

WHOEVER WELCOMES YOU WELCOMES ME

MATTHEW 10:40



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 190 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.

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

Restrooms are available in the Good Shepherd Room (Springettsbury Ave) and the narthex (George St). Baby changing stations are provided in these restrooms as well as in the nursery.

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 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

*The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God in loving memory of
Shirley Thornton, beloved Sister and Aunt by the Vaught Family*

We extend our appreciation and thanks to all of the instrumentalists for their musical leadership.

STAFF		
Pastor	Rev. Stanley Reep	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Visitation Pastor	Rev. Dan Yeiser	st.paulsyork@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
Children's Choir Director	Julianna Jones	jjones.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Secretary	Patee Pizzirusso	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Sexton	Ted Weikert	tweikert.stpaulsyork@gmail.com
Preschool Director	Deb Becker	presch.stpaulsyork@comcast.net

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

June 28, 2026

Holy Communion 9:30 AM

Musical Setting 5 With One Voice

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Be Still, My Soul

arr. R.W. Smith

Stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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.

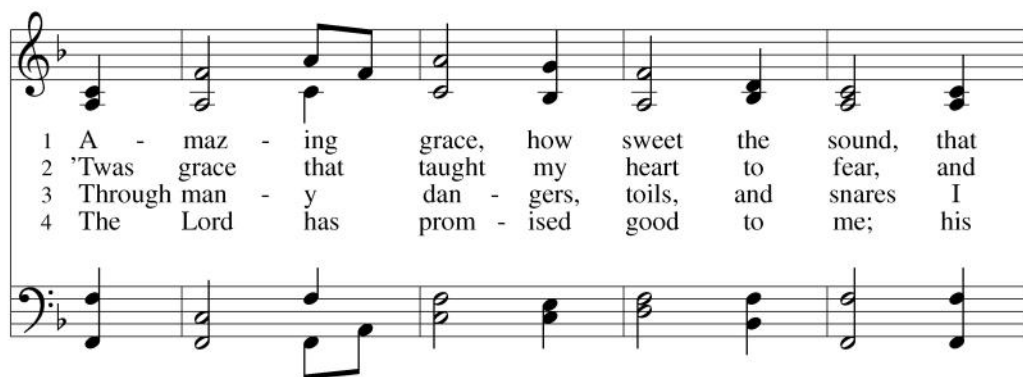
Most merciful God,

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

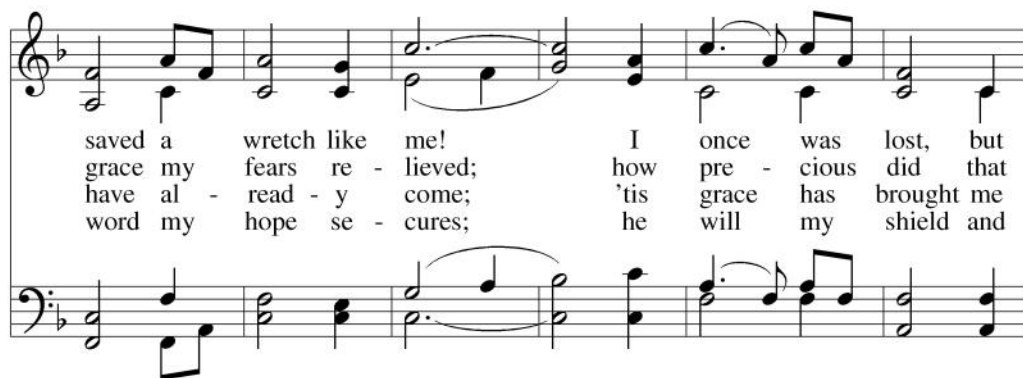
In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the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

ENTRANCE HYMN

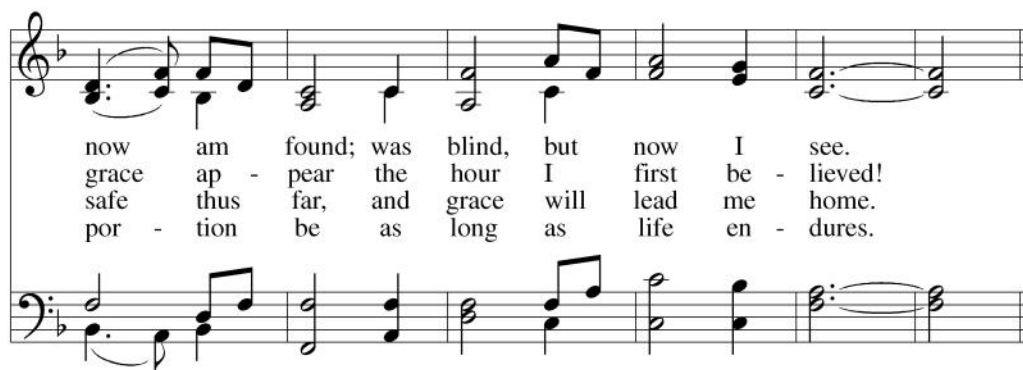
Amazing Grace (LBW 448)



1 A - maz - ing grace, how sweet the sound, that
2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and



now am found; was blind, but now I see.
grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
por - tion be as long as life en - dures.

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. . . O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond understanding. Pour into our hearts such love for you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Sit

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FIRST LESSON **Jeremiah 28:5-9** *back cover*

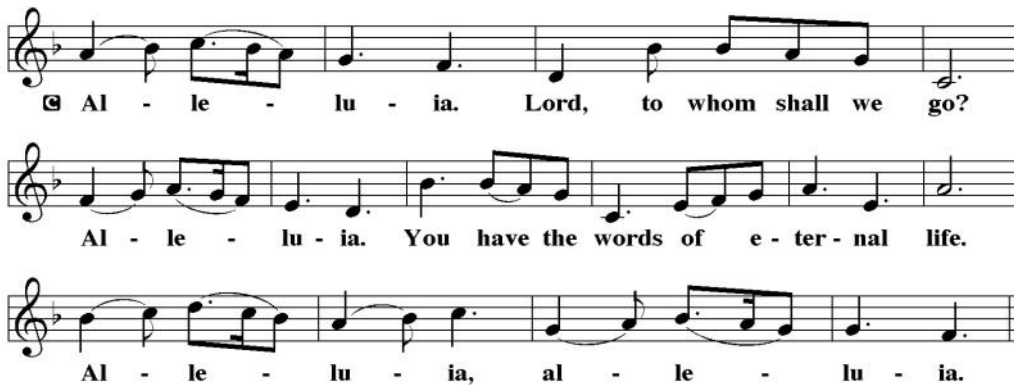
PSALM **Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18** sung unaccompanied cantor/congregation

- ¹ Your love, O LORD, forever | will I sing;*
from age to age my mouth will pro- | claim your faithfulness.
- ² **For I am persuaded that your love is estab- | lished forever;***
you have set your faithfulness firmly | in the heavens.
- ³ "I have made a covenant with my | chosen one;*
I have sworn an oath to Da- | vid my servant:
- ⁴ **"I will establish your | line forever,***
and preserve your throne for all | generations."
- ¹⁵ Happy are the people who know the | festal shout!*
They walk, O LORD, in the light | of your presence.
- ¹⁶ **They rejoice daily | in your name;***
they are jubilant | in your righteousness.
- ¹⁷ For you are the glory | of their strength,*
and by your favor our might | is exalted.
- ¹⁸ **Truly, the LORD | is our ruler;***
the Holy One of Israel | is our king.

SECOND LESSON **Romans 6:12-23** *back cover*

Stand

ALLELUIA



HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 10:40-42

(back cover)

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

At the conclusion of the Gospel.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Pastor Stanley 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

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray to God our Father for the church and the needs of the world.

A brief silence.

Faithful God, we pray for the church. Help us be a place of welcome and peace. Nourish us so we can proclaim your hope to the world. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Bring life to places experiencing drought, deforestation, and pollution. Help us to cultivate and care for the natural world around us. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Bring an end to conflict and division (*places experiencing division may be named*). Sustain the work of prophets in our time, and work through world leaders to foster understanding, justice, and peace. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Give your children what they need physically, emotionally, and spiritually. (*We pray especially for . . .*) Bless caregivers as they show God's hospitality through their generous service. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Lead us from death to life. Inspire new ministries and endeavors, renew established ones, and strengthen our welcoming presence to our neighbors. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Eternal God, we remember the faithful departed of this community and of the wider church and world. We give thanks for saints of all times and places (*like Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons whom the church remembers today*). God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Almighty God, we commend to your gracious care and keeping all the men and women of our armed forces at home and abroad. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils that surround them; and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be, God of grace,,

hear our prayer.

Into your hands we commend all for whom we pray trusting in your mercy through your 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

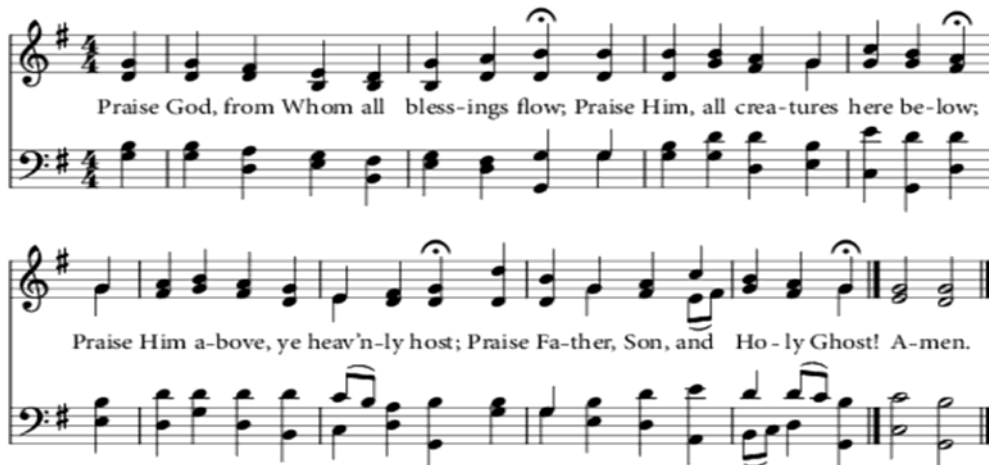
Adante

J. Guy-Ropartz

Duet Harrison Palmer, Piano; James Palmer, Trumpet

Stand

OFFERTORY



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

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

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Blessed are you,

O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

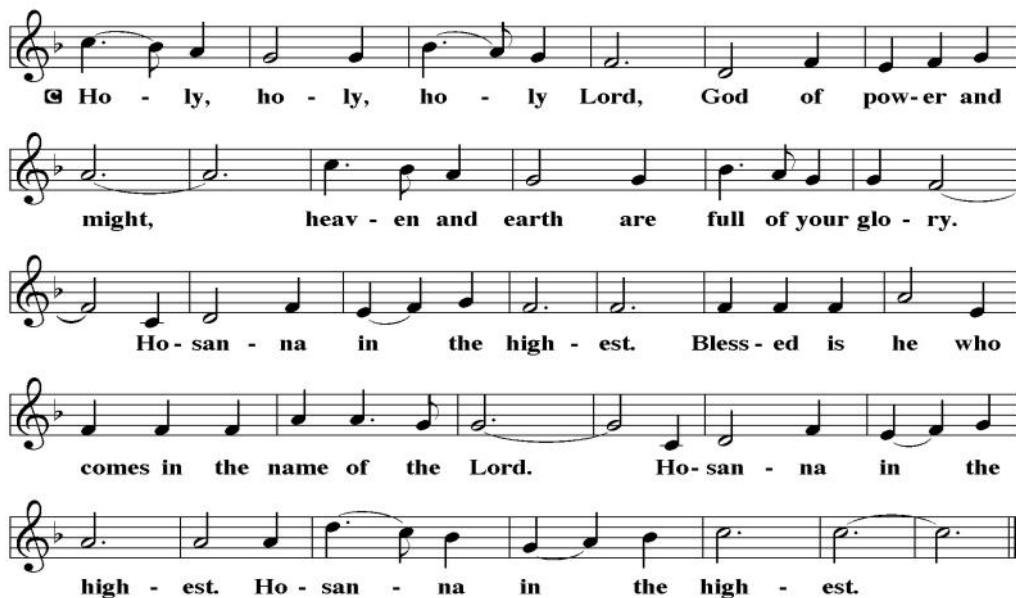
DIALOGUE *Spoken by Pastor and congregation*

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

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

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, 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. 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 in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

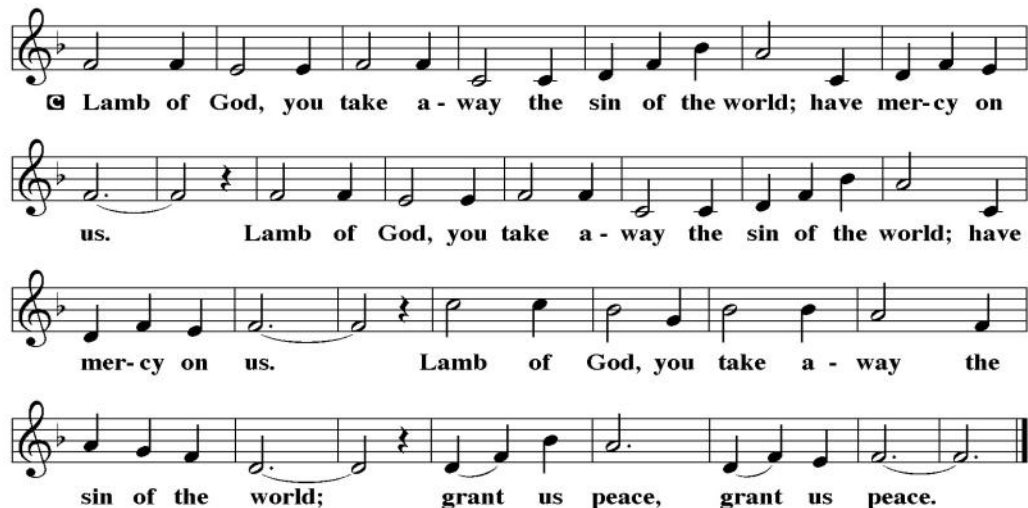
FRACTION RITE

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



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

Our Communion is “open” to all believers who trust that the Risen Christ is present for his people in the Holy Eucharist. We receive communion by common loaf and pouring chalice today.

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 *Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God (WOV 783) next page*
Accompanied by Julianna & Frederick Jones on piano and violin

COMMUNION INSTRUMENTAL *Olde English Hymn* arr. J. Swearingen

Stand

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

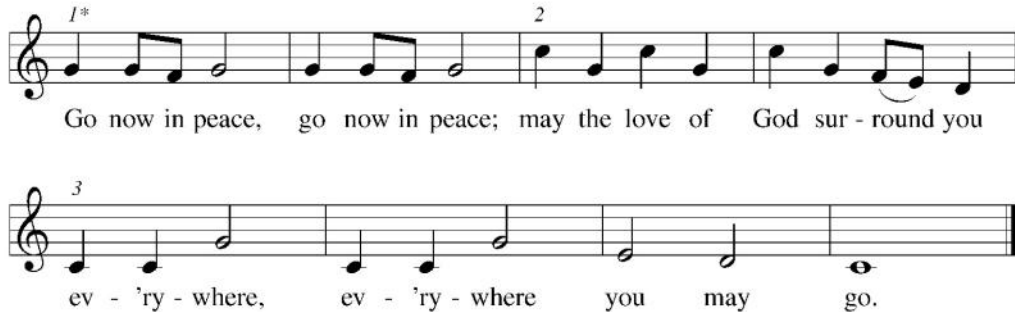
POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

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

BLESSING

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

HYMN *Go Now in Peace (Life Songs 108) sung three times*



**may be sung as a round*

DISMISSAL

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

Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God

783

Descant

Al - le - lu - ia, al -

1 Seek ye . . . first the king - dom of God and its
2 Ask and it shall be giv - en un - to you; seek and
3 We do not live by bread . . . a - lone, but by

D F#m G D G

le - lu - ia, al - le -

righ - teous - ness, and all these things shall be
you shall find; knock and the door shall be
ev - 'ry word that pro - ceeds from the

D Em A⁷ D F#m

lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

add - ed un - to you. Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia.
o - pened un - to you. Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia.
mouth . . of . . . God. Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia.

G D G D Em A D

This Week at St. Paul's

Church office open Mon–Thurs 8:00 AM—3:30 PM, Fri. Office Closed

Sunday, June 28

9:30 AM Holy Eucharist
10:30 AM Summer Fellowship
6:30 PM AA Meeting—Community Rm

Monday, June 29

7:00 PM Worship & Arts—Good Shepherd Rm

Tuesday, June 30

9:30 AM NO Pantry

Sunday, July 5

9:30 AM Holy Eucharist
10:30 AM Summer Fellowship
6:30 PM AA Meeting—Community Rm

Monday, July 6 Office Closed

Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Greeters	Ushers -	Altar Guild	Bread Bakers
6/28	9:30 AM	Tristan Ericson	Jaclyn Kinkella	Ann Ulrich	Frank & Carol Tyminski, Martina Uffelman, Norma Shue	Team 1L: Dave Kopp, Scott Donaldson, Darren Smith, Kass Keleta	Kat Lemke, Janet Fitch	Jessica Ericson

Altar Flowers beautify our worship space. Please consider providing flowers for an upcoming Sunday. The chart is posted on the Springettsbury Ave. bulletin board. The cost is \$40 per vase.

It is not too late to **volunteer to share your musical talent** during the summer months. A sign-up sheet is available on the stand in the Good Shepherd Room. The Worship and Arts Committee has already begun their work of arranging for instrumentalists and ensembles for Sundays while Victor is on sabbatical.

St. Paul's Food Pantry Needs: Peanut Butter, Cereal, plastic and paper shopping bags. Monetary donations can be placed in a special envelope marked "Pantry". Contact Teresa Rohrbaugh to volunteer for Tuesday distribution days. Contact Patty Snyder to volunteer for Thursday delivery days or Sunday stocking days or contact the church office. Thank you to all who help!

The Worship and Arts Committee in conjunction with the Congregation Council welcomes your feedback and insights regarding our Sunday morning worship schedule. In preparation for fall planning a decision will soon be made regarding time or times for the Sunday Holy Eucharist. Please communicate with a member of the committee or council soon. Thank you.

Summer Fellowship Time

Thank you to everyone who signed up to help. There remain a few slots open where items or help is needed. Know that you may bring something to augment the assigned theme. Thank you!

Date	Theme and help needed
July 5	<i>Fruit & Yogurt</i>
July 12	<i>Sandwiches.</i> We need two people to make a dozen sandwiches and cut them diagonally in half.
July 19	<i>Muffins.</i> 1 Helper/Host is needed.
July 26	<i>Deviled eggs, Ham & Cheese rollups</i> —1 person needed for food
August 2	<i>Cupcakes.</i> 1 Helper/Host is needed.
August 9	<i>Sandwiches.</i> We need one person to make a dozen sandwiches and cut them diagonally in half.
August 16	<i>Cinnamon rolls/buns.</i> 1 Helper/Host is needed.
August 30	<i>Fruit & Yogurt.</i> 1 Helper/Host is needed.
September 6	<i>Brownies.</i> 1 Helper/Host is needed and 1 person to bring brownies

The sign-up sheet remains on the stand in the Good Shepherd Room.

St Paul's collects clothing for Union Lutheran Church's Clothing Ministry and your help is requested. Union collects 'gently used' clothing (and shoes) for its clothing closet and offers it **free of charge** to needy families in the York City community. A bin has been placed in the Good Shepherd room to collect any clothing you would like to donate. These donations will surely be a blessing to our neighbors. Union's volunteers are very appreciative of our cooperation and our help. If you have large donations you may take them directly to Union Lutheran Church. Simply call them to arrange a time.



A Partnership Between Local Churches & LifePath Thrift Stores

Please remember to donate your no longer needed items to LifePath Thrift Stores. The stores then return a portion of the value of these items in the form of gift cards to your church to help those directly in your care.

How Does the Partnership Work?

Individuals or families donate their gently used items to LifePath Thrift Stores (formerly York Rescue Mission). Three locations: 2414 Eastern Boulevard, 283 West Market Street, and in the South York Plaza.

The LifePath Thrift Stores employee serving them will ask the name of their church. (St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 25 W Springettsbury Ave, York). We need to be specific as there are multiple St. Paul's Lutheran Churches.

Donors are still able to take advantage of the tax-deduction with every gift to LifePath Thrift Stores.

St. Paul's is signed up to partner with LifePath. Please keep LifePath in mind when you are cleaning out/decluttering. Visit LifePathYork.org for additional information.





We are delighted to add to our ministry staff The Rev. Daniel Yeiser. Pastor Yeiser will be providing pastoral care through visitation. The current arrangement has Pastor Yeiser working part-time on Wednesdays. We thank the Mutual Ministry Committee for their work in preparing for additional staffing hours, to the Congregation Council for their final approval, and to the congregation for recognizing this need and acting during the 2025 Annual Meeting last November. Please extend your greeting and welcome to Pastor Yeiser when next you see him during worship, coffee hour or at other congregation events.

Called for Service, Peace, Instruction & Renewal the theme for the 2026/27 stewardship emphasis highlights four aspects of our baptismal life. Work is underway now in preparation for our fall events. Helpers are always needed and welcome as we prepare. If you would like to aid in this important work, please notify the church office. There are many aspects to the campaign; preparing print materials, writing skits, actors for the skits, coordinating a “Thank You” dinner, cooking, setting up, cleaning up, providing Temple Talks, and leading discussions during the Sunday education time. Please prayerfully consider how you can share your gifts for the building up of the faith community.



Thank you to everyone who helped with Vacation Bible School and the culminating picnic. *Make me a Servant* helped the children deepen their understanding of what it means to be part of God’s kingdom. They learned about angelic messengers, Paul’s once hostile attitude toward Christians, the joy of hearing God’s word, baptism, and sending greetings to those who need to hear Good News. Thank you for making it a great week for the children of St. Paul’s.

Calling all crocheters and knitters. Last November we gave out over 200 scarves to our pantry shoppers. It’s time to start making scarves again for November 2026. The only suggestion is that scarves are about 4 ½ - 5 feet long and about 6 inches wide. When you finish a few scarves, put them in the pantry shopping cart in the Good Shepherd Room with your name on the bag. We extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to everyone who provided the amazing scarves. Let’s see if we can surpass last year’s number!



Serving schedule for July and August

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Greeters	Ushers -	Early: Altar Set-up Late: Altar Clean -up	Bread Bakers
7/5	9:30 AM	Harold Sargeant	Jennifer Ports	Chris Lipp	Ann & Axel Unrich, Kem & Cindy Vaught	Team 2E: Ron Riese, Kathy Monk, Ken Hinkle, Alex Bastian	Janet & Larry Moore	Justine Donaldson
7/12	9:30 AM	Larry Moore	Allison Lehr	Bob Reed	Scott & Johanna Wagner, Amelia & Michael West	Team 2L: Kem Vaught, Gail Kerchner, Sandy Dickensheets	Janet & Larry Moore	Janet Moore
7/19	9:30 AM	Ken Hinkle	James Palmer	Carolyn Kapoun	Carol Woodbury, Tim & Melissa Yakim	Team 3E: Norma Shue, Cliff Beck, Sheridan Palmer	Kathy Monk, Lois Ann Schroeder	Janet Fitch
7/26	9:30 AM	Patty Snyder	Larry Becker	Connie Reed	Dan & Christy Yeiser, Barb Young, Sharon Diazcum	Team 3L: Dan Garber, Joe Guarriello, Larry Becker	Kathy Monk, Lois Ann Schroeder	Pat Rudacille
8/2	9:30 AM	Harrison Palmer	Jaclyn Kinkella	Emily Reep	Bob & Judy Hoover, Matt & Betsy Herrington	Team 1E: Jeff Riese, John Monk, Alex Bastian, Claudia Deitrich	Tim & Melissa Yakim	Johanna Patterson
8/9	9:30 AM	James Palmer	Tim Yakim	Patty Snyder	Ann Anstadt, Alex & Erin Bastian	Team 1L: Dave Kopp, Scott Donaldson, Darren Smith, Kass Keleta	Tim & Melissa Yakim	Nancy Bennett
8/16	9:30 AM	Aaron Jacobs	Allison Lehr	Rev William Snyder	Cliff & Jjanine Beck, Deb & Larry Becker	Team 2E: Ron Riese, Kathy Monk, Ken Hinkle, Alex Bastian	Janet Fitch, Sandy Dickensheets	Abby Jacobs
8/23	9:30 AM	Janet Fitch	Denise Rider	Rev. George Fitch	Jim & Nancy Bennett, Mike & Carrie Berkey	Team 2L: Kem Vaught, Gail Kerchner, Sandy Dickensheets	Janet Fitch, Sandy Dickensheets	Kat Lemke
8/30	9:30 AM	Tristan Ericson	Ken Hinkle	Chris Wad-dail	Mike & Becky Bingham, Scott & Justine Donaldson	Team 3E: Norma Shue, Cliff Beck, Sheridan Palmer	Pat Scarborough, Kat Lemke	Jessica Ericson

Rewards, they were bound to surface following the sending out of the Disciples to cast out unclean spirits and heal disease and sickness, to take the good news message to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to realize that they were sent into the midst of wolves, that peace wasn't necessarily arriving without some conflict, and so before the Disciples could ask "what's in it for me? What's my reward?" Jesus assures them of the rewards that are in store. He shares three types of rewards; the prophet's reward, the righteous person's reward, and the unsuspecting act reward.

The classic story of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath brings into focus a prophet's reward. The story, recorded in First Kings 17:8-16, is prominent in Sunday school curriculum. Things have dried up. The drought in the land places life in jeopardy. The prophet Elijah receives the word of the Lord informing him to Go to Zarephath in the region of Sidon. He is directed to stay there. The Lord reassures him that things will not be as dire as he may think, for the Lord directed a widow to supply him with food.

¹⁰ So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, "Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?" ¹¹ As she was going to get it, he called, "And bring me, please, a piece of bread."

¹² "As surely as the Lord your God lives," she replied, "I don't have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die." Things are dire.

¹³ Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me and then make something for yourself and your son. ¹⁴ For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'The jar of flour will not be used up, and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord sends rain on the land.'"

¹⁵ She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So, there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. ¹⁶ For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.

The reward in this story seems to be divine provision for the widow and her son. By heeding the prophet's words, sharing what seems to be their very last resource, the Lord provided life for all.

Most of us, I suspect, conjure up a very different image than divine provision when we hear of reward. We are accustomed to credit card points, frequent flyer miles, special items at the supper market and a few cents off every gallon of gasoline. The prophet's reward in this example is divine provision, sustenance for the day. Most of us might miss a reward because we haven't allowed the Prophet's word to penetrate our hearts and we set out each day with a world view that is far different from provision for the day.

The reward of the righteous may be an even greater stretch for us. In most cases the righteous person is a little bit hard to be around. They are often a bit legalistic, always pointing out the rules, sometimes they can even come off as a bit of a wet blanket, dampening spirits just when things seem to be picking up. The righteous, according to Paul's letters, Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11, articulate that "the just (the righteous) shall live by faith." Just, the word that gives life to justice and equity. These are the positive aspects of the Old Testament terms of trespass and iniquity. If you are forgiven for breaking the Ten Commandments and if you are living

to make things equitable for all, then righteousness seems to be your newly found status. However, we know that we are all sinners and that the righteousness granted to us comes only through Christ Jesus. He “gifts” it to us. When Jesus speaks of the righteous person’s reward it has something to do with doing, not in some “goody two shoes” way but in the way of living fully and completely guided by a rule and norm that is not restrictive but is grounded and rooted in God’s love in Christ Jesus. That is what Martin Luther set out to demonstrate when he wrote his explanation of the Ten Commandments in *the Small Catechism*. Are you actively doing, structuring your days maximizing God’s loving purpose for you? If so, you have received your reward because you have allowed the righteous person’s (Christ Jesus) word to take up residency and create a comfortable stable ground from which to explore and entertain daily life.

This understanding of reward is bit of a challenge to grasp; it isn’t tangible in the way of credit card points or bonus buys. This reward is most visible where Christ is most visible, as Lutheran’s, one place we can be assured, is in the bread and wine of Holy Communion, the body and blood of Christ. There it is that you are reminded that you are made righteous through the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ our Lord.

Now about that unsuspecting reward associated with a cup of water. In most cases a cup of water is just the beginning of addressing needs, taking notice of injustices, acknowledging someone who has little and certainly has nothing to offer you. The unsuspecting reward is like the Prophet’s Reward summarized by listening, and the righteous person’s reward summarized by doing, the unsuspecting reward is like providing a cup of water to one who is thirsty. It is all about “giving.” Generosity is key as it skirts around sacrifice. Giving a cup of water and being recognized for generosity usually comes as a bit of a surprise to those who are generous (Matthew 25:40, “Lord, when did we see you...”) they are unsuspecting of such a reward. Those who give freely, those who act selflessly, those who spend less time calculating the cost and more time rolling up their sleeves and getting busy so that today’s cup of water that has been given may become tomorrow’s gushing stream, overflowing well, or ocean of new possibilities.

Jesus in addressing the twelve is addressing us with specific instructions about welcoming. When anyone welcomes any of the twelve, that one or group has in fact welcomed Jesus. And if they have welcomed Jesus, they have welcomed the one who sent him. They have welcomed his words, his actions, and his generosity (listen, do, give). They have secured a reward, perhaps they are even a bit surprised by it. Welcome, welcoming, welcomes, these all have to do with the ministry that is being entrusted to the disciples and to us. And in and with and through this welcoming, rewards are acknowledged. Listening, doing, giving, are the hallmark, the shape of a new community, a different neighborhood, a transformed world. Jesus doesn’t ask the disciples if they want to be part of this reward culture. He doesn’t give them a mini plastic Jesus card to attach to their key ring and swipe every time they hear a sermon, offer themselves in service, or give money or a cup of water. In calling us to follow we are enrolled in a life of listening, enrolled in a life of doing, enrolled in a life of giving, not so that we will be applauded for our life’s work, but because it is God’s work being carried out through us, just as it was though his Disciples. Amen.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 28:5-9

The prophet Jeremiah spoke to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of the LORD,⁶ and the prophet Jeremiah said, “Amen! May the LORD do so; may the LORD fulfill the words that you have prophesied and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the LORD and all the exiles.⁷ But listen now to this word that I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people.⁸ The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms.⁹ As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes true, then it will be known that the LORD has truly sent the prophet.”

Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18

SECOND READING: Romans 6:12-23

Do not let sin reign in your mortal bodies, so that you obey their desires.¹³ No longer present your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness.¹⁴ For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶Do you not know that, if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey,

either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

¹⁷But thanks be to God that you who were slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted¹⁸ and that you, having been set free from sin, have become enslaved to righteousness.¹⁹ I am speaking in human terms because of your limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and lawlessness, leading to even more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, leading to sanctification.

²⁰When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.²¹ So what fruit did you then gain from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death.²² But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the fruit you have leads to sanctification, and the end is eternal life.²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 10:40-42

[Jesus said to the twelve:] “Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.⁴¹ Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous,⁴² and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”