**August 20th, 2023 The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost – Email/At Home Missal**

**ZOOM INFORMATION FOR SUNDAY AUGUST 20, 2023-TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**The ZOOM link for today’s service, which opens at 9.30 am on August 20th, 2023, can be found here:**

**Sunday Worship August 20th, 2023 09:30 am ZOOM room opens; service begins at 10:00 am.**

**Join Zoom Meeting click here:**[**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85929098103?pwd=QlJFNUV1Slg3MHhOeGVEalJMdXMvZz09**](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85929098103?pwd=QlJFNUV1Slg3MHhOeGVEalJMdXMvZz09)

**Meeting ID: 859 2909 8103 Passcode: 171662**

**You don’t have to have a computer or internet to connect to any of our church Zoom services; you can also just call in on one of these numbers (long distance charges may apply): (All Canadian numbers). You can also access the ZOOM from your telephone by using the “One tap mobile” option:**

**+17789072071,,85929098103#,,,,\*171662# Canada,**

**+17806660144,,85929098103#,,,,\*171662# Canada**

**Dial by your location:**

**+1 778 907 2071 Canada**

**+1 780 666 0144 Canada**

**+1 204 272 7920 Canada**

**+1 438 809 7799 Canada**

**+1 587 328 1099 Canada**

**+1 647 374 4685 Canada**

**+1 647 558 0588 Canada**

**Meeting ID: 859 2909 8103 Passcode: 171662**

**Find your local number:** [**https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kerkltBAqg**](https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kerkltBAqg)

**…………………………….**

**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 20th, 2023:**

**Here is the YouTube link for the service from last Sunday, August 13th, 2023:** <https://youtu.be/jiNpoZnnecc>

**……………………….**

1. **PASTORAL VISITS:** Pastor Laura is available for visits by appointment by calling the church office, 519-653-4721. Whether you have a particular pastoral concern or would just like some one-to-one time to get to know Pastor Laura, she would love to meet with you.
2. **…………………………….**

You can order your own Maple Syrup from St. Peter’s, Preston. Our partner is a 5th generation Woolwich Township farm that has been producing maple syrup for over 100 years. They adhere to the production guidelines issued by the Ontario Maple Syrup Association, which state the number of taps per tree (max. of 2) for best forest management practices. Handling of the sap and syrup is minimized to reduce the chance of contamination. Their syrup is pure with nothing added, only the water has been removed. As of 2018 their maple syrup is certified organic.

**1 litre Mason Jars of maple syrup are $23.00.**

**Send an email to or** [alexblack@sympatico.ca](mailto:alexblack@sympatico.ca) **or call the church office at 519-653-4721 to order your own locally produced fresh Maple Syrup.**

**………………………………**

Help us support the **Cambridge Food Bank** by bringing a canned good or non-perishable item to church with you. We have a collection basket in the narthex, and every donation helps enable the food bank to ensure that no one in our community goes hungry. We appreciate and thank you for your help in filling the basket as there is a very real and urgent need.

1. **…………………………….**

This Fall you are invited to join as a singer in the **Mennonite Mass Choir** **in a performance of Handel’s Messiah** with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony at Centre in the Square on **Sunday, December 10th** (afternoon). Monday evening rehearsals begin on September 25th at First Mennonite Church (800 King St E, Kitchener) from 7:30-9:30pm. For more information and to register go to [www.mennosingers.com](http://www.mennosingers.com)

1. **…………………………..**

**Summer Services - Historic Ellis Pioneer Chapel**

6705 Ellis Road, Puslinch Township

**August 20, 2023 at 2:30 p.m.**

Guest speaker: Rev. Don McCallum

from Duff’s Presbyterian Church, Puslinch

**September 24, 2023 at 2:30 p.m.**

Concert of Barbershop and Gospel music

by Bakers Dozen, Guelph

Refreshments and fellowship in the garden to follow each of the services

**…………………………………..**

**AN EASTERN SYNOD TWO RIVERS and GRAND RIVER MINISTRY AREA GATHERING  
Thinking Forward – Saturday, September 16, 2023  
ST. MATTHEWS LUTHERAN CHURCH, 54 BENTON STREET, KITCHENER**

**Checking In 9:30 am – 10:00 am Gather and Refreshments**

**10:00 am – 12:00 noon Conversation**

An invitation to all Active Rostered, Congregational Lay Leaders and Members of Churches in the Grand River and Two Rivers Ministry Areas in the Waterloo and Wellington Regions

Part 2 - Let’s continue the conversation from May to think about possible pathways forward and discern the Spirit’s calling into God’s future.

**QUESTIONS?   
Rev. David Malina –** [**dmalinachurch@gmail.com**](mailto:dmalinachurch@gmail.com)

**Rev. Heike Toeller –** [**pastor.heike@gmail.com**](mailto:pastor.heike@gmail.com)

**…………………………..**

50th Anniversary   
**Celebration Organ Series  
Saturday September 23, 2023**   
featuring Martin Jongsma

Save the Date!

**…………………………………**

**Yard Sale**

**Saturday, August 26, 2023 8 am – 2:00 pm**We’re looking for good, gently used, clean items of all kinds, and clothing. Please – no very large mirrors, no complete dining room suites, no large old television sets. If you’re unsure of whether what you have is suitable or not, leave a message at the church office.

We’d love to re-purpose your goods and make a new owner happy. Items may be dropped off at church; just let us know when we can meet with you.

**August 18th is the last day to drop off items!**

**………………………………**

**Concert here at St. Peter’s Lutheran Church**

**Saturday October 21, 2023**

**Cambridge Symphony Orchestra**

Save the Date!

**………………………………**

**Coffee + Connect with Pastor Laura!**

**has been rescheduled for Tuesday, August 29, 2023**

This is a chance for you to get to know her and to (re)connect with one another. No need to RSVP but if you’d like to bring goodies to share, please contact the office.

Everyone is welcome, so bring along a friend or neighbour!

**……………………………………**

**The bulletin today and the flowers on the altar are being sponsored by Don and Virginia Davidson in celebration of their 72nd wedding anniversary which took place on August 18th. St. Peter’s wishes God’s richest blessings to Don and Virginia!**

1. **…………………………………..**

**Presiding Pastor: Rev. Laura Sauder**

**Organist & Director of Music: Bradley Moggach**

**Assisting Minister: Helga Morrison**

**Reader: Barb Jones**

**Land Acknowledgement:**

Here at St. Peter's in Cambridge, we acknowledge that we are on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron, or Neutrals, the Anishinaabe, and the Haudenosaunee Peoples. Before the arrival of European settlers, these First Peoples had agreements between them represented by wampum belts from which they understood how to use the resources sustainably. One of these wampum belts is called the ‘Dish With One Spoon’ Belt. This wampum agreement represents the abundant land and water in what is now known as the Great Lakes Region with a dish, or bowl. Each tribe was to use the one spoon to remove only those resources they needed to live sustainably and then pass the dish onto others so that the abundance was shared. We are grateful for this example of using our abundance sustainably so that our resources are never depleted but shared equally for the benefit of all and continuing to the next seven generations.

**Call to Worship:**

P: For the beauty of the summer day,

***C: And the comfort of friends nearby;***

P: For the invitation to love and be loved,

***C: For God who extends that call;***

P: For time set apart to nourish the soul,

***C: For time to go out into the world armed with love:***

P: For all these things we give thanks.

***C: Let us worship God.***

*Source: “Written by Beth Merrill Neel on her blog, ‘Hold Fast to What Is Good’.  Used with permission.* [*https://holdfasttowhatisgood.com/liturgy/call-to-worship/*](https://holdfasttowhatisgood.com/liturgy/call-to-worship/)

**Gathering Hymn:  ELW # 886 ‘Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing’**

1 Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing

my great Redeemer's praise,

the glories of my God and King,

the triumphs of his grace!

2 My gracious Master and my God,

assist me to proclaim,

to spread through all the earth abroad

the honors of your name.

3 The name of Jesus charms our fears

and bids our sorrows cease,

sings music in the sinner's ears,

brings life and health and peace.

4 He speaks, and list'ning to his voice,

new life the dead receive;

the mournful, broken hearts rejoice,

the humble poor believe.

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.

*(Title: Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing; Text: Charles Wesley, 1707 – 1788, alt. Public Domain; Music*: *Carl G. Glaser, 1784 – 1829; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792-1872; Public Domain; Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Invitation to Confession:**

The act of confessing our sin is not simply a recitation of our faults and wrongs, but also an opportunity to receive God’s mercy and share in that abundant grace. Confident in God’s love for us, let us offer our prayers, first in silence.

*silent prayer*

**Unison Prayer of Confession:**P: Gracious and loving God,

***C: open our hearts so that we can admit to you***

***the fullness of our lives –***

***that which is beautiful and good,***

***and that which is hurtful and hateful.***

***We confess that we do not follow Jesus in all that we do.  
We love with condition.  
We judge and condemn.  
We cast the first stone,***

***and keep the logs in our own eyes.  
We do not turn to You as the source of our healing.***

***Forgive us, we pray,***

***and empower us to be imitators of Christ***

***in love and service. Amen.***

**Assurance of Forgiveness:**

P: Friends in Christ, know this:

the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting,

and I remind you of this surpassing grace –

in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven +

***C: Alleluia! Amen.***

*Source:**“Written by Beth Merrill Neel on her blog, ‘Hold Fast to What Is Good’.  Used with permission.* [*https://holdfasttowhatisgood.com/liturgy/prayer-of-confession/*](https://holdfasttowhatisgood.com/liturgy/prayer-of-confession/)

**Greeting:**

The Lord be with you.

***C: And also with you.***

**Prayer of the Day*:***

God of all peoples, your arms reach out to embrace all those who call upon you. Teach us as disciples of your Son to love the world with compassion and constancy, that your name may be known throughout the earth, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.\***

**Lesson Introduction *(Pastor Laura)***

**Isaiah 56:1, 6-8**

Isaiah’s words are spoken to the descendants of those who had been taken into exile in Babylon. Now, all these generations later, some have been allowed to return to Jerusalem and rebuild. But as they try to re-establish themselves their very identity is at stake. Who are we now, and how do preserve our identity for the generations to come?

One of the tensions centres around those who have intermarried with women of other cultures. There are those who would argue that true identity could be found only in separating themselves from all things foreign.

But according to Isaiah, God’s word is clear. God’s dream for the world is bigger than national identity, or any other human imposed division or boundary. Let us listen to the word…

**The First Reading: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8**

The Lord says:  
    Act justly and do what is righteous,  
    because my salvation is coming soon,  
    and my righteousness will be revealed.

The immigrants who have joined me,  
    serving me and loving my name, becoming my servants,  
    everyone who keeps the Sabbath without making it impure,  
    and those who hold fast to my covenant:  
   I will bring them to my holy mountain,  
    and bring them joy in my house of prayer.  
    I will accept their entirely burned offerings and sacrifices on my altar.  
    My house will be known as a house of prayer for all peoples,

      says the Lord God,  
    who gathers Israel’s outcasts.  
I will gather still others to those I have already gathered. *(CEB)*

Word of God, Word of Life*.* ***C: Thanks be to God.****\**

**Lesson Introduction *(Pastor Laura)***

**Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32**

In our second reading we hear Paul wrestling with that same question – just how wide is God’s mercy? If Gentiles have now been included in God’s embrace, does this mean the Jewish people been pushed out?

Paul is clear that in no way is this the case. There is no limit to God’s love or embrace. In God’s family there is more than enough room for all who are in need of acceptance, belonging, and community. Let us listen to the word…

**The Second Reading: Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32**

So I ask you, has God rejected his people? Absolutely not! I’m an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God hasn’t rejected his people, whom he knew in advance.

God’s gifts and calling can’t be taken back. Once you were disobedient to God, but now you have mercy because they were disobedient. In the same way, they have also been disobedient because of the mercy that you received, so now they can receive mercy too. God has locked up all people in disobedience, in order to have mercy on all of them.  *(CEB)*

Word of God, Word of Life*.* ***C: Thanks be to God.****\**

**Gospel Acclamation:** **ELW Setting Eight** *(page 188)*

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia. Alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia.\*

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**The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 15:10-28**

***C: Glory to you, O Lord.***

Jesus called the crowd near and said to them, “Listen and understand. It’s not what goes into the mouth that contaminates a person in God’s sight. It’s what comes out of the mouth that contaminates the person.”

Then the disciples came and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended by what you just said?”

Jesus replied, “Every plant that my heavenly Father didn’t plant will be pulled up. Leave the Pharisees alone. They are blind people who are guides to blind people. But if a blind person leads another blind person, they will both fall into a ditch.”

Then Peter spoke up, “Explain this riddle to us.”

Jesus said, “Don’t you understand yet? Don’t you know that everything that goes into the mouth enters the stomach and goes out into the sewer? But what goes out of the mouth comes from the heart. And that’s what contaminates a person in God’s sight.Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adultery, sexual sins, thefts, false testimonies, and insults. These contaminate a person in God’s sight. But eating without washing hands doesn’t contaminate in God’s sight.”

From there, Jesus went to the regions of Tyre and Sidon. A Canaanite woman from those territories came out and shouted, “Show me mercy, Son of David. My daughter is suffering terribly from demon possession.” But he didn’t respond to her at all.

His disciples came and urged him, “Send her away; she keeps shouting out after us.”

Jesus replied, “I’ve been sent only to the lost sheep, the people of Israel.”

But she knelt before him and said, “Lord, help me.”

He replied, “It is not good to take the children’s bread and toss it to dogs.”

She said, “Yes, Lord. But even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall off their masters’ table.”

Jesus answered, “Woman, you have great faith. It will be just as you wish.” And right then her daughter was healed. *(CEB)*

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

**Sermon**

**Matthew 15:10-28**

When I was in seminary, one of the things my preaching professor was big on was looking for both the grace and the trouble in the scripture passage you were preaching on. To always ask yourself: what is the bad news in this text, and what is good news?

And one of the criteria we were given to determine whether something was good news, was if Jesus said it or did it. Even if it was something challenging, if Jesus did it or said then it must be good news. And I have to say, in all my Sundays of preaching, this has been super helpful advice. Except when I’ve run into this particular story.

Because it’s really hard to frame Jesus’ response to the Canaanite woman plea for help as grace or as good news.

This woman comes to him with honour and respect, asking earnestly for his help. First, he ignores her completely. But she persists and persists, and when his patience wears thin and the disciples are getting on his case to do something about it, he says to her: “It is not good to take the children’s bread and toss it to dogs.”

How can Jesus calling someone a dog be considered good news?

Now there are those who would try to soften Jesus’ words here. Who want to argue that dog is actually a term of endearment. That Jesus is really calling her a puppy dog. But everything we know about Jewish customs of the day doesn’t support that view.

Dogs were unwelcome, persistent pests. Calling her a dog is more likely a lot closer to that other name for a dog that women are sometimes called in our time when they’re being too persistent or assertive.

The other detail that adds another layer to this interaction is the fact that this woman is a Canaanite. She is from another people or culture than Jesus, which means there is also an element of racism or xenophobia in his treatment of her. At the very least, it’s dehumanizing.

And all of this after Jesus has just been criticizing the Pharisees for being more concerned with what goes into their body than what comes out. Jesus, who claims that what comes out of your mouth is what defiles you, has trouble practicing what he preached.

And that’s the challenging thing about Jesus’ teaching about the things that truly defile us, is that it’s so hard to live into. There’s not one of us here who hasn’t at some point had an evil thought toward someone else. There’s not one of here who hasn’t insulted someone, or at the very least judged another.

About 20 years ago I participated in my first anti-racism workshop (although it was so long ago that I don’t even remember if that’s what they called them back then). The workshop was led by two men who had been friends for many years – one who was white and one who was black.

And they shared a lot of personal stories about the prejudices and racist assumptions that had come up in the course of their friendship. About the growth and learning they had done together. And they were honest about the fact that in spite of all their awareness and learning, that still they still sometimes catch themselves making judgments or assumptions connected to race.

This was one of the learnings that has continued to stick with me: We all do racist things. We all think racist thoughts. We live in a culture, in a system, that is racist, and so even in spite of our best intentions, we will still sometimes do or say or think things that are racist or prejudiced. And that those of us whose skin colour aligns with the dominant group, that our words or actions can cause real harm to those who are minorities or marginalized.

We all do racist things even in spite of our best intentions, because this is the water we swim in. But this doesn’t automatically mean we are bad people. It means we’re imperfect people and we always have more to learn. Which really is the crux of it.

If we’ve said or done something that someone tells us was hurtful or racist, it’s important to own that thought or action. To learn from that experience so that we don’t do it again.

We can’t control our first thought. And that’s a painful reality when, to borrow Jesus’ words, it’s an ‘evil thought’. We can’t control what first pops into our heads. But what we can control is our second thought, and our first action.1 Which is what we see Jesus do.

Jesus’ first thought, and even his first actions with the Canaanite woman were not good.

But when Jesus likens her to a dog, whether it was a quick-thinking retort or something was simply lost in translation (Gentiles and Greeks didn’t necessarily have the same negative view of dogs, so it’s possible she didn’t perceive this as the slight it was intended)2, she says, “Yes, Lord. But even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall off their masters’ table.”

Her persistence; her refusal to be put down; her demand to be seen as a full person worthy of Jesus’ time and attention; her great faith changes something in Jesus’ heart.

Which is where Jesus finally gets to be part of the good news in this story. In this moment he realizes that he was in the wrong. He replaces his hurtful words with words of blessing – ‘Woman you have great faith. It will be just as you wish.’

This is a moment of transformation for Jesus. And an important one too.

This moment marks the widening of Jesus’ ministry to include not only his own people – the Jewish people – but also the Gentiles. And as Matthew’s gospel unfolds, this is where Jesus’ ministry will culminate, with the Great Commission. Where the risen Christ commands his followers to go and make disciples of ALL nations (28:20).

Now there are some who would argue that this is where Jesus was leading the conversation all along. That Jesus, who is all knowing because he’s God’s Son, was simply testing the woman’s faith.

But for me, this is one of those stories that powerfully and beautifully reveals the humanity of Jesus. That just like us, Jesus made mistakes, he learned, and he changed his mind about things. And in fact, this way of looking at it fits with the stories of Abraham and Moses arguing with God, and God changing God’s mind.

And the powerful thing about a flawed Saviour is that “if Jesus can go from being unclean to clean; from the words of his mouth being hurtful to being an agent of blessing, then we too are invited into such transformation.”3

We are offered forgiveness when our words or actions harm another.

We are invited to seek out encounters with those who are different from us so that our hearts might be transformed. So that our hearts might increase in love and concern for all people. And not only different in race – but in gender, class, nationality, sexual identity and gender expression, age, religion.

And so that not only our hearts, but the systems in which we live me also be transformed. The systems that dehumanize and distance us from one another; that privilege some and disadvantage others.

The good news that the Canaanite woman shares with us is that God’s mercy is wider than we can ever imagine.

May the Canaanite woman, whose name is not remembered, invite us to think about who we need to be listening to – as individuals but also as a congregation – for our hearts to be opened ever wider and for God’s mercy and goodness to abound. Amen.

1 <https://www.pulpitfiction.com/notes/proper15a>

2 Mitzi J. Smith: <https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revised-common-lectionary/ordinary-20/commentary-on-matthew-1510-20-21-28-4>

3 <https://www.pulpitfiction.com/notes/proper15a>

**Hymn of the Day: ACS # 1062 ‘Build a Longer Table’**

1 Build a longer table, not a higher wall,

feeding those who hunger, making room for all.

Feasting together, stranger turns to friend,

Christ breaks walls to pieces; false divisions end.

2 Build a safer refuge, not a larger jail;

where the weak find shelter, mercy will not fail.

For any place where justice is denied,

Christ will breach the jail wall, freeing all inside.

3 Build a broader doorway, not a longer fence.

Love protects all people, sparing no expense.

When we embrace compassion more than fear,

Christ tears down our fences: all are welcome here.

4 When we lived as exiles, refugees abroad,

Christ became our doorway to the reign of God.

So must our tables welcome those who roam.

None can be excluded; all must find a home.

*(Title: Build a Longer Table; Text: David Bjorlin, b. 1984; Text © 2018 GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved. Used by permission; Music: French Carol.; Public Domain; Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Affirmation of Faith:**

P: We believe in God;

***C: Who is older than eternity***

***and younger than our next breath;***

***who is beyond describing***

***yet knows us all by name;***

***who inspires faith***

***yet cannot be contained by religion.***

P: We believe in Jesus Christ,

flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone;

***C: He came in the body***

***to give worth to every human life.***

***He touched the untouchable,***

***loved the unlovable,***

***forgave the unforgivable***

***and endured slander,***

***persecution and death***

***in order that through suffering love***

***God’s kingdom might come on earth.***

***He rose from the grave as living proof***

***that what is laid down in faith***

***will be raised in glory.***

***He ascended to heaven***

***that he might be present***

***at all times***

***to all people.***

P: We believe in the Holy Spirit,

***C: Who leads us into truth and freedom,***

***who gives good gifts***

***to all God’s children,***

***who inspires research, enables prayer,***

***and wills***

***that human economics and politics***

***should prioritise justice,***

***care for the earth***

***and the healing of the nations.***

P: We celebrate the potential of the Church,

***C: The life in our bodies,***

***the yearning in our souls,***

***the promise of good things in store***

***for those who love the Lord.***

*Source: (A Wee Worship Book – Liturgy for Holy Communion A #30810; Type: Words; First Line: Call to worship – Gather us in; Language: English (pages 80-92); Contributors: Iona community; Text: © 1999, WGRG, Iona community, GIA Publications, Inc; exclusive North American agent. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Prayers of Intercession:**

A:Confident that God receives our joys and concerns, let us offer our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

O God, your Spirit gathers the church. Shepherd us in the proclamation of the gospel and breathe life into ecumenical and inter-religious endeavors. Hear us, O God. **C: Your mercy is great.**

You created the earth and all its inhabitants and declared it good. Clean polluted skies, seas, and soil, provide nourishment to plants and animals, and make us aware of our impact on the environment. Bring relief to all places impacted by the extreme weather and natural disasters brought on by climate change. Hear us, O God. **C: Your mercy is great.**

You call leaders to bridge differences and practice generosity. Inspire all in authority to protect people in harm’s way, deliver those in bondage, support fair elections, provide care for military personnel and veterans, and show mercy to those for whom they have responsibility. Hear us, O God. **C: Your mercy is great.**

You provide for those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit. Embrace people who have been rejected because of difference, heal trauma caused by racism or prejudice, shield any who are persecuted, console the dying, and heal the sick (especially Bill, Don, Tammy, Alice, Don, Lynn, Bryan, Nansea, Helen, Sharon, Donald, Creena, Shirley, Clara, Carol, Jeff, Aaron, Mackenzie, Rhett, Linda, Jan, Ken, Robin, Lee, Maria, Deborah, Fred, Anne and those we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts…). Hear us, O God. **C: Your mercy is great.**

You are our shelter and our refuge. We pray for those who do not have a home to call their own. Watch over them, and help us to find solutions to the housing crisis in our community with urgency and creativity. Hear us, O God. **C: Your mercy is great.**

God of community, we pray for our siblings in Christ. For the people of Knox Preston Presbyterian Church and their pastor Bill Bynum. For the people of St Paul’s Lutheran Church, Bridgeport and their pastor Mario Hryniewicz. Bless them in their ministry and unite us in our mission to serve your world. Hear us, O God. **C: Your mercy is great.**

We give thanks and pray for those who serve on our Ministry of Facilities and Risk Management. Embrace them with your love and renew them by your Spirit, as they steward our property resources. Hear us, O God. **C: Your mercy is great.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, in the name of the one who reconciled all creation to himself, Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.\***

**Share the peace of Christ:**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

**Offering**

**Offering Hymn: ACS # 968** ‘Feed Us with Hunger for Justice’

Feed us with hunger for justice.

Feed us with thirst for peace.

**Optional descant**

Feed us justice.

Feed us your peace.

*(Title: Feed us with Hunger for Justice; Text & Music: Anne Krentz Organ, b. 1960; Text and music © 2020 Augsburg Fortress; All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Offering Prayer:**

A: God of field and forest, sea and sky,

you are the giver of all good things.

Sustain us with these gifts of your creation,

and multiply your graciousness in us,

that the world may be fed with your love,

through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.\***

You are invited to prepare your table with bread and wine, or crackers and juice, whatever is available to you, so that you may participate in the meal.

**Meal: Click here for the communion liturgy from worship on YouTube:**

[**https://youtu.be/ViXmTzRsfU4**](https://youtu.be/ViXmTzRsfU4)

**Great Thanksgiving: ACS Setting 12: ‘Dialogue…’ (page 36) (spoken)**

The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **C: We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **C: It is right to give our thanks and praise**

**Thanksgiving at the Table:**

On the night before he died,

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 in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those

who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours,

now and forever. Amen.

**Invitation to Communion:**

This is Christ’s table. All are welcome here to receive God’s abundant gifts of love, mercy, grace, and forgiveness.

I invite those at home, and those in the building communing by fellowship cup, to take your bread or cracker as we say together, “The body of Christ, given for us.”

And, as we take our cup we say, “The blood of Christ, shed for us.”

**Communion Music: ELW # 684 ‘Creating God, Your Fingers Trace’**

1 Creating God, your fingers trace

the bold designs of farthest space;

let sun and moon and stars and light

and what lies hidden praise your might.

2 Sustaining God, your hands uphold

earth's myst'ries known or yet untold;

let water's fragile blend with air,

enabling life, proclaim your care.

3 Redeeming God, your arms embrace

all now despised for creed or race;

let peace, descending like a dove,

make known on earth your healing love.

4 Indwelling God, your gospel claims

one fam'ly with a billion names;

let ev'ry life be touched by grace

until we praise you face to face.

*(Title: Creating God, Your Fingers Trace; Text: Jeffery Rowthorn, b. 1934; Text © 1979 The Hymn Society, admin. Hope Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Used by permission; Music: W. Walker, Southern Harmony, 1835; arr. hymnal version; All rights reserved. Used by permission*

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P: May the body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ strengthen you, and keep you, in his grace.

***C: Amen.***

**Prayer after Communion:**

A: We thank you, generous God,

for the refreshment we have received

at your banquet table.

Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world,

through the one who is our dearest treasure,

Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.\*

**Blessing:**

The God who calls across the cosmos

and speaks in the smallest seed

☩ bless, keep, and sustain you

now and to the end of the age.

Amen\*

**Sending Hymn: ELW # 651 ‘Oh, Praise the Gracious Power’**

1 Oh, praise the gracious pow'r

that tumbles walls of fear

and gathers in one house of faith

all strangers far and near:

***Refrain***

***We praise you, Christ!***

***Your cross has made us one!***

2 Oh, praise persistent truth

that opens fisted minds

and eases from their anxious clutch

the prejudice that blinds: ***Refrain***

3 Oh, praise inclusive love,

encircling ev'ry race,

oblivious to gender, wealth,

to social rank or place: ***Refrain***

4 Oh, praise the word of faith

that claims us as God's own,

a living temple built on Christ,

our rock and cornerstone: ***Refrain***

5 Oh, praise the tide of grace

that laps at ev'ry shore

with visions of a world at peace,

no longer bled by war: ***Refrain***

6 Oh, praise the pow'r, the truth,

the love, the word, the tide.

Yet more than these, oh, praise their source,

praise Christ the crucified: ***Refrain***

7 Oh, praise the living Christ

with faith's bright songful voice!

Announce the gospel to the world

and with these words rejoice: ***Refrain***

*(Title: Oh, Praise the Gracious Power; Text: Thomas H. Troeger, b. 1945; Text from New Hymns for the Lectionary © 1984 Oxford University Press, Inc.; All rights reserved. Used by permission; Music: Carol Doran, b. 1936; © 1984 Oxford University Press, Inc.; All rights reserved. Used by permission; Reprinted and Streamed with permission under CCLI, License # 11098609. All rights reserved.)*

**Dismissal:**

A: Go in peace. Share the harvest.

***C: Thanks be to God.\****

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