A stained glass artwork featuring a woman's face and hands. The face is the central focus, rendered in shades of pink, purple, and yellow, with dark, thick lines for the eyes, nose, and mouth. The hands are positioned on either side of the face, with fingers spread. The background is a mix of dark and light colors, creating a textured, mosaic-like effect. The overall style is reminiscent of traditional stained glass windows.

LUKE 13:12

Woman,
you are
set free
from your
ailment

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.

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 CDC guidelines. Green/Optional, Yellow/Recommended, Red/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. 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 before you leave the chancel edge.*
- 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.

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday, August 21, 2022
Holy Communion 9:15 AM

Musical setting 6 from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

PRELUDE

There is a Balm in Gilead

Robert Powell

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

We Come to You for Healing Lord (ELW 617)

Stanza 1 & 5 Unison, Stanza 2, 3 & 4 Harmony

1 We come to you for heal - ing, Lord, of
 2 As once you walked through an - cient streets and
 3 You touch us through phy - si - cians' skills, through
 4 When nights are long with wake - ful - ness, through
 5 We come to you, O lov - ing Lord, in

bod - y, mind, and soul, and pray that by your
 reached toward those in pain, come, ris - en Christ, a -
 nurs - es' gifts of care, and through the love of
 days when strength runs low, grant us your gift of
 our dis - tress and pain, in trust that through our

Spir - it's touch we may a - gain be whole,
 mong us still with pow'r to heal a - gain.
 faith - ful friends who lift our lives in prayer.
 pa - tience, Lord, your calm - ing peace to know.
 nights and days your grace will heal, sus - tain.

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., b. 1923

Music: MARTYRDOM, Hugh Wilson, 1764-1824

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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 *Refrain sung by congregation. Verses sung by Cantor*


Refrain



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.**

God of all creation, you reach out to call people of all nations to your kingdom. As you gather disciples from near and far, count us also among those who boldly confess your Son Jesus Christ as Lord. **Amen**

Sit

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FIRST READING

Isaiah 58:9b-14

(back cover)

PSALM

Psalm 103:1-8

Spoken responsively by whole verse.

- ¹ Bless the LORD, | O my soul,*
and all that is within me, bless his | holy name.
- ² **Bless the LORD, | O my soul,***
and forget not | all his benefits.
- ³ He forgives | all your sins*
and heals all | your infirmities;
- ⁴ **he redeems your life | from the grave***
and crowns you with mercy and | lovingkindness;
- ⁵ he satisfies you | with good things,*
and your youth is renewed | like an eagle's.
- ⁶ **The LORD ex- | ecutes righteousness***
and judgment for all who | are oppressed.

Continued on next page...

⁷ He made his ways | known to Moses*
and his works to the chil- | dren of Israel.

⁸ **The LORD is full of compas- | sion and mercy,***
slow to anger and | of great kindness.

SECOND READING Hebrews 12:18-29 (*back cover*)

Stand

VERSE



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

HOLY GOSPEL Luke 13:10-17 (*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.

Lord God, guide us continually in our baptismal covenant to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. Use our diverse gifts in service to all your people. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Protect the habitats of fish and birds (*local bodies of water or wildlife refuges may be named*). Repair ecosystems damaged by misuse, neglect, or natural disaster, that all creation may thrive. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Inspire the rulers and leaders of nations with your compassion and mercy. Raise up activists and community organizers to restore places affected by violence, poverty, and inequality. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Heal those who are bent over by addiction, depression, and anxiety. Set free all who cry out under the weight of mental, emotional, or physical distress (*especially Erin Bastian, Gary Van Natten, Harry Harman, Kathryn Rose Wicker, Janet Fitch, Peggy Jacobs, Carl Jacobs, Katie Guyer, Eddie Turner, Gloria Kendrick, Amy Hollis, Heidi Glaudel, Kristine Gross, Rachel Barnes, Courtney Snell*). Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Renew our bodies, minds, and spirits in this worshiping assembly. Give rest to all who lead our congregation in worship, study, and service (*congregational leaders may be named*). Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give you thanks for the communion of saints who have gathered in prayer and praise in this place. Support us in your love until we rest forever in 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

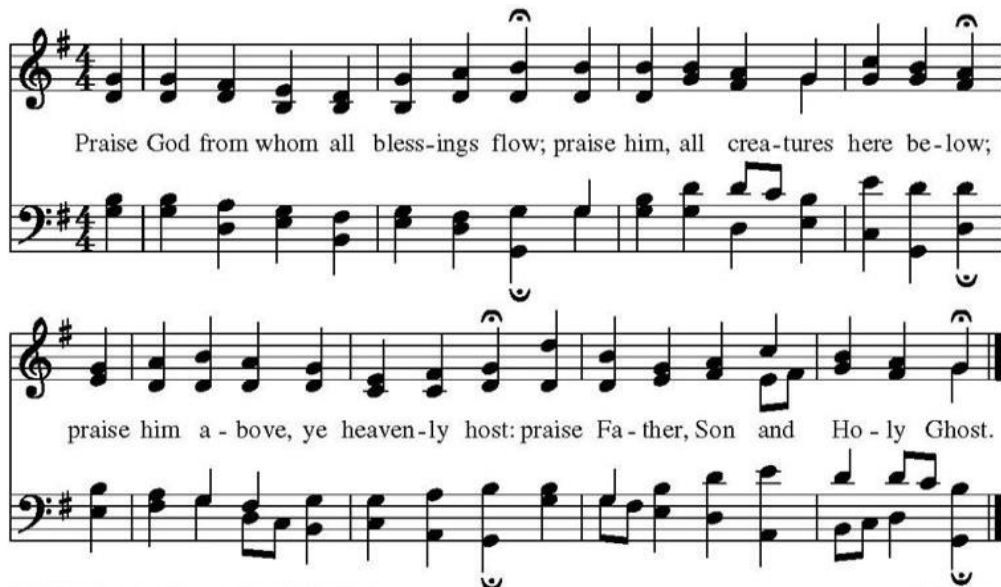
The peace of the Lord be with you always.

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.

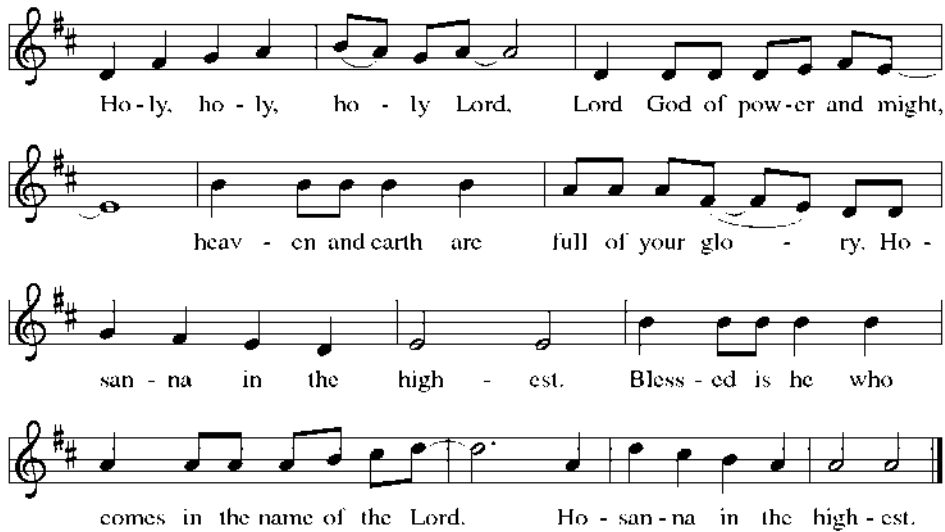
We lift them to the Lord.

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.

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

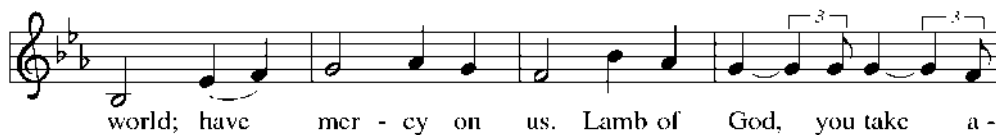
**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**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*



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

HYMN DURING DISTRIBUTION

Cast Out, O Christ (ACS 1016)



1 Cast out, O Christ, cast far a - way the
2 Our rag - ing griefs, our jeal - ous fears are
3 Once long a - go, from Gal - i - lee, you
4 Your word breathes life and health and hope that
5 So come, O Christ, and cast a - way the



de - mons that de - stroy: the haunt - ing dreads that
Le - gion in their name. Our shack - led hearts im -
sailed to storm - tossed shores. And still, in pow'r, you
break through e - vil's thrall. You send us, strength - ened,
de - mons that de - stroy. Trans - form our lives to



choke our souls, the hates that sti - fle joy.
plore your grace to loose our bind - ing shame.
brave new paths to breach our bolt - ed doors.
home in peace to live your gos - pel call.
sense your love and spread a - broad your joy.

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

Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good (ELW 871)



1 Sing praise to God, the high - est good, the au - thor of cre -
2 What your al - might - y pow'r has made, in mer - cy you are
3 We sought the Lord in our dis - tress; O God, in mer - cy
4 All who con - fess Christ's ho - ly name, give God the praise and



a - tion! O God of love, you un - der - stood our need for
keep - ing; by morn - ing glow or eve - ning shade, your eye is
hear us. Our Sav - ior saw our help - less - ness and came with
glo - ry! Let all God's sav - ing pow'r pro - claim; give God the



your sal - va - tion. With heal - ing balm our souls you fill;
nev - er sleep - ing; in the do - min - ion of your might
peace to cheer us. For this we thank and praise the Lord,
praise and glo - ry! Cast ev - 'ry i - dol from its throne;



all our la - ment with peace you still.
all things are just and good and right. To God all praise and glo - ry!
who is by one and all a - dored.
God is the Lord, and God a - lone:

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart

David Cherwien

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*The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God
By Kem & Cindy Vaught*



Flowers This Week

Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Communion Assistants	Greeters	Ushers	Altar Set-up & Altar Clean-up
8/21	9:15 AM	Tristan Ericson	Kirsten Barnes	Dale Smith	Kirsten Barnes	Dale & Betsy Smith	Bob Reed , Ron Riese, Kem Vaught, Larry Becker, Steve Heistand, Dan Garber	Norma & Ron Riese

This Week at St. Paul's

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

Sunday, August 21

9:15 AM Holy Eucharist
 10:15 AM Fellowship—Good Shepherd Rm
 10:15 AM Sunday School Teachers Mtg
 Upper level, Multicolored Rm.
 6:30 PM AA meeting Community Rm

Tuesday, August 23

9:30 AM Pantry
 12:30 PM Christian Ed Mtg—Good Shepherd Rm
 7:00 PM Worship & Arts Committee—
 Good Shepherd Rm

Thursday, August 25

12:00 noon Harvest Dinner Mtg—Christ Hall
 5:30 PM Choir Party—Trout Residence

Sunday, August 28

9:15 AM Holy Eucharist
 10:15 AM Fellowship—Good Shepherd Rm
 6:00 PM Pot Luck Supper—Christ Hall
 6:30 PM AA meeting Community Rm
 7:00 PM Evening Prayer on the Lawn



Food Pantry—August

Items needed: Beans, corn, juice, jelly, macaroni, Rice (1 or 2 lb bags), dehydrated potatoes, powdered milk, canned tuna, tomato sauce and soup. We also need paper grocery bags with handles and plastic bags.

Anyone able to help can contact Teresa Rohrbaugh, Patty Snyder, or Janet and Larry Moore. Money donations are gratefully accepted. Please place cash or check in a “special” envelope marked “Pantry”.

STAFF		
Pastor	Rev. Stanley Reep	prreep.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Youth Director	Kelly Moore-Spencer	kmoorespencer.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Organist, Choir Director	Victor Fields	vfields.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
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

News and Updates:

Vespers on the South Lawn – weather permitting next Sunday evening, August 28, we will hold the 7:00 PM liturgy outside. Please bring a lawn chair with you. The liturgy is preceded with a pot luck supper in Christ Hall at 6:00 PM.

Labor Day Weekend – we return to Sunday liturgies at 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM. Please do make worship part of your weekend plans.

God's Work Our Hands – provides an opportunity to participate in a mission project. Sunday September 11 from 9:15- 10:15 AM we will be assembling health kits for Lutheran World Relief. This event is for all ages and will be held outdoors on the South Lawn.

Bibles – will be presented to children and youth who are entering Kindergarten, Fourth Grade and Seventh Grade during the liturgy on Sunday September 18.

Confirmation ministry – will be held on Sunday mornings at 9:15 AM with the first session on the Lord's Prayer beginning on September 18.

Food Pantry Workers – will be recognized in conjunction with the 40th anniversary of St. Paul's Food Pantry ministry on Sunday September 25.

Red colored clip boards – will circulate through the congregation identifying positions of leadership needed to fully staff our Sunday morning services. Please do add your name and check off areas where you are willing to service.

Harvest Dinner and Auction – tickets are available for purchase through the Church office. Tickets for the October 8th event are \$100 and all proceeds benefit the Food Pantry at St. Paul's.

Grateful appreciation is extended – to members of the Fellowship Committee for serving as hosts for the summer coffee hours and to those who generously provided the delicious variety of food. We raise our voices in thanksgiving for this tremendous time of fellowship. Thank you!

Sunday school classes - for all ages begin on September 18th at 9:15 AM. Primary, Confirmation and High School students meet on the upper level. An adult class will be held in Christ Hall on the main level.

We have been in the synagogue with Jesus before. We have heard him speak and listened to the content of his teaching. Then it was at the beginning of his public ministry. Then people were shocked, stunned, people couldn't believe that this young man, the son of Mary and Joseph could speak as one having authority. Do you remember hearing about that day when he stood up in the synagogue, unrolled the scroll, and read from the Prophet Isaiah? *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*

This morning it is just such release that is announced to a woman who has been afflicted with a spirit crippling her, weighing her down, keeping her bent over, for 18 years. The woman in the synagogue arrived on the Sabbath for prayers. She experiences Jesus who first sees her condition and then calling over to her *"Woman, you are set free from your ailment."* Then Jesus came closer and laid his hands on her and she stood up straight. And praises to God exuded from her whole being.

To be truthful this story wigs me out just a little bit. When I meet together in a public location the last thing that I want to have happen is to be called out, singled out from the group, having my ailment, the thing or things that cripple me, that prevent me from fully being myself, fully being a child of God, to be recognized by someone in the group. I might even pretend that the one calling out to me is really calling to someone else, maybe the person near me or next to me. But certainly not me! But then when that one comes to me and lays hands on me, identifying me, making it known to the entire assembly that I am the one who needs to be released, that I am the one who needs good news, that creates an awkwardness that puts me outside my comfort zone. The irony is however that that is precisely what happens during the brief order of confession each week as we gather for worship. Jesus calls to each of us knowing full well what is crippling us, keeping us weighed down, preventing us from standing straight and tall, and from fully being children of God, or in the language of the text this morning "daughters and sons of Abraham."

The content of Jesus' teaching is omitted in the portion of the text from which we have read this morning. The writer, Luke, relies on our memory of that earlier visit Jesus made to the synagogue when we heard him teaching, that his ministry would be marked by "release." The woman came for prayer, she wasn't toting special credential, or putting forth a message that she deserved to be released from the crippling spirit that held her for the last 18 years. Nor did she ask for release. In the presence of Jesus and at his command and by his touch she receives what commentator Joel B. Green brands "redemptive intervention." She is released, able to stand straight and tall. And she is recognized as a "daughter of Abraham." This is certainly a proclamation of good news to the poor woman at the synagogue. This is a concrete example of good news of the kingdom of God breaking into the world in everyday life.

This morning we are presented with a healing story which leads us into a new and larger section of Jesus' ministry surrounding the question "who will participate in the kingdom?" We are presented a cast of characters; a crippled woman, Pharisees, disciples, and the unidentified group of worshippers present in the synagogue on the Sabbath. The text also implies those of

us who are listening. In just a few more verses we will hear the question “*Lord, will only a few be saved?*” (Lk 13:23). And in the next chapter we hear “*Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the Kingdom of God*” (Lk 14:14).

Jesus is heading toward Jerusalem. He is gathering disciples along the way. Not just the twelve, but others who will bear witness to him, who will share in the ministry of “release.” People who will relate to situations and things that bind, cripple, and preclude them from being the people God intended them to be. Jesus invites and welcomes people into the kingdom. The kingdom isn’t limited to sometime far off in the future. It is as Luther tagged it part of the kingdom already and not yet. Through stories Jesus lines out the fundamental commitments for those who follow him and for those desiring something different from the current situations in which they find themselves. Jesus expands borders.

Who will participate in such kingdom life? Who will be welcomed into the kingdom? Jesus is gathering followers. He is expanding the number of disciples. Through stories he sheds light on kingdom participants. “*The kingdom of heaven can be compared to... or the kingdom of heaven is like...*” Listening carefully to Jesus we can make some observations. It seems that eavesdroppers are certainly included in kingdom life; people who overhear conversations that are announcing “release.” Makes me think twice about the conversations I have. Who might be listening? Who might need to hear a word that brings “release” for them? It seems that people who don’t care about ranking are included in kingdom life. Who is first or last doesn’t seem to matter. “*The first will be last and the last will be first*” we will hear at the conclusion of his stories about kingdom life. Jesus makes room welcoming all. It seems that through stories we find out what kingdom life is and what kingdom life is not. Jesus invites followers, even people with whom he may seem to be at odds, think of the Pharisees. It was some Pharisees who warned Jesus of the plot on his life (Lk 13:31). The door to participants in the kingdom seems to remain open for people, who need “release,” who need good news.

Here we are, it is Sunday morning, and we are at church, and there is teaching, and we all come with something that cripples us. It may not be obvious to our sisters and brothers. But whatever is crippling us; its effects keep us from: living fully, loving fully, and embracing life fully. God announces release to us. Jesus announces across the room that our sins are forgiven. That the wrongs we have done, thought about, contemplated, entered into, and even the things that we didn’t make time for are all forgiven. You might even think that such a word is for the person near you or next to you but surely can’t be for you. But it is for you. And to assure you that his word of release is for you, He touches you with his own body, giving himself in Holy Communion.

A daughter of Abraham was released from the spirit that crippled her for 18 years. She was released and welcomed into kingdom life. I count her among those who followed Jesus, a disciple. She was released. She was set free. God in Christ Jesus knows what is crippling us and pronounces the Word that sets us free. God opens the future for us so that the crippling aspects of our past and present are not carried into tomorrow. One of my favorite preachers at the Chautauqua Institute would invite you to turn to your neighbor and tell them that they are set free. She would tell you, “look them straight in the eye, and with the compassion of Jesus tell them ‘you are set free.’” Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 58:9b-14

If you remove the yoke from among you,
 the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
¹⁰if you offer your food to the hungry
 and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
 then your light shall rise in the darkness
 and your gloom be like the noonday.
¹¹The LORD will guide you continually,
 and satisfy your needs in parched places,
 and make your bones strong;
 and you shall be like a watered garden,
 like a spring of water,
 whose waters never fail.
¹²Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
 you shall raise up the foundations of many
 generations;
 you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
 the restorer of streets to live in.
¹³If you refrain from trampling the sabbath,
 from pursuing your own interests on my holy day;
 if you call the sabbath a delight
 and the holy day of the LORD honorable;
 if you honor it, not going your own ways,
 serving your own interests, or pursuing your
 own affairs;
¹⁴then you shall take delight in the LORD,
 and I will make you ride upon the heights of the
 earth;
 I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor
 Jacob,
 for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Psalms 103:1-8**SECOND READING: Hebrews 12:18-29**

You have not come to something that can be
 touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom,
 and a tempest, ¹⁹and the sound of a trumpet, and a
 voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another
 word be spoken to them. ²⁰(For they could not
 endure the order that was given, "If even an animal
 touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death.")
²¹Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said,
 "I tremble with fear.") ²²But you have come to Mount
 Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly

Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,
²³and to the assembly of the firstborn who are
 enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and
 to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴and
 to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the
 sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the
 blood of Abel.

²⁵See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking;
 for if they did not escape when they refused the
 one who warned them on earth, how much less will
 we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven!
²⁶At that time his voice shook the earth; but now
 he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not
 only the earth but also the heaven." ²⁷This phrase,
 "Yet once more," indicates the removal of what is
 shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot
 be shaken may remain. ²⁸Therefore, since we are
 receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us
 give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable
 worship with reverence and awe; ²⁹for indeed our
 God is a consuming fire.

GOSPEL: Luke 13:10-17

Now [Jesus] was teaching in one of the synagogues
 on the sabbath. ¹¹And just then there appeared a
 woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen
 years. She was bent over and was quite unable to
 stand up straight. ¹²When Jesus saw her, he called
 her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from
 your ailment." ¹³When he laid his hands on her,
 immediately she stood up straight and began praising
 God. ¹⁴But the leader of the synagogue, indignant
 because Jesus had cured on the sabbath, kept saying
 to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought
 to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not
 on the sabbath day." ¹⁵But the Lord answered him
 and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on
 the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger,
 and lead it away to give it water? ¹⁶And ought not
 this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound
 for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage
 on the sabbath day?" ¹⁷When he said this, all his
 opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd
 was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was
 doing.

Next Sunday's Readings: Proverbs 25:6-7 or Sirach 10:12-18; Psalm 112; Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16; Luke 14:1, 7-14.

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