

ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2023

10 A.M.

INTRODUCTION

Conflict is a part of relationships and life in community. Jesus' words in today's gospel are often used in situations having to do with church discipline. The prophet Ezekiel tells of warning the wicked to turn from their ways, and Paul reminds us that love is the fulfilling of the law. We gather in the name of Christ, assured that he is present among us with gifts of peace and reconciliation.

PRELUDE

The assembly stands.



+ GATHERING +

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be God, the one who forms us, ✚ Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

Congregation (C) Amen.

P Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

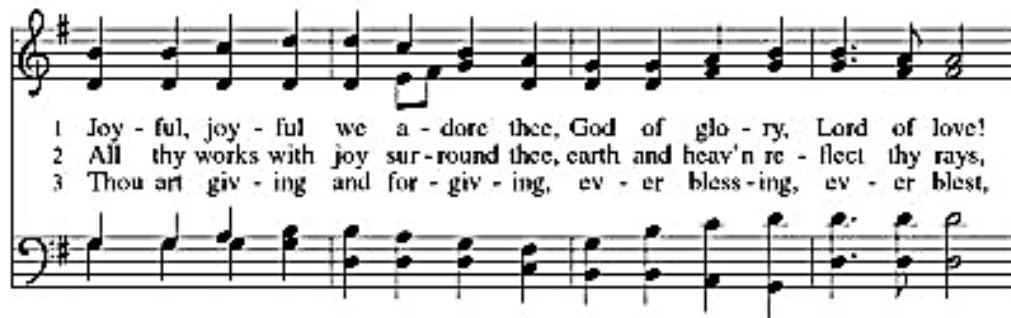
Silence is kept for reflection.

P Steadfast and faithful God,

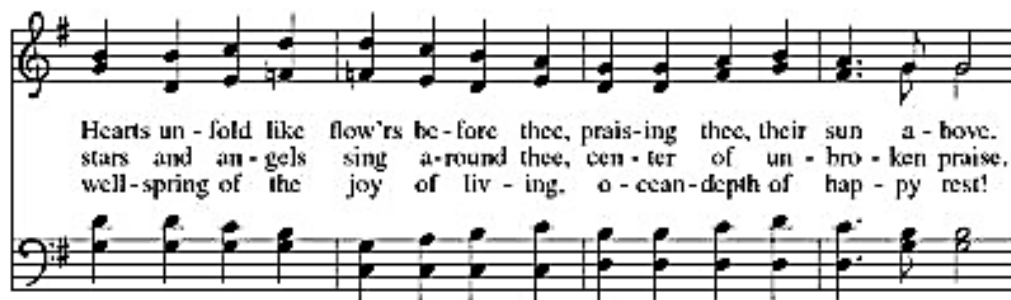
C you have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you. We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering. We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others. For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us. For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation, forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor, forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path; in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

P Beloved in Christ,
God's justice stretches beyond all understanding. God's compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us. In ✚ Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

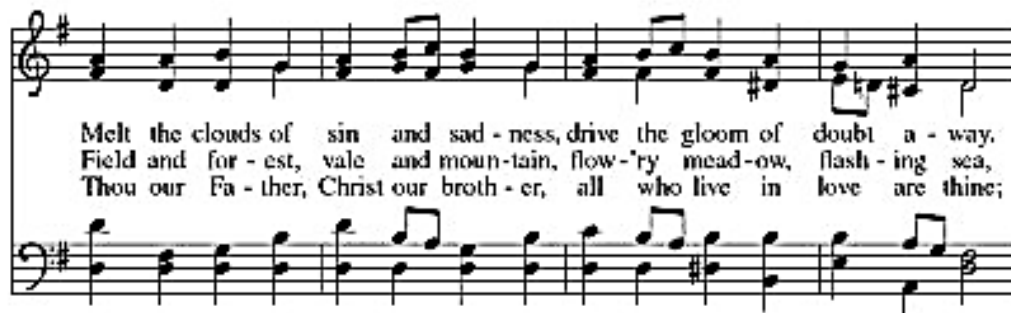
C Amen.



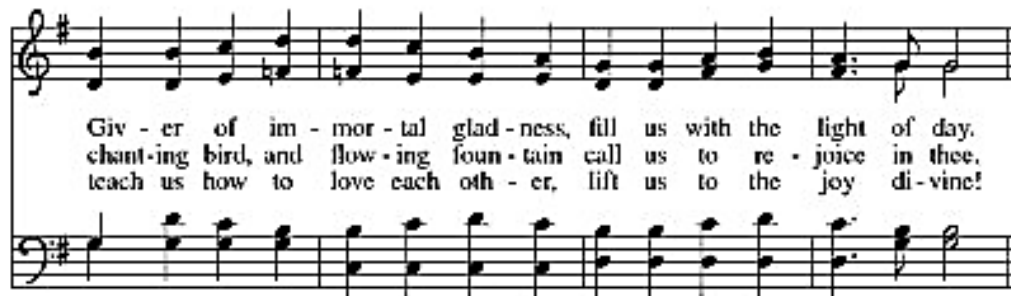
1 Joy - ful, joy - ful we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!
 2 All thy works with joy sur-round thee, earth and heav'n re - flect thy rays,
 3 Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blest,



Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore thee, prais - ing thee, their sun a - bove.
 stars and an - gels sing a - round thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise,
 well - spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean - depth of hap - py rest!



Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive the gloom of doubt a - way.
 Field and for - est, vale and moun - tain, flow - ry mead - ow, flash - ing sea,
 Thou our Fa - ther, Christ our broth - er, all who live in love are thine;



Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad - ness, fill us with the light of day.
 chant - ing bird, and flow - ing foun - tain call us to re - joice in thee,
 teach us how to love each oth - er, lift us to the joy di - vine!

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*



PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

O Lord God, enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy. Without your help, we mortals will fail; remove far from us everything that is harmful, and lead us toward all that gives life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

CHILDREN'S TIME



+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 33:7-11

God appointed Ezekiel as a sentinel for the house of Israel. Ezekiel must faithfully convey God's warnings to the people. Remarkably, God—who is about to attack Jerusalem—gives a warning with the hope that repentance will make the attack unnecessary.

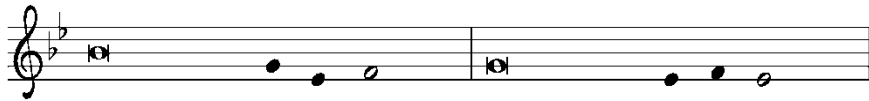
⁷So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. ⁹But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

¹⁰Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" ¹¹Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

Reader The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 119:33-40 *We sing the psalm in response to the first reading.*



Leader ³⁵Teach me, O LORD, the way | of your statutes,
and I shall keep it | to the end.

**C ³⁴Give me understanding, and I shall | keep your teaching;
I shall keep it with | all my heart.**

L ³⁵Lead me in the path of | your commandments,
for that is | my desire.

**C ³⁶Incline my heart to | your decrees
and not to | unjust gain.**

L ³⁷Turn my eyes from be- | holding falsehood;
give me life | in your way.

**C ³⁸Fulfill your promise | to your servant,
which is for | those who fear you.**

L ³⁹Turn away the reproach | that I dread,
because your judg- | ments are good.

**C ⁴⁰Behold, I long for | your commandments;
by your righteousness en- | liven me.**

Spoken after the Psalm is sung:

C Amen.

SECOND READING: Romans 13:8-14

The obligation of Christians is to love one another and so fulfill the heart and goal of the law. Clothes make the person as we “put on the Lord Jesus Christ” and live today in light of the future God has in store for us.

8Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet”; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” 10Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

11Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; 12the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; 13let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

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 18:15-20

Jesus offers practical advice to his disciples on how individuals—and the church as a whole—should go about restoring relationships when one member has sinned against another.

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

C Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹⁵“If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. ¹⁶But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

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.



1 Be - lov - ed, God's cho - sen, put on as a gar - ment
 2 With - in, call forth Wis - dom, to dwell in you rich - ly;
 3 Be - lov - ed, God's cho - sen, put on as a gar - ment



com - pas - sion, for - give - ness, and good - ness of heart.
 let peace rule your hearts and that peace be of Christ.
 com - pas - sion, for - give - ness, and good - ness of heart.



A - bove all, be - fore all, let love be your rai - ment
 And from the heart's cham - ber, be - lov - ed and ho - ly,
 A - bove all, be - fore all, let love be your rai - ment



that binds in - to one ev - 'ry dis - so - nant part.
 let sing - ing thanks - giv - ing to God ev - er rise.
 that binds in - to one ev - 'ry dis - so - nant part.

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, b. 1953
 Music: ANDREW'S SONG, Robert A. Hobby, b. 1962
 Text © 1994 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress.
 Music © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

APOSTLES' CREED

A Let us confess our faith.

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends: Merciful God,

Congregational response: receive our prayer.

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.

ANTHEM

"Sing Out, Earth and Skies" - Haugen

Come, O God of all the earth: Come to us, O Righteous One;
Come, and bring our love to birth; In the glory of your Son.

(refrain)

Sing out, earth and skies! Sing of the God who loves you!
Raise your joyful cries! Dance to the life around you!

Come, O God of wind and flame: Fill the earth with righteousness;
Teach us all to sing your name: May our lives your love confess. (refrain)

Come, O God of flashing light: Twinkling star and burning sun;
God of day and God of night: In your light we all are one. (refrain)

Come, O God of snow and rain: Shower down upon the earth;
Come, O God of joy and pain: God of sorrow, God of mirth. (refrain)

Come, O Justice, Come, O Peace: Come and shape our hearts anew;
Come and make oppression cease: Bring us all to life in you. (refrain)

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
may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

to Refrain

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 for a congregation and consists of 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 Jesus invites you to this table. Come, eat and live.

The assembly is seated.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.

Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word, Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray.

C **Amen.**

+ SENDING +

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

P The God of glory, ✝ Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever.

C **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING HYMN **731** *Earth and All Stars!*



1 Earth and all stars! Loud rush - ing plan - ets!
 2 Trum - pet and pipes! Loud clash - ing cym - bals!
 3 En - gines and steel! Loud pound - ing ham - mers!
 4 Class-rooms and labs! Loud boil - ing test tubes!
 5 Knowl - edge and truth! Loud sound - ing wis - dom!



Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!



Hail, wind, and rain! Loud blow - ing snow - storm!
 Harp, lute, and lyre! Loud hum - ming cel - los!
 Lime - stone and beams! Loud build - ing work - ers!
 Ath - letic and hand! Loud cheer - ing peo - ple!
 Daugh - ter and son! Loud pray - ing mem - bers!



Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!
 Sing to the Lord a new song!



God has done mar - vel - ous things.




I too sing prais - es with a new song!

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!**

+ + +

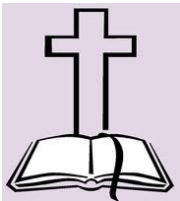
*Sundays and Seasons v.20220805.1416
Copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved*

	<p>MARILYN LARSON DEDICATES TODAY’S ALTAR FLOWERS TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND TO FAMILY MEMBERS WHO HAVE SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS.</p>
--	--

<u>Calendar for September 10-17</u>				
Sep.	10	Sun.	9:00 am	Book study
			9:30 am	Choir practice
			10:00 am	Worship, Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
			11:30 am	Worship & Music meeting
	13	Wed.	7:00 pm	Choir practice
17	Sun.	9:00 am	Book study	
		9:30 am	Choir practice	
		10:00 am	Worship, Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost	

Next Sunday, Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost:

[Genesis 50:15-21](#)
[Psalm 103:\[1-7\] 8-13](#)
[Romans 14:1-12](#)
[Matthew 18:21-35](#)



SERVING TABLE		
Serving	September 10	September 17
Presiding	Pastor Tom	Pastor Tom
Preaching	Pastor Tom	Pastor Tom
Assisting Minister	Audrey Post	Kirsten Ebbesen
Cup Minister	Rob Schiffer	Audrey Post
Lector	Colleen Holdcraft	Chris Reece
Tech Team	Rudy Hehn Jonas Holdcraft	Audrey Post Cindy Suhrweir
Altar Guild	Rita Ford Susan Warren	
Counters	Debee Meyer Susan Warren	Kirsten Ebbesen Rob Schiffer
Announcements	Denise Bookwalter	Denise Bookwalter

PRAYER REQUESTS

New concerns: Val Sullivan awaiting lung transplant; Laura Ketchum-Jahn, (friend of Cheryl & Steve), diagnosed with breast cancer. Steve Walits (cousin of Rob Schiffer), hospitalized after a serious accident.

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>.