

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, July 26, 2026

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church
215 N. Warren St.
Orwigsburg, PA
570-366-2316**

www.stpauls-orwigsburg.org

GATHERING

PRELUDE

“All Nature Sings”

A. Fedak

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”

(#533)

[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

Gracious God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Holy Spirit, give us true wisdom, so that we treasure the life you give 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.

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 3:5-7, 9-12)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 119:129-130, 132-135 (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.**

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

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

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

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.

(Matthew 13:31-33, 44-50)

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY “Children of the Heavenly Father”

(#781)

[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

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church and the needs of the world.

A brief silence.

Merciful God, your kingdom often comes in small and simple ways. Help your church trust the quiet work of your Spirit and share the surprising ways you reveal your reign in daily life. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Creator God, deepen our wonder at the world you have made. Teach us to treasure your gifts in creation and to care for the earth with gratitude and respect. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Ruling God, gather the nations under the shelter of your peace. Guide all leaders to build trust, seek justice, and walk in the ways that lead to life. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Compassionate God, help us pray with confidence in your mercy. Give comfort to the dying, rest to the weary, justice to the oppressed, and healing to the sick and suffering. We pray especially for those on our prayer list. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Faithful God, teach this congregation to simply ask for what we truly need. Keep us from distractions that lead us astray and give us renewed vision for the future you desire. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Holy God, strengthen us through the witness of the saints who treasured your kingdom above all else. Make our witness bold today and bring us at last into the joy of your eternal light. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

(The Pastor concludes): Trusting you receive all our prayers, we commend our spoken and unspoken prayers to you, O God, through Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

“Just As I Am”

C. Berry

OFFERTORY HYMN

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

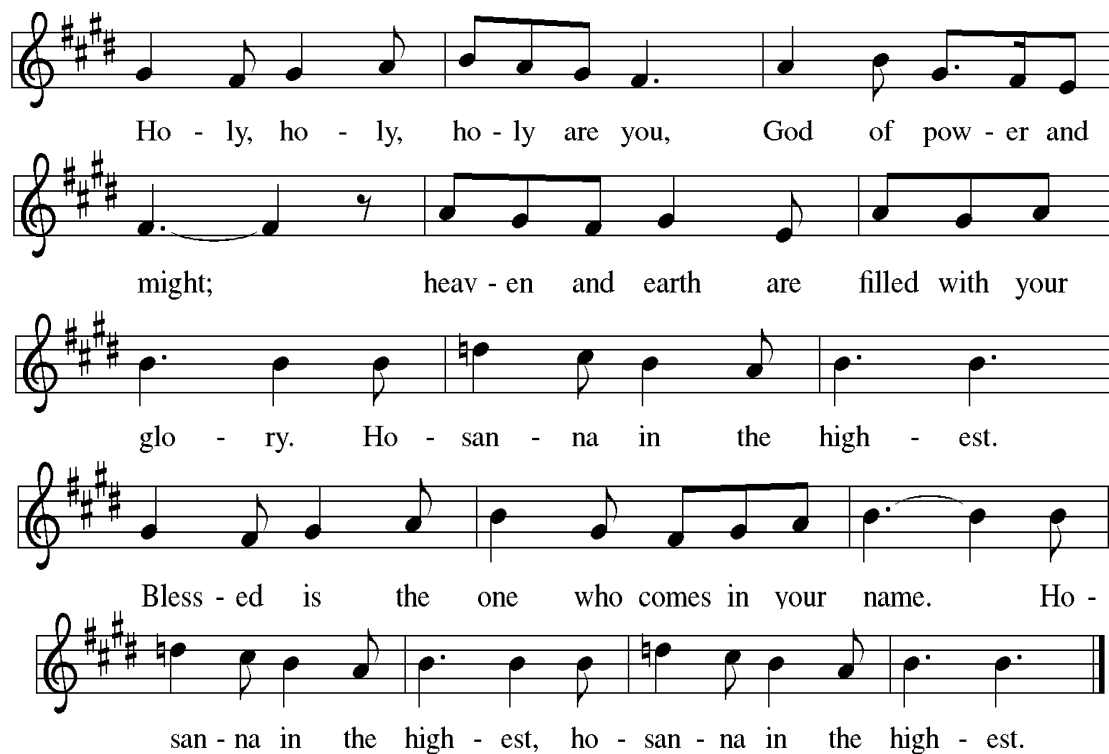
The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The Lord's banquet is ready. All who seek forgiveness and healing are welcome.
Let us taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

INSTRUCTIONS

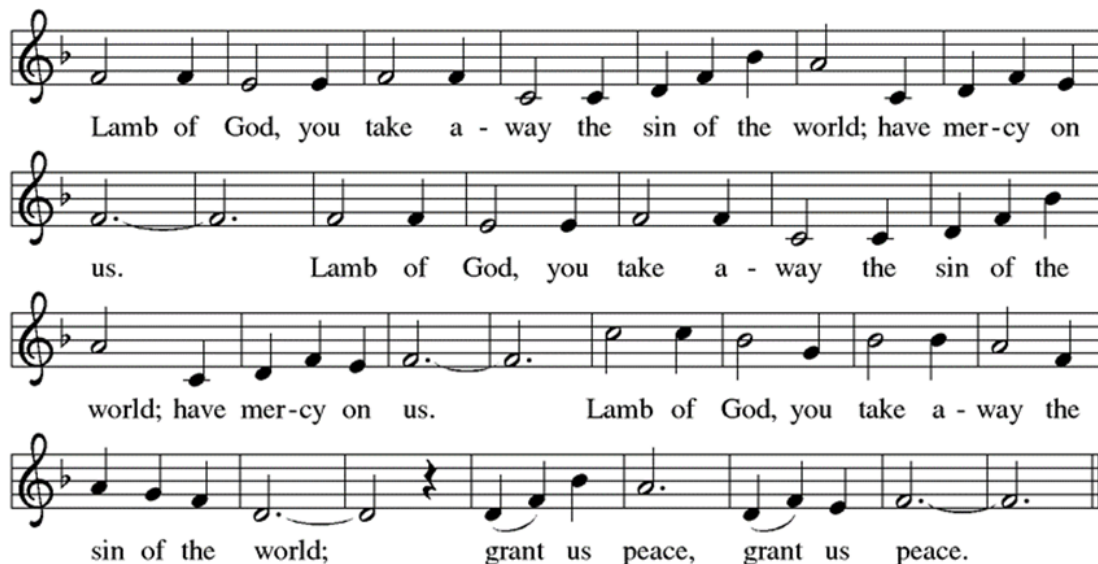
All who are baptized and seek forgiveness of their sins and the promise of eternal life in Jesus Christ are welcome to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion by intinction. You may dip a wafer of bread (the Body of Christ) into a chalice of wine (the Blood of Christ) before consuming it. If you require a gluten free wafer, please request it from the pastor.

If you (or your child) would like to receive a blessing rather than the Sacrament, come forward and say, "A blessing," or cross your arms over your chest.

If you are unable to come forward to receive the Sacrament, please raise your hand.

We will share the Sacrament with those on the pulpit side of the nave followed by those on the lectern side.

AGNUS DEI



COMMUNION HYMN

"Be Thou My Vision"
[See back of bulletin]

(#793)

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

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.**

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.**

The Reverend Robert C. Reier will celebrate the 45th anniversary of his ordination as Minister of Word and Sacrament on August 2. We look forward to congratulating him on his long and faithful ministry on Sunday, August 9, during our 9:30 a.m. service. Please mark your calendar and join us for this celebration.

SERVING THIS SUNDAY (7/26/26)

9:30 AM

GREETER: Chris Long; USHER: TBA; LECTOR: Kristin Durkee

COMMUNION ASSISTANT: Wayne Lutsey

ALTAR GUILD: Barbara Lafko and Amy Dewald

COUNTERS: Connie Teter, Joanne Emerich, and Barb Sterner

SERVING NEXT SUNDAY (8/02/26)

9:30 AM

GREETER: Krista Harding USHER: Glenda Bright; LECTOR: Kristin Durkee

COMMUNION ASSISTANT: Tina Butler

ALTAR GUILD: Barbara Lafko and Amy Dewald

COUNTERS: Gwen Wehr and Glenda Bright

THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S

Sunday, July 26	9:30 AM	Worship with Holy Communion
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Saturday, August 1	5:30 PM	Worship with Holy Communion
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Sunday, August 2	9:30 AM	Worship with Holy Communion
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SUMMER "BOOK DRIVE"

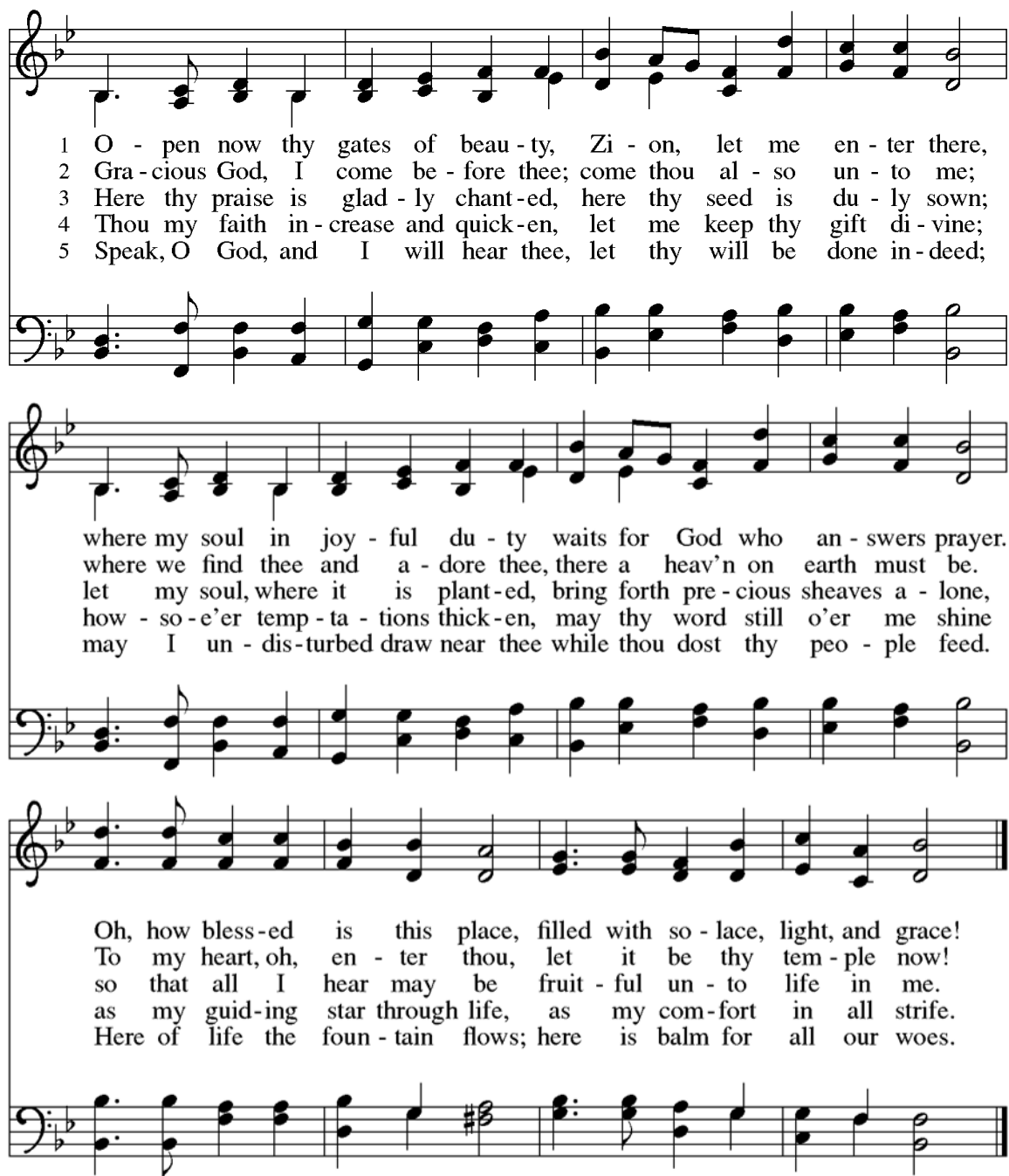
Our Service Ministry committee is seeking donations of new or gently used books for infants, preschool-aged children, and early readers. These books will benefit families served by our Orwigsburg Area Food Pantry. Books can open the minds of children and young people even among families who are facing serious difficulties. This book drive will run from July 1 through August 31 and a box for donations is in the narthex. Please be generous!

LOOKING FOR A CHURCH HOME?

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

We will not "pass the plate" during today's worship service. Our offering plate is in the back of the nave near the center aisle. If you would like to give an offering, please do so before the service has begun or after our service is over. Thank you for your continued generosity and kindness.

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.

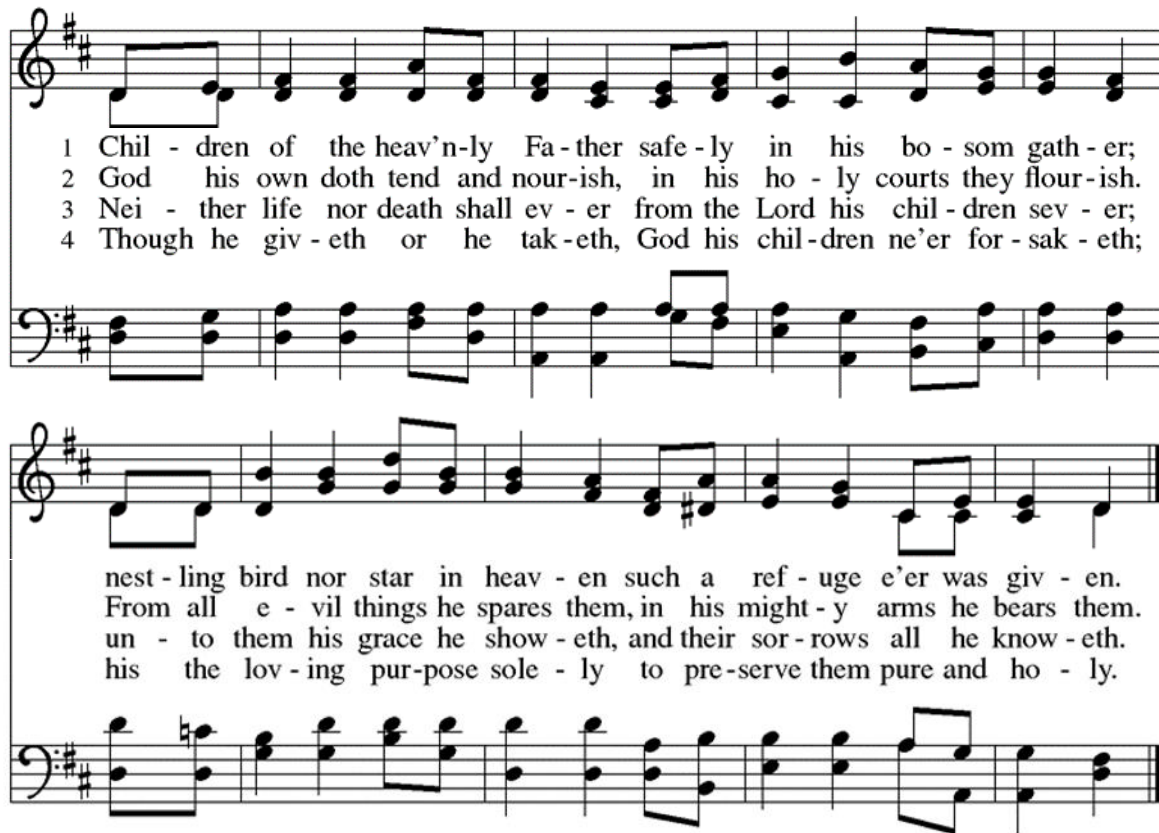
Oh, how bless - ed is this place, filled with so - lace, light, and grace!
To my heart, oh, en - ter thou, let it be thy tem - ple now!
so that all I hear may be fruit - ful un - to life in me.
as my guid - ing star through life, as my com - fort in all strife.
Here of life the foun - tain flows; here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

OUR PASTOR AND STAFF

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	No Email
Karen Travor, Treasurer	610-507-2797	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

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY 9:00 A.M. to 12 NOON.

HYMN OF THE DAY “Children of the Heavenly Father”



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;

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.

GWOH 2026!

Our *God's Work. Our Hands.* project will Servants to All – My Father's House in Pottsville, PA. A donation box will be in the narthex through July 31.

DONATIONS REQUESTED:

- **Hygiene items** — travel-size shampoo, soap, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, feminine hygiene products, wet wipes, disposable razors, lotion, and lip balm.
- **Non-perishable snacks** — granola bars, protein bars, peanut butter crackers, and other individually wrapped items.
- **Monetary gifts** — checks may be made payable to St. Paul's with "GWOH 26" on the memo line.

The following items must be new, unused, and (if packaged) in their original packaging:

- **Socks and undergarments** for men, women, and children.
- **Towels and washcloths.**
- **Twin-size bed sheets and pillows.**

Please plan to join us for "God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday on August 15!

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.

Please continue supporting our Community Food Pantry by bringing non-perishable food items to church with you. A donation box is in the narthex.

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.

If you are away from home during the summer months, please stop at a Christian church to pray. If you can worship on a Sunday while you are away, we encourage you to do so. Through Jesus Christ, we are one body, one church, and one family, adopted by God, made precious and holy, and joined together in God's love!