**July 30th, 2023 The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost – Email/At Home Missal**

1. **ZOOM INFORMATION FOR SUNDAY JULY 30, 2023-NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**The ZOOM link for today’s service, which opens at 9.30 am on July 30th, 2023, can be found here:**

**Sunday Worship July 30th, 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 30th, 2023:**

**Here is the YouTube link for the service from last Sunday, July 23rd, 2023:**

<https://youtu.be/vKM13QJ3xwk>

**……………………….**

**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.**

**………………………………**

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

**…………………………………..**

**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!

**………………………………**

**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)

**…………………………..**

**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 |

**…………………………….**

**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!**

**………………………………**

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

Save the Date!

**…………………………………**

**Presiding Pastor: Rev. Monika Wiesner**

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

**Assisting Minister: Emily Reidl**

**Reader: Austin Dykstra**

**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 # 533 ‘Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty’**

1 Open now thy gates of beauty,

Zion, let me enter there,

where my soul in joyful duty

waits for God who answers prayer.

Oh, how blessed is this place,

filled with solace, light, and grace!

2 Gracious God, I come before thee;

come thou also unto me;

where we find thee and adore thee,

there a heav'n on earth must be.

To my heart, oh, enter thou,

let it be thy temple now!

3 Here thy praise is gladly chanted,

here thy seed is duly sown;

let my soul, where it is planted,

bring forth precious sheaves alone,

so that all I hear may be

fruitful unto life in me.

4 Thou my faith increase and quicken,

let me keep thy gift divine;

howsoe'er temptations thicken,

may thy word still o'er me shine

as my guiding star through life,

as my comfort in all strife.

5 Speak, O God, and I will hear thee,

let thy will be done indeed;

may I undisturbed draw near thee

while thou dost thy people feed.

Here of life the fountain flows;

here is balm for all our woes.

*(Title: Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty; Text:**Benjamin Schmolck, 1672-1737; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.; Public Domain*

*Music: Joachim Neander, 1650-1680; 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*:***

Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

**The First Reading:  1 Kings 3:5-12**

At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, “Ask what I should give you.” And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?”

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.” *(NRSV)*

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

**Psalm: Psalm 119:129-136 *(read responsively)***

Your decrees are wonderful;

***therefore I obey them with all my heart.***

When your word is opened it gives light;

***it gives understanding to the simple.***

I open my mouth and pant

***because I long for your commandments.***

Turn to me and be gracious to me,

***as you always do to those who love your name.***

Order my footsteps in your word;

***let no iniquity have dominion over me.***

Rescue me from those who oppress me,

***and I will keep your commandments.***

Let your face shine upon your servant

***and teach me your statutes.***

My eyes shed streams of tears,

***because people do not keep your teaching.*\***

**The Second Reading: Romans 8:26-39**

The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,  
 “For your sake we are being killed all day long;  
  we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”  
No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. *(NRSV)*

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.\*

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

**Gospel Introduction**

**The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52**

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

Jesus put before the crowds another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.” *(NRSV)*

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

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

**Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52**

**Parables of the Kingdom**

Our gospel reading continues from the last two weeks’ readings. Jesus is telling parables. He’s telling his listeners, in ways they can readily understand, what the kingdom of God is like … and just as before, he’s using images that his 1st Century Palestinian audience would have found familiar. He uses the images of everyday life.

It may be helpful to place today’s reading into context. Jesus is in the region of Galilee, where most of his ministry takes place. In the Galilee, almost all the people were either farmers or fishermen. Jesus’ audience would have consisted almost exclusively of the peasant class … and so the parables he told were meant to touch the hearts of precisely these people.

There are five parables in this morning’s reading and in order to do them justice, I’d invite us to look at each one briefly, as each parable contains its own nugget of truth.

The first parable – a mustard seed. The smallest of all seeds, it was capable of enormous growth, sometimes reaching heights of more than six feet. It was a bush, really, not a tree. Yet this bush was capable of housing the birds of the air. For Jewish people, the image of the mustard plant housing “the birds of the air” would have immediately called to mind three different places in the Hebrew Scriptures where it says that birds of every kind shall live in the shade of a tree’s branches. For Jewish people, the expression “birds of every kind” actually meant “all Gentiles”. Remember, anyone who wasn’t Jewish was considered a Gentile and therefore an outsider. So the parable of the mustard seed was about welcoming all those whom your tradition considers an “outsider”. This parable is about radical inclusion.

Next is the parable of the leaven, which is an old fashioned word for yeast. We all know that we add yeast to flour to make it rise, to make it bigger. Jesus is saying that, even though we may not see it, the kingdom of God, like the yeast, is quietly growing in the everyday-ness of life. After all, what is more “everyday” than bread? Jewish mothers would have baked bread every day. If we look at this parable more closely, we will discover that it is also about astonishing extravagance. Father Robert Capon, Anglican priest and author, visited Waterloo Lutheran Seminary once on a lecture tour and shared with us the huge extravagance in this parable. He said that the amount of flour mentioned in this parable amounts to 128 cups of flour, or sixteen 5-lb bags. That would require 42 cups of water … and at the end, after the dough had risen, you’d have a little over 100 lbs of flour on your hands! Since all dough was worked by hand in those days, it was more than anyone could possibly do. This is a parable about radical extravagance!

Jesus then tells a parable about buried treasure. Now Jesus’ listeners would have identified with this instantly! It was something they did quite regularly! Why? To hide their treasures from the Roman authorities and the tax collectors. Why?? Because taxes were about 33% on grain and 50% on fruit, plus the head tax on each family member, plus taxes on trade (their version of the HST), plus the temple taxes that were required both in the form of animals that had to be bought to be sacrificed, as well as their financial offerings given in shekels. This all added up to an exorbitant burden on farmers and fishermen, and the historian Josephus writes that King Herod the Great “reduced the entire country to helpless poverty” by his heavy taxation. So people hid what they could. This parable would have gotten under the skin of all who heard it! They knew all about hiding treasure in a field. This parable is about a treasure so valuable that it needs to be protected.

In the fourth parable Jesus says the kingdom of God is like a “pearl of great value”. This parable probably needs the least amount of explanation. The kingdom of God is such a treasure that we will give whatever it takes to obtain it!

In the fifth parable, Jesus circles back to inclusivity. A net full of fish is something we find in other stories about Jesus as well. Each time it means all people … people of every religion, colour, gender, orientation and class. The net is full of fish of every description. The kingdom of God includes absolutely everyone!

So what is Jesus saying about the kingdom of God? First of all, the kingdom of God comes through the ordinary – bread, birds, fish, mustard seeds – and it is for everyone. The kingdom of God, as we have said before, is God’s dream for the world – what the world would look like if God ruled the world and our leaders did not. The kingdom of God is not about a blessed afterlife – it is about life right here, right now. It even says so in the Lord’s Prayer – “thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it [already] is in heaven.”

Radically inclusive? So precious we would do anything to obtain it? Extravagant in love? That’s how Jesus describes the kingdom of God here on earth. It may leave us wondering, how might something like that look today?

I invite us now to turn our eyes to the Holy Land. Today we know there is conflict galore as the people of the three Abrahamic faiths – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – all try to live together. Out of this region have come some incredible true stories. Allow me to share one with you.

In 1972, a Roman Catholic priest, Father Bruno Hussar, founded a village called the “Oasis of Peace”. It is a village of some 40 families, situated in Israel about halfway between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, hardly an area of peace, as we well know. He called it “Neve Shalom”, meaning “Oasis of Peace” in Hebrew, and “Wahat al-Salem” in Arabic. The Oasis of Peace embodies the values of both Jewish and Palestinian cultures, as well as the values of all three religions that are so essential to peaceful living together. It is a place where Jews and Christians and Muslims intentionally live, work, study, play and worship together in peace.

Several years ago, a woman named Grace Feuerverger visited the village and wrote a book talking about the effect that this village had on her. Feuerverger was a child of Holocaust survivors. She writes that at the village the people celebrated all the religious festivals. One time, while attending a Christmas pageant, she began taking pictures of the people around her. Her favourite photo is of a Palestinian woman in a hijab with a child on her lap sitting next to a Jewish woman, also with a child on her lap, both watching a Christian Christmas play. And it was so natural. Feuerverger, recalling all the suffering she and her family had endured because of their Jewish faith, asked herself, “My God, is this really happening?”

In 2019, I was privileged to attend the “Hakimah” program at the Tantur Ecumenical Institute in Jerusalem. During this 2-week program, students from around the world learned about the reality of living in this divided city from the viewpoint of all three Abrahamic faith traditions. Our teachers were three women – Jewish, Christian and Muslim – who were friends as well as educators. More than anything else, they wanted peace in the land they loved so much. We listened as they expressed a longing for peace in the land each called “home”.

One day, while we were in the region of Galilee, our class visited Magdala, the city where Mary Magdalene supposedly was born. Visiting a large church beside an excavation site, I thought I’d go into the sanctuary to take some photos. When I entered the sanctuary, I saw our Jewish and Muslim teachers sitting together all alone in the empty room. As I watched from the entrance, the Jewish woman put her arm around her Muslim friend’s shoulders and the two put their heads together and rested like that. I put my camera down and sat quietly, an unseen third presence, knowing I was on holy ground. For me, this was the peace of Jerusalem, for which all three religions pray.

This is where heaven and earth intersect. The kingdom of heaven is right here on earth. It is radically inclusive, extravagant in love, precious beyond price, and needs to be treasured and protected at all cost. This is God’s dream for the world!

The question now remains … what is it worth to us? Amen

**Hymn of the Day: ACS # 952 ‘The Reign of God, like Farmer’s Field’ *(sung to tune LBW # 464- Dundee – Public Domain)***

1 The reign of God, like farmer's field,

bears weeds along with wheat;

the good and bad are intertwined

till harvest is complete.

2 The reign of God is like a pearl

on barren land concealed.

If once you find that precious pearl,

go out and buy that field.

3 Though hidden now, the reign of God

may, yet unnoticed, grow;

from deep within it rises up,

like yeast in swelling dough.

4 Like mustard tree, the reign of God

from tiny seed will spread,

till birds of ev'ry feather come

to nest, and there be fed.

5 The reign of God is come in Christ;

the reign of God is near.

Ablaze among us, kindling hearts,

the reign of God is here!

*(Title: The Reign of God, like Farmer's Field; Text: Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939; Text © 1995, 2003 GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved. # Music: African American spiritual; ©1995 Augsburg Fortress****;*** *All rights reserved. Used by permission. 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.*

God of love, we pray for the church and all servants of the gospel. Equip rostered and lay ministers to proclaim that nothing can separate us from your love. May our children and our confirmands absorb the knowledge that they are loved … and may all experience a felt awareness of your never-ending love. Hear us, O God.***C: Your mercy is great.***

God of all life, we pray for the well-being of creation. Empower us to safeguard the environment and to see each living thing as sacred – our rivers and lakes; the mighty trees and the tiny mustard seed; the plants that feed and nourish. Give courage to all who advocate for sustainable practices. Hear us, O God. ***C: Your mercy is great.***

Compassionate God, we pray for the nations. Plant in us the desire to discern between good and evil, and to willingly work to free all who are oppressed. Protect those who are facing danger … and help us to promote peace around the world. Hear us, O God. ***C: Your mercy is great.***

Merciful God, we pray for all who are in need this day. We pray for all who are fleeing from war; for all who live in poverty; for all who are far away from their homeland. We pray for all refugee families and for those living in refugee camps around the world. Hear us, O God. ***C: Your mercy is great.***

We pray for all who are sick or grieving, for all who struggle with chronic illness, for all who are lonely or far from their loved ones. We pray for all unborn children, that they may be brought safely to birth. Today 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, Fred, Anne and those we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts. Hear us, O God. ***C: Your mercy is great.***

God of new beginnings, we pray for all who are experiencing life transitions. Grant them clarity of vision, that they may discern the path for the greater good of all. May they experience a felt awareness of your loving arms around them. Hear us, O God. ***C: Your mercy is great.***

Holy God, we pray for the people of this congregation, those gathered here today and those absent from our community. We pray for safety for our children attending summer camps or community programs. May all who are traveling find refreshment for their souls … and may they return home safely. Hear us, O God. ***C: Your mercy is great.***

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Eternal God, we give thanks for your saints who now rest from their labors. Inspire us by their witness to treasure the gospel, and continually nourish us with your grace. 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 # 686 ‘We Give thee but Thine Own’**

1 We give thee but thine own,

whate'er the gift may be;

all that we have is thine alone,

a trust, O Lord, from thee.

2 May we thy bounties thus

as stewards true receive,

and gladly, as thou blessest us,

to thee our firstfruits give.

3 The captive to release,

to God the lost to bring,

to teach the way of life and peace—

it is a Christlike thing.

4 And we believe thy word,

though dim our faith may be:

whate'er we do for thine, O Lord,

we do it unto thee.

*(Title: We Give Thee but Thine Own; Text: William W. How, 1823-1897, alt.; Public Domain; Music:* *L. Mason and G. Webb, Cantictica Lauda, 1850; Public Domain; 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 # 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.)*

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 # 550 ‘On What Has Now Been Sown’**

1 On what has now been sown

your blessing, Lord, bestow;

the pow'r is yours alone

to make it sprout and grow.

O Lord, in grace the harvest raise,

and yours alone shall be the praise!

2 To you our wants are known,

from you are all our pow'rs;

accept what is your own

and pardon what is ours.

Our praises, Lord, and prayers receive

and to your word a blessing give.

3 Oh, grant that each of us,

now met before you here,

may meet together thus

when you and yours appear,

and follow you to heav'n, our home.

E'en so, Amen! Lord Jesus, come!

*(Title: On What Has Now Been Sown; Text: John Newton, 1725-1807, alt.; Public Domain; Music: John Darwall, 1731-1789; Public Domain*

*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.*