

# *Eighth Sunday after Pentecost*

## *Sunday, July 23, 2023*

St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
215 N. Warren St.  
Orwigsburg, PA  
570-366-2316  
[www.stpauls-orwigsburg.org](http://www.stpauls-orwigsburg.org)

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### GATHERING

**PRELUDE**

“Largo”

G. F. Handel

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

We gather in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit,  
**Amen.**

If we say we have no sins, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us - from all unrighteousness.

*Silence for reflection and self-examination.*

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.**  
**Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake God forgives you all your sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ he gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

**GATHERING HYMN**

“Come, Ye Thankful People, Come”  
[See back of bulletin]

## **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.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit, nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## **WORD**

### **A READING FROM ISAIAH**

<sup>6</sup>Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel,  
and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:

I am the first and I am the last;  
besides me there is no god.

<sup>7</sup>Who is like me? Let them proclaim it,  
let them declare and set it forth before me.

Who has announced from of old the things to come?  
Let them tell us what is yet to be.

<sup>8</sup>Do not fear, or be afraid;  
have I not told you from of old and declared it?  
You are my witnesses!

Is there any god besides me?  
There is no other rock; I know not one.

(Isaiah 44:6-8)

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **PSALM 86:11-17 (Read responsively)**

<sup>11</sup>Teach me your way, O LORD,  
that I may walk in your truth;  
give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

<sup>12</sup>**I give thanks to you, O LORD my God, with my whole heart,  
and I will glorify your name forever.**

<sup>13</sup>For great is your steadfast love toward me;  
you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

**<sup>14</sup>O God, the insolent rise up against me;  
a band of ruffians seeks my life,  
and they do not set you before them.**

<sup>15</sup>But you, O LORD, are a God merciful and gracious,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

**<sup>16</sup>Turn to me and be gracious to me;  
give your strength to your servant;  
save the child of your serving girl.**

<sup>17</sup>Show me a sign of your favor,  
so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame,  
because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

### **A READING FROM ROMANS**

<sup>12</sup>So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—<sup>13</sup>for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.<sup>14</sup>For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. <sup>15</sup>For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” <sup>16</sup>it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup>and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

<sup>18</sup>I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup>For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; <sup>20</sup>for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup>We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; <sup>23</sup>and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup>For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? <sup>25</sup>But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

(Romans 8:12-25)

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Congregation:*

Al-le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we  
go? You have the words of e - ter - nal  
life. Al - le - lu - ia! *Optional Repeat*

## GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>24</sup>[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field;<sup>25</sup>but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away.

<sup>26</sup>So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well.

<sup>27</sup>And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ <sup>28</sup>He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ <sup>29</sup>But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. <sup>30</sup>Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ ”

<sup>36</sup>Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” <sup>37</sup>He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; <sup>38</sup>the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, <sup>39</sup>and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. <sup>40</sup>Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. <sup>41</sup>The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, <sup>42</sup>and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup>Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

(Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43)

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## SERMON

**HYMN OF THE DAY**      “We Plow the Fields and Scatter”  
[See back of bulletin]

## THE APOSTLES' CREED (In Unison)

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
and born of the virgin Mary,  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
On the third day he rose again;  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again 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

Confident that God receives our joys and concerns, let us offer our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

God of harvest, help your church to be both diligent and patient, full of resolve and gentleness, that our witness may be faithful to your intentions. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of all space and time, renew the earth, sky, and sea, so that all your creation experiences life even as it encounters death. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the nations, mend all our relationships which are torn apart by our pride and foolishness. Guide us by your mercy, grace, and steadfast love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of hope, open our hearts to those who feel lonely, abandoned, fearful, or trapped by despair. We especially pray for the people of Sudan and Ukraine and everyone on our prayer list. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the four seasons, give us opportunities for rest, refreshment, and renewal. We pray for everyone who risks his life and safety to serve others. We also pray for everyone who is far from home. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of life, we remember with thanksgiving your saints of all times and places. Keep us steadfast in our faith and gather us with them on the day of salvation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

(The Pastor concludes): Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, in the name of the one who reconciled all creation to himself, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

## PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

## OFFERING

### OFFERTORY


"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

Marianne Close, Krista Harding, Justin McClure, Greg Sklar

### OFFERTORY HYMN

"As Grains of Wheat"

*Refrain*



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were  
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread; so may all your peo-ple from  
all the ends of earth be gath-ered in - to one in you.

The image shows three staves of musical notation in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The first staff is labeled 'Refrain' and contains the melody for the first line of lyrics. The second and third staves continue the melody for the second and third lines of lyrics respectively. The lyrics are: 'As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread; so may all your peo-ple from all the ends of earth be gath-ered in - to one in you.'

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

Blessed are you,

**O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## MEAL

### THE 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 him thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; 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 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 are you, God of pow - er and  
might; heav - en and earth are filled with your  
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
Bless - ed is the one who comes in your name. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

## **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth.

In mercy for our fallen world, you gave your only Son,  
that all those who believe in him should not perish,  
but have eternal life.

We give thanks to you for the salvation you have prepared for us  
through Jesus Christ.

Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts,  
that we may receive our Lord with a living faith  
as he comes to us in his holy supper.

**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

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 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.

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER (In Unison)**

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.

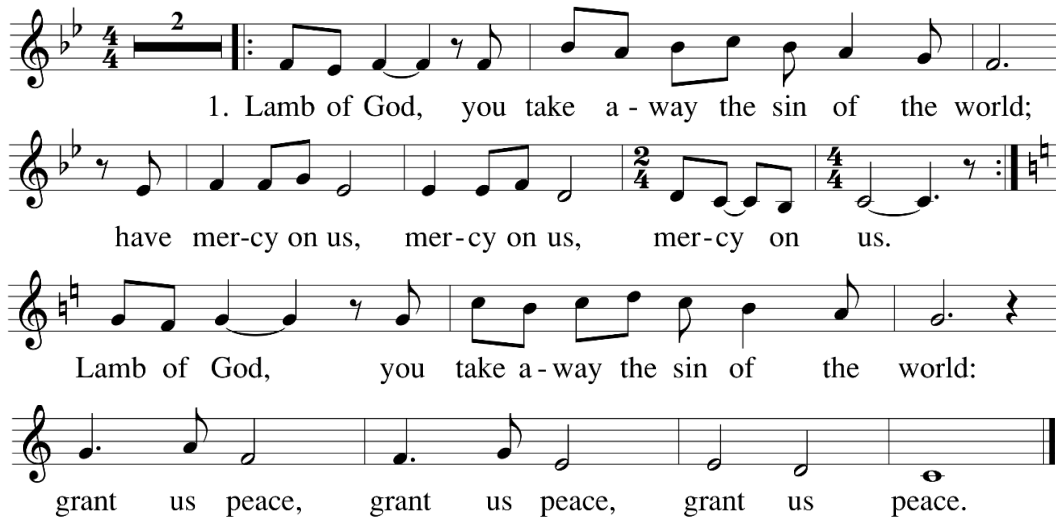
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.



## **INSTRUCTIONS**

All who are baptized and seek forgiveness of their sins and the promise of eternal life in Jesus Christ are welcome to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion by intinction. Communicants may dip a wafer of bread (the Body of Christ) into a chalice of wine (the Blood of Christ) before consuming it. If you or your child would like to receive a blessing rather than the Sacrament, please come forward and say, "A blessing," or cross your arms over your chest. Those who are unable to come forward should indicate that they wish to receive the Sacrament and they will receive it as they sit in their pew.

## **AGNUS DEI**



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

## **COMMUNION HYMN** "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" [See back of bulletin]

## **TABLE BLESSING**

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

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Pour out upon us the spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of those whom you have fed with one heavenly food; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **SENDING**

## **BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN**      “On What Has Now Been Sown”  
[See back of bulletin]

**THE DISMISSAL**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

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**Introduction to the Day:** It is an age-old question: why is there evil in the world? In the parable of the wheat and the weeds Jesus suggests that both grow together until the harvest. With Paul, we long for the day that all creation will be set free from bondage and suffering. Having both weeds and wheat within us, we humbly place our hope in the promises of God, and from the Lord’s table we go forth to bear the fruit of justice and mercy.

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**Altar flowers** are presented in honor of Jeff’s birthday and anniversary of Josephine’s baptism by Jeff and Cindy Ritschel.

**Bulletins** are presented in memory of Debbie Moyer by her mother and family.

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**SERVING THIS SUNDAY (7/23/23)**

**9:30 AM**

GREETER: Wayne Lutsey; USHER: Cindy Ritschel; LECTOR: Bill Smoot

COMMUNION ASSISTANT: Becky Smoot

ALTAR GUILD: Sue Schenck and Barb Sterner

COUNTERS: Connie Teter, Joanne Emerich, Barb Sterner

**SERVING NEXT SUNDAY (7/30/23)**

**9:30 AM**

GREETER: Wayne Lutsey; USHER: Gwen Wehr; LECTOR: Tom Wehr

COMMUNION ASSISTANT: Kay Weidensaul

ALTAR GUILD: Glenda Bright, Diane Brobst

COUNTERS: Connie Teter, Barb Sterner, Glenda Bright

## THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S

Sunday, July 23	9:30 AM	Worship with Holy Communion
Friday, July 28	10:00 AM	STiC SRT Walk in Auburn
Saturday, July 29	5:30 PM	Worship
Sunday, July 30	9:30 AM	Worship with Holy Communion

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### **LOOKING FOR A CHURCH HOME?**

Please worship with us again. Take a copy of our monthly newsletter. Check out our webpage. Visit us on Facebook. Watch our weekly video on YouTube. And get to know us better! We are a Lutheran congregation with a rich tradition, but we are not old-fashioned. Everyone is invited to worship and work together here -- to the glory of God!

### **WELCA TRIENNIAL CONVENTION**

Attention all women of St. Paul's: An exciting opportunity is available to you. The WELCA Triennial Convention is meeting in Phoenix, AZ, on September 21-24, 2023, and you can attend! Most of the costs for this event will be underwritten and we hope two women from our congregation will be able to attend.

Watch for additional details regarding registration, etc., in our church bulletin, and check the WELCA.org website for more information about the Triennial.

You may also indicate your interest to any member of WELCA.

### **WALKING TO BETHLEHEM**

Help us achieve the equivalent number of miles as if we walked right across the ocean to Bethlehem! St. John's, Salem, and St. Paul's are joining forces to make this happen this summer. "Walking Diaries" are available in the Gathering Room at our small display. Please bring your walking diary with you when you come to worship so that we can calculate our congregation's progress towards the final goal.

Our next event is Saturday, August 12 – Sweet Arrow Lake – Meet next to the pavilion at the Club House. Enjoy a morning of sensory interactions with nature. You will never experience a nature walk the same way again.

Want more information?

Please contact our coordinator, Sue Reier.

## **TIME & TALENT SURVEY**

Our 2023 Time and Talent Survey is again included in this month's newsletter.

Please complete a survey for each member in your household aged 16 and above. The information you provide will not only assist us now but will be helpful as we move forward in faith.

Place completed surveys in the offering plate, drop them off at the church office, or mail them to us: St. Paul's Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 156, Orwigsburg, PA 17961, Attn: T&T Survey, as soon as you have completed them. Thank you!

### **“JUMP FOR JOY” CONCERT ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 6 AT 7 P.M.**

Not only will we have some very fine musicians at our first benefit concert for Red Creek Wildlife, but our guest of honor, Peggy Hentz, will be giving us a presentation and bringing along one of her owl friends!

We are asking for free will donations and offering some door prizes, as well. Many thanks to WELCA for hosting the reception to follow, and you know that means something delicious! See you there and bring a friend!

Sue & the STiC team

### **“GOD’S WORK. OUR HANDS.”**

This year's “God's Work. Our Hands.” project will support “Servants to All – My Father's house” located in Pottsville, PA. “Servants to All” is a faith-based program and homeless services provider that offers emergency shelter, homeless prevention, street outreach, case management, and supportive services to those in need in Schuylkill and the surrounding counties.

Donations requested include:

Hygiene Items - tampons/feminine pads, toothbrushes and toothpastes, deodorant, soap, wet wipes, disposable razors, lotions, and bath towels and washcloths (new or almost new).

Bedding - Bed linens (twin or full-sized sheet sets), blankets, pillows, and pillowcases (new or almost new).

Cleaning Items - All-purpose cleaners, laundry detergents, disinfectants, hand sanitizers, mops, brooms, and buckets.

A box has been placed in the narthex for donations.

We will collect items through August 31, 2023. “God's Work. Our Hands,” Sunday is set for September 10, 2023.

# GATHERING HYMN

## “Come Ye Thankful People, Come”

1 Come, ye thank-ful peo - ple, come; raise the song of har - vest home.  
 2 All the world is God's own field, fruit un - to his praise to yield;  
 3 For the Lord our God shall come and shall take his har - vest home;  
 4 E - ven so, Lord, quick - ly come to thy fi - nal har - vest home.

All be safe - ly gath - ered in ere the win - ter storms be - gin.  
 wheat and tares to - geth - er sown, un - to joy or sor - row grown.  
 from his field shall in that day all of - fens - es purge a - way;  
 Gath - er then thy peo - ple in, free from sor - row, free from sin,

God, our mak - er, doth pro - vide for our wants to be sup - plied.  
 First the blade, and then the ear, then the full corn shall ap - pear.  
 give his an - gels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast,  
 there, for - ev - er pu - ri - fied, in thy gar - ner to a - bide.

Come to God's own tem - ple, come, raise the song of har - vest home.  
 Lord of har - vest, grant that we whole - some grain and pure may be.  
 but the fruit - ful ears to store in his gar - ner ev - er - more.  
 Come, with all thine an - gels, come, raise the glo - rious har - vest home!

# HYMN OF THE DAY “We Plow the Fields and Scatter”

1 We plow the fields and scat - ter the good seed on the land,  
2 You on - ly are the mak - er of all things near and far.  
3 We thank you, our cre - a - tor, for all things bright and good,

but it is fed and wa - tered by God's al - might - y hand,  
You paint the way - side flow - er, you light the eve - ning star.  
the seed - time and the har - vest, our life, our health, our food.

who sends the snow in win - ter, the warmth to swell the grain,  
The winds and waves o - bey you, by you the birds are fed;  
No gifts have we to of - fer for all your love im - parts,

the breez - es and the sun - shine, and soft re - fresh - ing rain.  
much more to us, your chil - dren, you give our dai - ly bread.  
but what you most would trea - sure—our hum - ble, thank - ful hearts.

*Refrain*  
All good gifts a - round us are sent from heav'n a - bove.

We thank you, Lord, we thank you, Lord, for all your love.

# COMMUNION HYMN "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heav'n, to  
 2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - 'ry  
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy  
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, pure and spot - less

earth come down! Fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy  
 trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us  
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -  
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -

faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,  
 find thy prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;  
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,  
 ly re - stored in thee! Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,

pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with  
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as  
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee  
 till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our

thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.  
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.  
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.  
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!

# SENDING HYMN "On What Has Now Been Sown"

1 On what has now been sown your bless - ing Lord, be - stow; the  
2 To you our wants are known, from you are all our pow'rs; ac -  
3 Oh, grant that each of us, now met be - fore you here, may

pow'r is yours a - lone to make it sprout and grow. O Lord, in  
cept what is your own and par-don what is ours. Our prais - es,  
meet to - geth - er thus when you and yours ap - pear, and fol - low

grace the har - vest raise, and yours a - lone shall be the praise!  
Lord, and prayers re - ceive and to your word a bless - ing give.  
you to heav'n, our home. E'en so, A - men! Lord Je - sus, come!

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