

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, July 30, 2023

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
215 N. Warren St.
Orwigsburg, PA
570-366-2316
www.stpauls-orwigsburg.org

GATHERING

PRELUDE

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 “Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty”
[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

Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit, help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith, hope, and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

WORD

A READING FROM FIRST KINGS

⁵At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, “Ask what I should give you.” ⁶And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today.

⁷And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in.

⁸And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?”

¹⁰It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹²I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.”

(1 Kings 3:5-12)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 119:129-136 (Read responsively)

¹²⁹Your decrees are wonderful;
therefore my soul keeps them.

¹³⁰**The unfolding of your words gives light;
it imparts understanding to the simple.**

¹³¹With open mouth I pant,
because I long for your commandments.

**¹³²Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as is your custom toward those who love your name.**

¹³³Keep my steps steady according to your promise,
and never let iniquity have dominion over me.

**¹³⁴Redeem me from human oppression,
that I may keep your precepts.**

¹³⁵Make your face shine upon your servant,
and teach me your statutes.

**¹³⁶My eyes shed streams of tears
because your law is not kept.**

A READING FROM ROMANS

²⁶The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Romans 8:26-39)

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.

³¹[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

³³He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵²And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

(Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52)

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY “Children of the Heavenly Father”

[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.

Merciful God, your reign is revealed to us in simple things. Help your church share the surprising yet simple ways you reveal your kingdom in daily life. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Teach us to better appreciate and stand in awe of your creation, that we might treasure what you have given us and take better care of it. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Gather all nations into the welcoming shade of your eternal reign. Direct all leaders to build trust with each other and walk in the way of peace. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Show us how to pray with confidence. Give comfort to the dying, refuge to the weary, justice to those who are oppressed, and healing to the sick and the suffering. We especially pray for everyone on our prayer list. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Help this congregation to ask boldly for what is most needed. Keep our minds from every foolish distraction. Give us new dreams and a fresh vision of the future. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Strengthen us in faith by the witness of saints in all times and places. Embolden our witness now and one day gather us with all your saints in light. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

(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

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.

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.

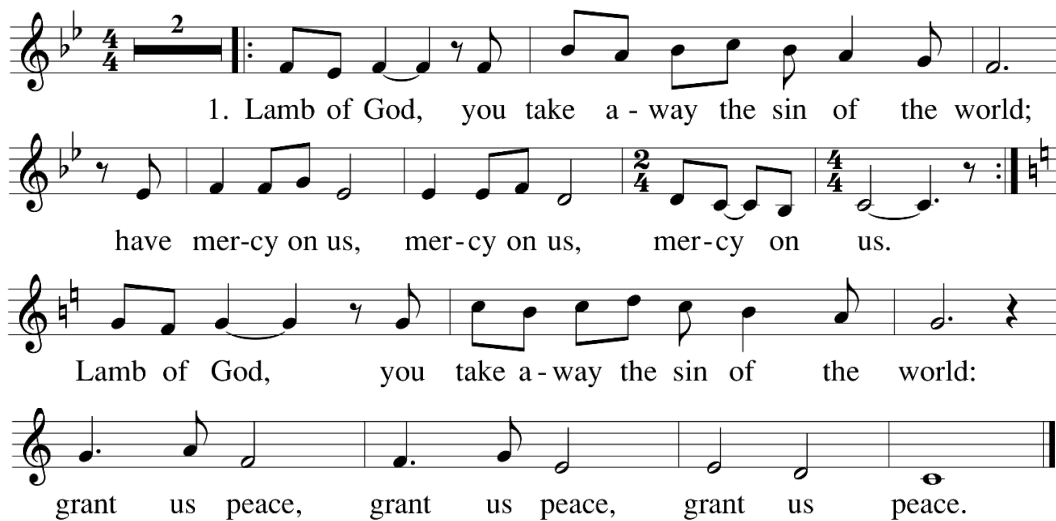
INSTRUCTIONS

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. After you have received the Sacrament, you may choose to briefly stand at the chancel rail before returning to your seat.

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 "Be Thou My Vision" [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 “God of Grace and God of Glory”
[See back of bulletin]

THE DISMISSAL

Go now in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Our Liturgy and Music are used by permission through Augsburg Fortress License #20611.

Introduction to the Day: As Solomon prays for wisdom, we also seek to deeply know the treasures of faith. In today’s gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God’s reign, the great surprise is that God’s grace finds us first!

Altar flowers are presented in honor of Samantha Kristina Clarke on her birthday (July 31).

Chancel flowers are presented in memory of Duke’s and my wedding on 31 July 1980 by Sue Schenck.

SERVING THIS SUNDAY (7/30/23)

9:30 AM

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

COMMUNION ASSISTANT: Kay Weidensaul

ALTAR GUILD: Glenda Bright and Madelyn Knecht

COUNTERS: Connie Teter, Barb Sterner, and Glenda Bright

SERVING NEXT SUNDAY (8/06/23)

9:30 AM

GREETER: Wayne Lutsey; USHER: Karen Travor; LECTOR: Doug Travor

COMMUNION ASSISTANT: Pat Kunkle

ALTAR GUILD: Glenda Bright and Madelyn Knecht

COUNTERS: Tom Wehr, Gwen Wehr, and Glenda Bright

REQUEST FOR DONATIONS

St. Paul's WELCA is hosting the table for the “Jump for Joy” concert. We are asking for donations of light refreshments for this event. If you are able, please add your name and item to the list at the gathering room table.

THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S

Sunday, July 30	9:30 AM	Worship with Holy Communion
Tuesday, August 1	6:30 PM	Evangelism
Thursday, August 3	1-3 PM.	Crafters' Guild
Friday, August 4	10:00 AM	STiC SRT Walk in Tumbling Run
Saturday, August 5	5:30 PM	Worship with Holy Communion
Sunday, August 6	9:30 AM	Worship with Holy Communion
	7:00 PM	"Jump for Joy" Benefit Concert

TIME & TALENT SURVEY

Our 2023 Time and Talent Survey was included in this month's newsletter. Additional copies are available in the narthex.

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!

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 diary with you when you come to worship so that we can calculate our congregation's progress towards the final goal.

Our next special event is from 10 a.m. to 12 noon on Saturday, August 12 at Sweet Arrow Lake. We will 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. This is a "rain or shine" event. Come on out, everyone!

Your coordinator, Sue Reier

W&M MEETING RESCHEDULED

The upcoming Worship and Music meeting scheduled for Monday, August 7 at 6:30 p.m., has been rescheduled for Monday, August 21 at 6:30 p.m.

“JUMP FOR JOY” CONCERT - 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

OUR ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC

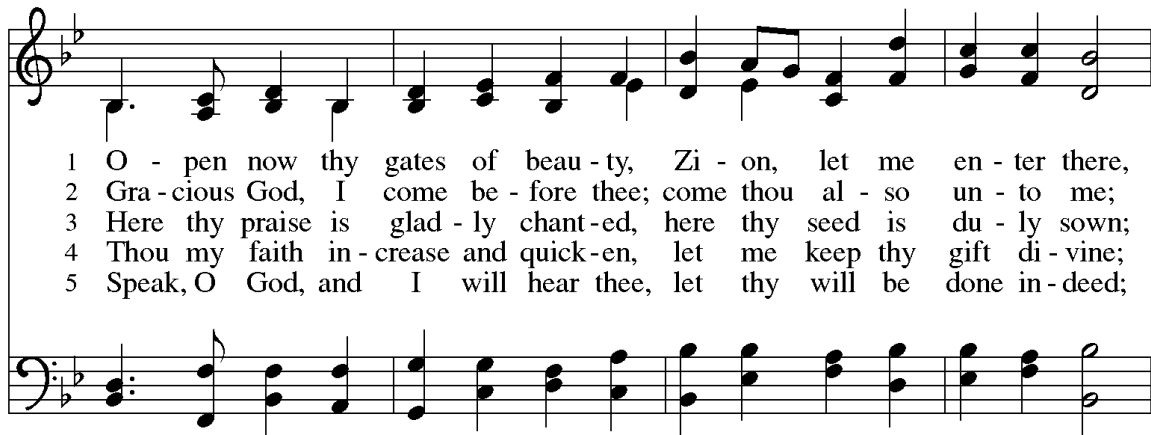
Following our 10:30 a.m. service at the church on Sunday, September 24, we will hold our annual Church Picnic at Albright’s Woods Pavilion. Please mark your calendars!

SOCIAL MEDIA MINISTRY

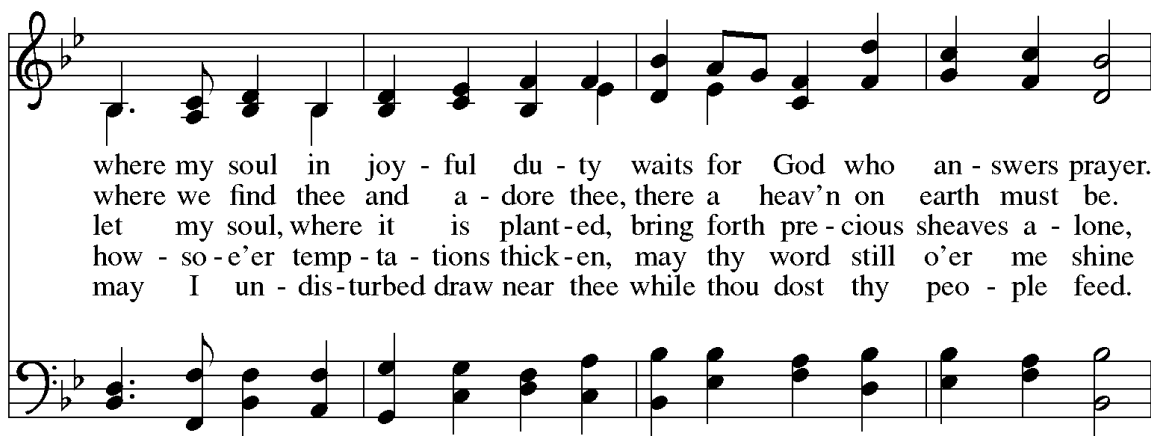
The “Blessing of the Backpacks” will be held on Sunday, August 27, 2023, at 9:30 a.m. Teachers, students, and school staff are welcome! Please bring bookbags, devices, etc. to be blessed in hope of a wonderful 2023-24 academic year!

Reverend Michael T. Petresky	570-366-2316 - Ext 11	pastormike@stpauls-orwigsburg.org
Justin McClure, Organist/Choir Director	570-573-4076	justin@stpauls-orwigsburg.org
Amy Dewald, Office Support Staff	570-366-2316	office@stpauls-orwigsburg.org
Carl Heintzelman, Sexton	484-408-5152	
Karen Travor, Treasurer	570-366-8757	karen@stpauls-orwigsburg.org
Wayne Lutsey, Financial Secretary	570-617-9617	cwlutsey@gmail.com
Jessica Swick, Social Media Manager	936-648-6809	jessica@stpauls-orwigsburg.org

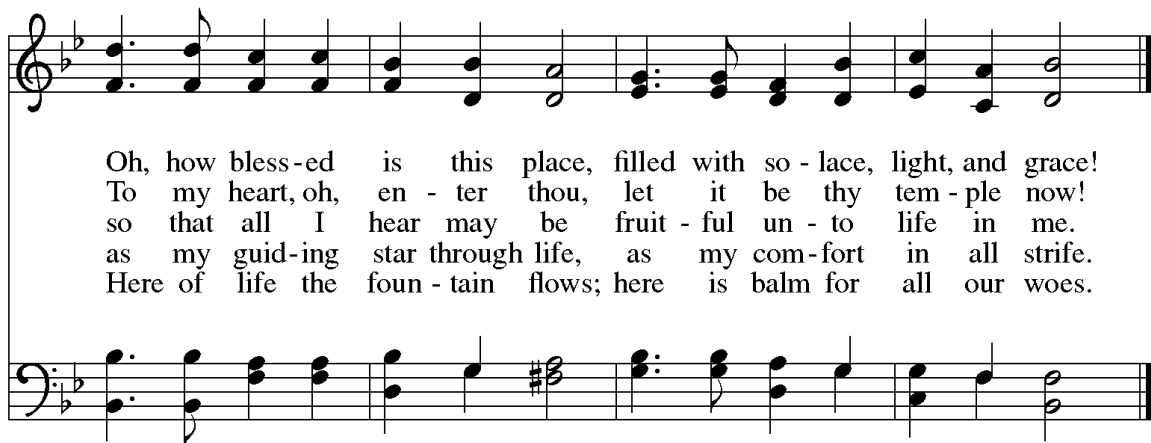
GATHERING HYMN “Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty”



1 O - pen now thy gates of beau - ty, Zi - on, let me en - ter there,
2 Gra - cious God, I come be - fore thee; come thou al - so un - to me;
3 Here thy praise is glad - ly chant - ed, here thy seed is du - ly sown;
4 Thou my faith in - crease and quick - en, let me keep thy gift di - vine;
5 Speak, O God, and I will hear thee, let thy will be done in - deed;



where my soul in joy - ful du - ty waits for God who an - swers prayer.
where we find thee and a - dore thee, there a heav'n on earth must be.
let my soul, where it is plant - ed, bring forth pre - cious sheaves a - lone,
how - so - e'er temp - ta - tions thick - en, may thy word still o'er me shine
may I un - dis - turbed draw near thee while thou dost thy peo - ple feed.

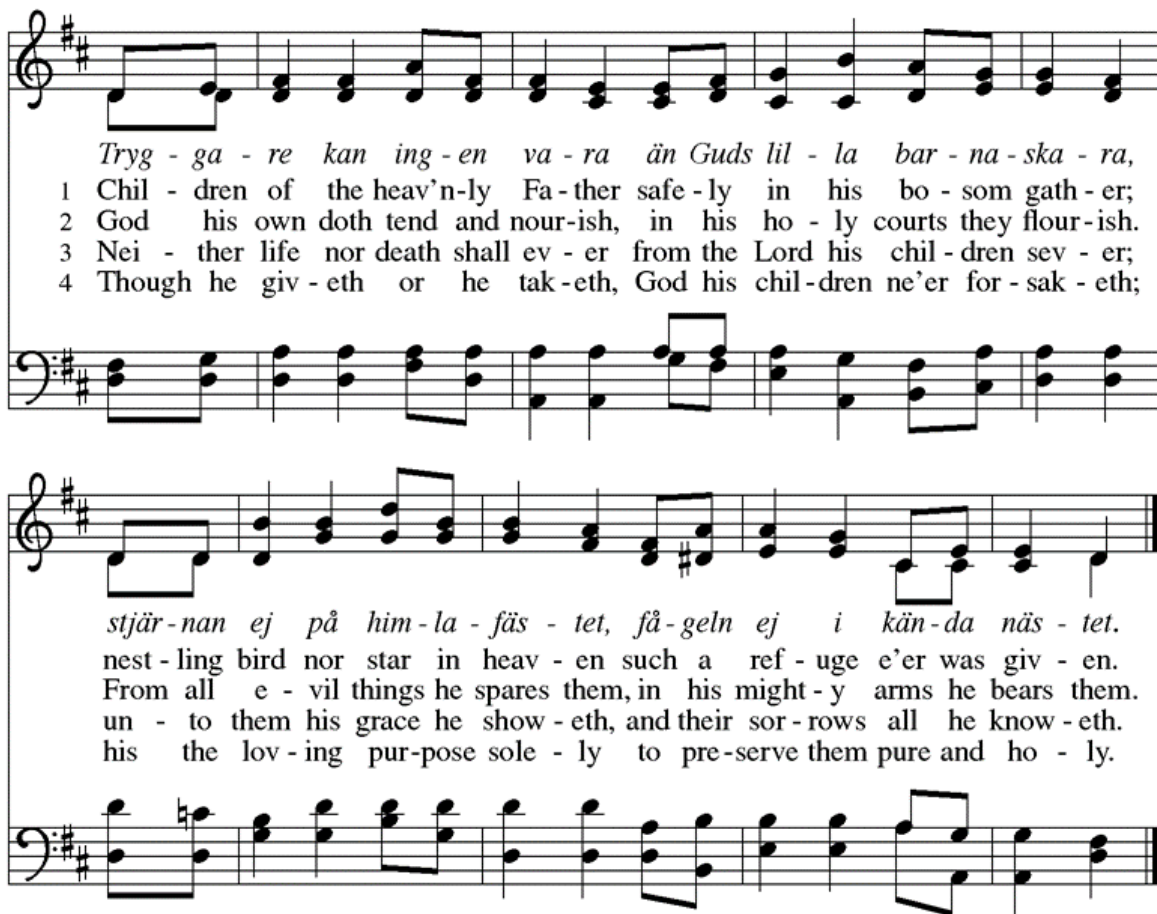


Oh, how bless - ed is this place, filled with so - lace, light, and grace!
To my heart, oh, en - ter thou, let it be thy tem - ple now!
so that all I hear may be fruit - ful un - to life in me.
as my guid - ing star through life, as my com - fort in all strife.
Here of life the foun - tain flows; here is balm for all our woes.

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!

HYMN OF THE DAY “Children of the Heavenly Father”



The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the treble clef staff of each system.

Tryg - ga - re kan ing - en va - ra än Guds lil - la bar - na - ska - ra,
1 Chil - dren of the heav'n-ly Fa - ther safe - ly in his bo - som gath - er;
2 God his own doth tend and nour-ish, in his ho - ly courts they flour-ish.
3 Nei - ther life nor death shall ev - er from the Lord his chil - dren sev - er;
4 Though he giv - eth or he tak - eth, God his chil - dren ne'er for - sak - eth;

stjär - nan ej på him - la - fäs - tet, få - geln ej i kån - da näs - tet.
nest - ling bird nor star in heav - en such a ref - uge e'er was giv - en.
From all e - vil things he spares them, in his might - y arms he bears them.
un - to them his grace he show - eth, and their sor - rows all he know - eth.
his the lov - ing pur - pose sole - ly to pre - serve them pure and ho - ly.

“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).

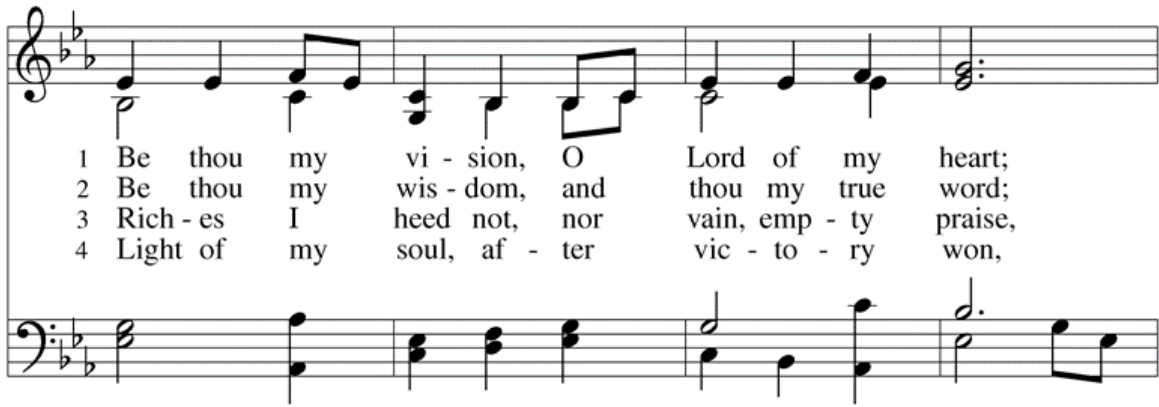
Bedding - Bed linens (twin or full-sized sheet sets), blankets, pillows, and pillowcases (new or almost new).

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.

COMMUNION HYMN

“Be Thou My Vision”



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,



naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!



thou my best thought by day and by night,
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, thou my high tow'r,
 thou, and thou on - ly, first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

SENDING HYMN

“God of Grace and God of Glory”

1 God of grace and God of glo - ry, on your peo - ple
 2 Lo! The hosts of e - vil round us scorn the Christ, as -
 3 Cure your chil - dren's war - ring mad - ness; bend our pride to
 4 Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion to the e - vils

pour your pow'r; crown your an - cient chur - ch's sto - ry;
 sail his ways! From the fears that long have bound us
 your con - trol; shame our wan - ton, self - ish glad - ness,
 we de - plore; let the gift of your sal - va - tion

bring its bud to glo - rious flow'r. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age
 free our hearts to faith and praise. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age
 rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
 be our glo - ry ev - er - more. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,

for the fac - ing of this hour, for the fac - ing of this hour.
 for the liv - ing of these days, for the liv - ing of these days.
 lest we miss your king - dom's goal, lest we miss your king - dom's goal.
 serv - ing you whom we a - dore, serv - ing you whom we a - dore.