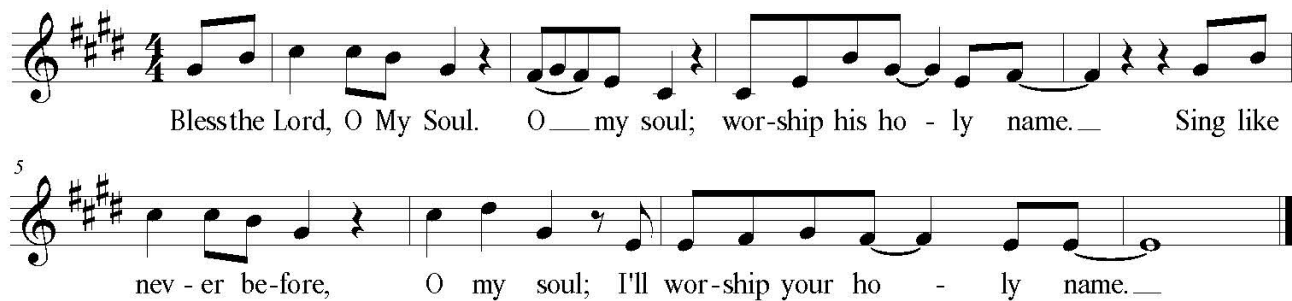
Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY

Ten Thousand Reasons (Bless the Lord, O My Soul)

Refrains – All Verses – Choir

Refrain, sung by ALL at the beginning and as indicated



Sung by the Choir

- 1) The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning;
it's time to sing your song again.
whatever may pass, and whatever lies before me,
let me be singing when the evening comes. REFRAIN
- 2) You're rich in love, and you're slow to anger.
Your name is great, and your heart is kind.
For all your goodness, I will keep on singing --
ten thousand reasons for my heart to find. REFRAIN
- 3) And on that day when my strength is failing,
the end draws near, and my time has come:
still, my soul will sing your praise unending --
ten thousand years and then forever more! REFRAIN

APOSTLES' CREED

Asst: Joining with the saints of every time and place, we confess our faith:

All: 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 PEOPLE

After “Be our hope and healer” worshipers respond by singing:



WE SHARE IN HIS MEAL:

SHARING OF THE PEACE

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: And also with you.

Worshipers share a sign of God's peace with one another, greeting each other with words like "Peace be with you... And also with you."

Sit

OFFERING Please date and complete the fellowship registration pad.

For members of the Prince of Peace community, an offering is our expression of gratitude to God and a way we share God's love with the world.

If you are visiting with us today, your presence is already a great gift.

LITURGICAL HAND WASHING

I wash my hands in innocence, and go around your altar, O Lord, singing aloud a song of thanksgiving, and telling all your wondrous deeds. Psalm 26:6-7

OFFERING RESPONSE

All Creatures, Worship God Most High — vs. 1, 4, 6 (stand)

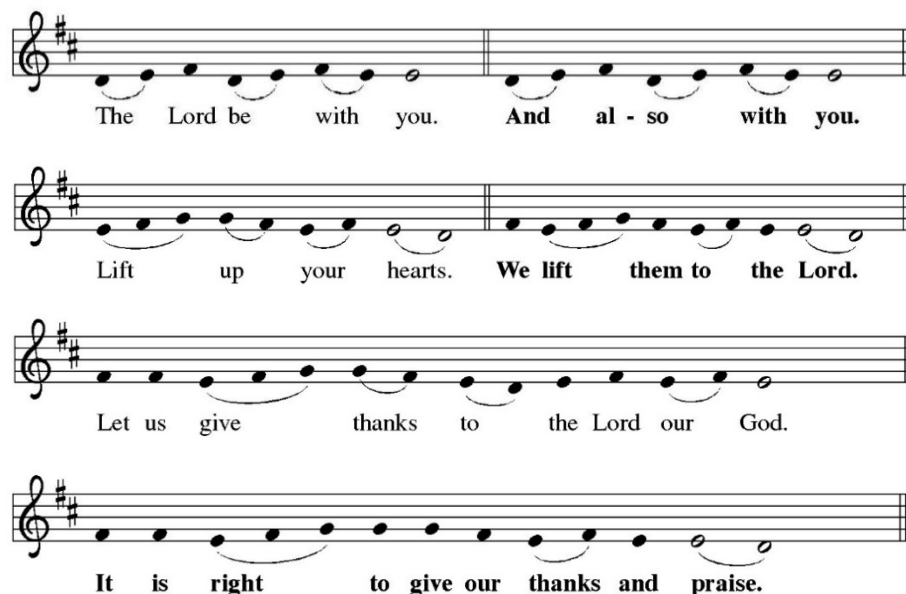
ELW #835

OFFERING PRAYER

Asst: 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.

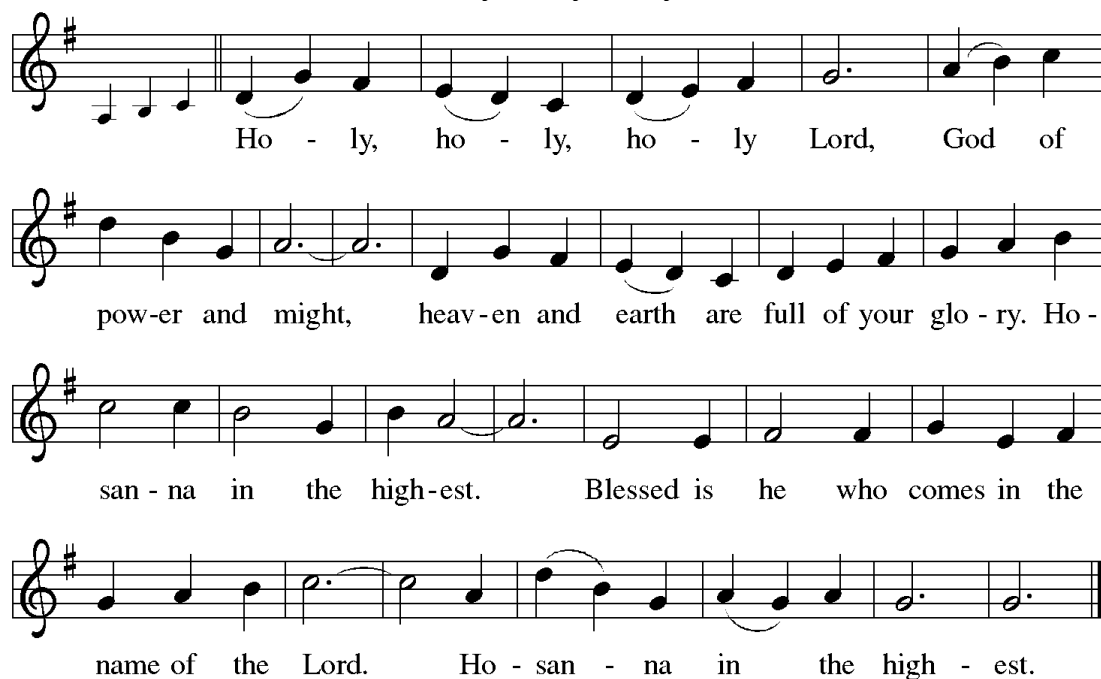
All: Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING - Grace Before the Meal



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:

Holy, Holy, Holy



P: In the night in which he was betrayed, 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 to you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it 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.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

All: **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.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO THE MEAL

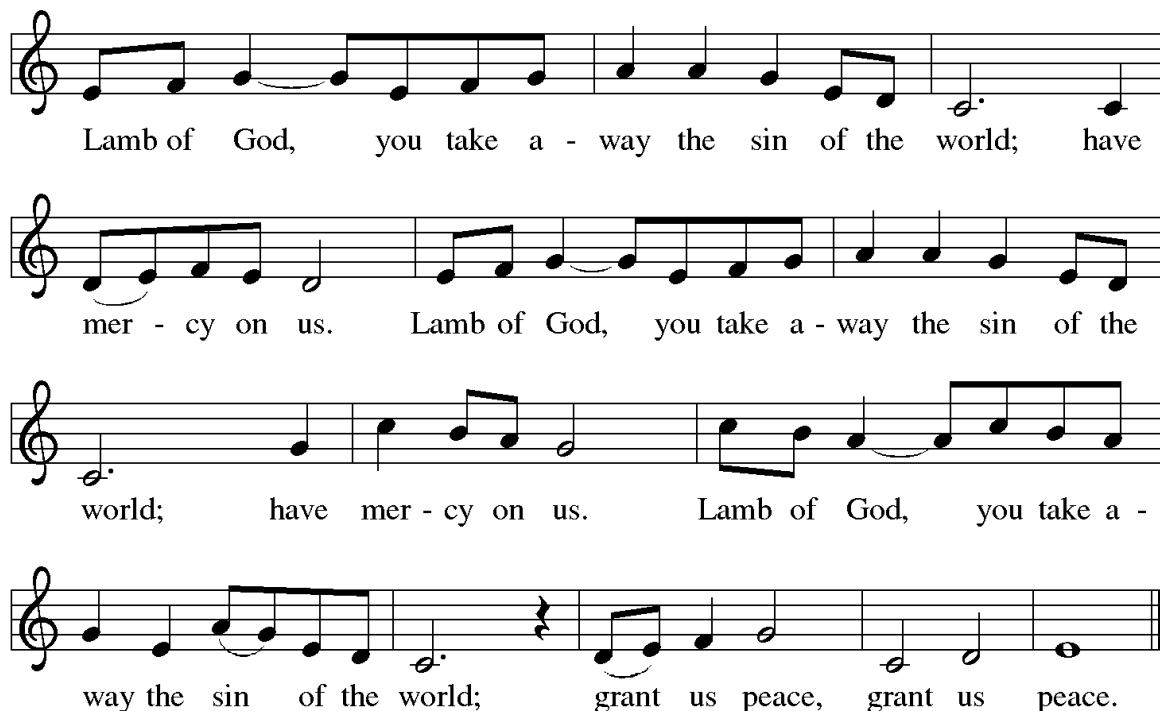
P: If you desire to receive what God offers, come to this Table. Come with your faith and your doubt. Come with your questions and your hopes. Come with your grief and your love. Come taste the Lord's goodness. There is room for you here because this is Christ's table. You are welcome.

Sit

HOLY COMMUNION - The Lord's Supper

All are welcome at Christ's table regardless of age or membership status. All communion servers will have sanitized their hands before handling the communion elements. Ushers will direct you to come forward. The pastor and assisting minister will distribute the bread (gluten-free) and the other servers will distribute the wine (red) or grape juice (white). Individually packaged gluten free wafers and sets of completely sealed elements (wheat wafer and grape juice) are available on the stands near the bread distributors. You may pick one of those up yourself, if you prefer. You may place your empty cup in the baskets on the tables as you return to your seat. If you would prefer not to receive communion, you are invited to come forward for a blessing. Please cross your arms over your chest to indicate your preference to the servers.

Lamb of God



The musical notation for 'Lamb of God' is presented on four staves. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is written in a simple, accessible style. The lyrics are: '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, grant us peace.'

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, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS:

Where Charity and Love Prevail

ELW #359

I Come with Joy

ELW #482

TABLE BLESSING

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

Asst.: God of plenty, you have nourished our bodies with the fruits of the earth, our minds with the assurance that there is enough, and our spirits with the promise of Christ's true presence. Send us from this table to welcome as we have been welcomed, to feed as we have been fed and to forgive as we have been forgiven, for the sake of the world you love.

All: Amen.

SENDING OF COMMUNION

Communion ministers may be sent to take the sacrament to those who are absent.

Pastor: God of Love, as Jesus called disciples to follow him, bless those who go forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick/homebound/imprisoned. May these gifts be signs of our love and prayers, that through the sharing of the body and blood of Christ, all may know your grace and healing revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

WE ARE SENT OUT TO SERVE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Worshippers are invited to share announcements not listed in the weekly Peace Proclamations - Blessings (anniversaries, birthdays, births or new jobs), Prayer Concerns, or Answered Prayers.

*So that all present on person and live-streaming can see and hear you,
come up the ramp to the chancel then go to the pulpit to give your announcement.*

AFFIRMATION OF CHRISTIAN VOCATION

Pastor: Siblings in Christ, both our work and our rest are in God. Will you endeavor to pattern your life on the Lord Jesus Christ, in gratitude to God and in service to others, at morning and evening, at work and at play, all the days of your life?

All: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Pastor: Almighty God, by the power of the Spirit you have knit us your servants into the one body of your Son, Jesus Christ. Look with favor upon us in our commitment to serve in Christ's name. Give us courage, patience, and vision; and strengthen us all in our Christian vocation of witness to the world and of service to others; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Stand

FINAL BLESSING

P: God the Creator made the tiny goldfish and elegant sharks, looked at them and said,

All: You are GOOD!

P: God the Creator made the croaky frogs, looked at them and said,

All: You are GOOD!

P: God the Creator made the birds of the sky, looked at them and said,

All: You are GOOD!

P: God the Creator made the rainbows that shine, looked at them and said,

All: You are GOOD!

P: God the Creator made you and me, and all of humanity, looked at us and said,

All: You are GOOD!

P: God the Creator bless you and keep you, today and every day in love, peace, and joy,

All: Amen.

God's Work, Our Hands



1 God's work, our hands: work - ing to - geth - er,
 2 God's work, our feet: trav - 'ling to - geth - er,
 3 God's work, our voice: sing - ing to - geth - er,
 4 God is at work in and a - round us:



build - ing a fu - ture, re - pair - ing the world,
 fol - low - ing Je - sus to plac - es un - known,
 prais - ing, pro - claim - ing to all who will hear,
 seed - lings are sprout - ing and bread's on the rise!



rais - ing up homes, plant - ing new gar - dens,
 walk - ing as friends, march - ing for free - dom,
 pray - ing for peace, shout - ing for jus - tice,
 Washed and set free, hum - bled and hon - ored,



feed - ing the hun - gry and shelt - 'ring the cold.
 run - ning the race with God's fu - ture the goal.
 claim - ing God's love for the lost and the least.
 gift - ed by grace, we re - spond in God's love.



Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,
 Bless, God, our feet as we fol - low your way,
 Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,
 Bless, God, our lives as we an - swer your call,



shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.

DISMISSAL

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

All: Thanks be to God.

MUSIC FOR THE CLOSE OF WORSHIP

A Choral Postlude will be sung from the Gathering Space.

This Week's Servers

September 13, 2026

Worship Asst: Jolaine Snyder
Reader: Beth Whately
Ushers: Greg Gutherie
Crucifer: Bette Stemaly
Technology: Mike Whately, Mark Clyne, Jackson Seguin
Prayer Station:
Sacristy Asst.: Laila Poisson
Communion Asst.: Cam Hart, Gary Bischof
Altar Guild: Linda Timm
Fellowship Host: GWOH Day
Fellowship Treats: GWOH Day
Church Lockup: Jeremy Zimmerman

Next Week's Servers

September 20, 2026

Worship Asst: Lisa Creed
Reader: Karen Adams
Ushers:
Technology: Mike Whately
Prayer Station:
Sacristy Asst.: Kathy Eklov
Communion Asst.: Sandy Mertz, MacKenzie Hart,
Annika Eklov
Altar Guild: Sandy Bennett
Fellowship Host:
Fellowship Treats:
Church Lockup: Sandy Bennett

pop_listen2



Hearing Aid Compatible Assistive Listening System

1. Use the left QR code to connect to the *pop_listen2* Wi-Fi network.
 2. Use the right QR code to download the *ListenWIFI* app, either from the Apple Store or the Google Play Store.
 3. Open the *ListenWIFI* app and select "POP Service."
 4. You should now be receiving audio in your hearing aids.
- If you need assistance, see an usher.

ListenWIFI app



Living Voice of Creation: A Liturgy for the Feast of Creation in Christ, Provided by Nourishing Vocation with Children through the Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community St. Olaf College Northfield, MN

Music by Carol Meier and Hans Peterson ©2026 Carol Meier Music & Dakota Road Music

Ten Thousand Reasons Text and Music © 2011 Thankyou Music / Atlas Mountain Songs / CapitolGMPublishing.com

Permission under OneLicense Annual License A-710485 *ELW Holy Communion Setting 1; God's Work, Our Hands*

Permission under Augsburg Fortress Annual License SAS006200. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Staff Church phone: 269-343-3453

Pastor: Rachel Laughlin ext 11
Music Director: Janet Hill ext 16
Engagement Coordinator: Em Witteveen ext 12
Admin. Asst.: Ashley Wineland ext 10
Tech Manager: Mike Whately ext 13
Accountant: Marilyn Storch ext 14
Nursery: Melissa Copeland
& Megan Zimmerman ext 17
Custodian: Charles Boyd ext 20
Care Team Email: prayer@popportage.org

Use the QR code below to donate online to Prince of Peace Lutheran Church and its ministries. See the Peace Proclamations announcement page for more details.

