



**Christ
Lutheran**
CHURCH

2610 Campbell Street
Valparaiso, Indiana 46385
(219) 462-6660 • clcvalpo.org



**Feast of Creation
September 6, 2026**

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 of 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.

Since the seventh century, September 1 has symbolized the day of the creation of the world in the Byzantine tradition and has been the opening feast of its liturgical year (known as the Feast of the Indiction), in a parallel with the feast of Rosh Hashanah marking the Jewish New Year. Creation in Christ celebrates the ongoing creation of the world in and through Christ, who sustains, unites, and holds all created things. We hear today of the triune God who creates all things: sun and moon, shining stars, sea monsters, creeping things and flying birds—and, yes, even human beings. God-in-Christ still takes care of all things and invites us to join in as caretakers of God's good creation.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

PRELUDE

*Prelude in G
(BWV 541)*

J.S. Bach

Now We Ask the Holy Spirit

Buxtehude

WELCOME

If you are joining us for the first time, welcome! We'd love to meet you, or 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) or using a yellow Connection Card in the pew holders.



***Prayer requests** can be posted to the livechat or use a yellow Prayer Request (on the backside of the Connection Card) and give them to an usher.*

*If you are worshipping with us 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

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Glory to you, O God: **cross**
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 worthy 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:
Amen.

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.

GATHERING HYMN ELW #864 *Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven*



- 1 Praise, my soul, the God of heav - en; joy - ful - ly your trib-ute bring.
- 2 God be praised for grace and fa - vor to our fore-bears in dis-tress.
- 3 Frail as sum-mer's flow'r we flour - ish, blows the wind and it is gone;
- 4 An - gels sing in ad - o - ra - tion, in God's pres-ence, face to face.



Ran-somed, healed, re - stored, for - giv - en, ev - er - more God's prais-es sing.
 God be praised, the same for - ev - er, slow to chide and swift to bless.
 but, as mor - tals rise and per - ish, God en-dures un-chang-ing on.
 Sun and moon and all cre - a - tion, all who dwell in time and space.



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Prais - es ev - er - last - ing ring!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Glo - rious is God's faith - ful - ness!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise the great E - ter - nal One!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise with us the God of grace!



PRAYER OF THE DAY

A silence is kept before the prayer.

O Blessed Trinity,
we worship you, the Source and Savior and Strength of all the worlds.
We laud you for your wondrous creation.
Breathe your blessing on us and on all that you have made,
and form us by your wisdom to be caregivers of your gift of this good earth.
Glory to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and unto ages of ages.
Amen.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

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

CHILDREN'S TIME

Children are invited for a time together.

SPECIAL MUSIC:

Bist du bei Mir
(BWV 508)

J.S. Bach

READING: Genesis 2: 4b-25

⁴ These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵ when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no vegetation of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground, ⁶ but a stream would rise from the earth and water the whole face of the ground—⁷ then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. ⁸ And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹ Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰ A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. ¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold, ¹² and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep

it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

¹⁸ Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.” ¹⁹ So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all cattle and to the birds of the air and to every animal of the field, but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. ²¹ So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²² And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
this one shall be called Woman,
for out of Man this one was taken.”

²⁴ Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. ²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 148

¹ Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!

² **Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host!**

³ Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars!

⁴ **Praise him, you highest heavens
and you waters above the heavens!**

⁵ Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for he commanded and they were created.

⁶ **He established them forever and ever;
he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.**

⁷ Praise the Lord from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps,

⁸ **fire and hail, snow and frost,
stormy wind fulfilling his command!**

⁹ Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!

- ¹⁰ **Wild animals and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds!**
¹¹ **Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!**
¹² **Young men and women alike,
old and young together!**
¹³ **Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven.**
¹⁴ **He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his faithful,
for the people of Israel who are close to him.
Praise the Lord!**

READING: Acts 17:22a, 24-28

²² Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely spiritual you are in every way. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶ From one ancestor he made all peoples to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷ so that they would search for God and perhaps fumble about for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸ For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said,

‘For we, too, are his offspring.’

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands to welcome the Gospel.



Al-le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia.

Repeat alleluia



Our hearts burn with - in us as you open to us the scriptures.

GOSPEL: John 1:1-5

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

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 #1049***Before the Waters Nourished Earth***

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

1 Be - fore the wa - ters nour - ished earth or night im -
2 This Love re - mained as time re - vealed the loss of
3 De - spair, so deep it bears no name, or sor - rows
4 The Love that called cre - a - tion good all good - ness

ag - ined morn - ing, a Love con - ceived the
E - den's glo - ry and, griev - ing, holds in
par - a - lyz - ing can - not re - voke Love's
still is bring - ing. This Love turns death a -

u - ni - verse and rev - eled in its form - ing.
mem - o - ry each trag - ic hu - man sto - ry.
faith - ful claim to dwell with - in our dy - ing.
gain to life and si - lence in - to sing - ing.

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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
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,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who 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

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

We join with Christians far and near to worship God the Creator, praying for the earth and for all in need, responding to each petition with the words, “Your mercy is great.”

A brief silence.

O God of mystery, mercy, and might, for the church we pray:
that churches around the globe collaborate in care for the earth,
and that all the baptized nurture a zeal for the wellbeing of creation.
Hear us, O God, source of life and ground of our being:

Your mercy is great.

For the earth we pray:
that this bounteous creation receive continued divine blessing,
that the air be wholesome, that the waters be plenteous and clean,
that the land be treasured, and that animals be protected.
Grant that what has been harmed on earth will be healed.

Hear us, O God, our creator and fruitful garden:

Your mercy is great.

For the nations we pray:
that farmers, herders, foragers, fishers, and grocers provide the food humans need,
that legislators strive in all things for the common good,
and that science and technology lead us toward more responsible ways to live.
That the lands, people, and churches of Benin, Ivory Coast, and Togo receive your peace,
healing, and growth in the common good.

Hear us, O God, our stronghold and sun of justice:

Your mercy is great.

For our country we pray:
that national parks, forests, and wildlife refuges be safeguarded,
that all natural resources benefit the whole population,
and that our children learn respect for nature.

Hear us, O God, our guardian and rainbow of promise:

Your mercy is great.

For those in need we pray:
that humankind be sheltered from pandemic and from extreme weather,
and that all who are sick or suffering receive medical attention and communal support.
Give heed to those whose names we call out to you.

Hear us, O God, our healer and heart of the universe:

Your mercy is great.

For our Little Lamb Preschool we pray:

That as students grow and learn they might know your love more and more each day, that their families are strengthened and equipped in their calling to nurture your children, that you bless the Outstanding Owls class including Teri and Dani their teachers, these students and their families: Damian, Dax, Dhru, Finn, Freddie, Greyson, Harper, Jack, Jorie, Kaden, Lynn, Madison, Maxine, Nicolo, Oakley, and Penelope.

Hear us, O God, our teacher of wonder:

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We praise you for Peter Claver and for all believers who have lived and died in faith.

Grant that in your good time we join with all your creatures in your presence forever.

Hear us, O God, the beginning and the end:

Your mercy is great.

Into your hands, O God, our maker and keeper, we commend ourselves and your whole creation, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

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 offerings 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 clevalpo.org/give.



OFFERTORY

Voluntary

Boyce

The assembly stands as the gifts are brought forward.

OFFERING PRAYER

O God, maker of heaven and earth,

your steadfast love embraces all creation.

**You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth
and bring forth its bounty.**

**Through these gifts of bread and wine,
draw us into the death and life of your Son,
who calls us to bear witness to his saving work.**

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

THE 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.

SANCTUS

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

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and

God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your

glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the

Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

O God triune, how majestic...
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

O God triune, you took on our flesh in Jesus our healer...
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

Gathered around this table...
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

O God triune, you create the worlds...
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

Amen, and amen.
Amen, and amen.



LORD'S PRAYER

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

Our Fa - ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav - en.
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as we
for-give those who sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al
and de - liv - er us from e - vil. For the king - dom, the pow'r,
and the glo - ry are yours, now and for - ev - er. A - men.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The gifts of creation for God's beloved creatures.

Come and share.

Thanks be to God!

The assembly is seated.

DISTRIBUTION

*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; they are received via 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 #814 *Take, O Take Me as I am (sung 4x)*

Take, oh, take me as I am; sum-mon out what I shall be;

The first system of music consists of a treble and bass staff in G minor (three flats). The treble staff features a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The lyrics are placed below the treble staff, aligned with the notes.

set your seal up - on my heart and live in me.

The second system of music continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. It concludes with a double bar line. The lyrics are placed below the treble staff, aligned with the notes.

ACS #927 *Christ Is the Life*



1 Christ is the life of all that is, God's pure cre - a - tive
 2 Christ is the death of all that is; a broad and beck - 'ning
 3 Christ is the death of all that is, a bright, con - sum - ing
 4 Christ is the life of all that is, Be - gin - ning and the



Word, whose pow'r be - yond and through all space the
 tomb, who wel - comes us from well - worn ways to
 fire, whose flames re - quire our pri - or self as
 End; cre - a - tive force, most peace - ful death, trans -



worlds to Be - ing stirred. Christ is the life be - yond all
 dark - ness of the womb. Christ is the death, the sink - ing
 kin - dling for the pyre. Christ is the death of dust - y
 form - ing burn - ing brand. Christ is the life, in whose wise



time, cre - a - tion's birth and breath, whose la - bor
 down past all de - sire and fear, whose prom - ise
 days of un - cre - a - tive strife, for out from
 love cre - a - tion lives and dies and thus for -



brings all things to be and brings all things to death.
 in the gen - tle dark bids new - ness to ap - pear.
 fire we tread up - on the thresh - old of new life.
 ev - er - more shall bless the Source, the liv - ing Christ.

ELW #522 *As We Gather at Your Table*

1 As we gath-er at your ta - ble, as we lis - ten to your word,
 2 Turn our wor-ship in - to wit - ness in the sac - ra - ment of life;
 3 Gra - cious Spir - it, help us sum - mon oth - er guests to share that feast

help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
 send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.
 where tri - um-phunt Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.

Nour-ish us with sa - cred sto - ry till we claim it as our own;
 Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for - give as you for - gave;
 There no more will en - vy blind us nor will pride our peace de - stroy,

teach us through this ho - ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic - t'ry known.
 may we still be - hold your im-age in the world you died to save.
 as we join with saints and an-gels to re - peat the sound-ing joy.

After all have returned to their places, the assembly stands as the minister continues.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of our salvation,
we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls,
reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey.
Through the body and blood of your Son,
may we become Christ's body in the world,
bearing witness to your love for all creation,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
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.
Amen.



1 "Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, nev - er a - lone.
 2 "Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure.
 3 "Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, clos - er to me.



Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you, you are my own.
 Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.
 Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free.



In my love's bap - tis - mal riv - er I have made you mine for - ev - er.
 Here you heard my dear Son's sto - ry, here you touched him, saw his glo - ry.
 Here my Spir - it's pow - er filled you, here my ten - der com - fort stilled you.



Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, you are my own."
 Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure."
 Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, joy - ful and free."

Children join the pastors to send us in mission.

DISMISSAL

Children: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Trumpet Tune

Tambling



Worship Leaders	<u>9:30 a.m.</u>
Acolyte	Shawn Longacre
Lector	Mark Kretzmann
Prayer Assistant	Robin Nelson
Communion Assistants	Darla Hernandez Phyllis Schroeder
Ushers	
Sound/Light	Tony Reinhold
Video/Livestream	Joey Rodeck
Pastors	Rev. Timothy Knauff, Jr. Rev. Erica Gibson-Even
Director of Music Ministries	Brian Bartusch
Special Music	Luke Venstrom, trumpet Sam Venstrom, accompanist
Communion Baker	Marilyn McGawn

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

This week we pray for the churches and people of **Benin, Ivory Coast, Togo.**

We are thankful for:

- the beauty, natural resources, wildlife and different cultures in these countries
- the produce that small farmers continue to grow amid environmental and other hardships
- the spiritual vitality and growth of the churches and how they are cooperating with each other and those of other faiths and practices
- the relative peace and stability that prevails after long years of civil war and political struggle.

We pray for:

- more democratic governments that are free of corruption and that prioritize what the people most need
- those working to alleviate the poverty, illiteracy and hunger that so many in these countries still experience
- churches faithfully bringing the gospel to, and serving, all people with greater respect for how those of other faiths express their spirituality
- emotional and physical healing, and restoring hope in people who are victims of conflict, disease and human rights abuses

COMMEMORATIONS **Week of September 9**

September 9

Peter Claver, priest, missionary to Colombia, died 1654

Peter Claver was born into Spanish nobility and was persuaded to become a Jesuit missionary. He served in Cartagena (in what is now Colombia) by teaching and caring for enslaved people. They arrived in ships, where they had been confined in dehumanizing conditions. Claver met and supplied them with medicine, food, clothing, and brandy. He learned their dialects and taught them Christianity. He called himself “the slave of the slaves forever.” Claver also ministered to the locals of Cartagena who were in prison and facing death.

Efforts toward an Ecumenical Feast of Creation originated in 1989, when Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios offered an invitation “to the entire Christian world” to mark September 1 as a day of prayer for creation, including “thanksgiving for the gift of creation” and “petitions for its protection and salvation,” though this occurred often without a set liturgy.

Not only had September 1 long served as the beginning of the liturgical year in the Orthodox Church, but it had also been associated with *the* beginning—that is, the beginning of creation. (There was even a charming tradition among the Orthodox that traced the first day of creation precisely to September 1, 5509 BCE.) There is some historical evidence, however, that the date for the beginning of the liturgical year in Eastern tradition was originally the September equinox and was moved sometime in the fifth century to synchronize with the imperial taxation calendar that began the first day of September. (Given that the equinox, in March and September, is the only time the day is essentially equal in the northern and southern hemispheres, and light and darkness are more or less in balance around the world, the September equinox—or the Sunday following it—is especially appropriate for a festival of creation, particularly as a sign of the equity we seek in environmental justice.)

Over several years, a series of ecumenical conferences, known as ‘The Assisi Process,’ has involved 13 Christian world communions and various ecumenical bodies in exploring the rich theological symbolism and the potential of the ‘Feast of Creation in Christ’ and how it might enrich other Christian liturgical calendars.

The Feast contains four interrelated themes:

1. Creation as God’s creative act (the feast’s core)
2. Creation as a Christological mystery (the entry point and feast title given the liturgical year’s theology)
3. Creation as a Trinitarian mystery, and Creation as a sacramental and covenantal gift.

The fruit of those conferences has now resulted in a significant, mutually recognized day of celebration. This is the first time in over 500 years such an agreement between Orthodox, Protestant, Anglican, and free church traditions has been adopted. In April, the feast was officially adopted by the ecumenical Consultation on Common Texts, adding it to the Revised Common Lectionary for wide use in Western churches. This marks the first addition of a new feast to the common lectionary since its release in 1983.

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