



**Christ
Lutheran**
CHURCH

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Season of Creation
“LEARN”
September 8, 2024

We Welcome You to Christ Lutheran Church! We are a community of people sharing God's love through Christ and growing together in faith.

We celebrate all the ways we are made in the image of God, seeking to see God in everyone. We honor and respect each person's age, ethnicity, family composition, gender identity, gender expression, life history, mental well-being, physical ability, relationship status, sexual orientation, skin color, and socioeconomic standing. Together, we strive to love and serve our neighbor and all creation, including working toward racial and social justice. We would love to walk with you on this creative adventure* of faith, grace, and love.

** The first sermon ever preached at Christ Lutheran was titled "A Call to Creative Adventure."*

ABOUT WORSHIP

We gather to worship weekly to hear and remember our shared hope: the life, death, and resurrection of Christ makes all things new, even us.

You will find everything that happens in worship printed in this bulletin, with hymns found in the red hymnals ("ELW") in the seats in front on you.

If you have a prayer request, note it on a yellow card from the seatback holder and pass it to an usher; the other side is for any information you would like about Christ Lutheran. Please feel welcome to remain seated as necessary during the service.

CHILDREN ARE ALWAYS WELCOME IN CHURCH!

God's people come in all shapes and sizes – it is a gift to the whole community when the smallest of us are present! Sitting with parents and learning to treasure times of worship is the foundation for helping build a growing faith in a child's life. There's some noise and movement that we expect from little ones - feel free to make use of the **activity bags, doodle pads, bookshelf in the overflow area and cry room at the back of the sanctuary** as needed. Whatever sacrifice of energy and effort you make to include your children in worship is multiplied as the good news of God's love takes root in their lives!

WHEN NURSERY CARE IS NEEDED DURING WORSHIP

A fully equipped and staffed Nursery is available for both infants and toddlers during all services. The Nursery is located west of our gathering area in **Room 110**.

RESTROOMS

Men's and women's restrooms off the Gathering Area and Church Hall have changing tables, as does the all-gender restroom near the nursery. A second all-gender restroom is through the Vestry off the East hallway, past the Welcome Center.

HOLY COMMUNION

Holy Communion is the family meal of God's people, to which we come at Jesus' invitation. The body and blood of Christ, in the bread and wine, are his real presence with us and offer the gift of forgiveness because of his death and resurrection. Drawn together and strengthened by this meal, we are given a taste of the fullness of God's coming kingdom, and are equipped to be the hands and feet of God's love in the world. All baptized Christians are always welcome at the Lord's table.

Our services are on video, and occasional photographs are taken for our website and e-mail news. If you have concerns, please speak to a church staff member.

Hearing assistance devices are available to those who need help with listening to the service and are located at the entrance to the sanctuary, or please see an Usher for assistance.

A Reminder: Please turn off all cell phones during worship services.

James tells us to stop showing favoritism in the assembly, treating the rich visitor with more honor than the poor one. Jesus himself seems to show partiality in his first response to the Syrophoenician woman in today's gospel. Was he testing her faith in saying Gentiles don't deserve the goods meant for God's children? Or was he speaking out of his human worldview, but transcended those limits when she took him by surprise with her reply? Either way, the story tells us that God shows no partiality. Everyone who brings a need to Jesus is received with equal honor as a child and heir.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

PRELUDE

Earth & All Stars

arr. Burkhardt

WELCOME

If you are a guest with us, welcome! We'd love to meet you and if there's anything you'd like to know about the ministry of Christ Lutheran Church, please consider [filling out a Connection Card online](#) (you can point your phone at the graphic to the right).



***Prayer requests** can be posted to the livechat or use a yellow Prayer Request and give them to an usher.*

*If you are joining via livestream, consider **preparing your space for Communion**: light a candle (if appropriate and safe), and have a plate with bread/cracker/tortilla and a cup for wine or grape juice (or an empty cup as a sign Jesus is sufficient in one or both elements).*

LITANY OF PRAISE FOR CREATION

Glory to you, O God:

you speak a word of power,
and so you create the world.

We praise you, O God:

We praise you, O God.

For the Spirit hovering to bring forth life,
for the earth ordered from chaos,
and for light and dark,

We bless you, O God:

We bless you, O God.

For the cosmos beyond our earth,
for the sky above our heads,
and for the cycle of evening and morning,
we exalt you, O God:

We exalt you, O God.

For the seas, the lakes, and the rivers,
for the land with its mountains and plains,
and for the trees, the plants, and their fruits,
we magnify you, O God:

We magnify you, O God.

For the sun to rule the day,
for the moon to brighten the night,
and for the shining stars,
we extol you, O God:

We extol you, O God.

For the fish in the sea,
for the birds of the air,
and for the monsters in the deep,
we glorify you, O God:

We glorify you, O God.

For wild animals and creatures of all kinds,
for cattle and all livestock,
and for everything that creeps on the earth,
we adore you, O God:

We adore you, O God.

For humankind made in your image,
for setting us on your good earth,
and for providing us food to eat,
we worship you, O God.

We worship you, O God.

Bless us, your creatures.
Accept our praise,
and make us stewards of your marvelous creation.

We praise you, O God:

We praise you, O God.

Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving
and honor and power and might
be to you, our God, forever and ever.

Amen.



1 Earth and all stars! Loud rush - ing plan - ets!
 2 Trum - pet and pipes! Loud clash - ing cym - bals!
 3 En - gines and steel! Loud pound - ing ham - mers!
 4 Class-rooms and labs! Loud boil - ing test tubes!
 5 Knowl-edge and truth! Loud sound - ing wis - dom!



Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!



Hail, wind, and rain! Loud blow - ing snow - storm!
 Harp, lute, and lyre! Loud hum - ming cel - los!
 Lime - stone and beams! Loud build - ing work - ers!
 Ath - lete and band! Loud cheer - ing peo - ple!
 Daugh - ter and son! Loud pray - ing mem - bers!



Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!

Refrain



God has done mar - vel - ous things.



I too sing prais - es with a new song!

Text: Herbert F. Brokering, b. 1926
 Music: EARTH AND ALL STARS, David N. Johnson, 1922-1987
 Text and music © 1968 Augsburg Publishing House, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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.

Children: This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Grant us, Lord, to trust in you with all our hearts; help us to learn from you to resist the temptation to use our power to dominate your creation; teach us to learn to live so that there is enough for all your people and all your creatures; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

CHILDREN'S TIME

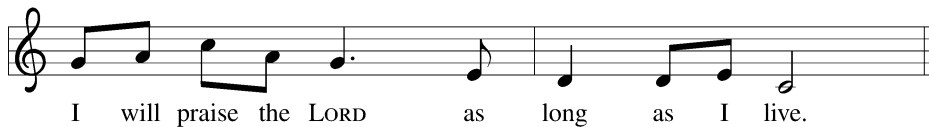
The assembly is seated as children are invited for a time together.

SPECIAL MUSIC (10:30 A.M.) *Beautiful Savior*

PSALM 146

The congregation is invited to sing the psalm refrain when indicated (R). Verses will be chanted alternately by the leader and the people.

Refrain



Psalm Tone



¹Hal-¹ lelujah!
 Praise the LORD,¹ O my soul!
²**I will praise the LORD as long¹ as I live;**
I will sing praises to my God while I¹ have my being.
³Put not your¹ trust in rulers,
 in mortals in whom there¹ is no help.
⁴**When they breathe their last, they re-¹ turn to earth,**
and in that day¹ their thoughts perish. R
⁵Happy are they who have the God of Jacob¹ for their help,
 whose hope is in the¹ LORD their God;
⁶**who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that¹ is in them;**
who keeps promis-¹ es forever;
⁷who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to¹ those who hunger.
 The LORD sets the¹ captive free.
⁸**The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts**
up those who¹ are bowed down;
the LORD¹ loves the righteous. R
⁹The LORD cares¹ for the stranger;
 the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way¹ of the wicked.
¹⁰**The LORD shall¹ reign forever,**
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.¹ Hallelujah! R

READING: James 2:1-17

Faithful Christians do not show partiality to the rich and powerful of the world, especially at the expense of the poor and weak. Likewise, faith does not pay mere lip service to God's will. Instead, a living Christian faith expresses itself in acts of compassion and mercy for those in need.

¹ My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? ² For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, ³ and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," ⁴ have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? ⁵ Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? ⁷ Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

⁸ You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ⁹ But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. ¹¹ For the one who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery but if you

murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹² So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. ¹³ For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? ¹⁷ So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands to welcome the Gospel.



HOLY GOSPEL: Mark 7:24-37

In Mark's gospel, encounters with women usually signify turning points in Jesus' ministry. Here, a conversation with a Syrophenician woman marks the beginning of his mission to the Gentiles.

The Holy Gospel according to Mark.
Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁴ [Jesus] set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, ²⁵ but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. ²⁶ Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ He said to her, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” ²⁸ But she answered him, “Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” ²⁹ Then he said to her, “For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.” ³⁰ So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

³¹ Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. ³² They brought to him a deaf man who had an

impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. ³³ He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. ³⁴ Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” ³⁵ And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. ³⁶ Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. ³⁷ They were astounded beyond measure, saying, “He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The assembly is seated. Time for reflection follows the sermon.

HYMN OF THE DAY ACS #1069

God Bestows on Every Sense

The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song.



1 God be - stows on ev - 'ry sense beau - ty as hope's
 2 Catch a fleet - ing glimpse of grace in an un - ex -
 3 Vi - brant pic - tures in our dreams, brushed with crys - tal
 4 In a burnt and black - ened field bro - ken ground be -
 5 God makes all cre - a - tion new, turn - ing back what



ev - i - dence: signs of what the earth will
 pect - ed place: just a taste, the small - est
 col - or schemes, van - ish from a wak - ing
 gins to yield ti - ny, frag - ile sprouts of
 peo - ple do, build - ing up what we de -



be just be - yond what we can see.
 crumb of the ban - quet yet to come.
 mind, leav - ing just a trace be - hind.
 green: hints of for - ests yet un - seen.
 stroy, sing - ing sor - row in - to joy.

Text: Adam M. L. Tice, b. 1979
 Music: ALL CREATION NEW, Anthony Giamanco, b. 1958
 Text © 2009 GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved.
 Music © 2018 Augsburg Fortress

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.

**Or, "he descended into hell," another translation of this text in widespread use.*

PRAYERS

Our prayers draw on the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle and the Church's calendar of Commemorations—further information is found each week at the end of the bulletin.

Drawn together in the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray with confidence for the church, God's good creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Awaken in our communities of faith a spirit of radical hospitality. Encourage our churches to celebrate and embrace people of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and abilities. Deepen our commitment to ecumenical and interreligious partnerships, including the Interfaith Action Network. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Bring forth water to nourish plants and animals in places suffering from drought. Renew our commitments to protect rivers, lakes, and streams, and make us good stewards of water in our homes and communities. Preserve wetland habitats and the creatures that make their homes there. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Inspire leaders of cities, nations, and tribes to lead with wisdom and humility. Bring peace among peoples in conflict and strengthen global commitments to nonviolent solutions. Guide all who seek refuge from war to a safe haven. In Ghana and Nigeria, grant an end to conflict and bless the work of those who work for justice, peace, and interreligious understanding. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Comfort all who live with chronic illness. Surround them in your tender embrace and sustain all who provide ongoing care and support. Bring hope and healing to people struggling with addiction and nourish the spirits of all who are in recovery.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Nurture in all people the gift of your creating Spirit. Inspire artists and musicians, woodworkers and quilters, poets and dancers. Revive those whose artistic wells have run dry and enliven all who doubt their creative talents. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give you thanks for all who have died and now find their rest in you, including Peter Claver and John Chrysostom. May their faithful witness guide us in our daily life with you.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We entrust these and all our prayers to you, holy God, in the name of your beloved child, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

*We invite those worshiping by livestream to share a sign of peace in the chat, and for those in person we turn to offer them our greeting of peace before sharing a sign of peace with one another: **Peace be with you!***

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERING

*This congregation serves our neighbors, community, and the world through the participation and support of its members and guests. Because offerings are never just about us, this month we are sharing a portion of your gifts with **Compass International Family Center**, Valparaiso*

*compassIFC.org and **Project Neighbors** –*

***Freedom Recovery Fund** projectneighbors.org/frf*

If you wish to give electronically, use the QR code or browse to our secure on-line portal at clcvalpo.org/give or use [our CLC app](#) (download at clcvalpo.org/app).



OFFERTORY

Canon in E

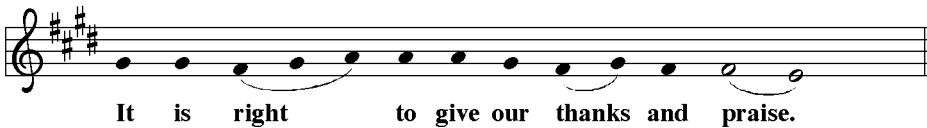
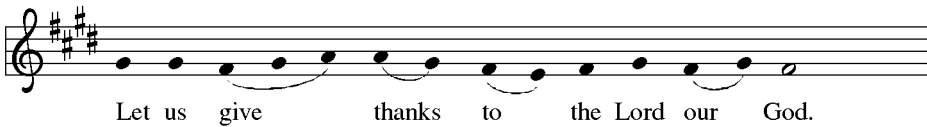
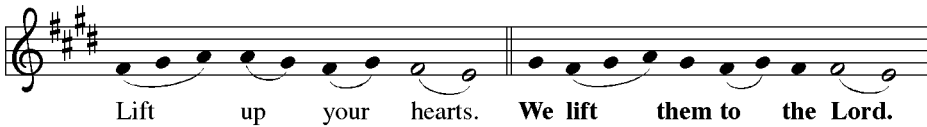
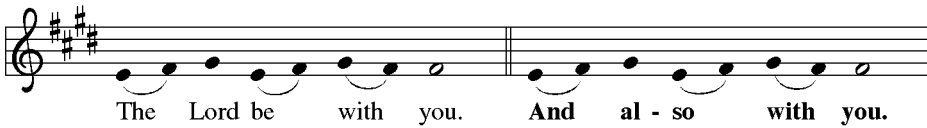
Schumann

OFFERING PRAYER

The assembly stands as the gifts are brought forward.

Blessed are you, O God,
source of every gift of your creation.
By these gifts and with our lives,
help us to serve one another and all in need,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING



It is our duty and delight ...and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS

(An ancient practice invites us to make the sign of the cross in honor of Jesus at the words "Blessed is he")

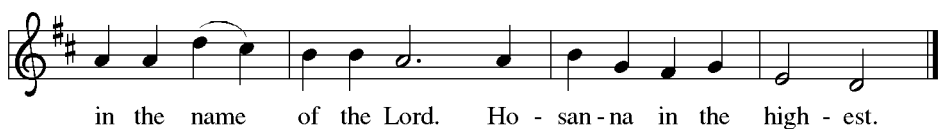
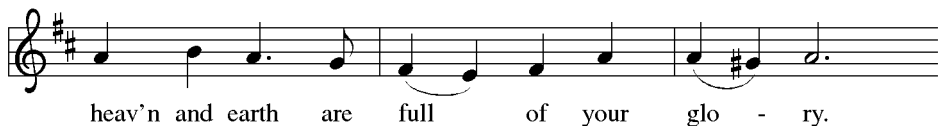


TABLE PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

Children: The Spirit makes us one. We pray as Jesus taught us:

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.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

From the beginning, God fed us and all of creation - come now and share this foretaste of the feast to come, in the new creation.

Thanks be to God!

DISTRIBUTION

*The assembly is seated. The pastor invites those worshipping via **livestream** to commune:*

The body of Christ, given for you.

Amen (receive the bread)

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen (receive the cup)

In-person distribution: When indicated by the ushers, come up the right-hand ramp to approach the altar rail. When finished you may leave individually without being dismissed. WINE is lighter-colored and GRAPE JUICE is dark; wine is received either by Common Cup or from individual cups in the trays. USED GLASSES are placed in the basket located near the ramp. GLUTEN-FREE BREAD IS AVAILABLE, please indicate to the server that you require this.

LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS: ELW #620 *How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds*

1 How sweet the name of Je - sus sounds in
 2 It makes the wound - ed spir - it whole and
 3 Dear name! The rock on which I build, my -
 4 By thee my prayers ac - cep - tance gain al -

a be - liev - er's ear! It soothes our sor - rows,
 calms the heart's un - rest; 'tis man - na to the
 shield and hid - ing place; my nev - er - fail - ing
 though with sin de - filed. The dev - il charg - es

heals our wounds, and drives a - way all fear.
 hun - gry soul and to the wea - ry, rest.
 trea - sury, filled with bound - less stores of grace.
 me in vain, and I am owned a child.

5 O Jesus, shepherd, guardian, friend,
 my prophet, priest, and king,
 my Lord, my life, my way, my end,
 accept the praise I bring.

6 How weak the effort of my heart,
 how cold my warmest thought;
 but when I see thee as thou art,
 I'll praise thee as I ought.

7 Till then I would thy love proclaim
 with every fleeting breath;
 and may the music of thy name
 refresh my soul in death!

ELW #675 *O Christ, Our Light, O Radiance True*

1 O Christ, our light, O Ra - diance true, shine forth on
 2 Fill with the ra - diance of your grace the wan - d'ers
 3 Lord, o - pen all re - luc - tant ears and take a -
 4 Lord, let your mer - cy's gen - tle ray shine down on
 5 Make theirs with ours a sin - gle voice up - lift - ed,

those es - tranged from you, and bring them to your home a -
 lost in er - ror's maze. Set free all those whose hearts and
 way the need - less fears of those who trem - ble to ex -
 oth - ers strayed a - way. To those in con - science wound - ed
 ev - er to re - joice with wond - 'ring grat - i - tude and

gain, where their de - light shall nev - er end.
 minds some deep de - lu - sion haunts and binds.
 press the faith their in - most hearts con - fess.
 sore show heav - en's wait - ing, o - pen door.
 praise to you, O Lord, for bound - less grace.

Text: Johann Heermann, 1585–1647; tr. composite
 Music: O JESU CHRISTE, WAHRES LICHT, *Gesangbuch*, Nürnberg, 1676
 Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

When all have returned to their places, the assembly stands as the presiding minister continues.
The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Jesus, you have fed us with your presence:
create in us a new heart and a new vision,
that the gifts of your Spirit may work in us
and renew the face of the earth.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

INVITATIONS

The assembly is seated as brief invitations are shared, especially those related to the assembly's participation in God's mission in the world.

BLESSING

God of the galaxies,
God of the starburst and sunlit morning,
God of the forest and shining seas,
God of the blooming desert and rolling grasslands -
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit -
Shine on you and bless you today and always.

Amen.

1 Oh, for a thou - sand tongues to sing my great Re - deem - er's praise,
 2 My gra - cious Mas - ter and my God, as - sist me to pro - claim,
 3 The name of Je - sus charms our fears and bids our sor - rows cease,
 4 He speaks, and lis - t'ning to his voice, new life the dead re - ceive;

the glo - ries of my God and king, the tri - umphs of his grace!
 to spread through all the earth a - broad the hon - ors of your name.
 sings mu - sic in the sin - ner's ears, brings life and health and peace.
 the mourn - ful, bro - ken hearts re - joice, the hum - ble poor be - lieve.

5 Look unto him, your Savior own,
 O fallen human race!
 Look and be saved through faith alone,
 be justified by grace!

6 To God all glory, praise, and love
 be now and ever giv'n
 by saints below and saints above,
 the church in earth and heav'n.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Music: AZMON, Carl G. Gläser, 1784–1829; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

Children join the pastors to send us in mission

DISMISSAL

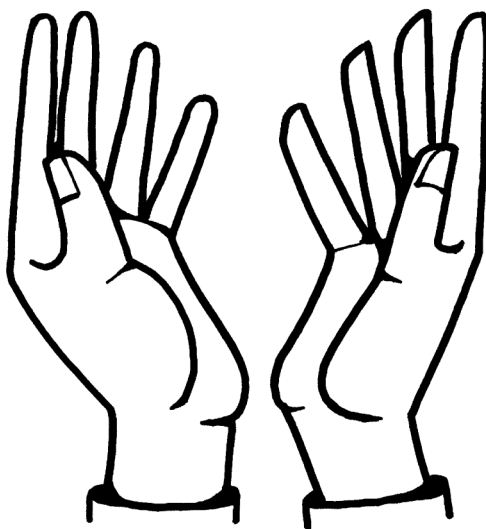
Children: Go in peace. Follow Jesus.

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Trumpet Tune & Finale

Purcell



From *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis

Pope Francis Pope Francis (b. 1936) is a Jesuit from Argentina. Laudato si' (Praise Be to You) is his first original encyclical with the subtitle "on care for our common home."

When we speak of the “environment,” what we really mean is a relationship existing between nature and the society which lives in it. Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it. Recognizing the reasons why a given area is polluted requires a study of the workings of society, its economy, its behavior patterns, and the ways it grasps reality. Given the scale of change, it is no longer possible to find a specific, discrete answer for each part of the problem. It is essential to seek comprehensive solutions which consider the interactions within natural systems themselves and with social systems. We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.

From *Creation and the Cross*, Elizabeth Johnson

Elizabeth A. Johnson (b. 1941) is a Roman Catholic feminist theologian. She is a Distinguished Professor Emerita of Theology at Fordham University, a Jesuit institution in New York City and a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Brentwood.

Calvary graphically shows that the God of suffering love abides in solidarity with all creatures, bearing the cost of new life through endless millennia of evolution, from the extinction of whole species to, yes, every sparrow that falls to the ground. The Creator of all flesh is silently present with creatures in their pain and dying. The cross signals that God is present in the midst of anguish, bearing every creature and all creation forward with an unimaginable promise.

From *Ladder to the Light*, Steven Charleston

The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston (b. 1949) is a Native American elder, a citizen of the Choctaw Nation, an author, and a retired bishop in the Episcopal Church.

Last night they came again, the spirits of earth and sky, of wind and rain, of deep seas and tall mountains. In all shapes and sizes they came, from every tribe and nation: the deer and the elk, the bear and the wolf, broad-winged eagles and crows as black as night. They all came and stood in a solemn circle beneath the one-eyed moon and spoke with a single voice this message from the sacred: “Do not doubt what you see: the world is warming, the waters are rising, and the winds are coming stronger than before. Do not turn away, do not pretend not to see, but speak the truth and set the spirits free to heal the world, before the ice has gone, before the last tiger falls, before only the desert remembers the ones who once walked this land.”

From *Resurrection is Vegetal*, Dong Hyeon Jeong

The Rev. Dr. Dong Hyeon Jeong is a pastor and professor of New Testament Interpretation at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. The son of Korean missionaries in the Philippines, Jeong is an ordained elder in the Philippine Central Conference, Manila Episcopal Area, Southwest Philippines Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.

I love gardening. Touching the soil, seeing and smelling the plants, and eating the fruits of their love teach me every time to be receptive to the presence of the vegetal life. Moreover, recently I have also learned about the importance of accepting decay or death. As a human being, I am fearful of my own death because, as a Christian, I have one life to live with a clear expiration in sight. And yet, plants teach me that decay/death is not the end. They grow their leaves during spring, blossom their flowers during summer, lay down their leaves during the fall, and accept the slumber during winter. Then they rise again as the spring season awakens... Losing one's life for the gospel is not a call for meaningless sacrifice or abuse. Rather, it is a reminder to “come and see” (John 1:39) from God's creation that resurrection is vegetal. We live and die in Christ because, like the plants, we believe in Christ's promise of renewed life. This renewed life recognizes the joys and pains of the olden days, the deaths that we have had in the past, while believing that we will see the rays of divine light and the joys of the blessed rain in our lives. In all of these, we are invited once again to let go of all of ourselves so we can be buried and be resurrected in Christ.

Worship Leaders

	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:30 a.m.</u>
Acolyte	Olivia Hernandez	Audrey Crill
Lector	Bill Lieske	Becky Fry
Prayer Assistant	Linda Mapes	Becky Fry
Communion Assistants	Linda Mapes Kathy Sutherland	Jacque Chevalier Jeri Simms
Ushers	Tim Sutherland Bob Luckett	Becky Fry Aaron Fry
Pastors	Rev. Timothy Knauff, Jr. Rev. Erica Gibson-Even	
Director of Music Ministries	Brian Bartusch	
Worship Participants	Mila Van Luan, soloist	
Cantor	Madeline Fry	
Lights/Sound Tech	Lance Nolting	Jeff Peiffer
Livestream Tech	_____	
Communion Baker	Marilyn McGawn	
Communion Table	Barb Clements Terry Albrecht Helen Arvidson	Diana Ahlbrand Marilyn McGawn Marla Niksch Lori Schwartz

COMMEMORATIONS

Week of September 8, 2024

September 9

Peter Claver, priest, missionary to Colombia, died 1654

Born into Spanish nobility, Claver became a Jesuit missionary, and served in present-day Colombia. His ministry was focused on the enslaved people who arrived there. He gave them food and medicine, learned their dialects, and taught them Christianity.

September 13

John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, died 407

John was a priest in Antioch and an outstanding preacher. His eloquence earned him the nickname “Chrysostom” (“golden mouth”). Appointed bishop of Constantinople, seat of the empire, he criticized corruption in the court. As a result, he was exiled by the empress.

September 14

Holy Cross Day

Helena, mother of Constantine, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and found what may be the actual site of Jesus’ crucifixion. Her son built two churches there, and the dedication of one of them gave rise to this celebration of our Lord’s victory on the cross.

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

This week we pray for the churches and people of **Ghana, Nigeria**

We are thankful for:

- Christians and Muslims who take risks to work for dialogue and reconciliation, and people of disparate ethnic groups who strive together for the common good
- churches who have been faithful in spreading the Good News, serving the people and pursuing justice in these societies
- economic growth from natural resources, where it benefits all people – and especially the poor – in these nations
- how people, especially in Nigeria, have been sustained by God in the face of attacks and violence in the context of the movement of population groups and from extremist elements like Boko Haram.

We pray for:

- those affected by violence and terrorism, and that such violent attacks might cease
- leaders of churches, that they might speak out courageously against political, social and economic injustices
- Just and peaceful relations between members of different ethnic groups and between Muslims and Christians
- Those who suffer from malnutrition and diseases such as malaria, whooping cough and HIV and AIDS
- Better stewardship of the environment and natural resources.

A Table-scrap Feast

The story of the Syrophenician woman is one of the most puzzling in all the gospels. It raises more questions than answers: Why did Jesus turn her down? Was he testing her? Was the human side of him mistaken? Perhaps Jesus was just grumpy? Unfortunately, the gospel writer did not record what Jesus was thinking, only what he said, and those words remain troubling.

But we do know that Jesus was moved by the Syrophenician woman's persistence and faith. She bravely crossed multiple barriers—gender, ethnicity, class, religion—to get the help her daughter needed. In the end, Jesus grants her the mercy she seeks: he heals her daughter and restores their family. The woman had come begging for crumbs and instead received an abundant feast.

Who is the Syrophenician woman today? Maybe she is one of the millions who face daily violence and abuse, or perhaps the countless many who live with addiction or mental illness. She may be an asylum-seeker or refugee, reluctantly fleeing home because it's no longer safe for her family. The woman in today's gospel represents all who are outcast and ignored. This story is a powerful reminder of the inclusivity and compassion at the heart of Jesus' teachings and deeds. It is also a call to action, urging us to open our hearts and extend love and mercy to those who are marginalized or in need, just as Jesus did.

God has this amazing ability to bring about change in astonishing ways, through the most unexpected people. God's work in our lives is always surprising us, shaking up our worldview, and making abundance out of scarcity. Even when all we expect for ourselves or others are scraps, God has a larger vision: a banquet to which we are all invited.

Stewardship Snippet

James 2:15 – If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that?

For many of us who have more than we need, it's very hard to follow Jesus' command to love our neighbor as ourselves. The questions steward/disciples have to ask prayerfully are "How generous am I, really? Is God calling me to be more generous?"

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