

ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost



SUNDAY, JULY 16, 2023

10 A.M.

INTRODUCTION

God's word is like the rain that waters the earth and brings forth vegetation. It is also like the sower who scatters seed indiscriminately. Our lives are like seeds sown in the earth. Even from what appears to be little, dormant, or dead, God promises a harvest. At the Lord's table we are fed with the bread of life, that we may bear fruit in the world.

PRELUDE

The assembly stands.



+ GATHERING +

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, who greets us in this and every season, whose word never fails, whose promise is sure.

Congregation (C) Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of our neighbors.
Merciful God,

C we confess that we have sinned. We have hurt our community. We have squandered your blessings. We have hoarded your bounty. In the name of Jesus, forgive us and grant us your mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection.

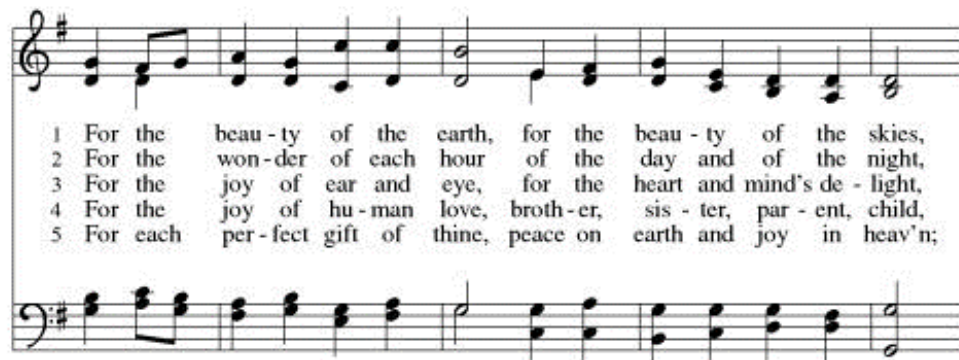
P Righteous God,

C we confess that we have sinned. We have failed to be honest. We have lacked the courage to speak. We have spoken falsely. In the name of Jesus, forgive us and grant us your mercy.

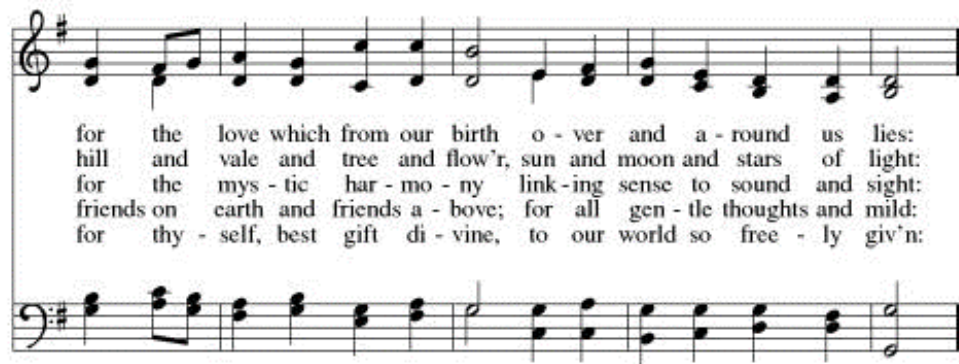
Silence is kept for reflection.

P God is a cup of cold water when we thirst. God offers boundless grace when we fail. Claim the gift of God's mercy: you are freed and forgiven in the name of ✚ Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

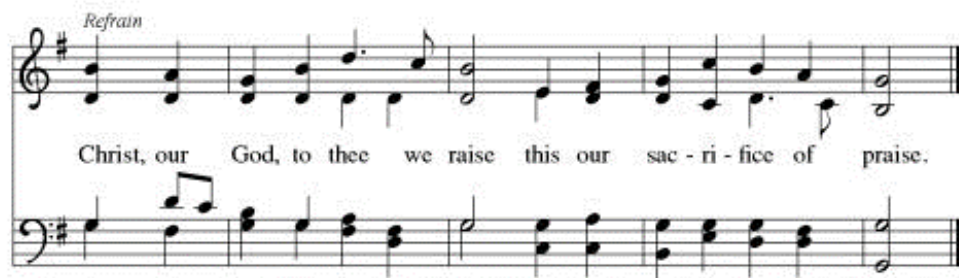


1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the beau - ty of the skies,
 2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
 3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,
 4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
 5 For each per - fect gift of thine, peace on earth and joy in heav'n;



for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
 hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light:
 for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:
 friends on earth and friends a - bove; for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
 for thy - self, best gift di - vine, to our world so free - ly giv'n:

Refrain



Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sac - ri - fice of praise.

Text: Follott S. Pierpoint, 1835-1917, alt.
 Music: DIX, Conrad Kocher, 1786-1872

GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion
 Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Refrain

Congregation:

Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion,
all of cre - a - tion sings for joy
to the God of life and love and
free-dom: praise and glo - ry for ev -
er - more!

Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

Verse 1

Congregation or Congregation 1:

1. Now is the feast of the Lamb once
slain, whose blood has freed and u -
nit - ed us to be one great peo - ple of
God.

to Refrain

Verse 2 *Congregation or Congregation 2:*

2. Pow - er and rich - es, wis - dom and
might, all hon - or and glo - ry to Christ
for ev - er. *to Refrain*

Verse 3 *Congregation:*

3. For God has come to dwell with us, to
make us peo - ple of God; to make
all things new. *to Refrain*

Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.



Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

CHILDREN'S TIME

L ¹⁵May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak
them- | selves with grain;
 let them shout for | joy and sing.

Spoken after the Psalm is sung:

C Amen.

SECOND READING: Romans 8:1-11

There is no condemnation for those who live in Christ. God sent Christ to accomplish what the law was unable to do: condemn sin and free us from its death-dealing ways. The Spirit now empowers proper actions and values in our lives and gives us the promise of resurrected life.

¹There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

R The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Congregation:

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we
go? You have the words of e - ter - nal
life. Al - le - lu - ia!

Optional Repeat

Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

In Matthew's gospel, both Jesus and his disciples "sow the seed" of God's word by proclaiming the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near." Now, in a memorable parable, Jesus explains why this good news produces different results in those who hear.

P The holy gospel according to Matthew, the thirteenth chapter.

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

¹That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ²Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹Let anyone with ears listen!"

¹⁸"Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²²As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one

who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

P The gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The assembly is seated.

SERMON *We encounter the living word of God in the preaching.*

The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY **690** *We Raise Our Hands to You, O Lord**

**Not available for insert.*

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends: Hear us, O God.

Congregational response: Your mercy is great.

PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

The people greet one another with the sign of Christ's peace.

The assembly stands.



+ MEAL +

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

OFFERING HYMN

The assembly stands to sing the offering hymn as the collection and the gifts are brought forward.

Refrain

Congregation:

As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread;
so may all your peo-ple from all the ends of earth be
gath-ered in - to one in you.

Verses

1. As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst
2. Let this be a fore-taste of all that is to come when
to Refrain
may we share the pres-ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You reveal your glory as the glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: equal in majesty, undivided in splendor, one Lord, one God, ever to be adored in your eternal glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Congregation:

The musical score is written on five staves of music. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 6/8. The lyrics are: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est! Bless - ed is the One who comes in your name. Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and
might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est!
Bless - ed is the One who comes in your name. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

The presiding minister continues to give thanks.

P In the night in which he was betrayed,
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.

C Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

C 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

P All people are called to Christ's table. Come, eat what is good.

The assembly is seated.

LAMB OF GOD

Congregation: *Congregation or Assistant:*




Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
 you break the chains of ha - tred and
 you are the way of jus - tice and
 you are the way of mer - cy and

Congregation:



world: have mer - cy on us, mer - cy on us,
 fear:
 peace:
 love.

Final Stanza
Congregation or Assistant:



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you

Congregation:



take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace,



grant us peace, grant us peace.

Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

As the ushers direct you, come to the altar using the side aisles and return to your seat via the central aisle. The assisting minister offers a pouring cup (wine or grape juice). If you prefer to receive the wine or juice in an individual glass, take one from the tray as you approach the rail. Leave the empty glass on the rail. Wheat-free wafers are available--simply tell the pastor.

COMMUNION HYMNS	838	<i>Beautiful Savior (Requested hymn)</i>
	512	<i>Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil</i>
	471	<i>Let Us Break Bread Together</i>

The assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.

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.

C Amen.

+ SENDING +

BLESSING *We receive the blessings of the triune God.*

P 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.

C Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING HYMN **679** *For the Fruit of All Creation*



1 For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.
 2 In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will is done.
 3 For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God.



For these gifts to ev - 'ry na - tion, thanks be to God.
 In the help we give our neigh - bor, God's will is done.
 For the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God.



For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are sleep - ing,
 In our world - wide task of car - ing for the hun - gry and de - spair - ing,
 For the won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con - found us,



fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.
 in the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will is done.
 most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.


Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000
 Music: AR HYD Y NOS, Welsh traditional; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958
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 Outside USA: Arr. from *The English Hymnal*, © Oxford University Press 1906.

DISMISSAL

- A We believe out loud that God’s mission for us is:
- C to be an active community that welcomes all people to nurture and share their faith and gifts with everyone, according to God’s call.**
- A Go in peace. Go in peace. Share the harvest.
- C Thanks be to God!**

+ + +

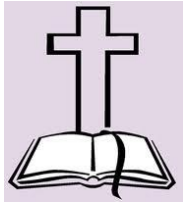
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	<p>ANDREA NOTLEY DEDICATES TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN HONOR OF HER GRANDDAUGHTER, AVA JULIET.</p>
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<u>Calendar for July 16 - 23</u>				
July	16	Sun.	9:00 am	Book study
			10:00 am	Worship, Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
	23	Sun.	9:00 am	Book study
			10:00 am	Worship, Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Next Sunday, Eighth Sunday after Pentecost:

[Isaiah 44:6-8](#)
[Psalm 86:11-17](#)
[Romans 8:12-25](#)
[Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43](#)



SERVING TABLE		
Serving	July 16	July 23
Presiding	Pastor Tom	Pastor Tom
Preaching	Pastor Tom	Pastor Tom
Assisting Minister	Audrey Post	Jennifer Dritt
Cup Minister	Beth Alexander	Audrey Post
Cantor	Susan Hehn	Pastor Tom
Lector	Erik Robinson	Jonas Holdcraft
Altar Guild	Judi Duffy Linda Eshleman	Billie Reardon Erik Robinson
Counters	Audrey Post Billie Reardon	Kirsten Ebbesen Rob Schiffer
Announcements	Denise Bookwalter	Denise Bookwalter

PRAYER REQUESTS

For the sick: Val Sullivan; Audrey Post; Margarete Decker (mother of Caroline Collins); Sallie Robinson (wife of Erik Robinson); Don Dowd; Isabelle Taylor (granddaughter of Bill & Connie Taylor), being treated for rheumatoid arthritis and Primary Immunodeficiency; Theresa Martin (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Dan Graney (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Sarah (friend of Cassandra White).

In treatment for cancer: Gordon Fleischer; Stephanie Barber; Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; Maggie Soff (friend of Sandy Sampson); James Sablan (brother of Donna Schiffer); Bruce Blubaum (cousin of Sharon Simmons); Chris Dickman (synod council member); Craig Timm (friend of Cheryl & Steve).

Health and protection: For all affected by the coronavirus – especially those experiencing mental-health difficulties due to isolation, those struggling to recover from the disease, those on the front lines fighting, researching and treating the disease (doctors, nurses, medical personnel, EMTs), the millions of unemployed people, etc.; for the unaccompanied children entering the U.S., including those “unaccounted for.”

For prisoners: All those on Death Row.

Other concerns: For Karen Olson; Kevin Robinson (son of Erik Robinson), in need of encouragement; Angela Locke (friend of Audrey Post), for patience and strength; Becky Button (cousin of Audrey Post), as she continues to recuperate; Isaac (son of Terri Schmitt), for physical and emotional healing.

Church concerns: St. Stephen's Church Council; the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council; all congregations searching for ways to stay connected and proclaim the Good News; Reconciling Works; Grace Lutheran Church; Bishop Pedro Suarez; Bishop Elizabeth Eaton; Our Savior Lutheran Church in Freeport, Bahamas; the ELCA Advocacy offices and ministry; St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pensacola.

World concerns: For all people suffering and/or recovering from hurricanes; migrants and asylum seekers; civil rights for people around the world; a ceasefire in Ethiopia and in Ukraine; peace in Afghanistan and the Middle East.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FLOWER CHART FOR 2023: Do you have an anniversary, birthday or special memory you would like to honor? Celebrate the occasion by sponsoring the flowers for our service by signing up for the 2023 Flower Chart located in the narthex. The cost is \$35, and you can place it in the offering plate.

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER: Want to read a sermon you missed? Visit <https://ststephenlutherantally.com/newsletters>. Want to read the latest newsletters? Go to <https://ststephenlutherantally.com/newsletters>. Want to browse a collection of St. Stephen songs? They're at <https://ststephenlutherantally.com/newsletters>.