



**Christ
Lutheran**
CHURCH

2610 Campbell Street • Valparaiso,
Indiana 46385 • (219) 462-6660
clcvalpo.org • office@clcvalpo.org



Season of Pentecost

July 2, 2023

YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

At Christ Lutheran people of all backgrounds and experiences gather to worship because we all share a common hope: the life, death, and resurrection of Christ makes all things new, even us.

You will find everything that happens in worship printed in this bulletin. If you have a prayer request, the yellow cards in the seatback holders have a place for them; the other side is for any information you would like about Christ Lutheran. Please feel welcome to remain seated as necessary during the service.

CHILDREN ARE ALWAYS WELCOME IN CHURCH!

God's people come in all shapes and sizes – it is a gift to the whole community when the smallest of us are present! Sitting with parents and learning to treasure times of worship is the foundation for helping build a growing faith in a child's life. There's some noise and movement that we expect from little ones - feel free to make use of the **activity bags, doodle pads, bookshelf in the overflow area and cry room at the back of the sanctuary** as needed. Whatever sacrifice of energy and effort you make to include your children in worship is multiplied as the good news of God's love takes root in their lives!

WHEN NURSERY CARE IS NEEDED DURING WORSHIP

A fully equipped and staffed Nursery is available for both infants and toddlers during all services. The Nursery is located west of our gathering area in **Room 110**.

RESTROOMS

Men's and women's restrooms off the Gathering Area and Church Hall have changing tables, as does the all-gender restroom near the nursery. A second all-gender restroom is through the Vestry off the East hallway, past the Welcome Center.

HOLY COMMUNION

Holy Communion is the family meal of God's people, to which we come at Jesus' invitation. The body and blood of Christ, in the bread and wine, are his real presence with us and offer the gift of forgiveness because of his death and resurrection. Drawn together and strengthened by this meal, we are given a taste of the fullness of God's coming kingdom, and are equipped to be the hands and feet of God's love in the world. All baptized Christians are always welcome at the Lord's table.

In-person distribution: When indicated by the ushers, come up the right-hand ramp to approach the altar rail. When finished you may leave individually without being dismissed. **WINE** is lighter-colored, and **GRAPE JUICE** is dark; they are received via individual cups in the trays, please indicate which you want. The **COMMON CUP** is available for anyone who wishes. **USED GLASSES** are placed in the basket located near the ramp. **GLUTEN-FREE BREAD IS AVAILABLE**, please indicate to the server that you require this. Also, if you unable to come up to the altar, let the usher know so that pastor can bring communion to you.

COVID Procedure Update

Masks are encouraged but optional during worship. Naturally if you prefer to stay masked throughout the service, you are of course welcome to do so. Masks are not required for singing but suggested.

Our services are on video, and occasional photographs are taken for our website and e-mail news. If you have concerns, please speak to a church staff member.

Hearing assistance devices are available to those who need help with listening to the service and are located at the entrance to the sanctuary, or please see an Usher for assistance.

A Reminder: Please turn off all cell phones during worship services.

The welcome of baptism is for all God's children. This baptismal gift sets us free from the power of sin and death. In today's gospel, Christ promises that the disciple who gives a cup of cold water to the little ones serves Christ himself. From worship we are sent on our baptismal mission: to serve the little ones of this world and to be a sign of God's merciful welcome.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

PRELUDE (8:00 am):

Prelude & Fugue in C

J.S. Bach

WELCOME

If you are a guest with us, welcome! We'd love to meet you, or if there's anything you'd like to know about the ministry of Christ Lutheran Church, please consider [filling out a Connection Card online](#) (you can point your phone at the graphic to the right) or using a yellow Connection Card in the pew holders.



***Prayer requests** can be posted to the livechat or use a yellow Prayer Request (backside of the Connection Card) and give them to an usher.*

*If you are worshipping with us via livestream, consider **preparing your space for Communion**: light a candle (if appropriate and safe), and have a plate with bread/cracker/tortilla and a cup for wine or grape juice (or an empty cup as a sign Jesus is sufficient in one or both elements).*

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who greets us in this and every season,
whose word never fails,
whose promise is sure.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God
and of our neighbors.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Righteous God,
we confess that we have sinned.
We have failed to be honest.
We have lacked the courage to speak.
We have spoken falsely.
In the name of Jesus,
forgive us and grant us your mercy.

God is a cup of cold water when we thirst.
God offers boundless grace when we fail.
Claim the gift of God's mercy:
you are freed and forgiven
in the name of ✠ Jesus Christ.
Amen.

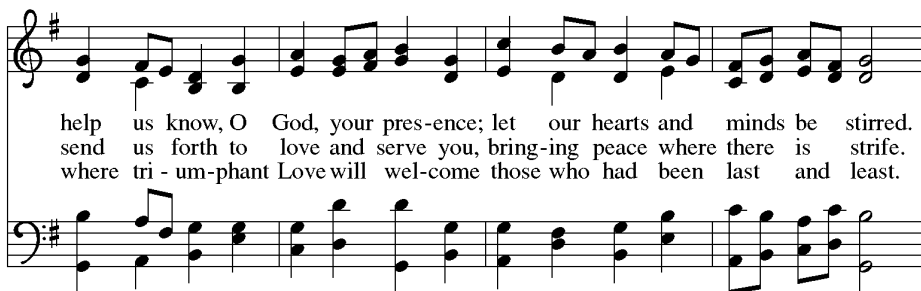


GATHERING HYMN ELW #522

As We Gather at Your Table



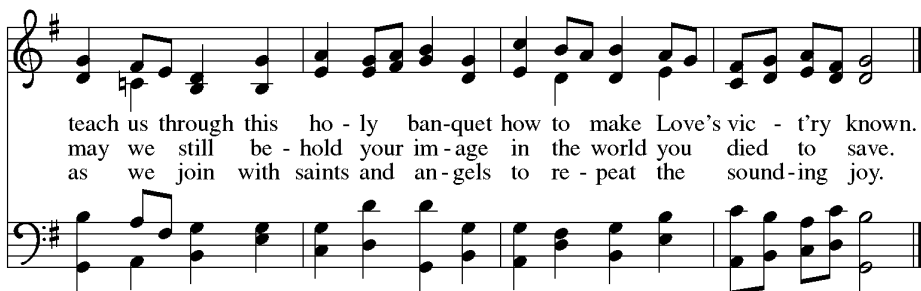
1 As we gath-er at your ta - ble, as we lis - ten to your word,
 2 Turn our wor-ship in - to wit-ness in the sac - ra - ment of life;
 3 Gra - cious Spir - it, help us sum-mon oth-er guests to share that feast



help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
 send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.
 where tri - um-phant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.



Nour-ish us with sa - cred sto - ry till we claim it as our own;
 Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for - give as you for - gave;
 There no more will en - vy blind us nor will pride our peace de - stroy,



teach us through this ho - ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic - t'ry known.
 may we still be - hold your im - age in the world you died to save.
 as we join with saints and an - gels to re - peat the sound-ing joy.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: IN BABILONE, *Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlities en Contradanssen*, 1710; arr. Julius Röntgen, 1855-1932
 Text © 1989 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

GREETING

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

And also with you.

Children: This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE



1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.

2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.

3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:

Son of God and gra-cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;

Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.

on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.

Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.

Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.

For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Welcoming God,
giving space for creation
to return your love:
make us apostles
of the open table,
a place of hospitality
to challenge the world
with the gift of eternal life;
through Jesus Christ, who offered himself for us.
Amen.

WORD

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

When children read, they may read a version that is appropriate to their reading level and voice, which may vary from the printed texts.

CHILDREN'S TIME

The assembly is seated as children are invited forward for a time together.

READING: Genesis 22:1-14

Abraham was prepared to obey God's command amid extreme contradiction: the child to be sacrificed is the very child through whom Abraham is to receive descendants. God acknowledged Abraham's obedient faith, and Abraham offered a ram in the place of his son Isaac.

¹God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ²He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you." ³So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt offering, and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. ⁴On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. ⁵Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you." ⁶Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. ⁷Isaac said to his father Abraham, "Father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" ⁸Abraham said, "God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together.

⁹When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.

¹⁰Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son. ¹¹But the angel of the

LORD called to him from heaven, and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”¹² [The angel] said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”¹³ And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴So Abraham called that place “The LORD will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSIVE PSALM 13

¹How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

²**How long shall I have perplexity in my mind, and grief in my heart, day after day?**

How long shall my enemy triumph over me?

³Look upon me and answer me, O LORD my God;
give light to my eyes, lest I sleep in death;

⁴**lest my enemy say, “I have defeated you,”
and my foes rejoice that I have fallen.**

⁵But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart is joyful because of your saving help.

⁶**I will sing to the LORD,
who has dealt with me richly.**

READING: Romans 6:12-23

Sin is an enslaving power which motivates us to live self-serving, disobedient lives. Sin’s final payoff is death. We, however, have been set free from sin’s slavery to live obediently under God’s grace, whose end is the free gift of eternal life.

¹²Do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. ¹³No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. ¹⁴For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!

¹⁶Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, ¹⁸and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.

²⁰When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. ²²But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. ²³For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands to welcome the Gospel.



HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 10:40-42

When Jesus sends his disciples out as missionaries, he warns them of persecution and hardships they will face. He also promises to reward any who aid his followers and support their ministry.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the twelve:] ⁴⁰“Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. ⁴¹Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; ⁴²and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The assembly is seated. Time for reflection follows the sermon.

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW #676

Lord, Speak to Us, That We May Speak

The assembly stands to proclaim the Word of God in song.

1 Lord, speak to us, that we may speak in
2 Oh, lead us, Lord, that we may lead the
3 Oh, teach us, Lord, that we may teach the
4 Oh, fill us with your full - ness, Lord, un -

liv - ing ech - oes of your tone; as you have sought, so
wan-d'ring and the wa - v'ring feet; oh, feed us, Lord, that
pre - cious truths which you im - part; and wing our words, that
til our ver - y hearts o'er - flow in kin - dling thought and

let us seek your stray - ing chil - dren, lost and lone.
we may feed your hun - g'ring ones with man - na sweet.
they may reach the hid - den depths of man - y a heart.
glow - ing word, your love to tell, your praise to show.

Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879, alt.
Music: CANONBURY, Robert Schumann, 1810–1856

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.

**Or, "he descended into hell," another translation of this text in widespread use.*

PRAYERS

Trusting in God's abundant mercy, let us offer our prayers for a world in need.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church. For wisdom to heed the voices of prophets in our midst who cast a vision of God's promised future. For courage to welcome people whom society rejects. For resolve to serve all in need. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for creation. For Lake Michigan, the Little Calumet, Salt Creek, and all rivers, lakes, oceans, and streams. For lands experiencing scorching heat, drought, or wildfires. For conservation organizations and environmental activists. For scientists working on clean energy solutions. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for this nation and all nations. For President Biden, Senators Braun and Young, and Representative Mrvan. For judges, juries, district attorneys, and public defenders. For military personnel. For those who are incarcerated. Guide us in ways of freedom that promote the common good. For our neighbors nearby, and for peace and wellbeing in the nations of Sudan, South Sudan, and Uganda. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for those in need. For exiles, immigrants, refugees, and those seeking asylum. For victims of harassment, torture, or abuse. For those who are ill. For any near death and for all who grieve. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for children. For their safety at home and in childcare settings. For their flourishing at summer programs and camps. For the many people who care for them including parents and grandparents; childcare workers and teachers; coaches, counselors, and mentors; pediatricians and psychologists. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for Thomas, Jan Hus, and all the saints and prophets who have received the free gift of God, which is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. May their lives of humble service inspire us in faith. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Receive our prayers and answer us, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

*We invite those worshiping by livestream to share a sign of peace in the chat, and for those in person we turn to offer them our greeting of peace before sharing a sign of peace with one another: **Peace be with you!***

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERING

The assembly is seated. This congregation serves our neighbors, community, and the world through the participation and support of its members and guests. Because offerings are never just about us, this month we are sharing a portion of your gifts with ELCA's Global Missions' Selian Lutheran Hospital in Tanzania Africa and AMOS, "A Mission of Service" in Guatemala/Honduras.



If you wish to give electronically, browse to our secure on-line portal at clcvalpo.org/give or use [our CLC app](#) (download at clcvalpo.org/app).

OFFERTORY (8:00 am):

Oh, Had I Jubal's Lyre

Handel

OFFERING PRAYER

The assembly stands as the gifts are brought forward.

God of field and forest, sea and sky,
you are the giver of all good things.
Sustain us with these gifts of your creation,
and multiply your graciousness in us,
that the world may be fed with your love,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The pastor begins the prayer and all join in singing:

SANCTUS

(An ancient practice invites us to make the sign of the cross in honor of Jesus at the words "Blessed is he.")



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



heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -



san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

TABLE PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

Children: The Spirit makes us one. We 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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

All people are called to Christ's table.
Come, eat what is good.
Thanks be to God!

DISTRIBUTION

The assembly is seated.

Holy Communion is the family meal of God's people, to which we come at Jesus' invitation. The body and blood of Christ, in the bread and wine, are his real presence with us and offer the gift of forgiveness because of his death and resurrection. Drawn together and strengthened by this meal, we are given a taste of the fullness of God's coming kingdom, and are equipped to be the hands and feet of God's love in the world. All baptized Christians are always welcome at the Lord's table.

*The pastor invites those worshipping via **livestream** to commune:*

The body of Christ, given for you.
Amen (receive the bread)

The blood of Christ, shed for you.
Amen (receive the cup)

In-person distribution: When indicated by the ushers, come up the right-hand ramp to approach the altar rail. When finished you may leave individually without being dismissed. WINE is lighter-colored, and GRAPE JUICE is dark; they are received via individual cups in the trays, please indicate which you want. The COMMON CUP is available for anyone who wishes. USED GLASSES are placed in the basket located near the ramp. GLUTEN-FREE BREAD IS AVAILABLE, please indicate to the server that you require this. Also, if you unable to come up to the altar, let the usher know so that pastor can bring communion to you.

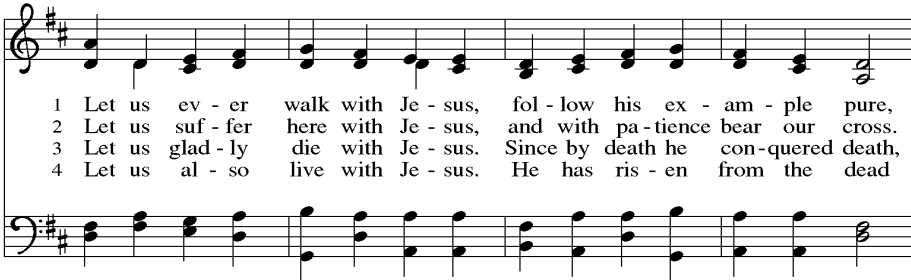
LAMB OF GOD



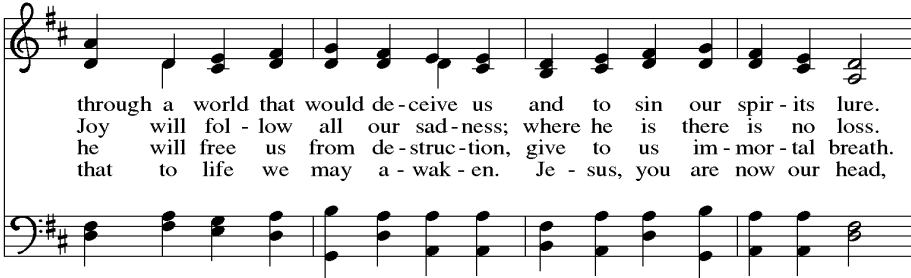
1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.



1 Let us ev - er walk with Je - sus, fol - low his ex - am - ple pure,
 2 Let us suf - fer here with Je - sus, and with pa - tience bear our cross.
 3 Let us glad - ly die with Je - sus. Since by death he con - quered death,
 4 Let us al - so live with Je - sus. He has ris - en from the dead



through a world that would de - ceive us and to sin our spir - its lure.
 Joy will fol - low all our sad - ness; where he is there is no loss.
 he will free us from de - struc - tion, give to us im - mor - tal breath.
 that to life we may a - wak - en. Je - sus, you are now our head,



On - ward in his foot - steps tread - ing, trav - 'lers here, our home a - bove,
 Though to - day we sow no laugh - ter, we shall reap ce - les - tial joy;
 Let us mor - ti - fy all pas - sion that would lead us in - to sin;
 we are your own liv - ing mem - bers; where you live, there we shall be



full of faith and hope and love, let us do our Sav - ior's bid - ding.
 all dis - com - forts that an - noy shall give way to mirth here - af - ter.
 and the grave that shuts us in shall but prove the gate of heav - en.
 in your pres - ence con - stant - ly, liv - ing there with you for - ev - er.



Faith - ful Lord, with me a - bide; I shall fol - low where you guide.
 Je - sus, here I share your woe; help me there your joy to know.
 Je - sus, here with you I die, there to live with you on high.
 Je - sus, let me faith - ful be; life e - ter - nal grant to me.

ELW #719 *Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life*

1 Where cross the crowd-ed ways of life, where sound the
 2 In haunts of wretch-ed-ness and need, on shad-owed
 3 From ten-der child-hood's help-less-ness, from hu-man
 4 The cup of wa-ter giv'n for you still holds the

cries of race and clan, a-bove the noise of
 thresh-olds dark with fears, from paths where hide the
 grief and bur-dened toil, from fam-ished souls, from
 fresh-ness of your grace; yet long these mul-ti-

self-ish strife, we hear your voice, O Son of Man.
 lures of greed, we catch the vi-sion of your tears.
 sor-row's stress, your heart has nev-er known re-coil.
 tudes to view the strong com-pas-sion in your face.

5 O Master, from the mountainside
 make haste to heal these hearts of pain;
 among these restless throngs abide;
 oh, tread the city's streets again;

6 Till all the world shall learn your love,
 and follow where your feet have trod;
 till glorious from your heav'n above
 shall come the city of our God.

After all have returned to their places, the assembly stands as the minister continues.
The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We thank you, generous God,
for the refreshment we have received
at your banquet table.
Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world,
through the one who is our dearest treasure,
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

INVITATIONS

Brief invitations are shared, especially those related to the assembly's participation in God's mission in the world.

BLESSING

The God who calls across the cosmos
and speaks in the smallest seed
✠ bless, keep, and sustain you
now and to the end of the age.
Amen.



1 The Spir - it sends us forth to serve; we go in Je - sus' name
2 We go to com - fort those who mourn and set the bur - dened free;
3 We go to be the hands of Christ, to scat - ter joy like seed
4 Then let us go to serve in peace, the gos - pel to pro - claim.



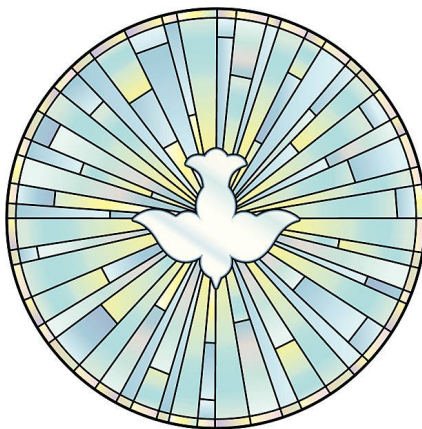
to bring glad tid - ings to the poor, God's fa - vor to pro - claim.
where hope is dim, to share a dream and help the blind to see.
and, all our days, to cher - ish life, to do the lov - ing deed.
God's Spir - it has em - pow - ered us; we go in Je - sus' name.

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939

Music: SANTA MONICA, Robert A. Hobby, b. 1962

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Children join the pastors to send us in mission.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the harvest.

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Allegro di molto e con fuoco

Saint-Saëns

*As worship concludes we move to the Gathering Place, where we are invited
to greet one another and share in fellowship.*



Worship Leaders

	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:30 a.m.</u>
Acolyte	Shawn Longacre	Joey Rodeck
Lector	John Buggeln	Phil McGuire
Prayer Assistant	Paige Reichardt	Cindy McGuire
Communion Assistants	Phyllis Schroeder Darla Hernandez	Cindy McGuire
Ushers	Don MacMillan Ramona Krueger	
Sound/Light	Lance Nolting	Jeff Peiffer
Video/Livestream	—————	John Buggeln
Preaching Presiding	Rev. Erik Grayvold Rev. Timothy Knauff, Jr.	
Director of Music Ministries	Brian Bartusch	
Worship Participant	LSM Musicians	
Communion Baker	Hernes Family	

July Altar Gifts

Holy Communion	In celebration of Sara & Jeremy Long's anniversary Celebration of Kelly & Cam Kozloski's 10th wedding anniversary
Altar Candles	Marilyn McGawn ~ In memory of Malcolm's birthday (7/17) Grace & Jeff Safrin ~ celebrating our daughter, Kara Rozin's birthday
Eternal Lamp Candles	In Memory of Jake Kozul, son-in-law of Grace & Jeff Safrin

COMMEMORATIONS

Week of July 2, 2023

July 3

Thomas, Apostle

Thomas is perhaps best remembered as “Doubting Thomas.” But alongside this doubt, the Gospel of John shows Thomas as fiercely loyal: “Let us also go, that we may die with him” (John 11:16). And John’s gospel shows Thomas moving from doubt to deep faith. Thomas makes one of the strongest confessions of faith in the New Testament, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28). From this confession of faith, ancient stories tell of Thomas’s missionary work to India, where Christian communities were flourishing a thousand years before the arrival of sixteenth-century missionaries. The feast of St. Thomas is observed on various dates, and a long tradition in the West placed it on December 21. In 1969, however, the Roman Catholic calendar moved it to July 3 in agreement with the Syrian Church. *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* follows this ecumenical trend.

July 6

Jan Hus, martyr, died 1415

Jan Hus was a Bohemian priest who spoke against abuses in the church of his day in many of the same ways Luther would a century later. He spoke against the withholding of the cup at the eucharist and because of this stance was excommunicated, not for heresy but for insubordination toward his archbishop. He preached against the selling of indulgences and was particularly mortified by the indulgence trade of two rival claimants to the papacy who were raising money for war against each other. He was found guilty of heresy by the Council of Constance and burned at the stake. The followers of Jan Hus became known as the Czech Brethren and eventually continued as the Moravian Church.

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

This week we pray for the churches and people of **Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda.**

We are **thankful** for:

- how the churches in Sudan and in South Sudan, as well as Ecumenical Network Sudan, have consistently pursued peace processes, healing and reconciliation in these war-ravaged countries
- those who work to bring justice for the victims of genocide and war crimes, including the International Criminal Court
- the many who carry out humanitarian work in these countries and who settle those who are displaced
- the economic progress and peacebuilding that has occurred in Uganda, and for effective measures to curb the spread of HIV and AIDS.

We **pray** for:

- a cessation of ethnic animosities and violence, and increased understanding between ethnic and religious groups
- an end to the rape and practices of genital mutilation of girls and women
- governments to respect the will and best interests of their people and the human rights of all natural resources to be preserved and the land saved from further desertification.

Stewardship Snippet

Matthew 10:40 – “Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.”

How do you welcome people in the name of Jesus? It clearly involves treating them with respect, courtesy, and dignity as you get to know them. These are the very marks of civility and hospitality that helps people understand the love of God.

A Welcome Promise

Earlier in the chapter from which today's gospel comes, Jesus gave his first twelve disciples instructions and advice before he sent them out to minister, teach, and preach (Matthew 10:1-8). We too are called to proclaim good news wherever we go, and like those first twelve, we may wonder why anyone should be interested in what we have to offer. We're not sure that we are good enough with words to persuade anyone. We're not sure that we are good enough with tools to be helpful with practical tasks. We're not sure that we have the financial resources to change lives with charitable giving. Often, we're not sure that we are brave enough to even try.

It's a good thing Jesus never sends us out alone. He always comes with us! That's why he can say that anyone who welcomes us welcomes him. What a wonderful gift to be able to bring to the people we meet: the opportunity to meet Jesus himself!

Sometimes Jesus sends us to faraway places. Sometimes he sends us deeper into our own communities. Sometimes he sends us to welcome others, and sometimes he sends us to be welcomed by others.

In all of those times, and in all of those places, Jesus has this reminder for us: "Whoever welcomes you welcomes me" (Matt. 10:40). We can depend on that because we can depend on him. Jesus is with us when we experience amazing hospitality and when we feel like we are all alone. Jesus is with us whether we are brave or timid. Jesus is there for the people we meet along the way, and Jesus is here for us. The promise is as certain as the waters of baptism, as real as the taste of bread and wine.

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