

Whoever
welcomes
one such
child in
my name
welcomes
me

MARK 9:37



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 which is accessed through the double doors front right.

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.

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

stpaulsyork.org

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

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.

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	Julianna Jones	jjones.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
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Secretary	Patee Pizzirusso	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
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Preschool Director	Deb Becker	director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 22, 2024
Holy Communion 8:00 & 10:30 AM
Musical Setting #4 Evangelical Lutheran Worship

TEMPLE TALK

Joyful Givers Sharing Abundantly

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

Making Their Way (ACS 979)

1 Mak-ing their way down through the a - ges, sin - ners and saints have
2 Mak-ing their way all the world o - ver, Chris - tians as - sem - ble
3 Mak-ing our way sea - son by sea-son, pil - grims, we jour - ney



heard God's call: wealth - y and poor, pow - er - ful, low - ly,
on this day, hear - ing the Word, shar - ing the Ban - quet,
till life's end, trav - el - ing light, shar - ing the rich - es,



Je - sus' dis - ci - ples, one and all. Gath - ered for wor - ship, of - fer - ing thanks,
learn - ing to walk in Je - sus' way. Mem - bers of Christ, u - nit - ed in love,
car - ing for strang - er as for friend, till in the joy of long - ing ful - filled,



the great - est with the least have come to share this feast.
they seek our God to know, and so to - geth - er grow.
to - geth - er we will come to our e - ter - nal home.



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. . . Lord God, you call us to work in your vineyard and leave no one standing idle. Set us to our tasks in the work of your kingdom, and help us to order our lives by your wisdom; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Sit

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 11:18-20

(back cover)

PSALM

Psalm 54

sung unaccompanied Cantor/congregation



¹ Save me, O God, | by your name;*
in your might, de- | fend my cause.

² **Hear my | prayer, O God;*
give ear to the words | of my mouth.**

³ For the arrogant have risen up against me, and the ruthless have | sought my life,*
those who have no re- | gard for God.

⁴ **Behold, God | is my helper;*
it is the Lord who sus- | tains my life.**

⁵ Render evil to those who | spy on me;*
in your faithful- | ness, destroy them.

⁶ **I will offer you a | freewill sacrifice*
and praise your name, O LORD, for | it is good.**

⁷ For you have rescued me from | every trouble,*
and my eye has seen the ruin | of my foes.

SECOND READING

James 3:13—4:3, 7-8a

(back cover)

Stand

VERSE

Sung by all



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

Mark 9:30-37

(back cover)

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark.

At the conclusion of the Gospel.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Pastor Reep

Stand

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.

Loving God, instill in the church a spirit of humility and curiosity. We pray especially for ministries of hospitality and faith formation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Curb our habits of overuse, and guide us toward more sustainable sources of energy, food, and water. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Encourage peace among peoples, tribes, and nations; heal divisions in our country and local communities, that together we might cooperate for the good of all. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Bring healing and wholeness to all who suffer (*especially*). Transform economic, political, and social systems that oppress vulnerable people, especially systems of structural racism and generational poverty. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Help us to see where you are calling us to live the gospel promise; assure us that even as change brings loss, it also brings hope and life with you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Grant peace to all who have died, console those who mourn, and at the last, gather us around your heavenly throne. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We entrust these and all our prayers to you, holy God, in the name of your beloved Son, 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

8:00 AM

Do This in Remembrance of Me

Dale Wood

10:30 AM

Handbell Choir

Jesus and His Love

arr. Ben Tucker

Stand

OFFERTORY

The musical score is written for a handbell choir in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

System 1:

Treble staff: Praise God, from Whom all bless-ings flow; Praise Him, all crea-tures here be-low;

Bass staff: (Handbell accompaniment)

System 2:

Treble staff: Praise Him a-bove, ye heav'n-ly host; Praise Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Ghost! A-men.

Bass staff: (Handbell accompaniment)

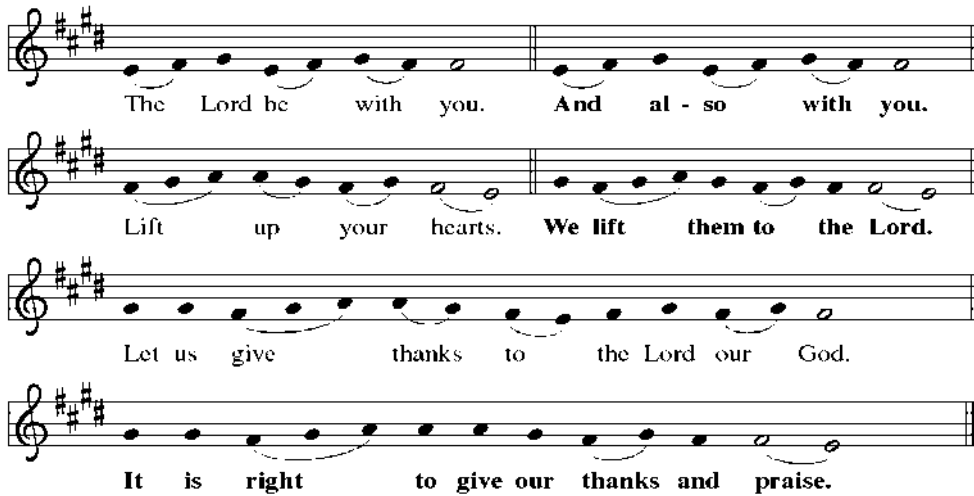
OFFERTORY PRAYER

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.

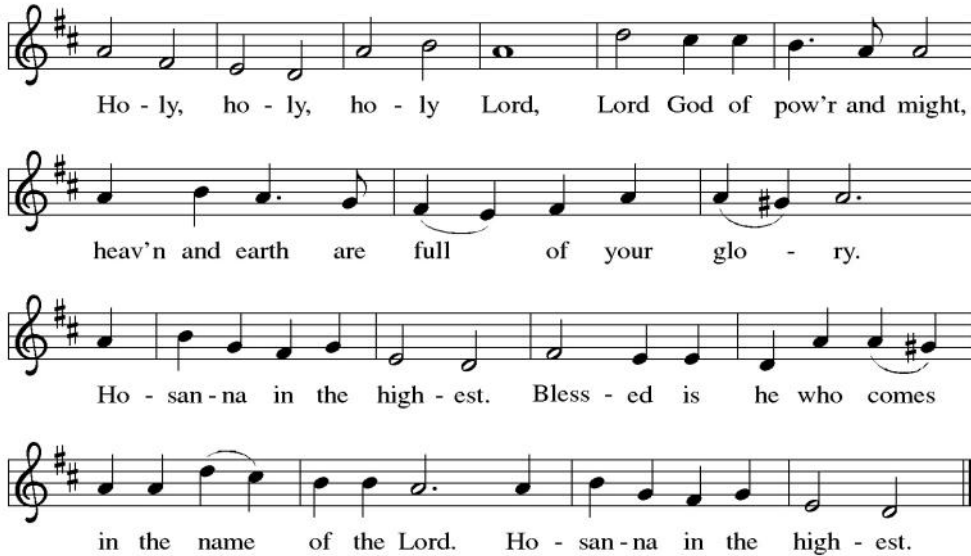
The musical notation is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff has a double bar line after the first measure. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words hyphenated across measures.

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'r and might,
heav'n 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.

The musical notation is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words hyphenated across measures.

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 *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

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 host 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 *Children of the Heavenly Father (ELW 781)*

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of two systems. The first system contains the first four lines of the hymn, and the second system contains the next four lines. The lyrics are printed below the vocal staves, with some words in italics. The music features a mix of single notes, dyads, and triads, with a steady harmonic accompaniment in the bass line.

Tryg - ga - re kan ing - en va - ra än Guds lil - la bar - na - ska - ra,
1 Chil - dren of the heav'n-ly Fa - ther safe - ly in his bo - som gath - er;
2 God his own doth tend and nour-ish, in his ho - ly courts they flour-ish.
3 Nei - ther life nor death shall ev - er from the Lord his chil - dren sev - er;
4 Though he giv - eth or he tak - eth, God his chil - dren ne'er for - sak - eth;

stjär - nan ej på him - la - fäs - tet, få - getn ej i kån - da näs - tet.
nest - ling bird nor star in heav - en such a ref - uge e'er was giv - en.
From all e - vil things he spares them, in his might - y arms he bears them.
un - to them his grace he show - eth, and their sor - rows all he know - eth.
his the lov - ing pur - pose sole - ly to pre - serve them pure and ho - ly.

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

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service (ELW 712) next page

DISMISSAL

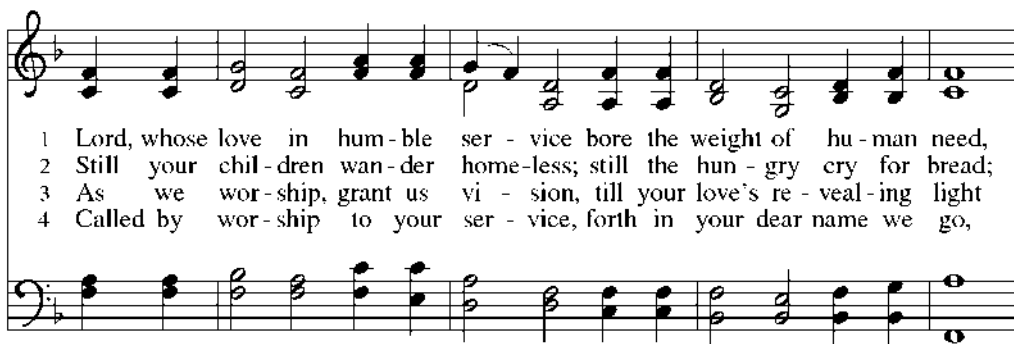
Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

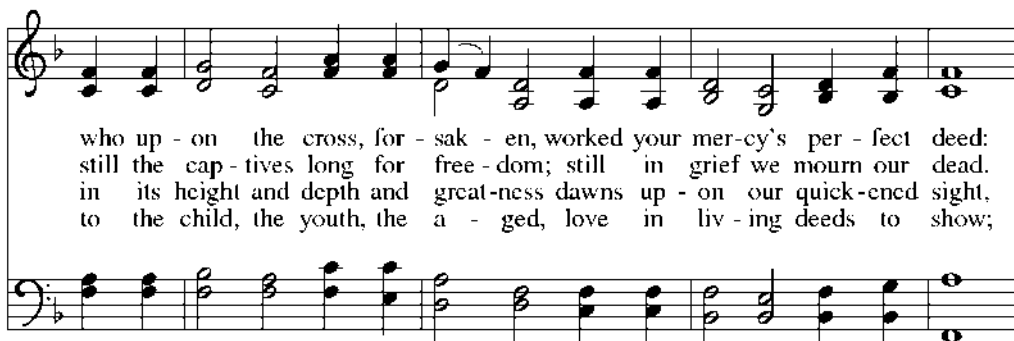
Sinfonia

Daniel Gawthrop

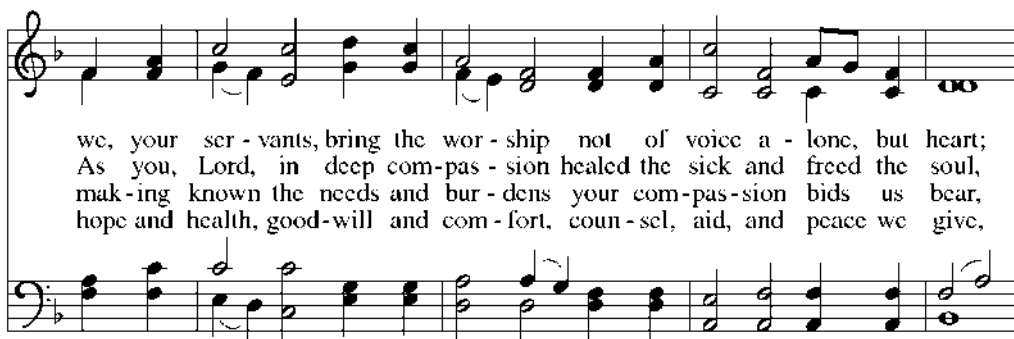
Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service



1 Lord, whose love in hum-ble ser - vice bore the weight of hu-man need,
2 Still your chil-dren wan-der home-less; still the hun - gry cry for bread;
3 As we wor-ship, grant us vi - sion, till your love's re - veal-ing light
4 Called by wor-ship to your ser - vice, forth in your dear name we go,



who up - on the cross, for - sak - en, worked your mer-cy's per - fect deed:
still the cap - tives long for free - dom; still in grief we mourn our dead.
in its height and depth and great-ness dawns up - on our quick-ened sight,
to the child, the youth, the a - ged, love in liv - ing deeds to show;



we, your ser - vants, bring the wor - ship not of voice a - lone, but heart;
As you, Lord, in deep com-pas - sion healed the sick and freed the soul,
mak-ing known the needs and bur - dens your com-pas-sion bids us bear,
hope and health, good-will and com - fort, coun - sel, aid, and peace we give,



con - se - crat - ing to your pur - pose ev - 'ry gift which you im - part.
by your Spir - it send your pow - er to our world to make it whole.
stir-ring us to ar - dent ser - vice, your a - bun - dant life to share.
that your ser - vants, Lord, in free - dom may your mer - cy know and live.

Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Live Stream	Greeters	Ushers	Altar Guild
9/22	8:00 AM	Harold Sargeant	Ken Hinkle	Bob Reed		Bob & Connie Reed	Team 1E: Jeff Riese, John Monk, Alex Bastian	Melissa & Tim Yakim
	10:30 AM	Tonya Cave	Larry Moore	Peggy Jacobs	Allen Reep	Carl & Peggy Jacobs	Team 1L: Dave Kopp, Carol Woodbury, Darren Smith	Janet Fitch,

This Week at St. Paul's

Sunday, September 22

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist
 9:15 AM Sunday School for all ages
 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist—Live-Stream Handbells
 3:00 PM Cottage Meeting
 6:30 PM AA Meeting—Christ Hall
 7:00 PM Cottage Meeting

Monday, September 23

7:00 PM Mutual Ministry

Tuesday, September 24

9:30 AM Pantry
 6:00 PM Create—Preschool thru Grade 6
 6:00 PM Property Committee

Wednesday, September 25

10:00 AM Preschool & Pastor—Nave
 10:30 AM Bible Study—Christ Hall

Thursday, September 26

10:00 AM Preschool & Pastor—Nave
 6:30 PM Handbell Choir—Nave
 7:30 PM Chancel Choir—Choir Room

Sunday, September 29

St. Michael & All Angels

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist
 9:15 AM Sunday School for all ages
 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist—Live-Stream
 3:00 PM Cottage Meetings
 6:30 PM AA Meeting—Christ Hall

We thank Rev. William Snyder for Presiding today at the 10:30 AM liturgy.

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.

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.

Altar Care—Now that we have returned to two liturgies please note that 8:00 AM Altar Guild will only need to clean up and reset for the 10:30 AM Liturgy. The set up for the 8:00 AM liturgy will take place on Thursday evening. This permits the 8:00 AM group to simply come in time for the liturgy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Religious education resumed last week with classes for all ages. A complete listing is included in the September/October issue of the *Our Church* newsletter. This includes catechetical instruction. .

Music and Create—Age 3 through Grade 6

We began last Tuesday evening, 6:00 PM—7:15 PM

Welcome back to Music and Create! Please come and enjoy making art and music with your friends. We are looking forward to this opportunity for our families with young children to engage in music and art while also having the opportunity to connect with other families. The program is designed for children ages 3 through grade 6. We divide the children into two age groups, age 3 through grade 1 and grade 2

Harvest Dinner

Saturday October 19, 2024

Make your reservations through the church office.



October 19th is the Harvest Dinner and Auction to benefit the ongoing work and needs of the Food Pantry.

The cost of the dinner is \$125 per person. This includes the wine and beer pairings, a delicious gourmet meal, dessert, and the entertaining interactions as members and friends try to outbid one another for the original artwork and hand crafted items. And please remember there are 24 fabulous silent auction items!

For families within the congregation there is a parallel track available that evening providing childcare, dinner (a kid friendly menu) and activities for your child or children age 3 and up. Their part of the evening will be held on the upper level in the Youth Room. Advise the church office if you desire this for your child when you make your reservations. There is no charge for your child. The hope is that more of our St. Paul's families with younger children will be able to participate in the event and support the work of the Food Pantry.



The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God
In recognition of the 55th Anniversary of Ordination of the Rev.
George W. Fitch and in grateful appreciation of his faithful service
to Christ and his Church by the Church Council.

There are dates open for altar flower sponsors in October and November.

Please sign up on the sheet on the Springettsbury entrance bulletin board and fill out the sentiment sheet. One vase is \$35.00

Joyful Givers Sharing Abundantly Stewardship Event – Cottage Meetings in September



The congregation's stewardship emphasis is featured during the month of September. The theme picks up on the Joyful nature of giving and sharing out of abundance. The mission trip to Tanzania in June permitted many of us to witness the joyful spirit of sisters and brothers at Mpuguso church giving and sharing. They did so out of their abundance. Their abundance however looks very different from the abundance, affluence, and economic advantage that we experience at home in York.

Cheerful is the biblical word most associated with giving of our first fruits. St. Paul addressed the early church at Corinth and reminded the congregation in his second letter that givers make up their minds to give. It doesn't just happen. It is an intentional thoughtful act. The stewardship cottage meetings are scheduled for that reason, so that we can gather together as members of a faith community, receive stewardship materials, and then with intentional thought take action to share abundantly for the up-building of the church and her mission to the world.

In September you will be given the opportunity to meet together in a small group cottage meeting. When you receive your invitation via email (for those who do not have an email address the invitation will be sent US mail), do adjust your calendar to attend, do notify the host family of your intention to participate, do pray that the Holy Spirit will increase in us the spirit of generosity so that on October 6, 2024, Commitment Sunday,

Adult Education Continues this fall Christ Hall

Sunday morning adult education is offered at 9:15 AM in Christ Hall. The fall of the year is divided into three sections with two intergenerational events. The first session is "Living the Liturgy" and concludes on October 6. The second session is "Living the Catechism" and draws upon Luther's Small Catechism. It will be led by Pastor Snyder. The third session is "Living the Gospel of Luke" and draws upon themes used by the evangelist. It will be led by Pastor Reep. The intergenerational events will facilitate the men and women of the congregation meeting to encourage a men's group and to reactivate a women's group. Chris Lipp and Alexis Heistand will be on hand to help guide those sessions. And because of the overwhelming positive response to the Jesse Tree Story event we have placed it back on the calendar! Pastor Reep will guide us through the story of salvation made known through the Old and New Testaments.

First Session "Living the Liturgy" Pastor Reep (Meets in Christ Hall)
October 6 Preface, Sanctus, Eucharistic Prayer, Fraction, Distribution, Sending

Christ in Our Home booklets for Oct-Dec are available at the nave entryways and the Springettsbury entrance.

In the life of a congregation there are always members who are astonished, confused, and upset by the actions taken to move the faith community forward. During these Sunday afternoons and evenings of cottage meetings I have been privy to some such responses. What is usually off the radar of those who are astonished, confused, and upset are a group of elected leaders, congregation council members, who linger in the background. They are working out the logistics of how to make a way forward when things are going smoothly and when difficult situations arise. They aren't better than others in the faith community, simply set apart for specific tasks. As pastor, I am one among those leaders who is often the subject of the astonishing, confusing and upsetting actions that have occurred.

Leadership either provides for a way forward allowing for a future or permits the status quo to dominate and the people often languish. Jeremiah is frustrated by the dominate attitudes and actions of the people of Israel. They have more than drifted from God; they have actually embraced the culture and religious norms that are in direct opposition with the covenant that God made with them. Now that Jeremiah has spoken out against them they are astonished, confused and upset. They think that the prophet is out of touch. The prophet wants the Lord God to bring retribution upon them. Such retribution would support the prophet's words. At this point in the story, it is hard for the people or for Jeremiah to imagine, comprehend, or understand how God is at work making a way forward, providing a future.

We have witnessed the crowds reacting to the ministry of Jesus in the region around Galilee. Jesus is making a way forward. Some in that region are astonished at what Jesus is doing. Some of them are confused by what Jesus is doing. Some of them are even upset by his actions. And while all of this is going on there are twelve disciples lingering in the background. This is recorded in the first part of the Gospel of St. Mark. Last week we reached a turning point with Jesus asking the disciples straight out "*who do you say that I am?*" This morning Jesus is moving the disciples and us forward. He tells them again what will happen as they move from the beautiful place, Galilee, where Jesus called them, to the city Jerusalem, where he will be betrayed into human hands, and be killed, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.

Along the way, the disciples have been keeping their eyes open. They have seen what Jesus can do. The list is getting rather lengthy. By chapter 9, blind eyes have been opened. Sick people have been made well. The hungry were fed. Jesus chose the disciples to follow and to join him on the journey. Now Jesus is focusing on them. They begin to think that it is their time to bask in all of the greatness that is surrounding Jesus. The healing, and feeding, and making whole witnessed by the crowds, now Jesus has directed his attention on them. It was inevitable that they would begin to think that they had something over the rest of the crowds. If they were "in," then of course one or more of them would be just a little bit better, greater, more advanced, than some others who were called to tag along.

One of the disciples must have been bold enough to put himself out there as the greatest, best, first, favorite. Image this after last week when we heard Jesus' rebuke of Peter. Peter had been

in that position but after his encounter with Jesus, I think it rather bold to even bring up who is first. But they argued just the same about who was indeed the greatest. They kept walking until they reached Capernaum. They miss the point of the things that Jesus is doing and asking. They somehow think that it's about them. Which one among them is the greatest? When asked about their discussion along the road, the disciples fell silent. I think that the disciples really did hear Jesus when he brought up the primary role servant hood plays in his realm. But before they had a chance to seek clarity on serving, Jesus propels the story with the important part that follows. Jesus takes a child, places the child among them, and embraces the child. Then he says, *"Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."*

Children did not have any status in Bible times. Unfortunately they were thought less of than women were at that time. Children didn't count, were not given a place, let alone be seen as having worth or value. Jesus is communicating something really important about greatness to the twelve. He is communicating something about leadership and making a way forward. Leadership has everything to do with servanthood. And servanthood is bound to bring astonishment, confusion and upset. Servant hood is not about title, fame, appreciation, attention, or status. In Baptism we are welcomed into the community of faith. We are embraced by Christ and are given a place at his table, a life to be lived in love, an identity as heir of his kingdom, and a promise that is equal for all who believe and call upon him to be saved. The disciples on that day as they traveled to Capernaum thought for sure that at least one among them was the greatest, that one of them must be a little bit more important, a little more worthy than were his counterparts. It is such thinking that often leads to astonishment, confusion, and upset.

Sentiments such as these are far too common. They plague nations, politicians, churches, pastors, community organizations, athletes, musicians, physicians, educators, entertainers, news anchors, school boards, law enforcement, accountants, attorneys, CEOs and all whose prejudices blind them from reaching out to those who have no status, place, or position. Often I am silent because I know all too well that I have not lived fully into my baptismal calling. It is easy for me, for us to slip into the mindset of the inner group of the twelve. Easy for us to begin to think more highly of ourselves than what it is that we bring to the table. We forget that discipleship is the work that Jesus calls us to, so that everyone arrives together at God's promised destination. Through disciples like you and me, God is at work making a way forward.

Today, it is Christ Jesus who welcomes us, who calls us to His table of love and forgiveness. We are given position and status only through the One who was willing to suffer for our sake. There is only one who is the greatest and that is Christ Jesus. All of us are called to follow, to serve, and to love, as we travel the road to Jerusalem. Along the way some will be astonished, some will be confused, while others will be upset. Each of us is needed, each of us is redeemed, and each of us is loved, because Christ made the trip to Jerusalem, to suffer and die and to be raised up, so that through him we have life and salvation. This is the journey to which we have been called through Christ Jesus. Leadership has servant hood as its trademark. Along the way we welcome children and all who lack position or title. That is what our Lord models as he makes a way forward permitting us to arrive together at the promised destination. Amen.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 11:18-20

It was the LORD who made it known to me,
and I knew;
then you showed me their evil deeds.
¹⁹But I was like a gentle lamb
led to the slaughter.
And I did not know it was against me
that they devised schemes, saying,
“Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,
let us cut him off from the land of the
living,
so that his name will no longer be
remembered!”
²⁰But you, O LORD of hosts, who judge
righteously,
who try the heart and the mind,
let me see your retribution upon them,
for to you I have committed my cause.

or Wisdom 1:16—2:1, 12-22 [not printed]

Psalm 54

SECOND READING: James 3:13—4:3, 7-8a

Who is wise and understanding among you?
Show by your good life that your works are
done with gentleness born of wisdom. ¹⁴But
if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in
your hearts, do not be boastful and false to
the truth. ¹⁵Such wisdom does not come down
from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish.
¹⁶For where there is envy and selfish ambition,
there will also be disorder and wickedness of
every kind. ¹⁷But the wisdom from above is
first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to
yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a
trace of partiality or hypocrisy. ¹⁸And a harvest

of righteousness is sown in peace for those
who make peace.

^{4:1}Those conflicts and disputes among you,
where do they come from? Do they not come
from your cravings that are at war within you?
²You want something and do not have it; so you
commit murder. And you covet something and
cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and
conflicts. You do not have, because you do not
ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you
ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on
your pleasures. ⁷Submit yourselves therefore
to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from
you. ⁸Draw near to God, and he will draw near
to you.

GOSPEL: Mark 9:30-37

[Jesus and the disciples went on] and passed
through Galilee. He did not want anyone to
know it; ³¹for he was teaching his disciples,
saying to them, “The Son of Man is to be be-
trayed into human hands, and they will kill
him, and three days after being killed, he
will rise again.” ³²But they did not understand
what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

³³Then they came to Capernaum; and when
he was in the house he asked them, “What
were you arguing about on the way?” ³⁴But
they were silent, for on the way they had ar-
gued with one another who was the greatest.
³⁵He sat down, called the twelve, and said to
them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last
of all and servant of all.” ³⁶Then he took a lit-
tle child and put it among them; and taking it
in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷“Whoever wel-
comes one such child in my name welcomes
me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not
me but the one who sent me.”