**July 23rd, 2023 The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost – Email/At Home Missal**

1. **ZOOM INFORMATION FOR SUNDAY JULY 23, 2023-EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**The ZOOM link for today’s service, which opens at 9.30 am on July 23rd, 2023, can be found here:**

**Sunday Worship July 23rd, 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 JULY 23rd, 2023:**

**Here is the YouTube link for the service from last Sunday, July 16th, 2023:** [**https://youtu.be/X9nSXyCZ2qA**](https://youtu.be/X9nSXyCZ2qA)

**……………………….**

**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.

***Please note:  Pastor Laura will be on vacation from July 10 – August 6, 2023 inclusive. Pastoral emergency coverage has been arranged, and to that end, if needed, please call the church office at 519-653-4721.***

1. ***…………………………….***

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.**

**………………………………**

**Yard Sale**

**Saturday, August 26, 2023 8:00 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.

**………………………………….**

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)

**…………………………..**

**Coffee + Connect with Pastor Laura!**

Over the summer, Pastor Laura will be hosting the following coffee hours in the parlour:

Tuesday August 15 at 10:30AM

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!

**………………………………**

**Send’em Off Smiling** [**http://www.sendemoff.ca/**](http://www.sendemoff.ca/)

COVID-19 has caused significant financial and personal hardships for many within Waterloo Region. Relatedly, it has made it more difficult for families to provide clothing and school supplies to their children. With your help and generous contributions, Send ‘em Off Smiling seeks to alleviate some of the burden by aiding those most in need within our community.  We rely on teachers, who witness the impact of child poverty on learning readiness, to help identify the children who would benefit most from the program.

Please get involved by bringing in **new** school and clothing supplies by **August 20, 2023**.  A basket will be in the St. Peter’s Narthex each Sunday for your much needed donations!  Feel free to also bring in any loose change!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SCHOOL SUPPLIES  **Note:** we do not accept scissors or glue   * Backpacks * Lunch bags * Water bottles * Zippered pencil case * Pencils * Blue, red and black pens * Erasers * Pencil sharpeners * Highlighters * Package of 24 crayons * Package of 24 pencil crayons * 12 inch flexible plastic ruler * Calculator * Math/geometry set | **CLOTHING**  We provide **new** clothes, both male and female, from  JK (age 4) thru to Grade 8 (age 13):   * running Shoes * jeans/sweat pants * short sleeved shirt * long sleeved shirt/hoodie * packages of underwear * packages of socks |

**……………………………………**

**Presiding Pastor: Rev. Monika Wiesner**

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

**Assisting Minister: Kim Strassburger**

**Reader: Bonnie Berg**

**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.

**Prayers for Peace & Lighting of Peace Candle**

**Welcome remarks**

**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 # 693 ‘Come, Ye thankful People, Come’**

1 Come, ye thankful people, come;

raise the song of harvest home.

All be safely gathered in

ere the winter storms begin.

God, our maker, doth provide

for our wants to be supplied.

Come to God's own temple, come,

raise the song of harvest home.

2 All the world is God's own field,

fruit unto his praise to yield;

wheat and tares together sown,

unto joy or sorrow grown.

First the blade, and then the ear,

then the full corn shall appear.

Lord of harvest, grant that we

wholesome grain and pure may be.

3 For the Lord our God shall come

and shall take his harvest home;

from his field shall in that day

all offenses purge away;

give his angels charge at last

in the fire the tares to cast,

but the fruitful ears to store

in his garner evermore.

4 Even so, Lord, quickly come

to thy final harvest home.

Gather then thy people in,

free from sorrow, free from sin,

there, forever purified,

in thy garner to abide.

Come, with all thine angels, come,

raise the glorious harvest home!

*(Title: Come, Ye Thankful People, Come; Text: Text: Henry Alford, 1810-1871, alt.; Public Domain; Music: George J. Elvey; 1816-1893; 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***:*

Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.\***

**The Reading: Isaiah 44:6-8**

Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel,  
  and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:  
I am the first and I am the last;  
  besides me there is no god.  
Who is like me? Let them proclaim it,  
  let them declare and set it forth before me.  
Who has announced from of old the things to come?  
  Let them tell us what is yet to be.  
Do not fear, or be afraid;  
  have I not told you from of old and declared it?  
  You are my witnesses!  
Is there any god besides me?  
  There is no other rock; I know not one. *(NRSV)*

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

**Psalm: Psalm: 139:1-12, 23-24**

Lord, you have searched me out;

***O Lord, you have known me.***

You know my sitting down and my rising up;

***you discern my thoughts from afar.***

You trace my journeys and my resting-places

***and are acquainted with all my ways.***

Indeed, there is not a word on my lips,

***but you, O Lord, know it altogether.***

You encompass me, behind and before,

***and lay your hand upon me.***

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;

***it is so high that I cannot attain to it.***

Where can I go then from your Spirit?

***Where can I flee from your presence?***

If I climb up to heaven, you are there;

***if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.***

If I take the wings of the morning

***and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,***

even there your hand will lead me

***and your right hand hold me fast.***

If I say, “Surely the darkness will cover me,

***and the light around me turn to night,”***

darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day;

***darkness and light to you are both alike.***

Search me out, O God, and know my heart;

***try me and know my restless thoughts.***

Look well whether there be any wickedness in me

***and lead me in the way that is everlasting.***\*

1. **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.\*

*From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.*

**Gospel Introduction**

**The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 13:24-30**

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

Jesus put before the crowds another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field;but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ ” *(NRSV)*

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

**Sermon (Imagine Supply Pastor Monika Wiesner’s voice here)**

Last week we talked about sowing seed. This week we’re talking about pulling weeds! The two go together! Every gardener knows that planting seeds is the easy part of having a successful garden. It’s much more difficult and time consuming to weed that same garden. As someone once said, “When weeding your garden, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a precious plant is to gently tug on it. If it comes out of the ground easily … it’s the plant!”

Today’s gospel reading is another parable. And just like last Sunday, today’s parable portrays God as a farmer. This farmer-God plants a healthy crop in his field and then finds both plant and weed growing side by side. But he chooses to do nothing about it until harvest time. He lets both plant and weed grow side by side for the full growing season, and only at the harvest does he separate the two.

What’s this all about?

Well, we know that whenever Jesus tells a parable, he uses images that his listeners would readily understand … and so it is today. The people would have understood the concept of wheat and weeds growing side by side, with the farmer unable to separate the two … because, in ancient Palestine, that is precisely what happened! You see, there was a weed called “bearded darnel”, a weed that in its early stages looked exactly like wheat, making it very difficult to tell the two apart. And … as the two grew side by side, the roots, over time, would intertwine, making them almost impossible to separate without destroying the wheat. However, it was necessary to separate the two because the darnel was both bitter in taste *and* it was toxic. If the farmer didn’t remove the darnel before milling, it would ruin the flour. And so, after threshing, the farmers would separate the two by spreading them out on a flat surface and removing the darnel by hand. A slow and tedious process, no doubt.

I know that over the years, this parable has been interpreted to mean “Clean up your behaviour and try to be more wheat than weed.” That’s certainly how I learned it in Sunday School and in the church of my youth. I imagine it was meant to motivate through guilt. Sadly, what can happen when we do that is that it leads to compartmentalized thinking. We believe ourselves to be “wheat” … of course we do! … while others – usually the ones we don’t like, let’s be honest – can be designated as “weeds”. The danger here is that once we designate anyone or any group as “weeds”, it makes it easier to dehumanize or villainize them. We know that history holds many stories of how those who consider themselves “wheat” have systematically destroyed the people they’ve dehumanized. I’m sure we can all name several tragedies that have occurred in the last century where people were systematically dehumanized and then targeted with hate crimes, even destroyed.

So these interpretations are not helpful. For one thing, they take the focus off God! Remember last week we said that Jesus’ parables were often told to teach us something about the nature of God, what God is like. And so we should not make this parable *us*. *Our* behaviour. Even here, this parable is to teach us something about what God is like!

Today’s parable tells us that both the wheat and the weeds are loved by God.

This is a parable about radical inclusion, so that no one might believe he/she is wheat … while someone *else …* can be designated as weeds. Making it okay to destroy them, in other words.

Now as we said last week, parables can be interpreted in many ways … and so this morning I’d like us to look at this parable in another way. I’d like to bring this parable even closer to home. I’d like to invite us to picture God looking into our hearts. Because in each heart … in yours and in mine … wheat and weeds grow together. In 21st Century language, there is light and shadow in each one of us.

Now most of us here today have heard that we all have a shadow side, a part of our personality or our innermost being that we like to keep hidden. That stuff we don’t want anyone to know about us … and so we keep it well hidden … not only from others but even from ourselves. Most of us can’t name our own shadow, we keep it so well hidden and out of our awareness. In fact, this is the stuff that we even try to keep hidden from God.

Allow me to share with you what I have learned about the “shadow” during my training as a spiritual director. If we want to discover our own shadow(s), it’s really quite simple. Observe yourself closely and see what *really* upsets you in someone else … what *really* pushes your buttons or hits those trigger spots. Did you know that *that* which provokes you in others is almost always your own shadow which you are trying to hide from yourself? During my training we were taught: “Stay with what provokes you!” In other words, this is where we learn a lot about ourselves … and where we need to begin doing our “inner work”. For example, if you get *really* upset with someone who tends to be critical, take notice. Then ask yourself, “*In what ways am I often critical of others?”*  And if you bristle up and say, “Oh but I’m *not!”,* then you have probably found your shadow. You may pride yourself in not *speaking* critically … but do you *think* critical thoughts? Judgmental thoughts? Toward yourself or others? We can say the same thing with anger or jealousy. If we do not acknowledge and befriend our shadow, we bury it underground … we hide it from ourselves … and then we project it onto others. We see in others that which we are hiding in ourselves. All of us do it, whether we recognize it or not. We all do it. Like the bearded darnel, it can make *us* bitter and toxic.

During my training as a spiritual director, a huge focus was working with our shadow … *not* to destroy it … or to get rid of it … because we can’t! Instead, we were taught to befriend it with compassion. Let the wheat and the weeds grow side by side. We befriend our shadow for one reason only … because that’s what God does. God loves us, light and shadow, good and not-so-good.

Befriending our shadow … treating ourselves as the compassionate Jesus would treat us. This is vital to our spiritual health. If we cannot love ourselves … light *and* shadow … we will have great difficulty loving others. Wheat and weeds *will* ultimately grow together in us … in you and in me … and it is God’s work and not ours to sort it all out.

In the last two years, I’ve had the privilege of working as a spiritual director at Loyola House, the Jesuit Retreat Center in Guelph. One of our Jesuits, who turned 91 last week and still works a full day, was presiding and preaching this past week on his birthday. It is Father Bill who always says … “In those dark places where you believe that God will love you the least … it is precisely in those places that God wants to love you the most!” And so the invitation is to pray into those dark places, asking God to transform those places that need healing in us.

Light and shadow … it’s a lovely interplay of images. Look around the room and see how light and shadow make things richer and more beautiful. In our spiritual journey, making peace with those parts of ourselves we’d rather deny leads to inner transformation. And it brings more balance to our life. And more peace.

And when we’re more peaceful in here… then we’re more peaceful out there. And that can only make the world a better place.

Amen

**Hymn of the Day: ELW 695 ‘As Saints of Old’**

1 As saints of old their firstfruits brought

of orchard, flock, and field

to God, the giver of all good,

the source of bounteous yield;

so we today firstfruits would bring,

the wealth of this good land,

of farm and market, shop and home,

of mind and heart and hand.

2 A world in need now summons us

to labor, love, and give;

to make our life an offering

to God, that all may live.

The church of Christ is calling us

to make the dream come true:

a world redeemed by Christ-like love;

all life in Christ made new.

3 In gratitude and humble trust

we bring our best today

to serve your cause and share your love

with all along life's way.

O God, who gave yourself to us

in Jesus Christ your Son,

teach us to give ourselves each day

until life's work is done.

*(Title: As Saints of Old; Text: Frank von Christierson, 1900-1996, alt.Text © 1961, ren. 1989 The Hymn Society, admin. Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Music: English folk tune; Ralph Vaughan, 1872-1958; Outside USA: Arrangement from*The English Hymnal*, © Oxford University Press 1906. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under CCLI, License # 11098609. 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, you call your church to announce the gospel of reconciliation and truth both near and far. Guide your church as it seeks your wisdom and shares it, trusting your Spirit bearing witness among us. Hear us, O God. **C: Your mercy is great.**

You brought forth all creation and called it good. Direct policymakers to protect lands and seas. Bring rain to sun-parched fields and protect areas impacted by natural disasters. Hear us, O God. **C: Your mercy is great.**

You desire peace among nations and peoples. Guard our neighborhoods from hatred, watch over police officers and firefighters, and teach us to advocate for those who live in fear. Hear us, O God. **C: Your mercy is great.**

You are gracious and merciful, comforting those who suffer any affliction especially we pray for Bill, Don, Tammy, Alice, Don, Lynn, Bryan, Nansea, Helen, Sharon, Donald, Creena, Shirley, Clara, Carol, Jeff, Aaron, Mackenzie, Rhett, Linda, Jan, Ken, Pastor Neil, Robin, Lee, Maria, Deborah, Janice, Hazel, and those we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts. Sustain your people living with HIV/ AIDS, provide shelter for all who are unhoused, and release any who are unjustly imprisoned. Hear us, O God. **C: Your mercy is great.**

You name each of us as your children. Guide our hospitality ministry to welcome all, our education ministry to equip us for faithful living, and our social ministry to enact the gospel in our community. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

You send faithful people to proclaim freedom from bondage and to renew your church. Encourage us by the witness of the faithful departed including Birgitta of Sweden, whom the church commemorates today, so that we live into that same hope. 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: ELW # 472 ‘Eat This Bread’ (Jesus Christ, Bread of Life)**

"Eat this bread, drink this cup,

come to me and never be hungry.

Eat this bread, drink this cup,

trust in me and you will not thirst."

*(Title: Eat This Bread (Jesus Christ, Bread of Life) Text: Taizé Community; Text © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications Inc., agent. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Music: Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994; Music © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications Inc., agent. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. 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 # 733 ‘Great Is Thy Faithfulness’**

1 Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;

there is no shadow of turning with thee;

thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not;

as thou hast been, thou forever wilt be.

***Refrain***

***Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!***

***Morning by morning new mercies I see;***

***all I have needed thy hand hath provided;***

***great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!***

2 Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,

sun, moon, and stars in their courses above

join with all nature in manifold witness

to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. ***Refrain***

3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,

thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;

strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,

blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! ***Refrain***

*(Title: Great Is Thy Faithfulness; Text& Music: Text: Thomas O. Chisholm, 1866-1960; © 1923, Music: William M. runyan, 1970-1957; ren. 1951 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission*. *Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

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: LBW # 563 ‘For the Fruit of All Creation’**

1 For the fruit of all creation,

thanks be to God.

For his gifts to ev’ry nation,

thanks be to God.

For the plowing, sowing, reaping,

silent growth while we are sleeping,

future needs in earth’s safekeeping,

thanks be to God.

2 In the just reward of labor,

God’s will is done.

In the help we give our neighbor,

God’s will is done.

In our worldwide task of caring

for the hungry and despairing,

in the harvests we are sharing,

God’s will is done.

3 For the harvests of the Spirit,

thanks be to God.

For the good we all inherit,

thanks be to God.

For the wonders that astound us,

for the truths that still confound us,

most of all, that love has found us,

thanks be to God.

*(Title: For the Fruit of All Creation; Text: Text: F. Pratt Green, 1903-2000, © 1970 Hope Publishing Co. All rights reserved. Used by permission.*

*Music: Emma Lou Diemer, b. 1927, Tune © 1978 Augsburg Fortress; All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Dismissal:**

A: Go in peace. Share the harvest.

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

*\*From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #42368. New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.*