

The birds of the air  
make nests in its shade

MARK 4:32



# St. Paul's Lutheran Church

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**WELCOME** Thank you for being with us.

We are a Christian church within the Lutheran tradition (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) and we welcome people of all Christian traditions as well as people of other faiths and people of little or no faith. Christian worship has been offered to God in this congregation for 185 years. By worshipping with us today, you become part of that living tradition.

**Restrooms** are available in the Good Shepherd Room (Springettsbury lobby) and the narthex. Baby changing stations are provided in these restrooms.

**The 10:30 AM Liturgy is live streamed on YouTube.** Search St. Paul's Lutheran Church S. George, York, PA. or use this link to our St. Paul's YouTube home page.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYCfdMzkJo\\_Xvbdkxn2IYIg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYCfdMzkJo_Xvbdkxn2IYIg). You may also view the service at a later time on YouTube. Please be aware that conversations may be audible to those viewing from home.

**A Children's Sermon** will be part of the 8:00AM liturgy. Children are asked to gather at the hula-hoops. The hula-hoops work as marking for social distancing. Children may stand or sit inside a hoop.

**We are not relaxing our guidelines at this time. Procedures at St. Paul's are currently being reviewed by our Covid Task Force and by Church Council. Please remain diligent.**

## **Guidelines for Worship during the time of COVID-19**

### **Entering and Leaving the Church:**

*Face masks are required inside,*

*Please take your service bulletin with you and dispose of it properly.*

### **Offerings:**

*Monetary offerings may be placed in the basins provided at the entrances to the nave prior to the service or immediately following the service. You may also donate via our website at*

*[www.stpaulsyork.org](http://www.stpaulsyork.org)*

### **While in the Nave:**

***Please wear your mask.** Please sit in designated pews only. You may sit together as a family. We ask that you practice social distancing from one family to the next within the pew. Occasionally an usher may seat a guest in the red zone.*

### **Communion Procedure:**

- Ushers will direct you. The pulpit side (left) of the nave communes first followed by the font side (right).*
- Wearing your face mask, come to the chancel step taking your place at one of the five positions marked on the chancel floor with a green cross.*
- Your entire household may gather at a position marked by the green cross.*
- Extend your arms and cup your hands together to receive the host.*
- Once the minister has moved to the next group, then remove your mask, receive the host, replace your mask and return to your pew by the closest side aisle. There is no need to hurry.*
- We are receiving communion in one kind only (bread/host).*

Our COVID-19 task force is assisting us as we remain open. Please thank Dr. Jessica Ericson, Sheridan Palmer, Deacon Harold Sargeant, and Dr. Martha Thomas for their dedication and service.

**Third Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Sunday, June 13, 2021**  
**Holy Communion 10:30 AM**

**PRELUDE**

*Come Risen Lord*

arr. Dale Wood

*Stand turning towards the font.*

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*The assembly stands. The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

In the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Let us pray. Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

If we say we have no sin, 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**

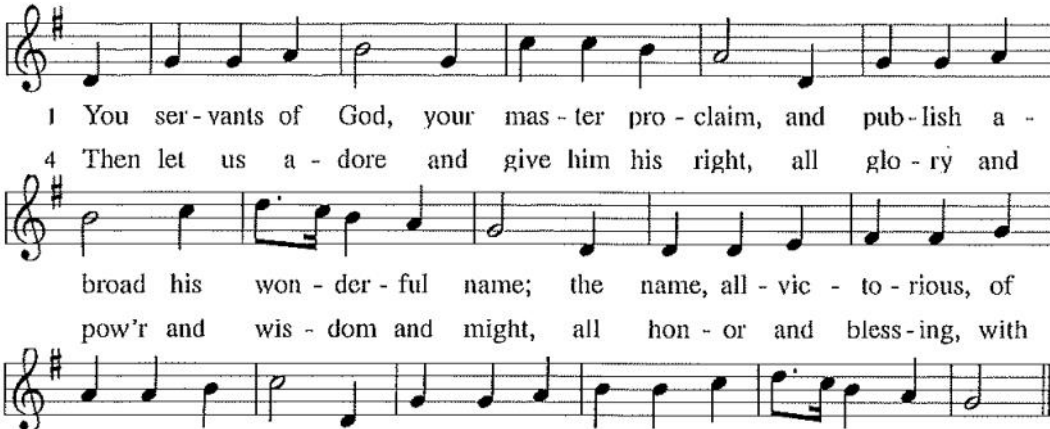
Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen**



## ENTRANCE HYMN

*Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty (LBW 250) Stanzas 1 & 2*

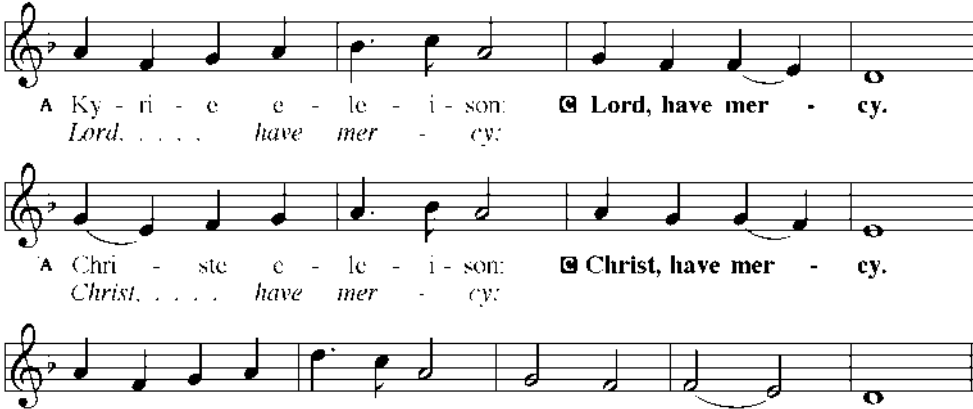


1 You ser-vants of God, your mas-ter pro-claim, and pub-lish a -  
4 Then let us a-dore and give him his right, all glo-ry and  
broad his won-der-ful name; the name, all-vic-to-rious, of  
pow'r and wis-dom and might, all hon-or and bless-ing, with  
Je-sus ex-tol; his king-dom is glo-rious and rules o-ver all!  
an-gels a-bove, and thanks nev-er ceas-ing, and in-fin-ite love!

## APOSTOLIC 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.**

## KYRIE



A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son:    **☩** Lord, have mer - cy.  
Lord, . . . . have mer - cy;  
A Chri - ste e - le - i - son:    **☩** Christ, have mer - cy.  
Christ, . . . . have mer - cy;  
A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son:    **☩** Lord, have mer - cy.  
Lord, . . . . have mer - cy;

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

O God, the strength of those who hope in you: Be present and hear our prayers; and, because in the weakness of our mortal nature we can do nothing good without you, give us the help of your grace, so that in keeping your commandments we may please you in will and deed; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**Sit**

**READING**

Ezekiel 17:22-24

(back cover)

**PSALM**

Psalm 92:1-4, 11-14 *Spoken responsively by half verse.*

- <sup>1</sup> It is a good thing to give thanks | to the LORD,\*  
**and to sing praises to your name, | O Most High;**  
<sup>2</sup> to tell of your lovingkindness early | in the morning\*  
**and of your faithfulness in | the night season;**  
<sup>3</sup> on the psaltery, and | on the lyre,\*  
**and to the melody | of the harp.**  
<sup>4</sup> For you have made me glad by your | acts, O LORD;\*  
**and I shout for joy because of the works | of your hands.**  
<sup>11</sup> The righteous shall flourish | like a palm tree,\*  
**and shall spread abroad like a ce- | dar of Lebanon.**  
<sup>12</sup> Those who are planted in the house | of the LORD\*  
**shall flourish in the courts | of our God;**  
<sup>13</sup> they shall still bear fruit | in old age;\*  
**they shall be | green and succulent;**  
<sup>14</sup> that they may show how up- | right the LORD is,\*  
**my rock, in whom there | is no fault.**

**Stand**

**VERSE**



**Stand**

**HOLY GOSPEL**

John 3:1-17

(back cover)

The Holy Gospel according to **St. John.** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*At the conclusion of the Gospel.*

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sit**

**SERMON**

Pastor Reep

*Stand*

## APOSTLE'S CREED

**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

*Let us pray.*

*A brief silence.*

Holy God, you send us to plant seeds of faith in every nation. Enliven us, so that the good news of your grace may take root and grow throughout the world. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

From the depths of the soil to the highest mountain, renew the face of the earth. Restore growth to places suffering drought. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

We pray for our leaders and those in power. Grant them the ability to regard those under their charge with humility, dedicating their lives in service to others. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

You show compassion to those in need and provide relief to those who call on you. Bless all who suffer, especially people trapped in cycles of poverty and homelessness. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

We give thanks and pray for our church musician(s) (*especially*). We dedicate to you the joyful noise that comes from this place; the cries of children, the melody of voice and instruments, and the songs from our hearts. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Eternal God, we give thanks for our ancestors in the faith who are now at home with you (*especially*). We look forward to that day when we are reunited in your new creation.

Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, trusting in your abiding grace.

**Amen.**

## PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*The ministers and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

## OFFERTORY

*As the pastor prepares the altar the people sing.*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
praise him, all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heav'nly host;  
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

## 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.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## THANKSGIVING

We give you thanks, Father, through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, whom you sent in this end of the ages to save and redeem us and to proclaim to us your will.

He is your Word, inseparable from you. Through him you created all things, and in him you take delight.

He is your Word, sent from heaven to a virgin's womb.

He there took on our nature and our lot and was shown forth as your Son, born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary.

It is he, our Lord Jesus, who fulfilled all your will and won for you a holy people; he stretched out his hands in suffering in order to free from suffering those who trust you.

It is he who, handed over to a death he freely accepted, in order to destroy death, to break the bonds of the evil one, to crush hell underfoot, to give light to the righteous, to establish his covenant, and to show forth the resurrection, taking bread and giving thanks to you, said:

Take and eat; this is my body, broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

In the same way he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This is my blood poured out for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, then, his death and resurrection, we lift this bread and cup before you, giving you thanks that you have made us worthy to stand before you and to serve you as your priestly people.

And we ask you:

Send your Spirit upon these gifts of your Church;  
gather into one all who share this bread and wine;  
fill us with your Holy Spirit to establish our faith in truth,  
that we may praise and glorify you through your Son Jesus Christ.

Through him all glory and honor are yours,  
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,  
in your holy Church both now and forever. Amen.

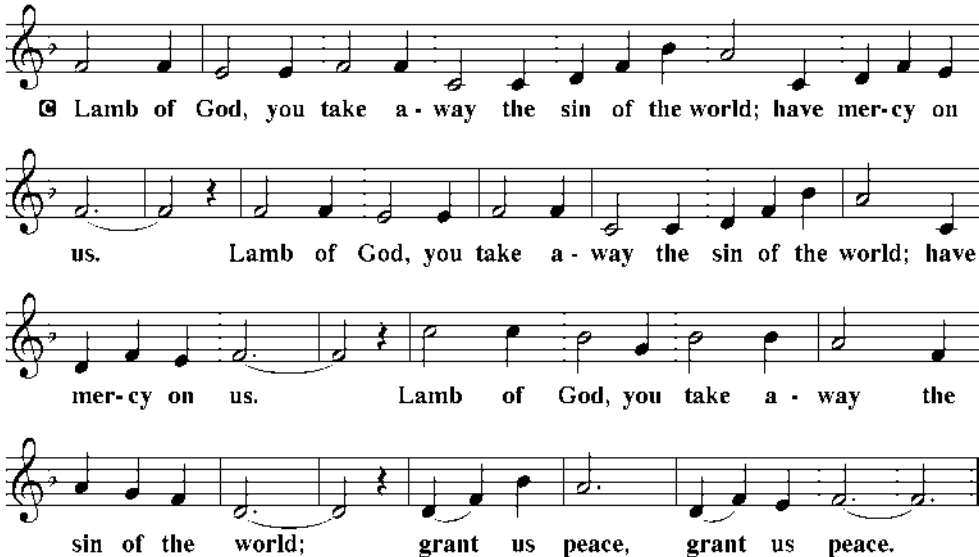
Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray...

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

FRACTION RITE *The bread is broken. A brief silence is kept.*

AGNUS DEI *sung by all*



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

*Sit The pastor cleanses hands and prepares for the distribution of Holy Communion.*

## COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

*Instructions for receiving the sacrament are on the inside front cover of the bulletin.*

*Stand*

## POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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



## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Almighty God, you provide the true bread from heaven, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant that we who have received the Sacrament of his body and blood may abide in him and he in us, that we may be filled with the power of his endless life, now and forever. **Amen**

## BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Bless you now and forever. **Amen**

## HYMN

*Sent Forth by God's Blessing (LBW 221) stanza 1 & 2*

1 Sent forth by God's bless-ing, our true faith con-fess-ing,  
2 With praise and thanks-giv-ing to God ev-er-liv-ing,  
the peo-ple of God from this dwell-ing take leave.  
the tasks of our ev-'ry-day life we will face—  
The sup-er is end-ed. Oh, now be ex-tend-ed  
our faith ev-er shar-ing, in love ev-er car-ing,  
the fruits of this ser-vice in all who be-lieve.  
em-brac-ing God's chil-dren, the whole hu-man race.  
The seed of Christ's teach-ing, re-cep-tive souls  
With your feast you feed us, with your light now  
reach-ing, shall blos-som in ac-tion for God and for all.  
lead us; u-nite us as one in this life that we share.  
Your grace shall in-cite us, your love shall u-nite us  
Then may all the liv-ing with praise and thanks-giv-ing  
to work for your king-dom and an-swer your call.  
give hon-or to Christ and his name that we bear.

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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***Please join in fellowship outside on the South lawn.***

*Please...be respectful of distancing and personal space as you leave.*

*...feel free to gather outside for conversation.*

*...take your service bulletin with you and dispose of it properly.*



Flowers This Week

***The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God  
by Richard and Patsy Griffin;  
and in memory of David Boyer's birthday from his wife, Mim.***

### Altar Flowers

The Springettsbury Hallway bulletin board has the sign-up sheet to sponsor flowers for available dates for the year. Many Sundays are still available! Cost is \$30 per vase.

### St. Paul's Food Pantry – Volunteer Opportunity on Sunday Morning

Thankfully, the St. Paul's Food Pantry has been able to remain open, with modifications, throughout the pandemic. In March 2020, pantry volunteers moved quickly to prepackaging food for clients and meeting them outside with groceries. Our highest numbers were up to 80 families per week. Now we are closer to 40 which is in the high range of pre-pandemic times. Every family receives 3-4 frozen meats, 1-2 dozen eggs, milk, cheese, and often a fresh fruit along with cereal, pastas, soups, canned fruits, beans, and vegetables.

While some volunteers were unable to continue serving, some stepped forward and began serving weekly instead of monthly. At least 8 new volunteers have participated as well. For those wishing to help, but unable to participate due to jobs or school during the week, there is a new volunteer opportunity. Twice a month volunteers work between Sunday services at 9:00 AM to stock the shelves. Contact Patty Snyder if you are willing to help in this ministry.

Pantry volunteers look forward to the time when we can once again safely bring clients into the building to select their own groceries.

### Food Pantry—June

**Items needed:** Pancake mix, 4 pks of toilet paper, canned or boxed potatoes, stuffing mix, jelly, boxed rice. We also need paper grocery bags with handles.

Anyone able to help can contact Teresa Rohrbaugh, Patty Snyder, or Janet and Larry Moore.

Plastic Bags are always needed. Money donations are gratefully accepted. Please place cash or check in a "special" envelope marked "Pantry".

## This Week at St. Paul's June 13—20

Church office open 7:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m. Mon—Thurs, 7:30 a.m.—12 noon Fri

### Sunday, June 13

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist—Outside  
 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist - live streamed.  
 6:30 PM AA meeting Community Rm

### Monday, June 14

6:30 PM Scout Leaders Mtg—ZOOM  
 7:00 PM Boy Scout Meeting— ZOOM

### Tuesday, June 15 Newsletter Deadline

9:30 AM Food Pantry  
 6:30 PM Preschool Mtg. Christ Hall

### Wednesday, June 16

10:30 AM Bible Study—Christ Hall

### Sunday, June 20 Father's Day

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist—Outside  
 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist - live streamed.  
 6:30 PM AA meeting Community Rm

## Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Prayers	Lector	Ushers	AV Team Livestream	Outside Set-up Crew	Altar Set-up Communion Both	Altar Clean-up Communion 10:30AM
6/13	Early Outside	Larry Moore	Melissa Yakim	Ron Riese Tim Yakim		Tom Martin	Kathleen Lemke Janet Moore	
	Late	Bob Reed	Judy McKee	Jerry Briggs Carol Wood- bury	Andrew		Pat Scar- borough	Jerry Briggs Pat Rudacille

**During the Summer months we will not have a Postlude at the 10:30 AM liturgy.  
 After the dismissal we ask that you move directly outside for a time of fellowship under the  
 shade trees (Springettsbury Ave. side).**

Join Lutherans throughout our Lower Susquehanna Synod from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 19, 2021 for our synod Juneteenth Celebration featuring a keynote from Drew Hart the author of ***'Who Will Be a Witness: Igniting Activism for God's Justice, Love, and Deliverance'***. Read more and register by clicking this link or log into the Synod's Website. [Journey Towards Justice - Lower Susquehanna Synod \(lss-elca.org\)](https://www.lss-elca.org) Contact Patty Snyder if you have questions.

### *In our prayers we remember...*

*Martha Spillman, Ron Stiffler, Ann DeMille, Terry Kaczor, Barbara Ruppert, Rick Hock, Tonya Cave, Amy Hollis, Chuck Oelsner, Chas Ebling, Morgan LanzaLotti, Courtney Snell, Jessica Arnold, Dante Fuligini, Alyuson Bucks, Delores Sergeant, Betty Mehrling, Drew Herdson, Kristine Gross, Porter Stacey.*

### STAFF

Pastor  
 Youth Director  
 Organist, Choir Director  
 Bookkeeper  
 Secretary  
 Sexton  
 Preschool Director

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 Deb Becker director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com

*"Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."*

The list of weekend chores is not glamorous. Weekend work is mostly grounded in the daily aspects of life. There are always things more alluring, things that capture your imagination, things more interesting, and certainly things more fun to do during a day or two when not otherwise engaged with the labor of occupation, than weekend chores.

It was Saturday. Any chance of frost was long gone. Last year's vegetable patch needed a good weeding. The surface of the garden already covered in green; sprigs of chard popping up, and spidery octopus like blue green vines greedily stretching as far as possible laying claim to territory atop what had once been fertile soil. The three pronged digger loosened compacted earth. The "vegetable imposters" released their grip; the garden bed turning over in preparation of birthing an eatable assortment of greens.

Lurking amidst and under the unwanted variety of green were tiny marigolds; identifiable by their unique aroma, red tinted stem, feathery growth, and the beginnings of miniscule golden flower heads. Standing slender and tall, stretching for light amid the darkness created by the greed of weeds, there was an entire community of beauty. A new community that sprung up from last year's dried scattered seed heads. We call them volunteers. They are I suppose better thought of as gift; no labor, no use of time waiting to see if seeds would sprout and grow, no trip to a hothouse, no outlay of currency, just tender young shoots needing a bit of care and protection nurturing them on their way.

Quickly to the garage fetching shallow egg carton like trays, filling them with potting soil, the marigold community was rescued, relocated to fertile ground where adequate root development could occur, and in time, the plants returned to garden beds bringing beauty, color, delight. The tiny red tinted feathery green plants with miniscule flower buds will grow into bushy plants producing hundreds of golden flower heads cascading like fountains till the last autumn frost.

A preschool child from next door comes to help.

"What are you doing?" he inquisitively asks.

"Potting up marigolds."

"How do you do that?"

"Gently tease them out from the weeds and carefully place them in the seed tray. Prepare a place for them. Poke your finger in the center to make a little hole in the potting soil, and then lower the marigold gently down into it. Now pull some soil up to its stem."

"Oh," said the boy, "I thought it was going to be something complicated."

"You are right, not complicated; just give them a little care and respect."

“What are you going to do with them?”

“Let them get strong. In a week or so they should develop stronger roots and sturdier stems. Then they can be planted directly into the ground.”

“Can I plant some?”

“Certainly you may.”

“What are they going to look like? Can you eat them? Will they grow at my house?” the enthusiastic youthful gardener probed.

Taking some three inch pots and searching for the strongest, healthiest marigold shoots, together they potted up a dozen or so plants, watered them, and placed them in the sun to bask in the light alongside the trays of what appeared to be baby feathery ones.

A family of three leashed to their Labradoodle pass by the driveway where the relocation of marigolds was underway. The preschool boy abandoned the potting process running up the drive to pet their fluffy cinnamon brown puppy. While petting the dog the boy shared his new found gardening knowledge with the family. Their first grade daughter wasn't quite as taken by the whole marigold enterprise as was the young gardener.

“Come and see” said the boy, extending an invitation to the girl to come take a closer look at what was going on with the flower potting process. Hesitating ever so slightly, the boy's eagerness lured her down the driveway to the potting operation. The two of them stooping down to get a better look at the plants, materials and process, the boy picked up the largest pot of flowers; four of the sturdiest plants, the four topped with golden flowing crowns, and proudly presented them to her.

“These are for your garden. Water them and give them light. In a week or so you can put them in the ground.”

*“With many such parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.”*

Telling God's story of hope and salvation is not glamorous work. It is rooted in the daily aspects of Christian life. Out of darkness Jesus calls us into his marvelous light. A beloved, beautiful, fruit bearing, community formed from and deeply rooted in the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. Rescued from sin and death we are given a place in the kingdom of God through the cascading water of baptism. We are given a crown of unfading glory. Glory more brilliant than any batch of marigolds. An eternal crown given through Christ's victory over all that is greedy, dark and deadly. In our daily work we enthusiastically invite others to come and see and to show them the work that is kingdom life. Tell them, like the preschooler to the first grader, “This is for you.”

*“Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear!”*



**FIRST READING: Ezekiel 17:22-24**

Thus says the Lord God:

I myself will take a sprig  
from the lofty top of a cedar;  
I will set it out.  
I will break off a tender one  
from the topmost of its young twigs;  
I myself will plant it  
on a high and lofty mountain.  
<sup>23</sup>On the mountain height of Israel  
I will plant it,  
in order that it may produce boughs and  
bear fruit,  
and become a noble cedar.  
Under it every kind of bird will live;  
in the shade of its branches will nest  
winged creatures of every kind.  
<sup>24</sup>All the trees of the field shall know  
that I am the LORD.  
I bring low the high tree,  
I make high the low tree;  
I dry up the green tree  
and make the dry tree flourish.  
I the LORD have spoken;  
I will accomplish it.

**Psalms 92:1-4, 12-15**

**SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:6-10  
[11-13] 14-17**

So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord—<sup>7</sup>for we walk by faith, not by sight. <sup>8</sup>Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. <sup>9</sup>So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. <sup>10</sup>For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

[<sup>11</sup>Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are

well known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences. <sup>12</sup>We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. <sup>13</sup>For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you.] <sup>14</sup>For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. <sup>15</sup>And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.

<sup>16</sup>From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. <sup>17</sup>So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

**GOSPEL: Mark 4:26-34**

[Jesus said,] "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, <sup>27</sup>and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. <sup>28</sup>The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. <sup>29</sup>But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come."

<sup>30</sup>He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? <sup>31</sup>It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; <sup>32</sup>yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

<sup>33</sup>With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; <sup>34</sup>he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.