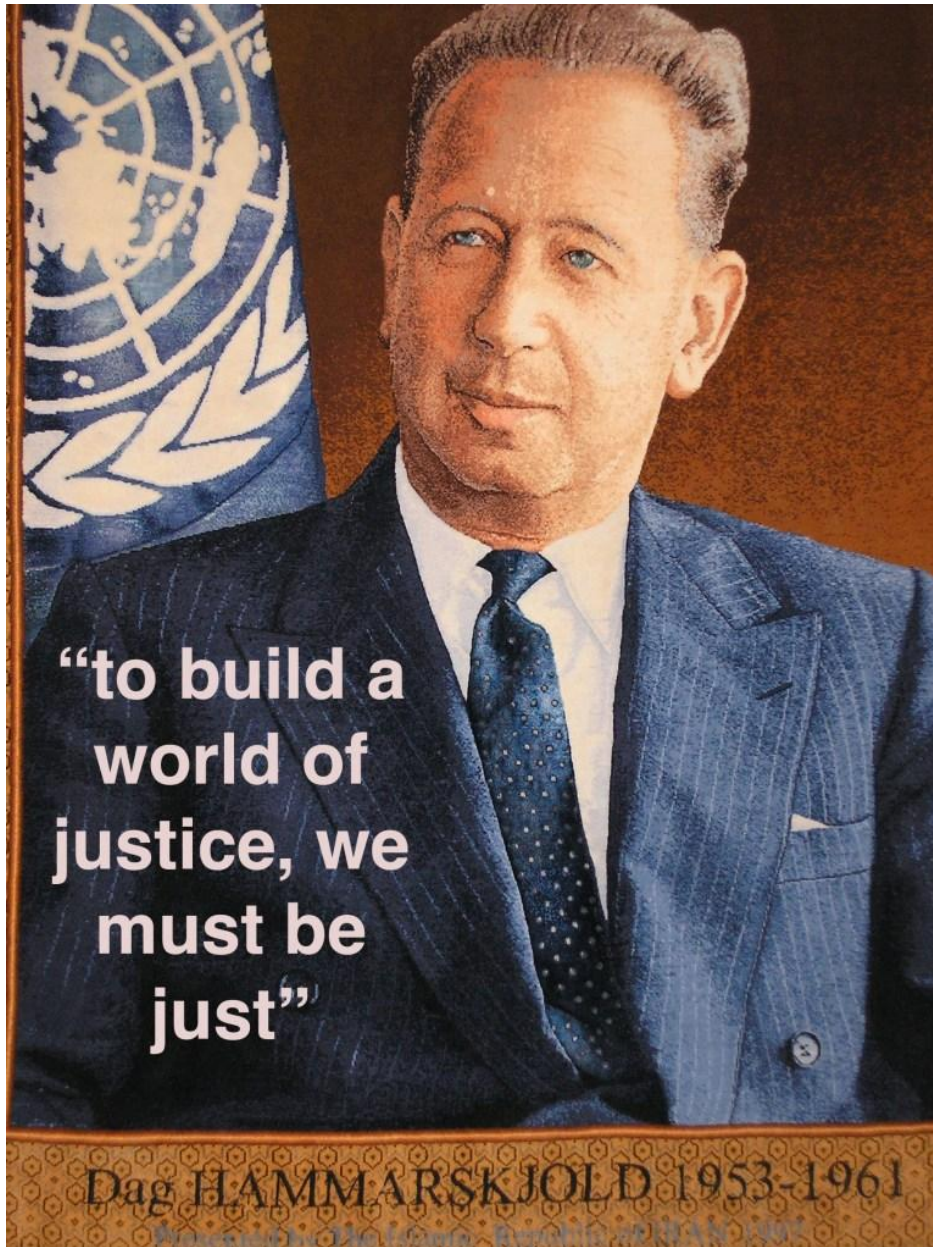


Commemoration of Dag Hammarskjöld

September 20, 2026



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

25 W. Springettsbury Ave., York, PA 17403

Church Office 717-843-8155 Email: st.paulsyork@comcast.net

Website: 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 Richard W. Haugh by loving wife Shirley and Family*

STAFF		
Pastor	Rev. Stanley Reep	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Visitation Pastor	Rev. Doctor Dan Yeiser	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Youth Director	Kelly Moore-Spencer	kmoorespencer.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
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Preschool Director	Deb Becker	presch.stpaulsyork@comcast.net

Commemoration of Dag Hammarskjöld

September 20, 2026

Holy Communion 9:30 AM

Musical Setting 3 Evangelical Lutheran Worship

ANNOUNCEMENTS

“Peace”

PRELUDE

Song of Peace

Jean Langlais

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

When Our Song Says Peace (ELW 709)



1 When our song says peace and the world says war, we will
2 When our song says free and the world says bound, we will
3 When our song says home and the world says lost, we will



sing de-spite the world. We will trust the song, for we sing of God,
sing de-spite the world. We will trust the song, for we sing of God,
sing de-spite the world. We will trust the song, for we sing of God,



who breaks the spear and sword and stills the storm of war.
who o - pens pris - on doors and sets the cap - tives free.
who brings us home at last, and gives a song to all.

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

Holy and righteous God, you created us in your image. Grant us grace to contend fearlessly against evil and to make no peace with oppression. Help us like your servant Dag Hammarskjöld to use our freedom to bring justice and peace among people and nations, to the glory of your name; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Sit

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FIRST LESSON

Micah 4:105

back cover

PSALM

Psalm 85

sung unaccompanied cantor/**congregation**

- ¹ You have been gracious to your | land, O LORD;*
you have restored the good for- | tune of Jacob.
- ² **You have forgiven the iniquity | of your people***
and blotted out | all their sins.
- ³ You have withdrawn | all your fury*
and turned yourself from your wrathful | indignation.

- 4 Restore us then, O | God our Savior;***
let your anger de- | part from us.
- 5 Will you be displeased with | us forever?***
 Will you prolong your anger from | age to age?
- 6 Will you not give us | life again,***
that your people may re- | joice in you?
- 7 Show us your mer- | cy, O LORD,***
 and grant us | your salvation.
- 8 I will listen to what the LORD | God is saying,***
for he is speaking peace to his faithful people
and to those who turn their | hearts to him.
- 9 Truly, his salvation is very near to | those who fear him,***
 that his glory may dwell | in our land.
- 10 Mercy and truth have | met together;***
righteousness and peace have | kissed each other.
- 11 Truth shall spring up | from the earth,***
 and righteousness shall look | down from heaven.
- 12 The LORD will indeed | grant prosperity,***
and our land will | yield its increase.
- 13 Righteousness shall | go before him,***
 and peace shall be a pathway | for his feet.

SECOND LESSON Ephesians 2:13-18 *back cover*

Stand

ALLELUIA

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

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

HOLY GOSPEL

John 15:9-12

(back cover)

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

At the conclusion of the Gospel.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Pastor Stanley Reep

Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY

Voices Raised to You (ELW 845)

1 Voic - es raised to you we of - fer; tune them, God, for
2 All cre - a - tion joins to praise you; earth and sky your
3 Christ, the song of love in - car - nate, touch - ing earth with -
4 Spir - it, flam - ing through cre - a - tion, kin - dle faith with -
5 How can an - y praise we of - fer mea - sure all the

songs of praise. Hearts and hands we bring in trib - ute
works dis - play. Art and mu - sic, gifts you lend us,
heav - en's grace, for your liv - ing, suf - f'ring, dy - ing,
in each heart. Lift our voic - es high in cho - rus;
thanks we owe? Take our hearts and hands and voic - es—

for your gifts through all our days. Al - le - lu - ia!
we re - turn to you to - day. Al - le - lu - ia!
for your ris - ing, hear our praise! Al - le - lu - ia!
through our hands your love im - part. Al - le - lu - ia!
gifts of love we can be - stow. Al - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia! Tri - une God, to you we sing!
Al - le - lu - ia! God, cre - a - tor, source of life!
Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, re - deem - er, Lord of life!
Al - le - lu - ia! Spir - it, help - er, breath of life!
Al - le - lu - ia! Tri - une God, to you we sing!

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**
**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.**
Through him all things were made.
**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin
Mary, and was made man.**
**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**
**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**
**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**
**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. 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 is kept.

For the people of the earth, that strife and division end and the gift of peace reign, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the church of Jesus Christ, that where there is division unity may be restored, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For all leaders in the church, that where this is jealousy or distrust, a spirit of forgiveness and compassion may nurture humble service, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who are called to preach the gospel, that in the presence of fear and anxiety the message of hope may be proclaimed courageously and effectively, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For all missionaries in foreign lands, that they may be strengthened in their Christian work by the Spirit of God, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For our community and our families, that where there is misunderstanding or discord, we may receive the grace to forgive and so rejoice in the peace of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

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, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

God of unity and peace, in baptism you have made us one people in the body of your Son. Hear us, as with one voice we offer you these prayers in the name of Jesus, who is Lord forever and ever. **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

Chancel Choir

Peace between Nations

Christopher Wiggins

Stand
OFFERTORY



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the
brim our cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the
seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u - nite them with the
prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,
and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

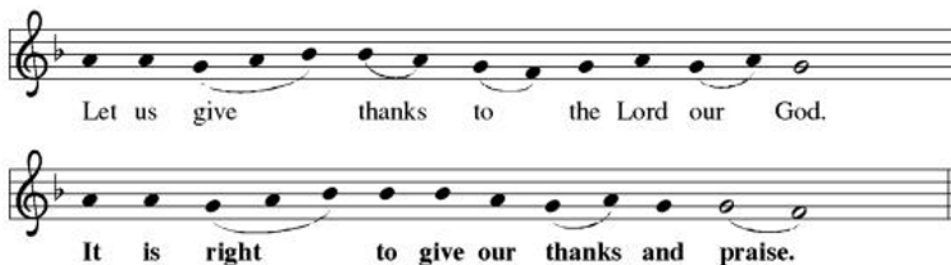
Let us pray. Merciful Father,

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*



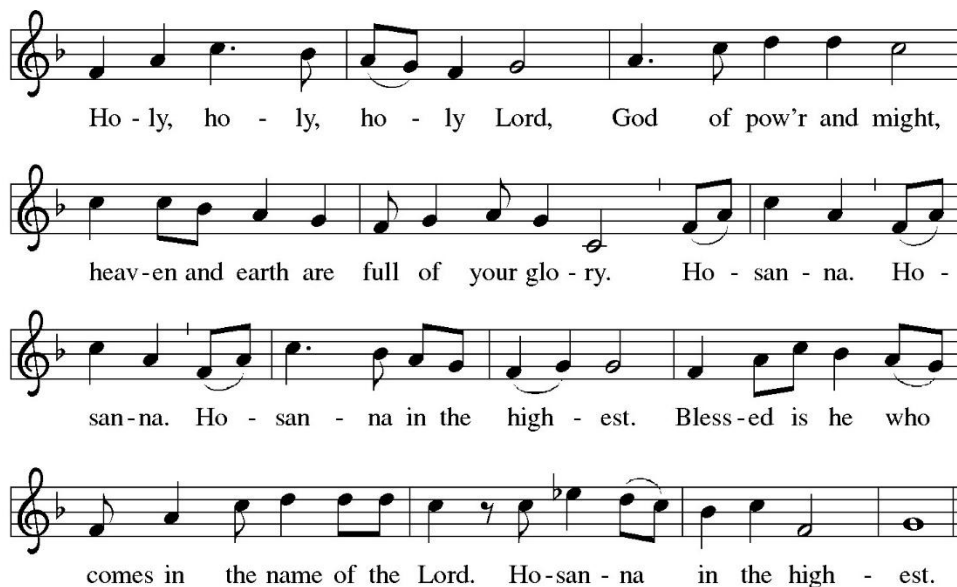
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.



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



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.

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.

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.

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.

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 HYMNS

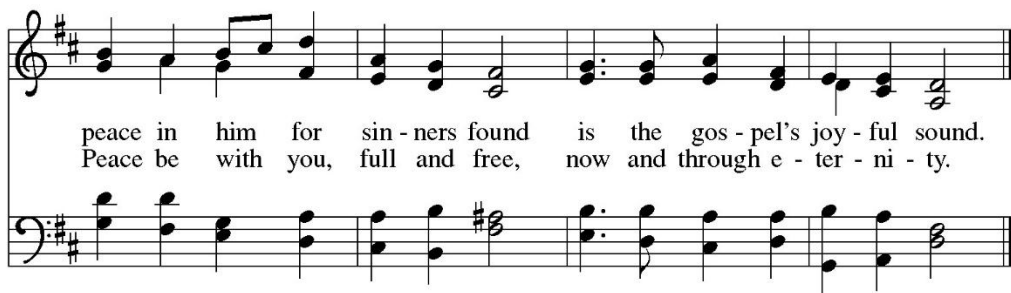
Peace, to Soothe Our Bitter Woes (ELW 381)



1 Peace, to soothe our bit - ter woes, God in Christ on us be - stows;
2 Peace with - in the church still dwells in our wel - comes and fare - wells;



Je - sus bought our peace with God with his ho - ly, pre - cious blood;
and through God's bap - tis - mal pow'r peace sur - rounds our dy - ing hour.



peace in him for sin - ners found is the gos - pel's joy - ful sound.
Peace be with you, full and free, now and through e - ter - ni - ty.

We Come to the Hungry Feast (ELW 479)



- 1 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a word of peace.
- 2 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a world re - leased
- 3 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry that the hun - ger cease,



To hun - gry hearts un - sat - is - fied the love of God is
from hun - gry folk of ev - 'ry kind, the poor in bod - y,
and know - ing, though we eat our fill, the hun - ger will stay



not de - nied. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
poor in mind. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
with us; still we come, we come to the hun - gry feast.

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

O Day of Peace (ELW 711)



1 O day of peace that dim-ly shines through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,
2 Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, nor shall the fierce de-vour the small;



guide us to jus-tice, truth, and love, de-liv-ered from our self-ish schemes.
as beasts and cat-tle calm-ly graze, a lit-tle child shall lead them all.



May swords of hate fall from our hands, our hearts from en-vy find re-lease,
Then en-e-mies shall learn to love, all crea-tures find their true ac-cord;



till by God's grace our war-ring world shall see Christ's prom-ised reign of peace.
the hope of peace shall be ful-filled, for all the earth shall know the Lord.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sit

POSTLUDE

O Day of Peace

Mark Sedio

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This Week at St. Paul's

Church office open Tues–Thurs 8:00 AM—3:30 PM, Friday 8-11:30 AM

Sunday, September 20 9:00 AM Fellowship – Good Shepherd Rm 9:00 AM Chancel choir rehearsal – Music RM 9:30 AM Holy Eucharist – Live Stream 10:45 AM Faith Formation – for all 10:45 AM Confirmation Class – Lower level classroom 6:30 PM AA Meeting-Community Rm Monday, September 21 6:30 PM Council Mtg – Christ Hall Tuesday, September 22 8:30 AM Staff Meeting 9:30 AM Food Pantry 6:00 PM CREATE – Preschool-Gr 6 6:00 PM Bible Study - Christ Hall 6:00 PM CREATE – Preschool – Gr. 6 6:00 PM Property Committee	Wednesday, September 23 10:00 AM Preschool with Pastor – Nave 10:30 AM Bible Study – Christ Hall Thursday, September 24 10:00 AM Preschool with Pastor – Nave 6:30 PM Handbell Choir 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Sunday, September 27 9:00 AM Fellowship – Good Shepherd Rm 9:00 AM Chancel choir rehearsal – Music RM 9:30 AM Holy Eucharist – Live Stream 10:45 AM Faith Formation – for all 10:45 AM Confirmation Class – Lower level classroom 3:00 PM Organ recital, Victor Fields 6:30 PM AA Meeting-Community Rm
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Serving the Lord with Gladness									
DATE	TIME	Asst Min	Crucifer	Comm Asst	Lector	Greeters	Ushers	Altar Guild	Bread Bakers
9/20	9:30 AM	Harold Sargeant	Lois Ann Schroeder	Rev. George Fitch	Janet Fitch	Scott & Nicki Herdson	Team 1L: Dave Kopp, Scott Donaldson, Darren Smith, Kass Keleta	Larry & Janet Moore	Janet Fitch
9/27	9:30 AM	Patty Snyder	Tim Yakim	Allison Lehr	Janet Fitch	Joe & Jennifer Guarriello	Team 2E: Ron Riese, Kathy Monk, Ken Hinkle, Alex Bastian	Larry & Janet Moore	Joe Guarriello

The 9:30 AM Sunday Worship time followed by Education (Sunday school) at 10:45 AM will extend through the end to the calendar year.

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!

FIRST LESSON Micah 4:1-5

¹ In days to come
the mountain of the LORD's temple
shall be established as the highest of the
mountains and shall be raised up above the hills.
Peoples shall stream to it,
² and many nations shall come and say:
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of
the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths.”
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
³ He shall judge between many peoples
and shall arbitrate between strong nations far
away;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation;
neither shall they learn war any more;
⁴ but they shall all sit under their own vines and
under their own fig trees,
and no one shall make them afraid,
for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has
spoken.
⁵ For all the peoples walk,
each in the name of its god,
but we will walk in the name of the LORD our
God forever and ever.

**SECOND LESSON Ephesians
2:13-18**

¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who
once were far off have been brought
near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he
is our peace; in his flesh he has made
both into one and has broken down
the dividing wall, that is, the hostility
between us, ¹⁵ abolishing the law with
its commandments and ordinances,
that he might create in himself one
new humanity in place of the two,
thus making peace, ¹⁶ and might
reconcile both to God in one body
through the cross, thus putting to
death that hostility through it. ¹⁷ So he
came and proclaimed peace to you
who were far off and peace to those
who were near, ¹⁸ for through him
both of us have access in one Spirit to
the Father.

HOLY GOSPEL John 15:9-12

⁹ As the Father has loved me, so I
have loved you; abide in my
love. ¹⁰ If you keep my
commandments, you will abide in my
love, just as I have kept my Father's
commandments and abide in his
love. ¹¹ I have said these things to you
so that my joy may be in you and that
your joy may be complete.
¹² “This is my commandment, that
you love one another as I have loved
you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

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!



This year the Blessing of the Scarves will be held on Sunday, November 8, prior to the distribution on November 10.

The Unitarian Church on S. George St. supplies our pantry with fresh vegetables. They are asking for help in their garden. If you can donate some of your time to help please contact Steve Converse at 717-577-6696.

Confirmation Ministry: With the extended 9:30 AM worship time through year's end the Christian Education Committee, in consultation with the parents of confirmation students, class will now meet on Sunday morning from 10:45-11:45 AM. The class will be held on the Lower level in Room 004.

Sunday School for Children: The children will gather for class following the 9:30 AM liturgy on the Lower level in Room 005. This space should accommodate our larger class size. Children may proceed directly following worship. Snacks will be available in the Lower level outside rooms 004 and 005 (but not 007!).

Concert, Sunday, September 27 Victor Fields, organ 3:00pm

Come and hear St. Paul's organist present a recital of music for organ and instruments with Mabel Tang, violin, Jeffrey Phelps, cello featuring selections by Bach, Dupré, Franck and The King of Instruments, A Parade of Music and Verse for Organ and Narrator by William Albright featuring actor Jay Poff.

Music & Create begins September 15, 6:00 PM

Age 3 through grade 6

Welcome back to Music and Create! We are looking forward to this opportunity for our families with young children to engage in music, art, and Bible stories 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 through grade 6.

Do you love to sing? Our CHANCEL choir needs you!

We are looking for joyful voices to help lead worship this year. No prior experience is required—just a willing heart. Tenors and Basses especially needed!!

If you would like to lend your voice for a Sunday or two, or more, a sign-up sheet to designate when you can help is available on the stand in the Good Shepherd room.

REHEARSALS begin September 10

- Rehearsals: Thursdays at 7:30-8:30 PM and Sunday at 9:00 AM prior to worship
- Contact: Victor Fields, vfields.stpaulsyork@comcast.net or see him at church

Called for Service, Peace, Instruction & Renewal the theme for the 2026/27 stewardship emphasis highlights four aspects of our baptismal life.

Stewardship Emphasis – Next week we observe the Commemoration of Jerome, translator and teacher. The readings are Proverbs 3:1-7, Psalm 119:89-104, 1 Corinthians 2:6-10, 13-16 and St. Matthew 13:47-52. We will have Bible Study on Tuesday evening at 6:00 PM and Wednesday morning at 10:30 AM.

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 our church to help those directly in our care. Donate at three locations: 2414 Eastern Boulevard, 283 West Market Street, and in the South York Plaza. Give them the name and address of our church. Donors are still able to take advantage of the tax-deduction with every gift to LifePath Thrift Stores.



Commemoration, Dag Hammarskjöld, Peace maker

Micah 4:1-5 Ephesians 2:13-18 John 15:9-12

Blessed are the peacemakers proclaims Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. *For they will be called children of God* (Matthew 5:9).

Dag Hammarskjöld, peacemaker, was, according to our Lord, a child of God. He was born in the early days of the 20th century and was the son of the Prime Minister of Sweden. He was a student of law and economics. He joined the ranks of the Swedish civil service serving as the Minister of Finance. Later he served as president of the board of the Bank of Sweden. Those positions prepared him for service in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the complexities associated with international trade and the problems that arise from such work.

In 1951 he was chosen vice-chair of the Swedish delegation to the United Nations and quickly rose to the position of Secretary General of the United Nations. He dealt with matters associated with the end of the Korean War (the war in which my father fought), problems in the Middle East (which continues to this day), and the crisis over the Suez Canal. Civil war in Congo in 1960 precipitated a United Nations force to suppress the violence. On a mission to negotiate a cease-fire, Dag Hammarskjöld was killed in a plane crash in the country we know as Zambia.

It was after his death that the world became aware of his Christian life and the way in which his faith gave shape and direction to his diplomacy and his understanding of the sanctity of human life. Dag kept a daily journal. His writings chronicled his struggles with complex decisions and how his Christian faith compelled him to wrestle seriously with the realities of his Christian convictions. Working out his faith in service to neighbor, he strove to learn more about the nature and work of God. In his devotional book entitled *Markings* he penned, *"In our era, the road to holiness necessarily passes through the world of action."* Dag Hammarskjöld was awarded the Nobel Peace prize.

Jesus connects peacemaking with being God's children. It hasn't taken Jesus long to articulate life in God's realm. There he was on the mountain teaching; the crowds were streaming toward him. It is a scene reminiscent of the vision of Micah, *In the days to come the mountain of the Lord's temple shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised up above the hills. People shall stream to it, and many nations shall come and say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.* The equivalent of negotiating a cease fire will follow in the successive verses; *They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war anymore.*

In those days' prophecies Micah, no one shall make anyone afraid. Fear, in our modern world it sells everything from weapons to political candidates. Fear drives the decision making of our society. Fear makes us do drastic things, go against better judgments, and often supersedes Christian faith and the teachings and actions of Jesus. Fear keeps us from being generous givers of our time, talent, and treasure. Fear paralyzes us. Fear prevents moving forward. Fear prevents conversation and cuts off future. On the mountain of the Lord, no one shall make us afraid; fear shall be no more, for we will walk in the name of the Lord.

Without fear and those who promote it, something other is possible. Albeit a complex endeavor. What we learn from peace makers is that the work is hard, the hours long, the

complexities real and the suffering lead even unto death. This was true for our Lord Jesus, the Prince of Peace, who ends up on the mountain of Calvary where he is put to death because of his words and actions that ran counter to the fear that was dominant in the culture.

But there, on Mount Calvary our Lord Jesus was raised high upon a cross establishing the highest and greatest love for humanity. *Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends* (John 15:13). It is through such self-giving love that Jesus shows us forgiveness, mercy, grace, acceptance, and puts an end to fear. But even his closest friends will remain fearful, even on that Easter day when they learn that Jesus has been raised from the dead, that the power of death cannot hold him. Jesus comes to his followers who are behind locked doors for fear of the Judeans. Jesus stands among them and bestows peace, and breaths on them his Spirit. Christ breaks down the dividing wall; it is Christ who banishes the hostility. It is Christ who through the cross puts to death all the world's hostility so that something other than hatred and fear can be brought forth. *So, writes Paul in Ephesians Jesus came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near, for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father.*

Access, access to the Father, access to real and everlasting peace, access to life and relationship with God now and with God for eternity. Such access is ours through Christ Jesus. Jesus bestows his peace on you and breaths it into you saving you from fear, and death, and the evil foes who work against peace. Day Hammarskjöld permitted that gift to free him so that he could work out Christian faith, chronicle his struggles with complex decisions, and permitted him space to wrestle seriously with the realities of Christian convictions. Peacemaking he came to understand as synonymous with his baptismal life.

In Christ you are saved, freed from the fears that the world puts in your path, and freed to live out your faith in the peace that Christ alone gives. *Blessed are the peacemakers* proclaims Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. *For they will be called children of God* (Matthew 5:9).

A prayer from 1954 by Dag Hammarskjöld

Thou who art over us,

Thou who art one of us,

Thou who art – Also within us,

May all see Thee – in me also,

May I prepare the way for Thee,

May I thank Thee for all that shall fall to my lot,

May I also not forget the needs of others,

Keep me in Thy love As Thou wouldst that all should be kept in mine.

May everything in this my being be directed to Thy glory, and may I never despair, For I am under Thy hand, And in Thee is all power and goodness.

Give me a pure heart – that I may see Thee,

A humble heart – that I may hear Thee,

A heart of love – that I may serve thee,

A heart of faith – that I may abide in Thee.