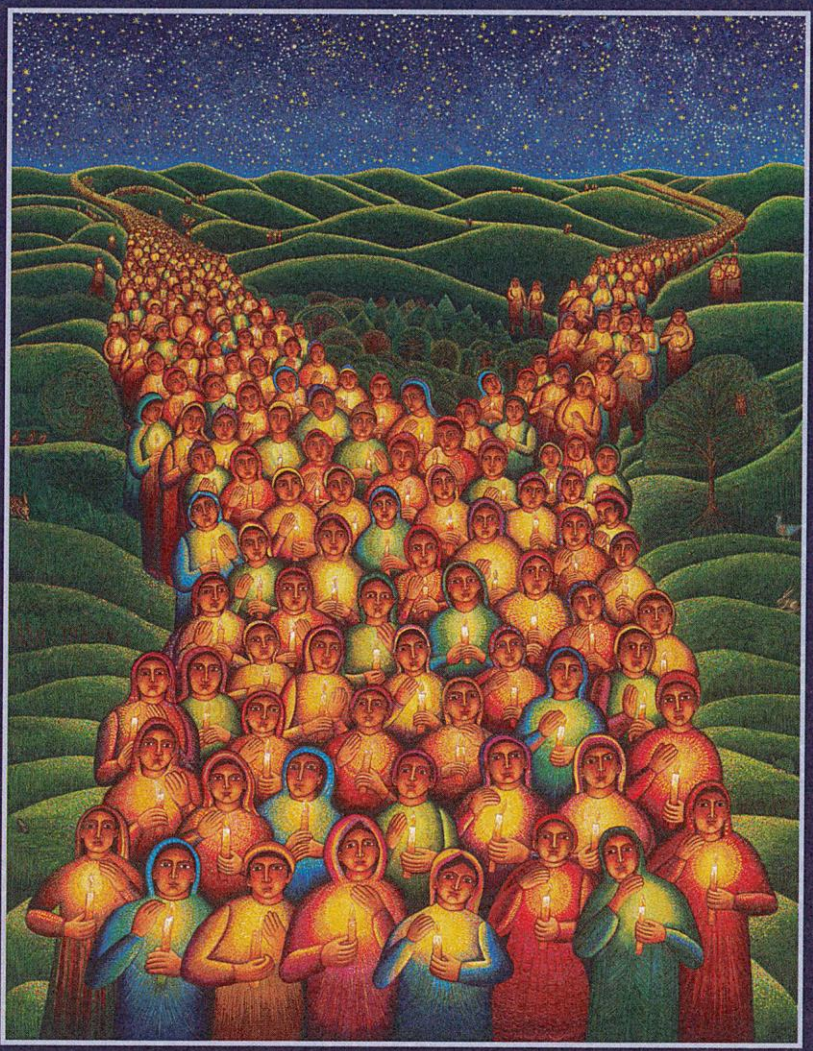
# *God will wipe away every tear from their eyes*

**REVELATION 7:17**



# 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.

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.

**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.

***The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God by Dick & Bonnie Keeports***

| **STAFF** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Pastor | Rev. Stanley Reep | st.paulsyork@comcast.net |
| Visitation Pastor | Rev. Dr. 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 |

# All Saints Day
## November 1, 2026
## Holy Communion 9:30 AM

*Musical Setting 9 Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

***Stand***

**PRELUDE** *Rejoice in God's Saints* *David Cherwien*

**ENTRANCE HYMN** ***Rejoice In God's Saints (ELW 418)***




**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.**

**KYRIE**


In peace, let us pray to the Lord.


Lord, have mer - cy.


For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.

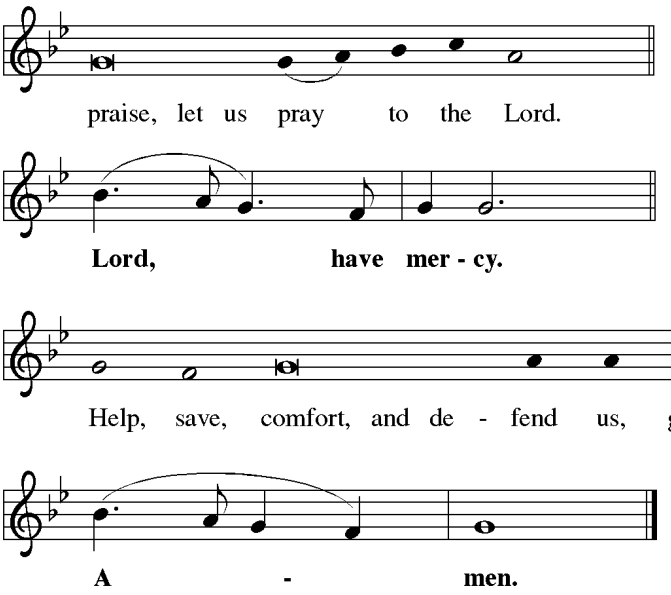

Lord, have mer - cy.


For the peace of the whole world, for the well - being of the church of


God, and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.


Lord, have mer - cy.


For this ho - ly house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and




## HYMN OF PRAISE *sung by all*






**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray. . . Almighty God, whose people are knit together in one holy Church, the body of Christ our Lord: Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

***Sit***

**RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS**

**FIRST READING** **Revelation 7:9-17** *back cover*

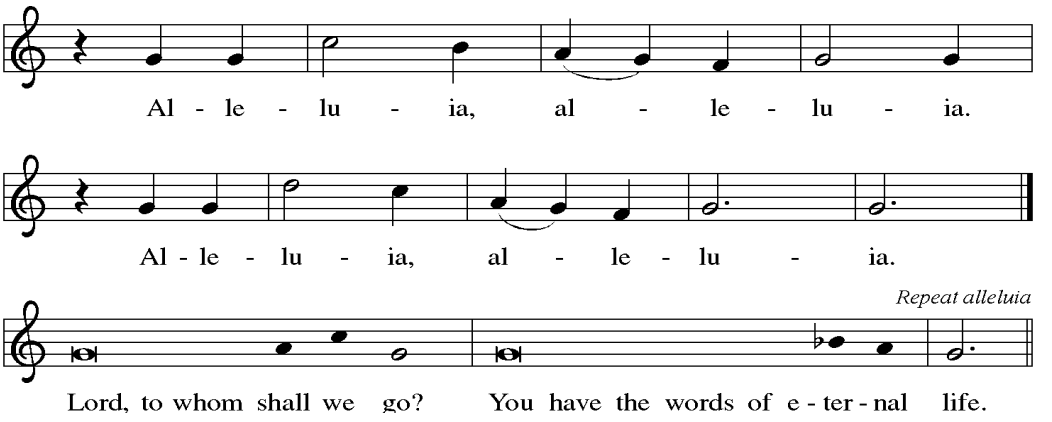
**PSALM** **Psalm 34** sung unaccompanied cantor/**congregation**

1 I will bless the LORD | at all times;*
his praise shall ever be | in my mouth.
**2 I will glory | in the LORD;***
**let the humble hear | and rejoice.**
3 Proclaim with me the greatness | of the LORD;*
let us exalt his | name together.
**4 I sought the Lord, and he | answered me***
**and delivered me out of | all my terror.**
5 Look upon him | and be radiant,*
and let not your faces | be ashamed.
**6 I called in my affliction, and | the Lord heard me***
**and saved me from | all my troubles.**
7 The angel of the LORD encompasses | those who fear him,*
and he will de- | liver them.
**8 Taste and see that the | LORD is good;***
**happy are they who | trust in him!**
9 Fear the LORD, you that | are his saints,*
for those who fear | him lack nothing.
**10 The young lions lack and | suffer hunger,***
**but those who seek the LORD lack nothing | that is good.**
22 The LORD ransoms the life | of his servants,*
and none will be punished who | trust in him.

**SECOND READING** **1 John 3:1-3** *back cover*

***Stand***

**ALLELUIA**



**HOLY GOSPEL** **St. Matthew 5:1-12** (*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** ***Sing With All the Saints In Glory (ELW 426)***




**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.*

Heavenly Father, fill your church with mercy and humility as she proclaims the gospel through worship and witness in the world. Renew and inspire all who preach and teach. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Restore all lands suffering from ecological degradation. Protect soils and waterways (*local places may be named*). Point us toward innovative ways of living in harmony and joy with creation. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Unite the nations in their actions toward justice and peace. Raise up leaders who listen deeply for the needs of their communities, and surround the election process with wisdom and discernment. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Bring comfort and care to all who are in need, especially all who mourn this day. Sustain any who are weary, experiencing loneliness, or struggling with chronic illness (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Nurture programs and communities that support elders and those who are homebound. Bless caregivers, nurses, chaplains, social workers, and hospice staff. Guide this congregation's ministry with seniors and their families. Lord, in your mercy,
**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, Lord in your mercy,
**hear our prayer.**

**NECROLOGY**

God of the ages, we give you thanks for saints, those of our day and of days before, who nurtured us in faith, who told us the stories of Jesus, and who cultivated among us the sense of our own vocation to follow God's path. Help us not only to remember them, but also to follow their example, to nurture their expectant hope, and to live our lives so that others might see your love reflected in all that we say and do.
**Thank you, God, for the gift of your saints.**
God of all time with grateful hearts we remember…

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12-6-25 | Becky Davids | 5-5-26 | Robert Little |
| 12-7-25 | Irmgard Nicolaysen | 5-28-26 | Deloris Jean Sergent |
| 1-1-26 | Rita Schaffler | 7-3-26 | Anna Mae Cook |
| 1-28-26 | Kristine Gross | 8-28-26 | Candace Hutton |
| 2-7-26 | Suzanne Moyer | | |

We also remember with thanksgiving saints alive today who continue to touch our lives and our faith journeys, and we look ahead with hope to the people whose faithful witness to God's love will inspire future generations.
**Keep us grateful for the witness of the saints of all generations, and make us, like them, eager to follow in the way of Christ. Then at the last, bring us with them to share in the inheritance of the saints of life.** Lord in your mercy,
**hear our prayer.**
Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**
*The ministers and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

***Sit***

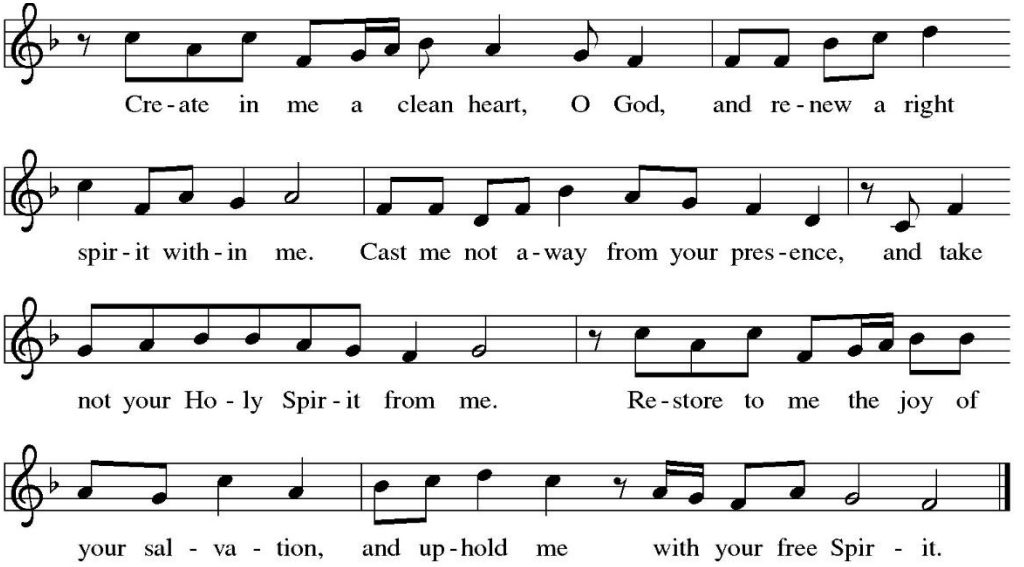
**OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS**

Chancel Choir *God That Madest Earth and Heaven* Welsh/David Thorne

*Please place completed Commitment Cards and Time & Ability forms in the offering basin.*

***Stand***

**OFFERTORY**

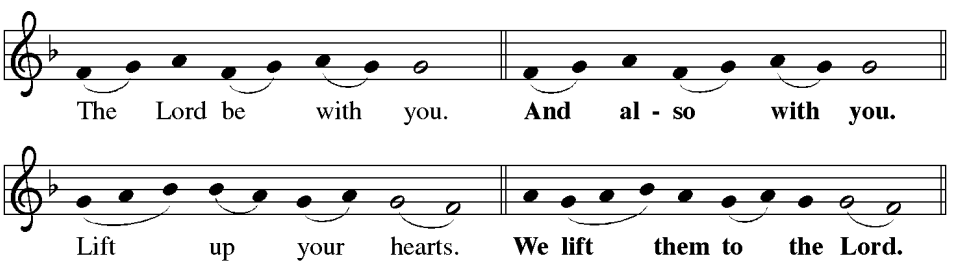


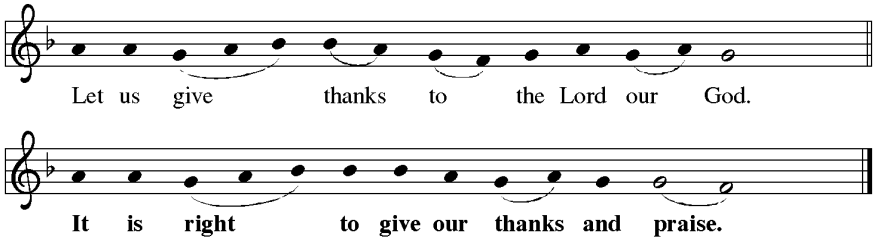

**OFFERTORY PRAYER**

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** *Sung by Pastor and* ***congregation***

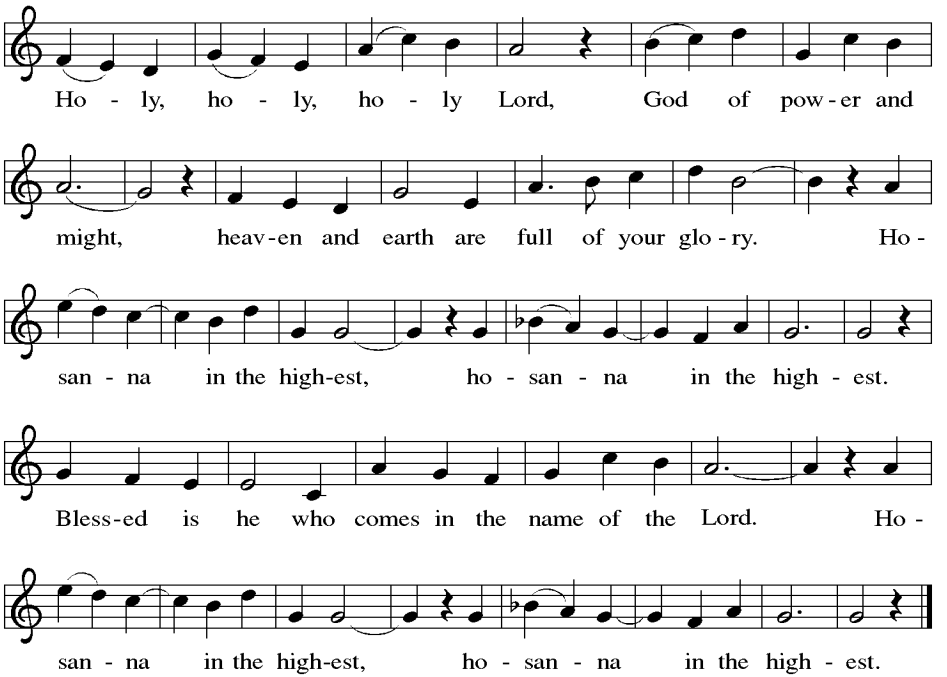





**PREFACE** *The preface appropriate to the day is said.*

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. In the blessedness of your saints you have given us a glorious pledge of the hope of our calling; that, moved by their witness and supported by their fellowship, we may run with perseverance the race that is set before us and with them receive the unfading crown of glory. 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' 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**

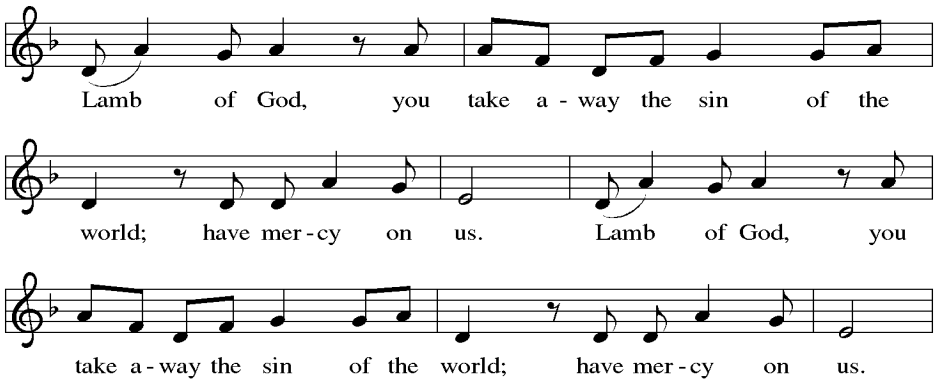
**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,**
**your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**
**Give us today our daily bread.**
**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**
**Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.**
**For the kingdom, the power,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

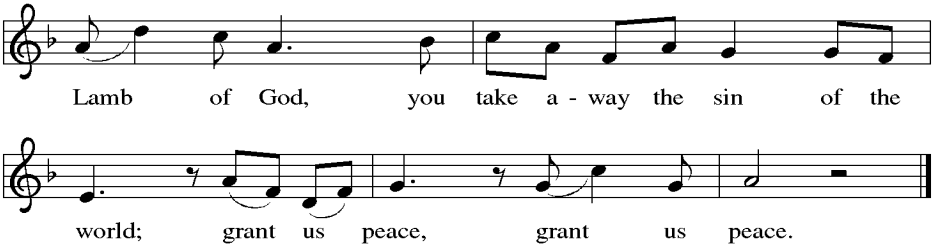
**FRACTION RITE**

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**





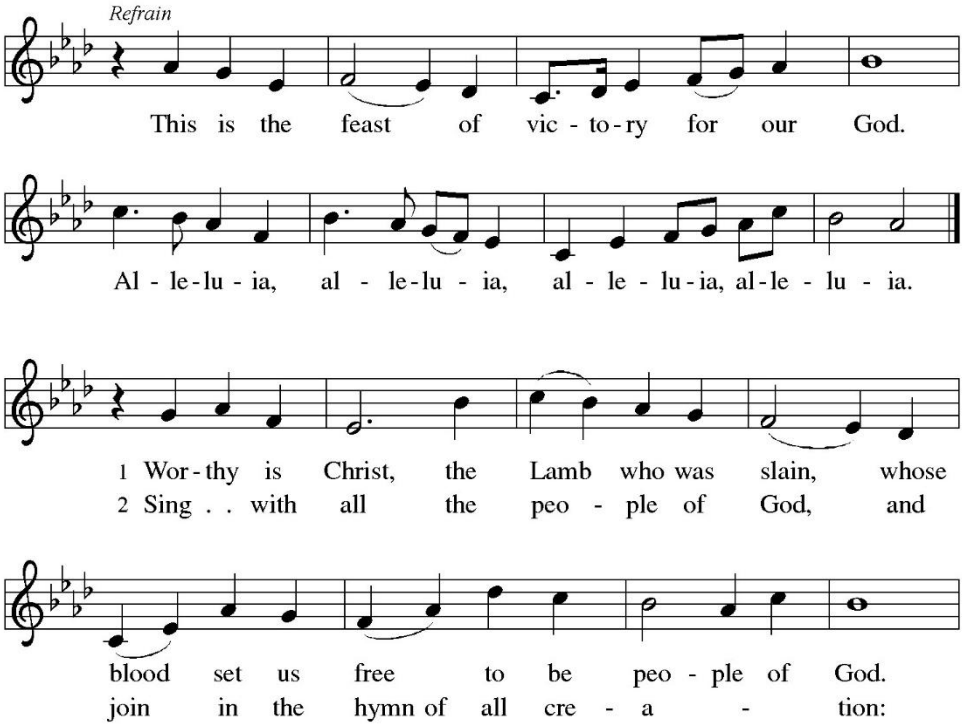

***Sit*** **COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL**

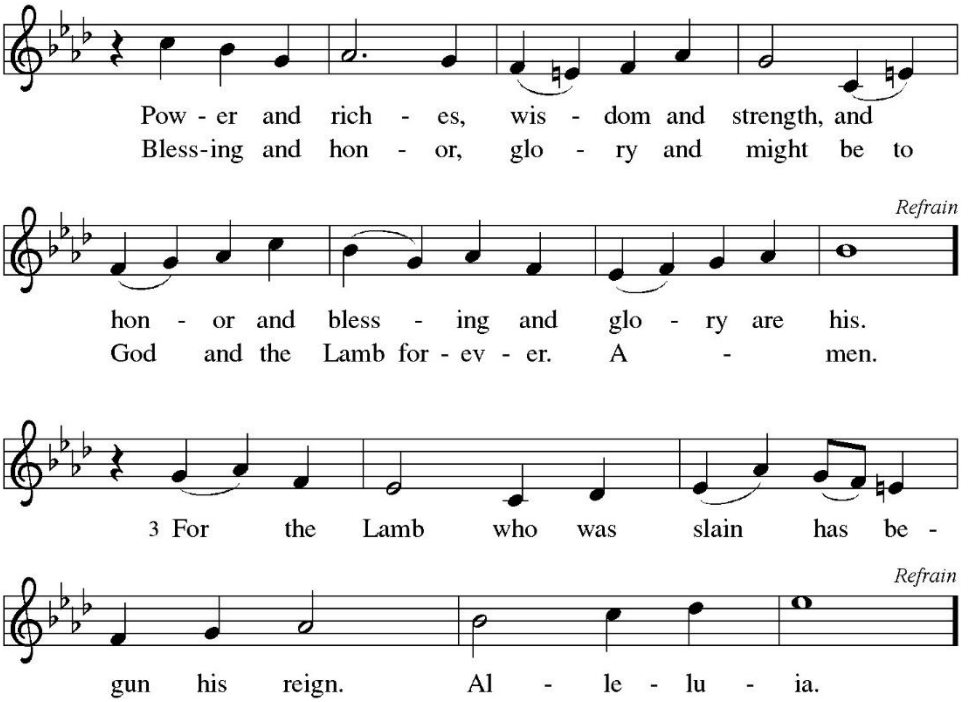
Our Communion is "open" to all believers who trust that the Risen Christ is present for his people in the Holy Eucharist. We receive communion by common loaf and pouring chalice.

*Procedure for receiving Communion:*

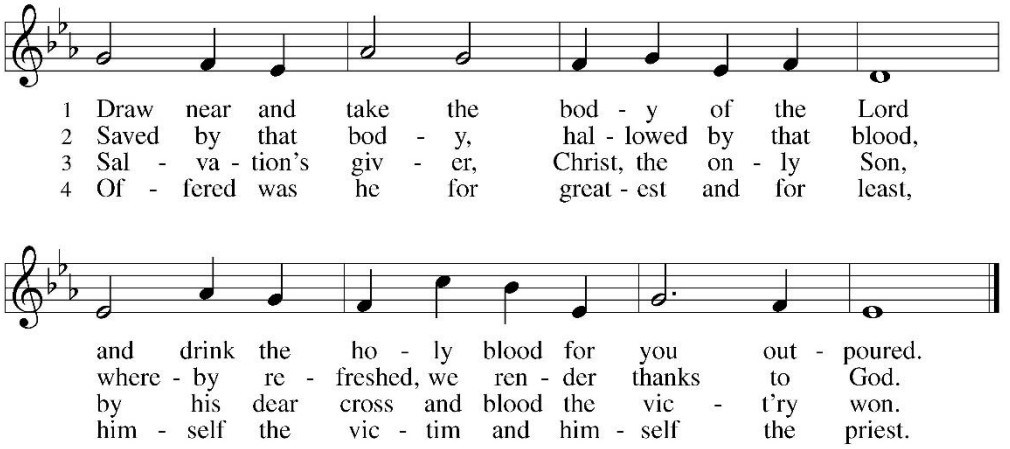
1. *Come to communion using the center aisle.*
2. *Take a communion glass from the tray of glasses.*
3. *Take your place along the chancel step.*
4. *The ministers will bring the bread and wine to you.*
5. *Place the used cup in an empty tray located on a credence table at the side aisle.*
6. *Return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

**COMMUNION CANTICLE** *Setting 1 ELW*






**COMMUNION HYMN** ***Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord (LBW 226)***




5 Come forward then with faithful hearts sincere,
and take the pledges of salvation here.

6 He who his saints in this world rules and shields,
to all believers life eternal yields,

7 With heav'nly bread makes those who hunger whole,
gives living waters to the thirsty soul.

8 The judge eternal, unto whom shall bow
all nations at the last, is with us now.

*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 Father, in the Eucharist you give us a foretaste of the Lamb's Feast of Victory. Keep us faithful to you so that we, with all your saints in heaven, may at length celebrate the Feast which has no end in Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**BLESSING**

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

**HYMN** ***For All the Saints (ELW 422)*** *4-part harmony Stanzas 3, 4, & 5*






**DISMISSAL**

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

***Sit***

**POSTLUDE** *Festive Hymn* Margaretha Christine de Jong

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## This Week at St. Paul's

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

**Sunday, November 1 All Saints Day**
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 – Adults: Christ Hall
Children: Lower level Rm 005
Confirmation Class: Lower level Rm 004
6:30 PM AA Meeting-Community Rm
**Tuesday, November 3**.
9:30 AM Food Pantry
6:00 PM CREATE – Preschool-Gr 6
6:00 PM Bible Study - Christ Hall
**Wednesday, November 4**
10:00 AM Preschool with Pastor – Nave
10:30 AM Bible Study – Christ Hall

**Thursday, November 5**
**Annual Reports Due**
10:00 AM Preschool with Pastor – Nave
6:30 PM Handbell Choir
7:30 PM Chancel Choir
**Sunday, November 8**
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 – Adults: Christ Hall
Children: Lower level Rm 005
Confirmation Class: Lower level Rm 004
1:00 PM Rededication Rev. Jonathon Oswald plot
Prospect Hill Cemetery
6:30 PM AA Meeting-Community Rm

| Serving the Lord with Gladness | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **DATE** | **TIME** | **Asst Min** | **Crucifer** | **Comm Asst** | **Lector** | **Greeters** | **Ushers** | **Altar Guild** | **Bread Bakers** |
| 11/1 All Saints | 9:30 AM | Lois Ann Schroeder | Allison Lehr | Kathy Monk | Carolyn Kapoun | Dick & Bonnie Keeports | Team 1L: Dave Kopp, Scott Donaldson, Darren Smith, Kass Keleta | Kathy Monk, Lois Ann Schroeder | Nancy Bennett |
| 11/8 | 9:30 AM | Harold Sargeant | Tom Gibson | Sandy Dickens heets | Chris Waddail | Gail Kerchner, Sharon Diaczun | Team 2E: Ron Riese, Kathy Monk, Ken Hinkle, Alex Bastian | Kathy Monk, Lois Ann Schroeder | Norma Shue |

**2027 Offering Envelopes** are prepared and are available in the Good Shepherd Room. Please take your packet along with you, put them in a secure place so that you have them ready when the new year begins. If you are new to St. Paul's and would like to receive a packet of offering envelopes, please contact the church office.

**Survey regarding the 9:30 AM service.** Please complete the online survey at https://form.jotform.com/262735591748066 or fill out a print copy (available in the narthex). The Council members would like to hear from you as they discern the future direction for our gathering for worship. Kindly direct your insights to any council member: Ann Anstadt, Sharon Diaczun, Tristan Ericson, Joe Guarriello Alexis Heistand, Keith Kates, Kass Keleta, Chris Lipp, Darren Smith, Frank Tyminisky, Carol Woodbury, Tim Yakim or Pastor Reep. They are eager to learn about how the trial schedule affects your participation in; worship, education, choir, parking, serving, fellowship and in our outreach to the community. Thank you for your time, thoughtfulness, and consideration as we work together for the building up of the body of Christ.

**Photo Directories** are in the Good Shepherd Room with your name For newcomers to St. Paul's, we have a few additional copies for distribution. Contact the Church office to receive a copy.

**St. Paul's Food Pantry Needs: White Rice, 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!

St Paul's collects gently used clothing for **Union Lutheran Church's Clothing Ministry**. Union offers it **free of charge** to needy families in the York City community. If you have large donations you may take them directly to Union Lutheran Church. Simply call them to arrange a time.

**Crocheters and Knitters** please remember to bring in your scarves for the Blessing of the Scarves next Sunday, November 8, prior to the distribution in the Pantry on November 10.

**Sunday school for Children** is held on the Lower Level in rooms 004 and 005. There are opportunities for church members to help with the teaching for a week or two. Simply sign up on the calendar located on the stand in the Good Shepherd room. Please note that we do require clearances for everyone working with children. If you want to know more, please speak with Miss Kelly or Johanna Patterson.

**Stewardship Materials** were mailed along with 3rd Quarter giving statements. There are three parts; Time and Ability Form, Step chart, and commitment card. The Time and Ability Form and Commitment Card may be returned today All Saints Sunday (November 1) or to the church office prior to November 15.

**Our winter coat drive for Jackson Elementary School ends next Sunday**. Please check your closets for gently used coats, preschool-8th grade including some adult sizes. Of course, new coats would be appreciated too. Drop off is located in Christ Hall. Your generosity will contribute to many children's enthusiasm for learning.

**2027 Flower Chart -** The 2027 flower chart is posted on the Springettsbury vestibule bulletin board. The cost of the flowers is $40 per vase. You are welcome to sign up to provide one or both vases. Make a check payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church and mark it altar flowers.

**Silent Art Auction**. Members of St. Paul's have created a variety of items that will be on display in the narthex (George Street). You may bid on items up through November 15, the day of the Annual Meeting. This is a great way to secure an original piece of artwork and even a potential holiday gift. All proceeds are given in support of St. Paul's Food Pantry.

**The Auxiliary to SpiriTrust Lutheran** is receiving annual memberships, any donation is welcome. All gifts go to Benevolent care. Please see Jim Mummert. Make checks payable to "The Auxiliary to SpiriTrust Lutheran" by November 30.

**Please sign-up** in the Good Shepherd Room for the Annual Meeting Luncheon. We would like an accurate count for the meal. Thank you!

**All Saints Sunday 2026**
**Revelation 7:9-17 1 John 3:1-3 Matthew 5:1-12**

Hungering and thirsting for something other than what is being experienced is not new for us as God's people. It is recorded in the pages of sacred scripture. This is referenced in Revelation, 1 John, and in Matthew. In the reading from Matthew, what precedes the Beatitudes is a paragraph highlighting the healing work of Jesus among the suffering people across the Judean countryside. People, who have been disenfranchised, people who are sick, people who are suffering, people who are unemployable, and Jesus ministers to all of them. The crowds swell. People follow. Jesus goes up the mountain, sits down and teaches them.

Hungering and thirsting for something other than what is being experienced is what citizens of our country articulate. Interviews with residents have punctuated the week's news cycle. Red states, blues states, swing states, Republicans, Democrats, Independents, election strategists, young voters, old voters, local party chairpersons, it didn't seem to matter, news outlets had reporters interviewing folks on street corners across our nation. I heard important themes from all of them; inflation, high costs associated with gasoline to healthcare, housing affordability, meaningful labor, education, the persistent theme of war, and a desire for peace. Americans seem to be hungering and thirsting for something other than what we are experiencing in the moment.

When Jesus sat down on the mountain top to teach, he addressed the crowd. He addressed the things that were confronting them. Blessings in the ancient world aren't usually bestowed upon the disenfranchised, those battling sickness, the unemployable, and the nominally religious. Jesus recognized that the people are indeed hungering and thirsting for something other than poverty, grief, sickness, despair. Jesus tells them that with him…the poor receive the kingdom of heaven. Those grieving receive comfort. The meek inherits the earth. (Imagine this in a system where only the eldest son inherits.) Those hungering and thirsting for righteousness will be filled. The merciful finally get a fair shake for "*doing unto others as you would have them do to you."* They too receive mercy. They get in return what they give. The pure in heart see God. Peacemakers get a new name, "*children of God*." And those persecuted, made fun of, belittled, and looked down on for doing what is right, they are welcomed into the kingdom of heaven right alongside the poor in spirit.

And don't worry about the evil, unkind, hateful statements made about you for following Jesus, because your reward is great in heaven. You will be counted among the faithful like the prophets who came before you. "*You are,"* Jesus declares, "*the salt of the earth*." And in the ancient world salt was valuable and precious, and necessary for future.

When John the Divine writes down his vision, his revelation, for the early church community he is very much aware of how few Christians there are, how they are a minority, how they are suffering, how they are taking it on the nose for following Jesus. He knows that they don't fit into the social norms of the time. They are seeking relationships, understanding, and acceptance in a world that doesn't care much for peace or meekness, a world that doesn't have time to deal with poverty or righteousness. Looking out and seeing a great multitude, a number too great to count, that begins to change perceptions. John leads the beloved of God to a place that acknowledges that in this heavenly realm gathered around the Lamb, Christ Jesus, those struggling to find their way will hunger and thirst no more. For the Lamb will provide what is needed. And the tears associated with daily life and living shall be wiped away.

The political systems in the days of Jesus were wrought with corruption. Both the social and religious politic were threatened by a man who welcomed and blessed those who couldn't find room, place, belonging, acceptance, or a chance for a different way of life. Jesus offered them blessing and with it hope. The political systems in the days of the early church were seeking and searching for more power. They were threatened by a fledgling community that believed that there was another way. John of Patmos, often referred to as John the Divine, John the writer of Revelation, cast a vision that offered hope to Christians during uncertain times.

In our own time, today, right now, we are hungering and thirsting for something other. That's why we are here this morning. We are citizens of God's kingdom, we are children of God, beloved by God, and as such we go about daily life and living in another way. We know too well how the odds seem to be against the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart and peacemakers. We know how Jerrymandering isn't just a tool of political parties to control power. We are all tempted in ways that seek to keep our own control. Christ Jesus comes among us forgiving our foolish ways and offering another way to go about life. Jesus teaches us as God's beloved children. And as the beloved of God there are new possibilities given for each of us. Believing in Jesus means doing what he says! And that changes everything.

On this All Saints Day we remember; Becky, Irmgard, Rita, Christine, Suzanne, Bob, Deloris, Anna Mae and Candy. They lived their life marked by Christ's cross; Children of God who struggled with relationships, understanding, acceptance and who during their lives took up the refrains of peace, meekness, poverty, and righteousness each in their own way. They were the salt of this congregation and of this commonwealth. They lived in the hope of Christ's victory and took comfort knowing they were guided to the springs of the water of life. And they believed in God's time all tears would indeed be wiped away giving clarity of vision to see God, and God's way for life and living; a way of blessing, a vision of hope.

Together we share a vision of hope for the world. A vision that is only possible because of Christ Jesus, who taught the crowds on a mountain side, and who gathered all people to himself through his suffering and death on a hill outside of Jerusalem where the political leaders put him to death on a cross. The vision of hope did not die in a tomb, because God raised Jesus from death to life announcing to the world that he makes room for all. This is shocking news. Shocking just as it was when Jesus welcomed and healed the disenfranchised, the sick, the suffering, and the unemployable from the Judean countryside and gave them blessing. Shocking just as it was when John cast a vision that brought hope to the early church reminding them of the Lamb who claimed them and the Shepherd who guided them. Shocking when leadership in the early church were reminded that they are God's beloved children. Shocking when Matthew announced that you are blessed even when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on account of Jesus. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. Great because tears will be wiped away. Great because you will forever abide in the presence of the Almighty. Great because you are God's beloved child. Amen.

## FIRST READING: Revelation 7:9-17

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. [10]They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

"Salvation belongs to our God who is seated
on the throne and to the Lamb!"

[11]And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, [12]singing,

"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honor
and power and might
be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

[13]Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" [14]I said to him, "Sir, you are the one who knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

[15]For this reason they are before the throne
of God
and worship him day and night within his
temple,
and the one who is seated on the throne
will shelter them.
[16]They will hunger no more and thirst no
more;
the sun will not strike them,
nor any scorching heat,
[17]for the Lamb at the center of the throne
will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of the
water of life,
and God will wipe away every tear from their
eyes."

## Psalm 34:1-10, 22

## SECOND READING: 1 John 3:1-3

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God, and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. [2]Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. [3]And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

## GOSPEL: Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. [2]And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

[3]"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[4]"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

[5]"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

[6]"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

[7]"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

[8]"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

[9]"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

[10]"Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[11]"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. [12]Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

**Next Sunday's Readings:** Amos 5:18-24 *or* Wisdom of Solomon 6:12-16; Psalm 70 *or* Wisdom of Solomon 6:17-20; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13.

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Tracks 1 and 2

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