

GREETING

Gathered in Christ. **We serve with grace.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy. **Amen.**

Drawn to Christ and seeking God’s abundance, let us confess our sin. *Silence is kept for reflection.* God, our provider, **help us. It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn? Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for life in the world. Amen.**

Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, † the bread of life, you are shown God’s mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG “Abide with Me”#629

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy God, your word feeds your people with life that is eternal. Direct our choices and preserve us in your truth, that, renouncing what is false and evil, we may live in you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

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

¹ Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. ^{2a} And Joshua said to all the people, ¹⁴ “Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵ Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.” ¹⁶ Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷ for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; ¹⁸ and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the

Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.” Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 34:15-22

¹⁵ The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous,
and God’s ears are open to their cry.

¹⁶ **The face of the LORD is against those who do evil,
to erase the remembrance of them from the earth.**

¹⁷ The righteous cry, and the LORD hears them
and delivers them from all their troubles.

¹⁸ **The LORD is near to the brokenhearted
and saves those whose spirits are crushed.**

¹⁹ Many are the troubles of the righteous,
but the LORD delivers them from every one.

²⁰ **God will keep safe all their bones;
not one of them shall be broken.**

²¹ Evil will bring death to the wicked
and those who hate the righteous will be punished.

²² **O LORD, you redeem the life of your servants,
and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.**

SECOND READING: EPHESIANS 6:10-20

¹⁰ Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵ As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak. Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

P: Alleluia!

C: Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN 6:56-69

The Holy Gospel according to John, the 6th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord. [Jesus said,] ⁵⁶ “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” ⁵⁹ He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum. ⁶⁰ When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” ⁶¹ But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶² Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³ It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴ But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. ⁶⁵ And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.” ⁶⁶ Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷ So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.” The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON “*What Have You Come to Believe? What Turns You Back?*” Deacon Ro

HYMN OF THE DAY “*Blessed Assurance*”#638

APOSTLES CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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

Calling on the spirit of Wisdom to guide our hearts and our minds, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need. *A brief silence.* Holy God, you have the words of eternal life. Lead the church to put its trust in Jesus, the living Word. Direct preachers, teachers, writers, and all the baptized in faithful speech and bold witness. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Creator God, we and all creation are sustained by your Word. We pray for all who remind us of our interconnectedness with all living things. Prosper the work of conservation organizations, ELCA advocacy, and local climate justice advocates. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of wisdom, as our nation navigates another election cycle, guide our leaders to act justly for the sake of the world. Bring about fruitful conversation among your people and bring about change where you see fit. Sustain all who serve on juries in their deliberations. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of restoration, bring healing and wholeness to all who cry to you. Where pain is sharp, bring a sense of comfort and relief. Where grief runs deep, bring your tender mercy. Care for those on our hearts. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

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

God of every generation, we remember with thanksgiving all who have completed their baptismal journeys. Strengthen us in our baptismal callings to serve you faithfully until our journey's end. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

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

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

OFFERTORY SONG "*Give Thanks*"

Give thanks with a grateful heart. Give thanks to the holy one. Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ His Son. And now let the weak say I am strong. Let the poor say I am rich; because of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks. Give thanks.

OFFERING PRAYER

Jesus, Bread of life, you have set this table with your very self, and called us to the feast of plenty. Gather what has been sown among us, and strengthen us in this meal. Make us to be what we receive here, your body for the life of the world. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. God most mighty, God most merciful, O God our rock and our salvation. Hear us as we praise; call us to Your table; grant us Your life.

HYMN “*Holy, Holy, Holy*” Setting 4, p153

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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 in 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.”

LORD’S PRAYER (*sung*)

COMMUNION HYMN “*Lamb of God*” Setting 4 #154

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Jesus, Bread of life, we have received from your table more than we could ever ask. As you have nourished us in this meal, now strengthen us to love the world with your own life. In your name we pray. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, † be upon you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG “*Lead On, O King Eternal*”#805

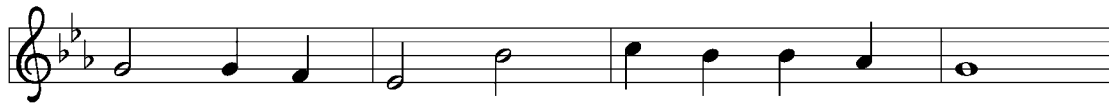
SONG OF PEACE

My peace I give unto you. It's a peace that the world cannot give. It's a peace that the world cannot understand; peace to know; peace to live. My peace I give unto you.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**

Abide with Me



1 A - bide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide.
2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;
3 I need thy pres - ence ev - 'ry pass - ing hour;
4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;
5 Hold thou thy cross be - fore my clos - ing eyes,



The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide.
earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way;
what but thy grace can foil the tempt - er's pow'r?
ills have no weight, and tears no bit - ter - ness.
shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;



When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,
change and de - cay in all a - round I see;
Who like thy - self my guide and stay can be?
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy vic - to - ry?
heav'n's morn - ing breaks, and earth's vain shad - ows flee;



help of the help - less, oh, a - bide with me.
O thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.
Through cloud and sun - shine, oh, a - bide with me.
I tri - umph still, if thou a - bide with me!
in life, in death, O Lord, a - bide with me.

Text: Henry F. Lyte, 1793–1847

Music: EVENTIDE, William H. Monk, 1823–1889

Blessed Assurance



- 1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
- 2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
- 3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.
an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.
watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.

Refrain



This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:



this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

Lead On, O King Eternal!



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



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



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



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

IT'S GRILL NIGHT!!!! Sunday, August 25th Our last one for the summer! Join us as we enjoy brats, pork burgers, hamburgers, hot dogs and a few surprise side dishes!

*If you want to bring a dish, you may but not required!
5:00-6:30pm See you then!!!*

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8! God's Work Our Hands Sunday!

An ELCA celebration Sunday of service! Nearly 10,000 congregations across the United States join together on this Sunday to share acts of service, love, and compassion in and throughout their communities. Bethlehem Lutheran will share "Bowls of Love" with those who are unable to attend church in person or with someone you know who needs a bowl of love!

Bring cookies, candy, fruit, or a salty snack to church that Sunday to fill at least 20 bowls of love for our community!

For those of you who have yellow shirts...wear your shirt to church that day!

More shirts available that day!

*Prairie Parish Gathering, Saturday September 7, 9:00am,
Peace Lutheran, Sterling*

"Discovering Spiritual Gifts, What Happens Now?"

If anyone still needs a gifts inventory and scoring sheet, please see Deacon Ro.