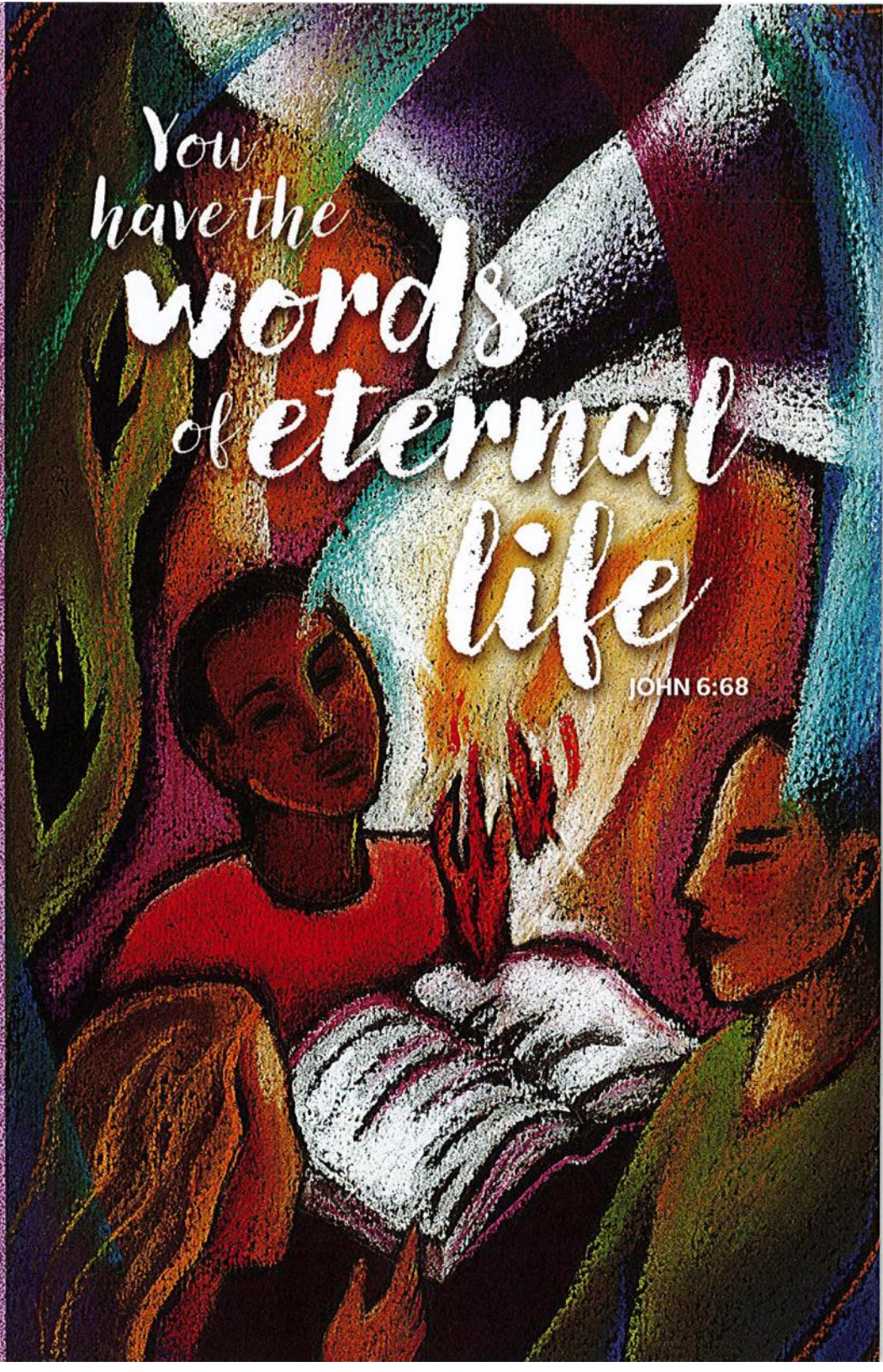


You
have the
words
of eternal
life

JOHN 6:68



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

25 W. Springettsbury Ave., York, PA 17403

Church Office 717-843-8155

Email: st.paulsyork@comcast.net

www.stpaulsyork.org

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 188 years. By worshipping with us today, you become part of that living tradition.

Offerings Offerings are received during the liturgy. They are presented along with gifts of bread and wine at the altar. You may also donate via our website at www.stpaulsyork.org or use the QR Code provided.

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.

An AED/Defibrillator unit is located in the Good Shepherd room. It is placed on the wall left side of the Springettsbury door exit.

The Nursery is accessed through the front right double doors.

The liturgy is live-streamed into the Nursery. Parents are asked to stay with their children. Quiet activities are also available in the Narthex for infant through preschool children to use with an adult.

Parents, please do accompany your child to the restroom during the liturgy and wait with them. This is a way for us to practice good safety protocol within our building.



Lutheran Church in York, PA - St. Paul's Lutheran...

stpaulsyork.org

BULLETIN AND NEWSLETTER EMAIL ISSUES: Due to restrictions being put on the number of recipients we can email at one time and the size of the email itself we are no longer able to send out the weekly bulletin and monthly newsletter via email. If you would like to see a copy of the bulletin please go to our website www.stpaulsyork.org and click on "Bulletins" and "Newsletter" in the upper right hand corner.

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

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
August 25, 2024

Holy Communion 9:15 AM

Musical Setting #6 Evangelical Lutheran Worship

PRELUDE

Let Us Break Bread Together

Charles Callahan

Stand turning to face the Baptismal Font

CONFESSION

In the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit..

Amen.

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

HYMN

O Living Bread from Heaven (ELW 542)

1 O liv - ing Bread from heav - en, how well you feed your guest!
 2 My Sav - ior, you have led me with - in your ho - liest place,
 3 You gave me all I want - ed; this food can death de - stroy.
 4 Oh, grant me then, well - strength - ened with heav'n - ly food, while here



The gifts that you have giv - en have filled my heart with rest.
 and here your - self have led me with trea - sures of your grace;
 And you have free - ly grant - ed the cup of end - less joy.
 my course on earth is length - ened, to serve you, free from fear;



O won - drous food of bless - ing! O cup that heals our woes!
 for you have free - ly giv - en what earth could nev - er buy,
 My Lord, I do not mer - it the fa - vor you have shown,
 and bring me home to praise you where none can peace de - stroy,



My heart, this gift pos - sess - ing, in thank - ful song o'er - flows!
 the bread of life from heav - en, that now I shall not die.
 and all my soul and spir - it bow down be - fore your throne.
 where I will ev - er raise you glad songs in end - less joy.



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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. . . .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

Tristan Ericson

TONE CHIME CHOIR

FIRST READING

Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

(back cover)

PSALM

Psalm 34:15-22 *sung unaccompanied Cantor/congregation*



- ¹⁵ The eyes of the LORD are up- | on the righteous,*
and his ears are open | to their cry.
- ¹⁶ **The face of the LORD is against those | who do evil,***
to root out the remembrance of them | from the earth.
- ¹⁷ The righteous cry, and | the LORD hears them*
and delivers them from | all their troubles.
- ¹⁸ **The LORD is near to the | brokenhearted***
and will save those whose spir- | its are crushed.
- ¹⁹ Many are the troubles | of the righteous,*
but the LORD will deliver him out | of them all.
- ²⁰ **He will keep safe | all his bones;***
not one of them | shall be broken.
- ²¹ Evil shall | slay the wicked,*
and those who hate the righteous | will be punished.
- ²² **The LORD ransoms the life | of his servants,***
and none will be punished who | trust in him.

SECOND READING

Ephesians 6:10-20

¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you

may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. ¹⁹Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

Stand

VERSE

Sung by all



HOLY GOSPEL

John 6:56-69 (*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

HYMN

He Hideth My Soul

Fanny J. Crosby

Sung unaccompanied Stanza 1—Quartet, Stanzas 2, 3, 4—Congregation in harmony

Allegretto

1. A won - der - ful Sav - ior is Je - sus my Lord, A won - der - ful
 2. A won - der - ful Sav - ior is Je - sus my Lord, He tak - eth my
 3. With num - ber - less bless - ings each mo - ment He crowns, And filled with His
 4. When clothed in His brightness, transport - ed I rise To meet Him in

Sav-ior to me, He hid-eth my soul in the cleft of the rock, Where
bur-den a-way, He hold-eth me up, and I shall not be moved, He
full-ness di-vine, I sing in my rap-ture, oh, glo-ry to God For
clouds of the sky, His per-fect sal-va-tion, His won-der-ful love, I'll

CHORUS

riv-ers of pleas-ure I see.
giv-eth me strength as my day. He hid-eth my soul in the cleft of the rock
such a Re-deem-er as mine!
shout with the mil-lions on high.

That shadows a dry, thirst-y land; He hid-eth my life in the depths of His love,

And cov-ers me there with His hand, And cov-ers me there with His hand.

APOSTLES' 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.

Holy God, you have the words of eternal life. Lead us to put our trust in Jesus, the living Word. Direct preachers, teachers, writers, and all the baptized in faithful speech and bold witness. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Prosper the work of conservation organizations, ELCA advocacy, and local environmental advocates. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Guide our leaders to act justly for the sake of the world. Bring about fruitful conversation among your people and bring about change where you see fit. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Bring comfort and relief where pain is sharp. Bring your tender mercy where grief runs deep. Care for those on our hearts (*especially*). Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

God of new life, protect students and teachers during this new school year. Bring an end to school shootings and cycles of violence. Move us to do all that is necessary to ensure a safe future for our children. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Strengthen relationships between congregations. We especially pray for our sister congregation, Mpuguso Lutheran Church, Tukuyu, Tanzania. Prosper the work of our Synod Konde Committee. Bind us together in such ways that your name is glorified and that our lives are fuller because of our interconnectedness. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

We remember with thanksgiving all who have died in the faith of the church. (*especially*). Strengthen us in our baptismal callings to serve you faithfully until our journey's end.

Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

We lift up these prayers to you, gracious God. Receive them into your holy keeping we ask 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.

Sit

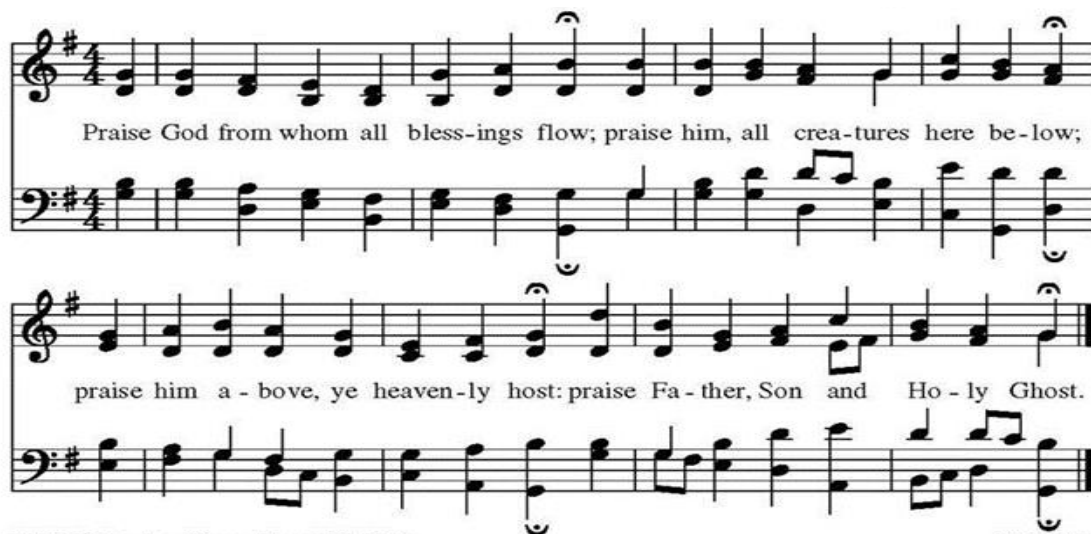
OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS

Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel
Peyton Beech, Baritone

Harry T. Borleigh

Stand

OFFERTORY



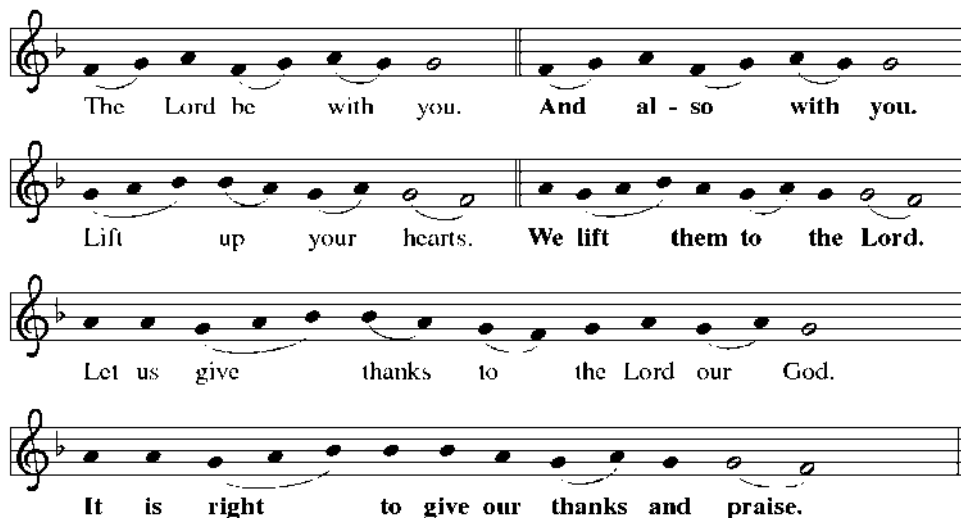
Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow; praise him, all crea-tures here be-low;
praise him a - bove, ye heaven-ly host: praise Fa - ther, Son and Ho - ly Ghost.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Merciful Father,
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

DIALOGUE

Sung by Pastor and congregation



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE *The preface appropriate to the day is sung.*

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 *Sung by all.*

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 God, mighty Lord, gracious Father:

Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign.

You have filled all creation with light and life; heaven and earth are full of your glory.

We praise you for the grace shown to your people in every age:

the promise to Israel, the rescue from Egypt, the gift of the promised land, the words of the prophets; and, at this end of all the ages, the gift of your Son, who proclaimed the good news in word and deed and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup we remember the life our Lord offered for us.

And, believing the witness of his resurrection, we await his coming in power to share with us the great and promised feast.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, that we who share in Christ's body and blood may live to the praise of your glory and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

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**

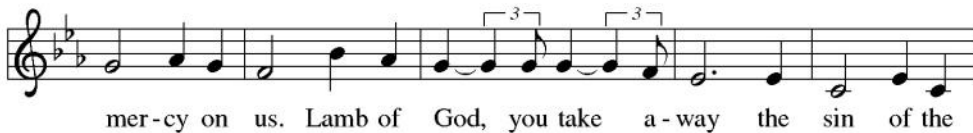
FRACTION RITE

When we eat this bread, we share the body of Christ.

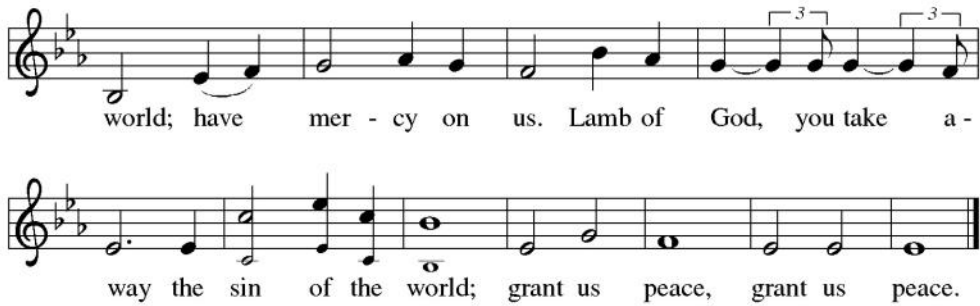
When we drink this cup, we share the blood of Christ.

**Reveal yourself to us, O Lord, in the breaking of the bread, as once you revealed
yourself to your disciples.**

AGNUS DEI *Sung by all.*



Continued on next page...



Sit

COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

Holy Communion at St. Paul's Church is "open" to all believers who trust that the Risen Christ is present for his people in the Holy Eucharist.

Procedure for receiving Communion:

1. Come to communion using the center aisle.
2. Take a communion glass from the tray of glasses.
3. Take your place along the chancel step.
4. The ministers will bring the bread and wine to you.
5. Place the used cup in an empty tray located on a credence table at the side aisle.
6. Return to your pew using the side aisle.

COMMUNION HYMN *Bread of Life from Heaven (ELW 474)*

Refrain

Bread of life from heav-en, your blood and bod - y giv - en,
we eat this bread and drink this cup un - til you come a - gain.

Continued on next page...



1 Break now the bread of Christ's sac - ri - fice; giv - ing
2 Seek not the food that will pass a - way; set your
3 Love as the one who, in love for you, gave him -
4 Dwell in the one who now dwells in you; make your
5 Drink of this cup and de - clare his death; eat this



thanks, hun - gry ones, gath - er round. Eat, all of you, and be
hearts on the food that en - dures. Come, learn the true and the
self for the life of the world. Come to the one who is
home in the life - giv - ing Word. Know on - ly Christ, Ho - ly
bread and be - lieve Eas - ter morn; trust his re - turn and, with



sat - is - fied; in Christ's pres - ence the loaves will a - bound.
liv - ing way, that the full - ness of life may be yours.
food for you, that your hun - ger and thirst be no more.
One of God, and be - lieve in the truth you have heard.
ev - 'ry breath, praise the one in whom you are re - born.

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. In your mercy, 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

Lead on, O King Eternal (ELW 805) next page

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say

Aaron David Miller

Lead On, O King Eternal!

1 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal! The day of march has come;
2 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal, till sin's fierce war shall cease,
3 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal: we fol - low, not with fears,

The first system of the hymn features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

hence-forth in fields of con - quest your tents will be our home.
and ho - li - ness shall whis - per the sweet a - men of peace;
for glad-ness breaks like morn - ing wher - e'er your face ap - pears.

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The treble staff includes a key signature change to one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are aligned with the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes.

Through days of prep - a - ra - tion your grace has made us strong;
for not with swords loud clash - ing, nor roll of stir-ring drums,
Your cross is lift - ed o'er us; we jour - ney in its light;

The third system continues the melody and accompaniment. The treble staff includes a key signature change to one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are aligned with the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes.

and now, O King e - ter - nal, we lift our bat - tle song.
but deeds of love and mer - cy the heav'n - ly king - dom comes.
the crown a - waits the con - quest; lead on, O God of might!

The fourth system concludes the hymn. The treble staff includes a key signature change to one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are aligned with the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The system ends with a double bar line.



*The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God
for all of the youth starting a new school year especially our
daughter starting senior year by Kirsten and Sammy Barnes*

Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Comm. As-sist	Greeters	Ushers	Altar Guild
8-25	9:15 AM	Harold Sargeant	Ken Hinkle	Jennifer Ports	Ken Hinkle or Harold Sargeant	Norma Shue, Gail Kerchner	Team 1L: Dave Kopp, Carol Woodbury, Darren Smith	Early: Ron & Norma Riese Late: Larry & Janet Moore

Thank you everyone who joined us for our Summer Faithful Families together! We had a wonderful time together and we are looking forward to you joining us for Sunday school this fall starting on September 8th at 9:15 AM.

This Week at St. Paul's

Sunday, August 25

9:15 AM Holy Eucharist– Live-Stream
10:30 AM Welcome Back Luncheon
and Presentation for Mission
Delegation—Fellowship Hall
6:30 PM AA Meeting—Christ Hall

Monday, August 26

7:00 PM Mutual Ministry Meeting

Tuesday, August 27

9:30 AM Pantry
6:00 PM Property Committee

Friday, August 31

Office Closed

Sunday, September 1

9:15 AM Holy Eucharist– Live-Stream
6:30 PM AA Meeting—Christ Hall

Monday, September 2

Labor Day
Office Closed

Congratulations to the new parents, Chris and Victoria Waddail,
on the arrival of their baby daughter, Eloise.

We continue to collect clothing in support of Union Lutheran Church, W. Market Street, with their clothing closet. There is a collection bin in the Good Shepherd Room. If you have a large number of items to donate you can take them directly to Union Lutheran Church, simply call them for details.

Food Pantry News—We need **PEANUT BUTTER!** Please put your donations in the shopping cart in the Good Shepherd Room. We are always in need of paper grocery bags with handles and plastic bags. Money donations are gratefully accepted. Please place cash or check in a “special” envelope marked “Pantry”. Volunteers are also needed for a variety of tasks. Contact Patty Snyder, Ken Hinkle Teresa Rohrbaugh or the church office (717-843-8155) to volunteer.

The bus arrived. It was 2:00 AM. The group had gathered with some muted enthusiasm. It would be a long ride to JFK to board a flight headed for Dar es Salam. Before boarding the bus there was prayer for; safety, new friendships, renewed acquaintances and growth in the joy of the gospel. Voices chatted for a bit after boarding the bus, but along the way, the voices fell silent. Passengers configured themselves awkwardly in the tiny bus seats. Most were quiet, some were fast asleep. I seemed to only hear the hum of the bus tires on the pavement. We weren't 2 hours in on a 24 hour trip and my traveling companions remained silent as we sped along the highway headed for New York and the airport.

The disciples have been exceptionally quite as we have sped along through this sixth chapter of John. We pulled into a rest stop week before last and celebrated St. Lawrence. This morning we are back on the road with the gospel writer John. Usually Jesus' traveling companions speak up, share an insight, offer defense for peculiar statements, they are known to ask a question or two, or challenge the wisdom of one thing or another. But for the most part they have more in common with my traveling companions that early June morning on the way to JFK; they have settled into their place, it is as though their headphones are lowered over their ears. They may be listening to Jesus but they have fallen into silence through these nearly seventy verses of scripture, except of course for Peter who is willing to reply to Jesus' question which is at the heart of the journey. ***"Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God."*** At this point in the narrative many of Jesus' disciples, a number greater than the twelve, turned back and no longer went about with him. They, for some reason or other, found it too challenging, to frustrating, to unpredictable, to demanding, to continue on the long journey with Jesus, and so in the language of the text, they "turned back." Now I am happy to say that none from our mission delegation wanted to "turn back" at least they didn't communicate such a sentiment audibly to me!

Turned back is a phrase indicating a return to what is known, believed to be reliable, a retreat to safety. The phrase "turned back" as used by the gospel writer John gives insight into the tensions that have mounted for Jesus' disciples. Their foundations of faith have been battered. Their understandings about who is "in" and who is "out" have been challenged. The demands to grasp new teachings and process what they mean for daily life and living are perplexing. And so we find the followers of Jesus; his disciples, a group greater or other than the designated twelve, they turned back.

This change in direction is noticeable. It isn't a subtle shift in the direction they are heading, it is obvious to Jesus that the momentum, the energy, the signs that they had witnessed, have stretched them beyond comfort. There were plenty of times this June when I think that I stretched the travelers on the mission delegation beyond comfort! (That is a good question to ask when you have an opportunity to talk with one of our travelers about the trip later this morning.) This teaching of Jesus as bread of life, this teaching of eating his flesh and drinking his blood promising life forever, eternal life, that was the point where followers of Jesus turned back. Jesus asks the twelve straight out "do you also wish to go away?" It is Peter who speaks up and responds to the Lord's question. It is Peter who becomes spokesperson for the disciples. ***"Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."***

Our liturgical formula places these words on our lips nearly every week. Most of the time these words are introduced with “alleluias” and concluded with “alleluias” and while this verse is important to our lives of faith, it is the concluding sentence that is the goal of the gospel writer for readers, listeners, followers, disciples, “***we have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.***” It is **in** this powerful affirmation, **through** this powerful affirmation, **with** this powerful affirmation, that we continue to press ahead on the journey.

There were many times when one among our group of travelers became the spokesperson for the group. And I can assure you that not everyone was always in agreement over who the spokesperson should be. At times it seemed like there wasn’t a way forward, or the fear and anxiety of the situation would swallow us up, or that the road ahead was more dangerous than anyone had honestly imagined. However it was the powerful affirmation that we were together in with and through the power of the Holy Spirit that we continued to press ahead on the journey.

As followers of Jesus we are on a journey. It began in baptism and through the work of the Holy Spirit has brought us together in this community of faith. We are gathered here now to hear the Word and receive the Sacrament. Our forbearers embarked on a journey following Jesus believing that worshipers should hear the good news of the Gospel message of Jesus and his love in the English language. In 1836 they believed that worship should be in the same language that they spoke with neighbors, conducted business with merchants, and interacted with family members. They made financial sacrifices necessary to purchase land, build a building, and begin a ministry that has continued for 188 years. Through the decades there were struggles, economic downturns, a Civil War, a flu pandemic, two world wars, multiple buildings, organs, pianos, Sunday school, arson, merger, rebuilding, a massive renovation, another pandemic and most recently a mission trip to Tanzania; All this, to make God’s loving purpose known, all this, to draw us deeply together in Christ Jesus for the up building of his kingdom, all this so that we along with Peter boldly proclaim “***we have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.***”

And now we are sharing the story of our most recent journey to Tanzania. It is a journey that has not left us silent. Downstairs in Fellowship Hall you will hear many voices telling the story of journeying together to be with sisters and brothers at Mpuguso Church, touring classrooms at Manow Lutheran Junior Seminary and witnessing medical conditions at hospitals at Metema and Itate. You will see the beauty of the landscape, the joy of the people, the elegance of animals in their natural habitat; Giraffes, elephants, zebras, impala, monkeys and hippos. You will hear how we have been drawn closer to the Holy One of God, Christ Jesus, from sharing in the journey.

As the miles on the highway passed, and as the daylight began to stream through the bus windows the silence was broken with anticipation for the next leg of the journey. My companions awakened, coffee and breakfast were some of the first mutterings along with the classis phrase “are we there yet?” Christ Jesus tells that food for the journey revives us, conversation engages us, and the joy of being together in one another’s company sustains us. “***Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.***” Amen.

FIRST READING: Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God.

^{2a}And Joshua said to all the people,

¹⁴“Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.

¹⁵Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

¹⁶Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; ¹⁸and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.”

Psalm 34:15-22

SECOND READING: Ephesians 6:10-20

[not printed]

GOSPEL: John 6:56-69

[Jesus said,] “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them.

⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” ⁵⁹He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” ⁶¹But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶²Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. ⁶⁵And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

⁶⁶Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” ⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”