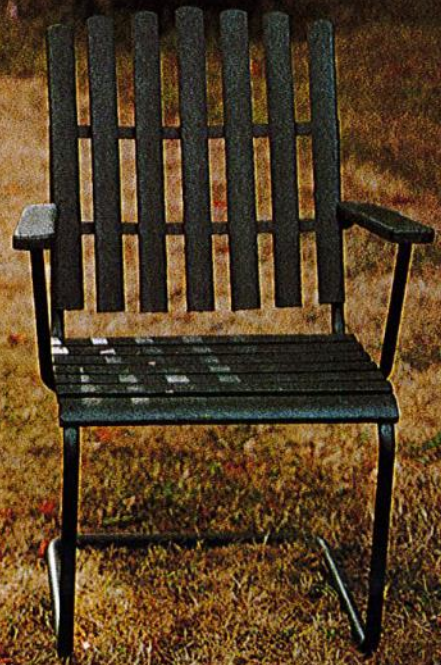


Life

does not consist in the
abundance of possessions

LUKE 12:15



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

25 W. Springettsbury Ave., York, PA 17403

Church Office 717-843-8155

www.stpaulsyork.org

Email: st.paulsyork@comcast.net

www.stpaulspreschoolyork.com

Facebook: St. Paul's Lutheran Church York PA on Springettsbury & George

YouTube: St. Paul's Lutheran Church - South George St. York

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 186 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 (George St). Baby changing stations are provided in these restrooms as well as in the nursery.

Our Communion is "open" to all believers who trust that the Risen Christ is present for his people in the Holy Eucharist.

The Nursery is accessed through the front right double doors. The 9:15 AM liturgy is live-streamed into the Nursery.

Today we thank Christine Kates for serving as our guest organist while Victor Fields is on vacation.

Guidelines for Worship during the time of COVID-19

Entering and Leaving the Church:

*Wearing a mask while in worship is optional, recommended or required based on the local percentage of infection. 5% or lower/Optional, Between 5% & 10%/Recommended, 10% or higher/Required. **The instruction will be posted on the entry doors. Please be sure to bring a mask in the event of required/recommended masking. Disposable masks are available at the entrance to the church nave.***

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

Communion Procedure:

- 1. Come to communion using the center aisle (about 10 adults per side).*
- 2. Communion glasses are placed on credence tables at the front pews (left and right side).*
- 3. Take a communion glass from the tray of glasses.*
- 4. Take your place along the chancel step. The ministers will bring the bread and wine to you.*
- 5. Extend your hands to receive the communion host.*
- 6. Consume the communion host before you leave the chancel edge.*
- 7. Hold the communion glass with both hands at chest height so that the communion assistant can easily pour the wine into the glass.*
- 8. Consume the wine.*
- 9. Place the used cup in an empty tray located on a credence table at the side aisle.*
- 10. Return to your pew using the side aisle.*

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

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday, July 31, 2022
Holy Communion 9:15 AM

Musical setting 6 from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

PRELUDE

Fuge from Sonata VI

Mendelssohn

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

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.**

HYMN OF PRAISE



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace



to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the



high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



1 Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - mighty God and Fa-ther,



we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

Refrain



2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God,



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world:



have mer - cy on us; you are seat - ed at the right



hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.

Refrain

3 For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.

Final refrain

Glo - ry to God in the high - est.

A - men, a - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

Almighty God, judge of us all, you have placed in our hands the wealth we call our own. Give us such wisdom by your Spirit that our possessions may not be a curse in our lives, but an instrument for blessing; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Sit

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FIRST READING

Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23

(back cover)

PSALM

Psalm 49:1-11

Spoken responsively by whole verse.

¹ Hear this, all you peoples; hearken, all you who dwell | in the world,*
you of high degree and low, rich and | poor together.

² **My mouth shall | speak of wisdom,***
and my heart shall meditate on | understanding.

³ I will incline my ear | to a proverb*
and set forth my riddle up- | on the harp.

⁴ **Why should I be afraid in | evil days,***
when the wickedness of those at my | heels surrounds me,

⁵ the wickedness of those who put their trust | in their goods,*
and boast of | their great riches?

⁶ **We can never ran- | som ourselves,***
or deliver to God the price | of our life;

Continued on next page...

⁷ for the ransom of our life | is so great,*
that we should never have e- | nough to pay it,
⁸ **in order to live forev- | er and ever,***
and never | see the grave.
⁹ For we see that the wise die also; like the dull and stu- | pid they perish*
and leave their wealth to those who come | after them.
¹⁰ **Their graves shall be their homes forever,**
their dwelling places from generation to | generation,*
though they call the lands after | their own names.
¹¹ Even though honored, they cannot | live forever;*
they are like the | beasts that perish.

SECOND READING Colossians 3:1-11 (*back cover*)

Stand

VERSE



HOLY GOSPEL Luke 12:13-21 (*back cover*)

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

At the conclusion of the Gospel.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Pastor Stan 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 for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

A brief silence.

O God, where there is division in your church, bring reconciliation and healing. Guide the work of theologians, pastors, deacons, Sunday school teachers, seminary professors, and all who provide instruction for the building up of your church. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

O God, where creation cries out in distress, bring relief and renewal. Bless farmers, ranchers, distributors, and all who provide our food. Nourish the land and all its inhabitants. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

O God, where nations and communities yearn for peace, (especially in the Ukraine) bring an end to war and establish justice. Strengthen those who toil for the welfare of others, especially military personnel, police, first responders, and activists. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

O God, where your people are overwhelmed with the busy-ness of life, bring encouragement through your message of hope in Christ. Accompany all who experience emotional, mental, or physical distress (*especially Peggy Jacobs, Carl Jacobs, Katie Guyer, Eddie Turner, Gloria Kendrick, Amy Hollis, Heidi Glaudel, Kristine Gross, Rachel Barnes, Courtney Snell*). Renew us at your table of mercy. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

O God, where scarcity and anxiety pervade your church, bring abundance and vitality. Guide the work of church councils and committees and give them clarity for the work of ministry. Provide us with disciples willing to serve in positions of leadership in our congregation (*specific ministries may be named*). Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

O God, we give you thanks for all your saints (*especially John Uffelmann and Clarence Kates*). Inspire us by their example of faithful living and set our minds on things above so that we are rich in love toward you. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Receive the prayers of your children, merciful God, and hold us forever in your steadfast love; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

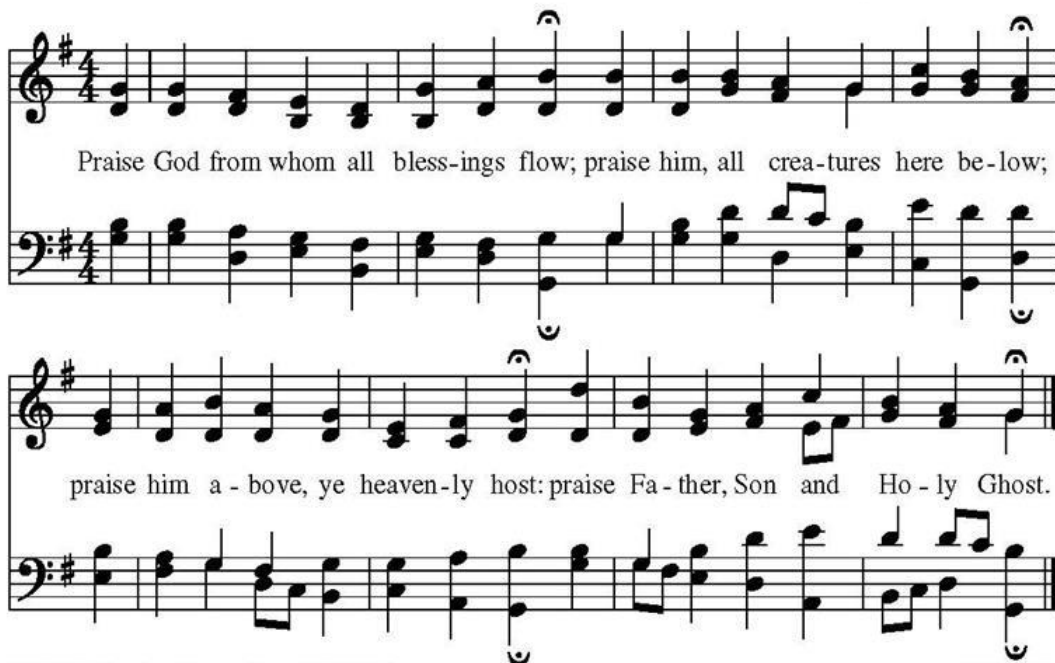
PEACE

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 heavenly host: praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

WORDS: *Doxology*, Thomas Ken (1637-1711)
MUSIC: Louis Bourgeois (ca. 1510-1561), *Genevan Psalter*, 1551

OLD 100th
L.M.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Merciful God,

we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to the Lord.

And also with you.

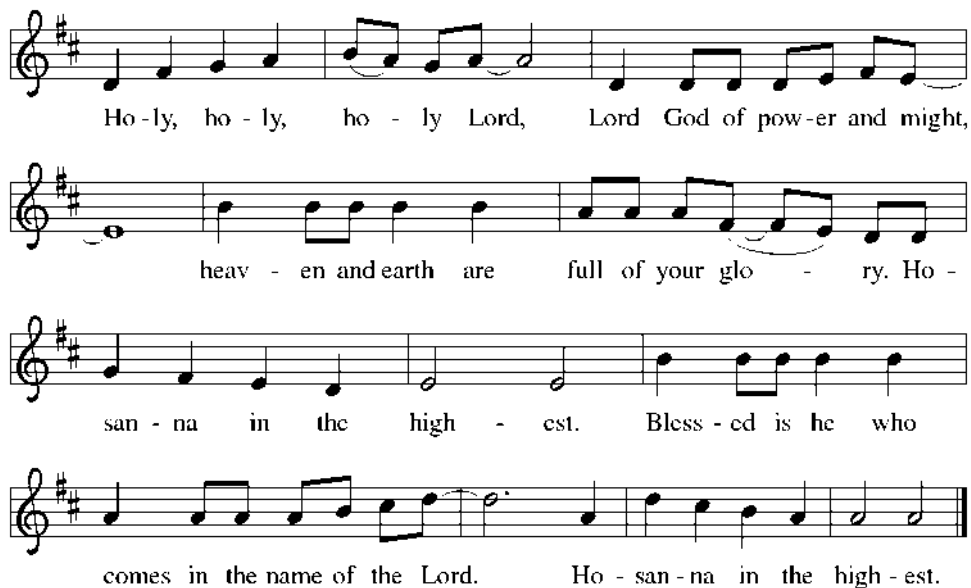
We lift them to the Lord.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

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 Lord, Lord God of pow - er and might,
heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, that by this Holy Communion we may know
the unity we share with all your people
in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Continued on next page...

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, 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 *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.

COMMUNION HYMN*Be Thou My Vision (ELW 793)*

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 both by day and by night,
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,
 thou and thou on - ly, the 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.

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

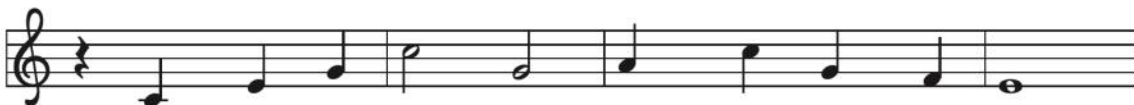
Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

BLESSING

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

HYMN

Founded on Faith (ACS 1048) (following pages)



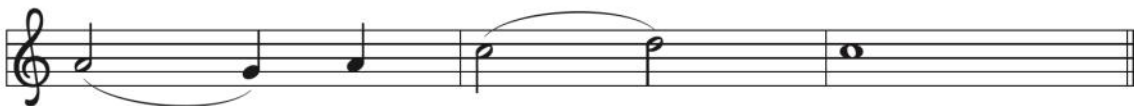
1 Found - ed on faith, the church— a - live by grace—
2 Your cross, O Christ, re - news our life each day.
3 E - quipped by prayer, we live the Spir - it's call.
4 Grow - ing in grace for God's cre - at - ed earth,
5 Found - ed on faith, called forth, em - pow' red to serve,



pro - claims the gos - pel here and ev - 'ry place.
Bap - tized in you, we learn and teach and pray.
Em - pow' red to serve with gifts, both great and small,
we yearn for jus - tice, peace, and hu - man worth;
we share God's end - less love with - out re - serve.



The word of God re - sounds through time and space:
Fed by your love, with thank - ful hearts, we say:
we bring the liv - ing hope of God to all.
a world re - stored; a faith - ful, car - ing church.
Then let us shout a - loud the liv - ing Word!



Al - le - lu - ia!

POSTLUDE

Postlude on "St. Anne"

Cherwien

Join us tonight for Covered Dish Supper (6:00 PM) and Vespers (7:00 PM).

The service is preceded with a covered dish supper at 6:00 PM in Christ Hall. Please bring something to share and join us for prayer! Bring a lawn chair for the outside service—weather permitting.

Harvest Dinner Tickets are on sale. The dinner will be held on October 8, 2022. Proceeds benefit the Food Pantry. This year will feature select regional wines and local microbrews paired with the menu. Contact the office for tickets.

Altar Flowers sponsors are needed. Please check out the Springettsbury Hallway bulletin board for the sign-up sheet and available dates for the year. Cost is \$30 per vase.

Ukraine Offering—Offerings to give aid to Ukrainian refugees, orphans, widows and humanitarian help can be given through St. Paul’s website www.stpaulsyork.org by selecting the designated button or through our pew envelopes marking them “Ukraine”.



Sunday Coffee Hour—Please contribute baked goods, fruits or veggies for Fellowship following our Summer 9:15 AM services. Simply notify the church office or sign up in the Good Shepherd room to be added to the schedule. The desire is to have fellowship opportunities following worship each Sunday throughout the summer. A member of the Fellowship Committee will provide oversight for each gathering.

This Week at St. Paul’s

Church office open 7:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m. Mon—Thurs

Sunday, July 31

- 9:15 AM Holy Eucharist
- 10:15 AM Fellowship—Good Shepherd Rm
- 6:00 PM Pot Luck Supper—Christ Hall
- 7:00 PM Evening Prayer on the Lawn

Tuesday, August 2

- 9:30 AM Pantry

Sunday, August 7

- 9:15 AM Holy Eucharist
- 10:15 AM Fellowship—Good Shepherd Rm
- 10:30 AM Assembly Backpacks for Food Pantry Clients with school age children—Christ Hall
- 6:30 PM AA meeting Community Rm



Flowers This Week

The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God by Linda Turner.

Summer Worship

Combined Service time at 9:15 AM with Fellowship to Follow

Following each service there will be a time for fellowship held in the Good Shepherd Room. A member of the Fellowship Committee is scheduled to provide oversight with the set-up, serving and clean up each week. Please do volunteer to provide fruit or veggies or a baked good for one of these fellowship times. A sign-up sheet is located on the server in the Good Shepherd Room if you are able and willing to provide and item or two. Thank you to the Fellowship Committee for taking the lead on making these important times possible.

Preschool Webpage—We are excited to let everyone know that St. Paul's Preschool has a new webpage (stpaulspreschoolyork.com). Please take a few minutes to check it out and share it with people you know who may have children 2, 3, or 4 years of age. Applications for 2022-2023 enrollment are being accepted now.

Confirmation instruction will begin in September and will be held on Sunday morning. Students entering the 7th Grade should be enrolled in the program. Please contact Pastor Reep for additional information.

Prayerful consideration needed for Congregation Treasurer. Interim Treasurer, Peter O'Connor is bringing those duties to a close with completion of the 2021 audit (August 31). The duties associated with the treasurer's position have been greatly clarified during the past several years. If you are willing to consider this ministry opportunity or would like more information, please speak to President Tristan Ericson or Pastor Reep.

The Nominating Committee is beginning its work to secure persons willing to serve on Congregation Council, Benevolence Committee, Mutual Ministry Committee, and Voting Members to the Synod Assembly. Please contact Tristan Ericson or Kathryn Wicker if you would be willing to serve.

Family Ministry - Picnic in the Park, August 16th, 5:30pm – 7:00pm

Kain Park, Perch Pavilion

God Creates the Creatures in the Sea

Join your friends from St. Paul's for an evening picnic and bible activities at one of York Counties local parks. Each family is asked to bring their own picnic dinner to enjoy as we gather. The evening will include an interactive bible story and craft. All pavilions are located close to the park playground so your children can enjoy time playing with their friends. Restrooms and parking are located within walking distance.

5:30 – Picnic

6:00 – 7:00 – Bible Story and Craft



Food Pantry—July

Items needed: Rice (1 or 2 lb bags), dehydrated potatoes, powdered milk, tomato sauce and soup. 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”.

Help Needed-Handbell Polishing Party!

In order to keep our bells in great shape for years to come, they are in need of polishing. It is not a difficult task, but with over 60 bells, many hands are needed to lighten the work! If you are willing to donate your time and elbow grease, please join us for a polishing party on Thursday, August 18 at 6:30 PM. All supplies, training, and great conversation will be provided! Please wear older clothes that can get dirty, as the polish can stain fabrics. We appreciate your help in maintaining our beautiful instruments!

Sunday School Begins on September 11 with the God’s Work Our Hands project. Regular classes start on September 18 at 9:15 AM.

Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Communion Assistants	Greeters	Ushers	Altar Set-up & Altar Clean-up
7/31	9:15 AM	Rev. George Fitch	Jennifer Ports	Kathy Monk	Patty Snyder	George & Janet Fitch	Jeff Riese, John Monk, Dave Kopp, Sandy Dickensheets	Deb Becker

STAFF		
Pastor	Rev. Stanley Reep	orreep.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Youth Director	Kelly Moore-Spencer	kmoorespencer.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Organist, Choir Director	Victor Fields	vfields.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Children Choirs Director	Cody Messersmith	cmessersmith.stpaulsyork@gmail.com
Bell Choirs Director	Leah McComas	lmccomas.stpaulsyork@gmail.com
Secretary	Patee Pizzirusso	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Sexton	Ted Weikert	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Preschool Director	Deb Becker	director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com

“Daddy,” she would say. “Tell me a Comet and Amelia story.”

When our daughter was very young, a toddler, highly verbal, part of her bed time ritual was hearing stories. Sometimes we read stories, books that are now well worn and that became staples at the conclusion of a day. And sometimes I made up stories for her about a beloved horse named Comet. Comet, the imaginary horse, lived in our stable, received hay from the barn, loved to eat crunch orange carrots from the garden, and sweet juicy red apples from the orchard.

But most of the stories involved a moon lit ride across fields and meadows, meandering through paths in woods, drinking cool refreshing water from the edge of the lake, the lake that mirrored the night sky’s constellations and revealed the phases of the moon in reflective light. These stories I discovered relieved childhood anxiety and calmed fears. They brought solace and permitted entry into much needed rest for a toddler and for a parent. Most nights the stories of Comet the horse followed a familiar pattern, drawing from the day’s events and engaging themes of peace, relaxation, cooperation, comfort, safety, trust, and rest.

“Teacher,” a person interrupted. “Tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.”

When someone in the crowd petitioned Jesus to intervene in a conflict over property inheritance Jesus draws from the moment and from earlier conversations in the day. Jesus tells a story. He doesn’t draw from the well-worn books of the law. *“The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, ‘what should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?’ Then he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’ But God said to him, ‘You fool!’ This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?”*

Needless to say, the person who interrupted Jesus, the teacher, didn’t get what he asked for. He didn’t get the arbitration. Instead he heard a story. The story certainly wasn’t a Comet and Amelia story. This story drew from the day’s events, engaged themes, but they weren’t themes of peace, relaxation, cooperation, comfort, safety, trust, rest. This story confronted the person interrupting Jesus with **the folly of preoccupation with accumulated wealth**, with the self-centeredness of “my crops, my barns, my goods” and the lack of concern for the community and lack of concern for God. The rich man in the story is rich in every way except rich toward God. This is a story about a rich man being sent empty away. This is a theme that we hear throughout the gospel of Luke. We heard it first from Jesus’ mother, Mary, as she sang about the child in her womb; the child that would change everything, the child that in adulthood speaks words to calm anxiety and fear, the child that desires lasting peace, comfort, safety, rest.

We often sing Mary’s Song using the words *“God has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty”* (Luke 1:53). When the biblical narrative presents rich men and wealthy people, I quickly transfer my thoughts to the likes of Warren Buffet, Jeff Bezos, and Elon Musk. This is at least one time when I want to step out of the lime light and take a seat with the hungry, those filled with good things. Who among us wants to be sent away empty? So I quickly step aside knowing that my crops and barns and goods pale in comparison to the others who are far wealthier. We exist in a culture that equates self-worth, value, acceptance, and even friendship on the possessions we obtain; our address, occupation, clothing labels and vehicle. And yet this morning we are told a story. We are given important insight about being rich toward God.

Last week we heard about God’s desire for us to be in prayer; ask, search, knock. This

morning we hear about God's desire for us to be in a relationship marked by the generous sharing of one's wealth with others in need. Stewardship appeals have historically been a way to move Christian people from selfish accumulation to generous giving. They keep us from hoarding and from building bigger barns to generosity and building bigger hearts. This fall we will be returning to our annual practice of a stewardship appeal during the month of October. It will be linked to our need for reform, reformation in our lives as we consider God's abundant generosity towards us in Christ Jesus, and the need to share our time, ability, and financial resources with others in need. At St. Paul's we recognize the ongoing needs of others; for the hungry in the community (Food Pantry), and the hungry in the world (Lutheran World Hunger Appeal), our Lenten appeal this year was for Domestic Disaster Relief providing assistance for those who experienced the devastating effects of a hurricane, There is an appeal to help with the construction costs associated with the expansion of Mpoguso Lutheran Church in Tanzania, our sister congregation, and we have an appeal for Ukraine to assist those in need because of the aggression and war brought upon them. We are helping orphans, widows, refugees, providing for resettlement, securing food, water, and health care, all of which is provided through the Church's ELCA Disaster Relief and Lutheran World Federation partnerships.

If one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions, then of what does it consist? Last Tuesday during the Christian Education Committee meeting we made plans to welcome everyone back for the opening of the education year on September 11. We are working to get the message out for all to return. Return to God. Return to community. Return to faith formation. Return, as we learned last week, to generous prayer and as we heard today a return to generous giving. Our lives consist of generosity toward God through prayer and generosity toward those in need through giving. This is the richness that Jesus was on about that day when he told a story about a man building bigger barns.

Each Sunday we hear the story of how God gives generously to us; in confession's words of absolution and communion's tangible word of grace, we hear that our sins are forgiven and that we are made whole. We hear the story of God's redeeming love in Christ Jesus, his suffering and death on the cross and the joy we anticipate celebrating with Easter's resurrection. The story keeps us wrapped in God's generosity. This morning we are invited into a story. The story is precipitated by an interruption by someone who has a personal desire to have Jesus do something for him. Jesus tells a story that changes things. His story implicitly asks the man to do something for others and by so doing is rich toward God.

Opportunities for us to tell stories abound, and not just at bed time for tired children. Jesus tells stories drawing us closer to God. Today we hear that life is not driven by desperate moves to acquire and accumulate, building bigger barns, but life is driven through generous sharing with others in need.

"Daddy," she would say. "Tell me a Comet and Amelia story."

Once upon a time there was a horse named Comet and a little girl who loved to go on moon light rides. She took baskets of crunch orange carrots from her garden and juicy red apples from the trees in her orchard and bundled them up in burlap sacks tied up tightly with twine. Then she carried the heavy bundles to the stable, saddled up Comet, filled the pack with the burlap bundles and off they would go, across fields and meadows in the moon light until they reached the edge of a village and the glowing street lamp of a town. There she would dismount from Comet and leave burlap bundles of carrots and apples at the door steps of people who didn't have a garden, or a fruit tree, or a barn with hay, or even a stable to keep a horse. Amen.

FIRST READING: Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23

Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

¹²I, the Teacher, when king over Israel in Jerusalem, ¹³applied my mind to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven; it is an unhappy business that God has given to human beings to be busy with. ¹⁴I saw all the deeds that are done under the sun; and see, all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

^{2:18}I hated all my toil in which I had toiled under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to those who come after me ¹⁹—and who knows whether they will be wise or foolish? Yet they will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. ²⁰So I turned and gave my heart up to despair concerning all the toil of my labors under the sun, ²¹because sometimes one who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave all to be enjoyed by another who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. ²²What do mortals get from all the toil and strain with which they toil under the sun? ²³For all their days are full of pain, and their work is a vexation; even at night their minds do not rest. This also is vanity.

Psalms 49:1-12**SECOND READING: Colossians 3:1-11**

So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, ³for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

⁵Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient. ⁷These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life. ⁸But now you must get rid of all such things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices ¹⁰and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. ¹¹In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

GOSPEL: Luke 12:13-21

Someone in the crowd said to [Jesus], “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.” ¹⁴But he said to him, “Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?” ¹⁵And he said to them, “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.” ¹⁶Then he told them a parable: “The land of a rich man produced abundantly. ¹⁷And he thought to himself, ‘What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?’ ¹⁸Then he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’ ²⁰But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ ²¹So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.”

Next Sunday's Readings: Genesis 15:1-6; Psalm 33:12-22; Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16; Luke 12:32-40.

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