



17TH SUNDAY AFTER  
**PENTECOST**



***Welcome to  
St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Child Development Center and Pre-School***  
Rev. Dr. George R. Qualley, D.R.S., Ph.D., Pastor

*September 20, 2026*

FOR TO ME  
TO LIVE IS  
CHRIST,

AND TO  
**DIE**  
IS GAIN.

PHILIPPIANS 1:21

St. Paul  
Lutheran



Taylor, TX  
LCMC

***Welcome to  
St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Child Development Center and Pre-School***

Rev. Dr. George R. Qualley, D.R.S., Ph.D., Pastor

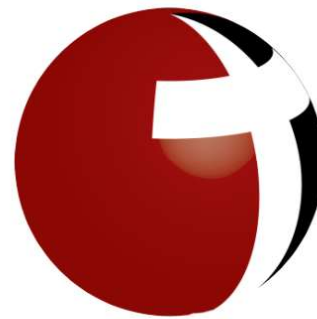
*The Lord is  
GRACIOUS,  
and full of  
COMPASSION;  
slow to anger,  
and of great mercy.*



*Psalm 145:8*

WELCOME

WE'RE GLAD YOU JOINED US

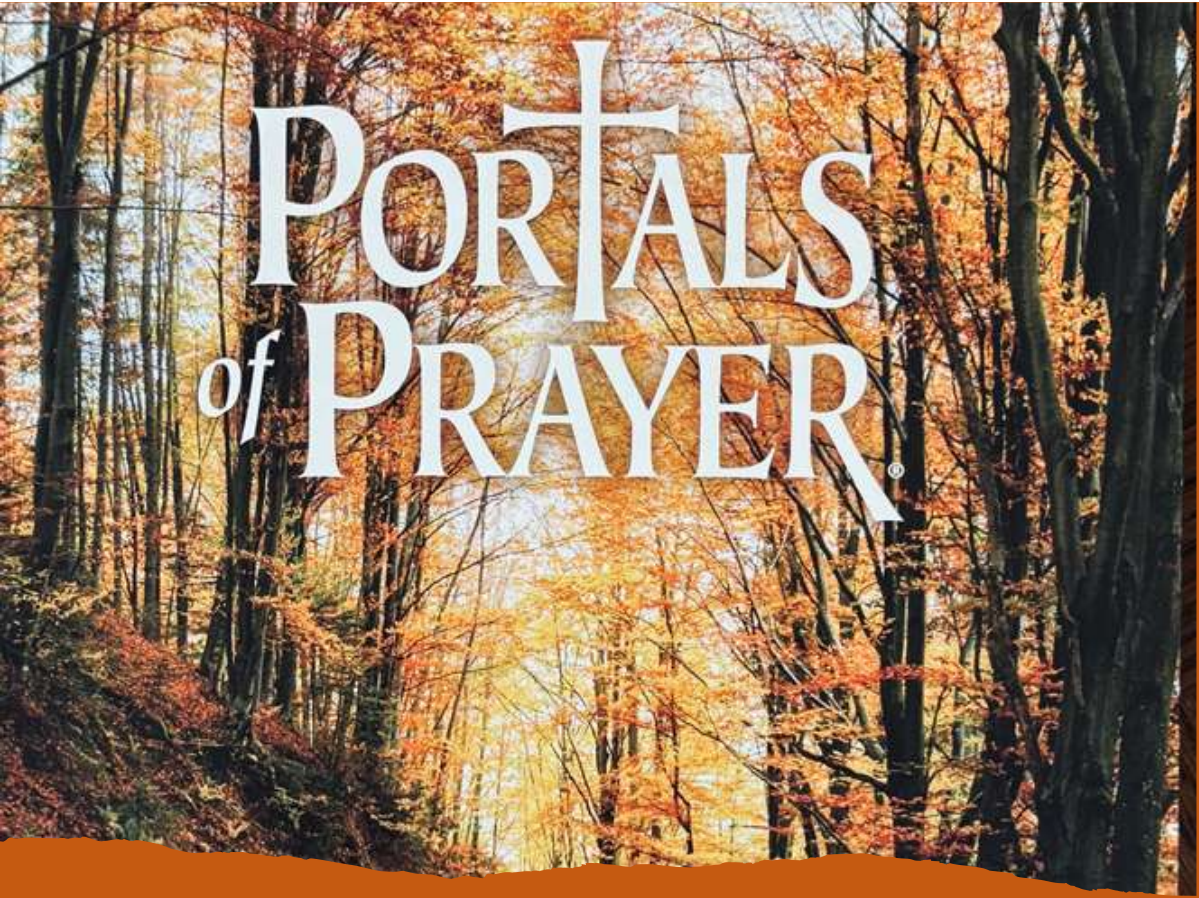


**lcmc**

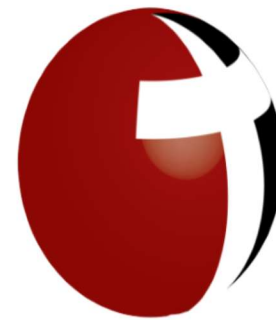
Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ



The handbell choir will be practicing 9-9:45 am on:  
Sept 27 Oct 11 & 25 Nov 15 & 22 Dec 13 & 20  
Please contact Debbie Matthys or come to practice if  
you are interested in joining!



# PORTALS *of* PRAYER



**lcmc**

Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ

The new Portals of Prayer are available at  
the front entrances and in the Narthex

# PRAY FOR: THOSE SEEKING

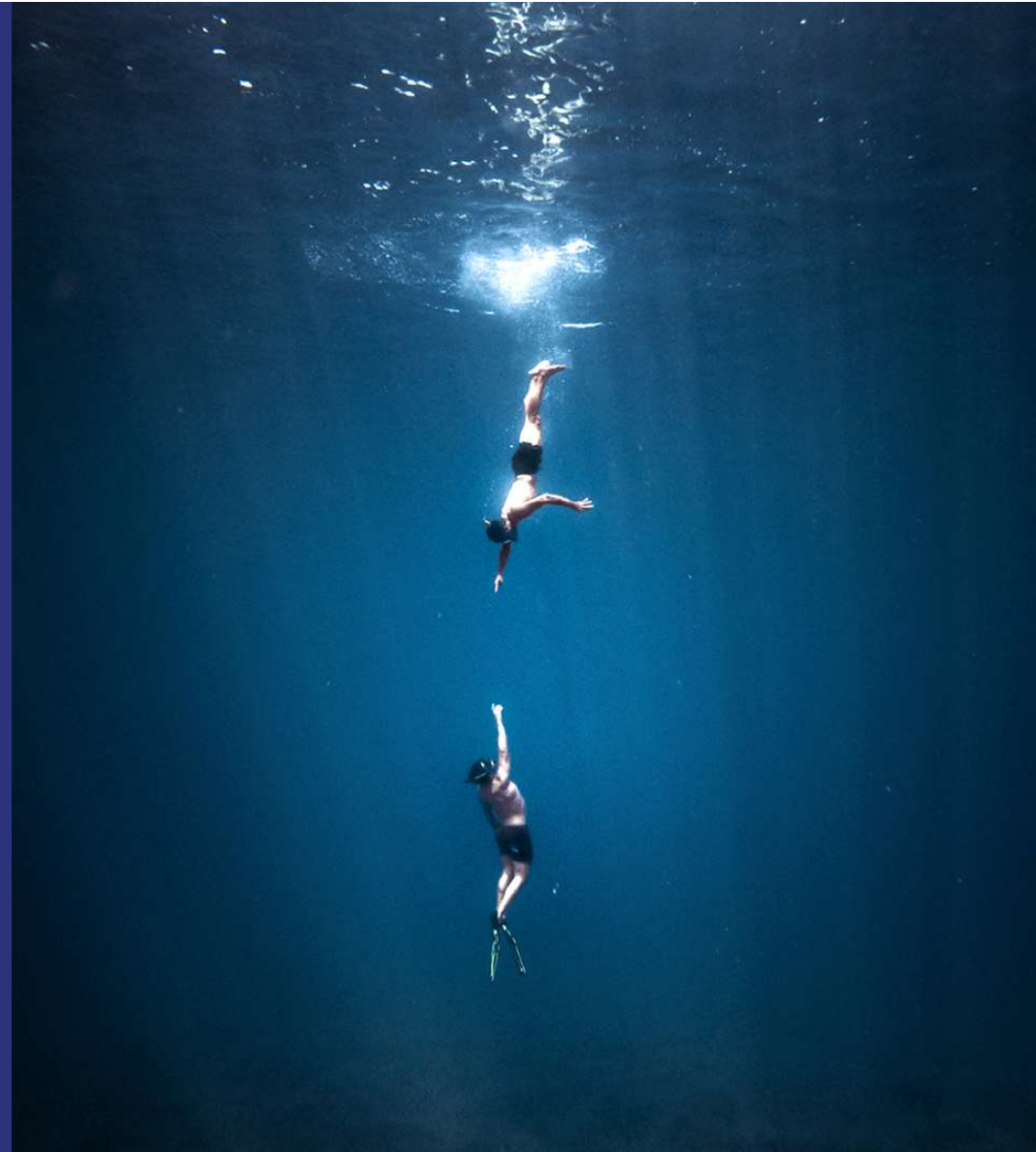
O Lord, encourage the seeker to reach out to you in faith.

*And many nations shall join themselves to the Lord...and I will dwell in your midst, and you shall know that the Lord has sent me to you.*

—Zech 2:11



[prayerleague.org](http://prayerleague.org)



## INTRODUCTION

*Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.*

## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
who pours love into our hearts  
and healing upon the earth.

**Amen.**

Confident that God justifies us by grace through  
faith, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Compassionate God,  
**we confess that we struggle to embody  
your goodness  
in the world and in our own hearts.  
Creation groans from overuse.  
Jealousy and bitterness strain our  
relationships.  
Indifference keeps us from seeking  
justice.**

**Divisions disrupt your call to show  
genuine love  
to others.**

**Turn our hearts back to you.**

**Restore our world and reconcile us to one  
another.**

**Renew us to live as your holy people,  
following the way of Jesus Christ.**

**Amen.**

Hear this good news:  
We have peace with God through ✝ Jesus Christ,  
in whom there is no condemnation,  
but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.  
Receive freely this healing gift of grace.  
**Amen.**

## **Gathering Song**

**“Take My Life, That I May Be”**

**Hymn # 583**

**[Refrain]**

**Take my life, that I may be  
consecrated, Lord, to thee;  
take my moments and my days;  
let them flow in ceaseless praise.**

Hymn # 583

**<sup>1</sup> Take my hands and let  
them move  
at the impulse of thy love;**

Hymn # 583

**take my feet and let them be  
swift and beautiful for thee.**

**[Refrain]**

Hymn # 583

**[Refrain]**

**Take my life, that I may be  
consecrated, Lord, to thee;  
take my moments and my days;  
let them flow in ceaseless praise.**

Hymn # 583

**2 Take my silver and my  
gold,  
not a mite would I withhold;**

Hymn # 583

**take my intellect and use  
ev'ry pow'r as thou shalt  
choose.  
[Refrain]**

Hymn # 583

**[Refrain]**

**Take my life, that I may be  
consecrated, Lord, to thee;  
take my moments and my days;  
let them flow in ceaseless praise.**

Hymn # 583

**3 Take my voice and let me  
sing  
always, only, for my King;**

Hymn # 583

**take my lips and let them be  
filled with messages from  
thee.**

**[Refrain]**

Hymn # 583

**[Refrain]**

**Take my life, that I may be  
consecrated, Lord, to thee;  
take my moments and my days;  
let them flow in ceaseless praise.**

Hymn # 583

**Final Take my will and make it  
thine;  
it shall be no longer mine;**

Hymn # 583

**take my heart, it is thine  
own;  
it shall be thy royal throne.  
[Refrain]**

Hymn # 583

**[Refrain]**

**Take my life, that I may be  
consecrated, Lord, to thee;  
take my moments and my days;  
let them flow in ceaseless praise.**

Hymn # 583

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 mercy.***

*For the peace from above, and for our salvation,  
let us pray to the Lord*

***Lord, have mercy.***

*For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being  
of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us  
pray to the lord*

***Lord, have mercy.***

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their  
worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

***Lord, have mercy***

*Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord*  
***A-men.***

**THIS IS THE FEAST**

***This is the feast of victory  
for our God.***

***Alleluia, alleluia***

*(sung twice)*

***Worthy is Christ,  
the Lamb who was slain  
whose blood set us free  
to be people of God***

***Power, riches, wisdom, and  
strength,  
and honor, blessing, and glory  
are his***

***This is the feast of victory  
for our God.***

***Alleluia, alleluia***

*(sung twice)*

***Sing with all the people of God,  
and join in the hymn of all  
creation:***

***Blessing, honor, glory, and might  
be to God and the Lamb forever.  
Amen.***

***This is the feast of victory  
for our God.***

***Alleluia, alleluia***

*(sung twice)*

***For the Lamb who was slain  
has begun his reign. Alleluia.***

***This is the feast of victory  
for our God.  
Alleluia, alleluia***

*(sung twice)*

## **Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## **WORD**

### **FIRST READING: Jonah 3:10—4:11**

*After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?*

<sup>10</sup> When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

<sup>4:1</sup> But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. <sup>2</sup> He prayed to the LORD and said, “O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment.

<sup>3</sup> And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” <sup>4</sup> And the LORD said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” <sup>5</sup> Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush.

<sup>7</sup> But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. <sup>8</sup> When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.”

<sup>9</sup> But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.”

<sup>10</sup> Then the LORD said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. <sup>11</sup> And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?”

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

# PSALM: 145:1-8

*The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. (Ps. 145:8)*

<sup>1</sup> I will exalt you, my God and king,  
and bless your name forever and ever.

<sup>2</sup> **Every day will I bless you  
and praise your name forever and  
ever.**

<sup>3</sup> Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised!

There is no end to your greatness.

**<sup>4</sup> One generation shall praise your works  
to another  
and shall declare your power.**

<sup>5</sup> I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty  
and all your marvelous works.

**<sup>6</sup> They shall tell of the might of your  
wondrous acts,  
and I will recount your greatness.**

<sup>7</sup> They shall publish the remembrance of your  
great goodness;  
they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.

<sup>8</sup> **The LORD is gracious and full of  
compassion,  
slow to anger and abounding in  
steadfast love.**

## **SECOND READING: Philippians 1:21-30**

*Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.*

<sup>21</sup> For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. <sup>22</sup> If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. <sup>23</sup> I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, <sup>24</sup> but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. <sup>25</sup> Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, <sup>26</sup> so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.

<sup>27</sup> Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel <sup>28</sup> and in no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. <sup>29</sup> For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well,

<sup>30</sup> since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

***Gospel Acclamation***

***Alleluia.***

***Lord, to whom shall we go?***

***You have the words of eternal Life.***

***Alleluia.***

# GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel according to  
Matthew 20:1-16

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

## **GOSPEL:** Matthew 20:1-16

*Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup> “The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. <sup>2</sup> After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. <sup>3</sup> When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, <sup>4</sup> and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. <sup>5</sup> When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same.

<sup>6</sup> And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' <sup>7</sup> They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' <sup>8</sup> When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' <sup>9</sup> When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received a denarius.

<sup>10</sup> Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. <sup>11</sup> And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, <sup>12</sup> saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' = But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius?' <sup>14</sup> Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you.

<sup>15</sup> Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' <sup>16</sup> So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**



# **Sermon**

Rev. Dr. George R. Qualley

A photograph of a vineyard at sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow over the scene. The vineyard rows are visible in the foreground and middle ground, with the soil appearing reddish-brown. The sky is filled with soft, golden clouds. A white rectangular text box with a thin black border is positioned on the left side of the image, containing the text.

The kingdom of heaven  
is like a landowner who  
went out at dawn to hire  
laborers for his  
vineyard. Matthew 20:1

life360  
america

**Hymn of the Day**

**“You Are Mine”**

**Hymn # 581**

**<sup>1</sup> I will come to you in the silence,  
I will lift you from all your fear.  
You will hear my voice,  
I claim you as my choice.  
Be still, and know I am here.**

Hymn # 581

**2 I am hope for all who are  
hopeless**

**I am eyes for all who long to see**

**In the shadows of the night**

**I will be your light**

**Come and rest in Me**

**[Refrain]**

Hymn # 581

**[Refrain]**

**Do not be afraid, I am with you.  
I have called you each by name.  
Come and follow me,  
I will bring you home;  
I love you and you are mine.**

Hymn # 581

**3 I am strength for all the despairing,  
healing for the ones who dwell in  
shame.**

**All the blind will see, the lame will all  
run free,  
and all will know my name  
[Refrain]**

Hymn # 581

**[Refrain]**

**Do not be afraid, I am with you.  
I have called you each by name.  
Come and follow me,  
I will bring you home;  
I love you and you are mine.**

Hymn # 581

**Final I am the Word that leads all to  
freedom,**

**I am the peace the world cannot give.**

**I will call your name, embracing all  
your pain.**

**Stand up, now walk and live!**

**[Refrain]**

**Hymn # 581**

**[Refrain]**

**Do not be afraid, I am with you.  
I have called you each by name.  
Come and follow me,  
I will bring you home;  
I love you and you are mine.**

Hymn # 581

With the whole church let us confess our faith.

## **CREED**

*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.**

*Congregation may be seated*

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love,  
we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

*A brief silence.*

Hold your church accountable for our unwillingness to share your good news and our anger at your generosity to others. Nourish us by your grace to be witnesses to your love.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Guide scientists and researchers studying responses to the climate crisis so that all your creation may inspire us to give thanks for your great goodness.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Encourage any who cannot work or who cannot work a full day with the truth that their value comes from your everlasting love for them. Provide for those who are injured, ill, and for all in any need and we remember our friends and family members before you.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Strengthen all those in this congregation whose labor serves the needs of others in the community. Inspire all in this congregation to support community endeavors with our time and talents.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for all our military, especially those deployed. We keep in our prayers all the Wounded Warriors that have returned home to heal. We pray for our missionaries, for Dick and Barb in Ecuador, serving with the World Mission Prayer League, and for our sister congregation at Grace Lutheran Church in Hayward, Wisconsin.

Today we also give you thanks for Holy Ghost Lutheran Church in Yoakum, Texas and their pastor Rusty Bailey. Bless their work for your Kingdom's sake.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Comfort us with the promise of the resurrection as we remember all our loved ones whose desire to be with Jesus is fulfilled.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

**Amen.**

**PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you. 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...

...we praise your name and join their  
unending hymn:

***Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
Lord God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are  
full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is he who comes in the  
name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.***

## **THE 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 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.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

# **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass  
against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

## **COMMUNION**

*Holy Communion is offered both in the center aisle line  
and at the altar rail.*

***Lamb of God Pg. 174***

***Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.***

***Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.***

***Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
grant us peace, grant us peace.***



*Holy Communion is offered both in the center aisle line and at the altar rail.*

# **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

## **SENDING**

## **BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and  
mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you  
peace.

**Amen.**

**Sending Song**

**“Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ”**

**Hymn # 674**

**<sup>1</sup> Let us talents and tongues  
employ, reaching out with a  
shout of joy:**

Hymn # 674

**bread is broken, the wine is  
poured,  
Christ is spoken and seen  
and heard.  
[Refrain]**

Hymn # 674

**[Refrain – Sung Twice]**

**Jesus lives again, earth can  
breathe again,  
pass the Word around:  
loaves abound!**

**Hymn # 674**

**2 Christ is able to make us  
one, at the table he sets the  
tone,**

Hymn # 674

**teaching people to live to  
bless, love in word and in  
deed express.  
[Refrain]**

Hymn # 674

**[Refrain – Sung Twice]**

**Jesus lives again, earth can  
breathe again,  
pass the Word around:  
loaves abound!**

**Hymn # 674**

**Final Jesus calls us in, sends  
us out bearing fruit in a  
world of doubt,**

Hymn # 674

**gives us love to tell, bread to  
share: God (Immanuel)  
ev'rywhere!**

**[Refrain]**

**Hymn # 674**

**[Refrain – Sung Twice]**

**Jesus lives again, earth can  
breathe again,  
pass the Word around:  
loaves abound!**

**Hymn # 674**

# DISMISSAL

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

**Thanks be to God.**

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17TH SUNDAY AFTER  
**PENTECOST**