

SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



The Eighth Sunday After Pentecost

July 19th, 2026

9:30 AM in the Chapel

The Rev. Stephanie E. Parker

Rector

Welcome to our Church

WELCOME to St. Paul's Episcopal Church

We are delighted you are seeking God in this special place. We want you to know that wherever you are on the journey of faith, you are welcome to ask your questions here.

Services are available: Recent services are available on our website:

<https://stpaulwilkesboro.org>

Newsletters: Sign-up today to receive our weekly electronic newsletter! Email the church office at office@stpaulwilkesboro.org to have your name added. If you would like a printed copy of the newsletter mailed, please call the office.

We extend a special thanks today to all that have been so generous with their time and talents in making this service possible.

200 W. Cowles St., P. O. Box 95, Wilkesboro, NC 28697

336-667-4231

www.stpaulwilkesboro.org

E-mail: office@stpaulwilkesboro.org

Pastoral Emergency Line: 336-482-6800

ONLINE GIVING QR CODE:



The Gathering

Prelude

Prelude in C Major

J.S. Bach

Welcome and Announcements

Processional Hymn #365 Come, Thou Almighty King

1 Come, thou al - might - y King, help us thy Name to sing,
2 Come, thou in - car - nate Word, by heaven and earth a - dored;
3 Come, ho - ly Com - fort - er, thy sa - cred wit - ness bear
4 To Thee, great One in Three, the high - est prais - es be,

help us to praise. Fa - ther whose love un-known all things cre-
our prayer at - tend: come, and thy peo - ple bless; come, give thy
in this glad hour: thou, who al - might - y art, now rule in
hence ev - er - more; thy sov - ereign ma - jes - ty may we in

at - ed own, build in our hearts thy throne, An - cient of Days.
word suc - cess; stab - lish thy right - eous - ness, Sa - vior and friend.
ev - ery heart, and ne'er from us de - part, Spi - rit of power.
glo - ry see, and to e - ter - ni - ty love and a - dore.

Words: Anonymous, ca. 1757, alt. Music: *Moscow*, Felice de Giardini (1716-1796); harm. *The New Hymnal*, 1916, based on *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 1875, and Lowel Mason (1792-1872).

Opening Acclamation

Presider Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

Presider Let us pray:

**Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our
hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may
perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Glory To God

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.**

Amen.

The Collect

Presider: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray.

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, you know our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking: Have compassion on our weakness, and mercifully give us those things which in our brokenness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask; through the constant grace of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

The Liturgy of the Word

First 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.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

People: Thanks be to God.

Inclina, Domine

Teach me your way, O LORD,
and I will walk in your truth; *
knit my heart to you that I may love your Name.

I will thank you, O LORD my God, with all my heart, *
and glorify your Name for evermore.

For great is your love toward me; *
you have delivered me from the nethermost Pit.

The arrogant rise up against me, O God,
and a band of violent people seeks my life; *
they have not set you before their eyes.

But you, O LORD, are gracious and full of compassion, *
slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.

Turn to me and have mercy upon me; *
**give your strength to your servant;
and save the child of your handmaid.**

Show me a sign of your favor,
so that those who hate me may see it and be ashamed; *
because you, O LORD, have helped me and comforted me

Second Reading

Romans 8:12-25

Brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh-- for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ-- if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

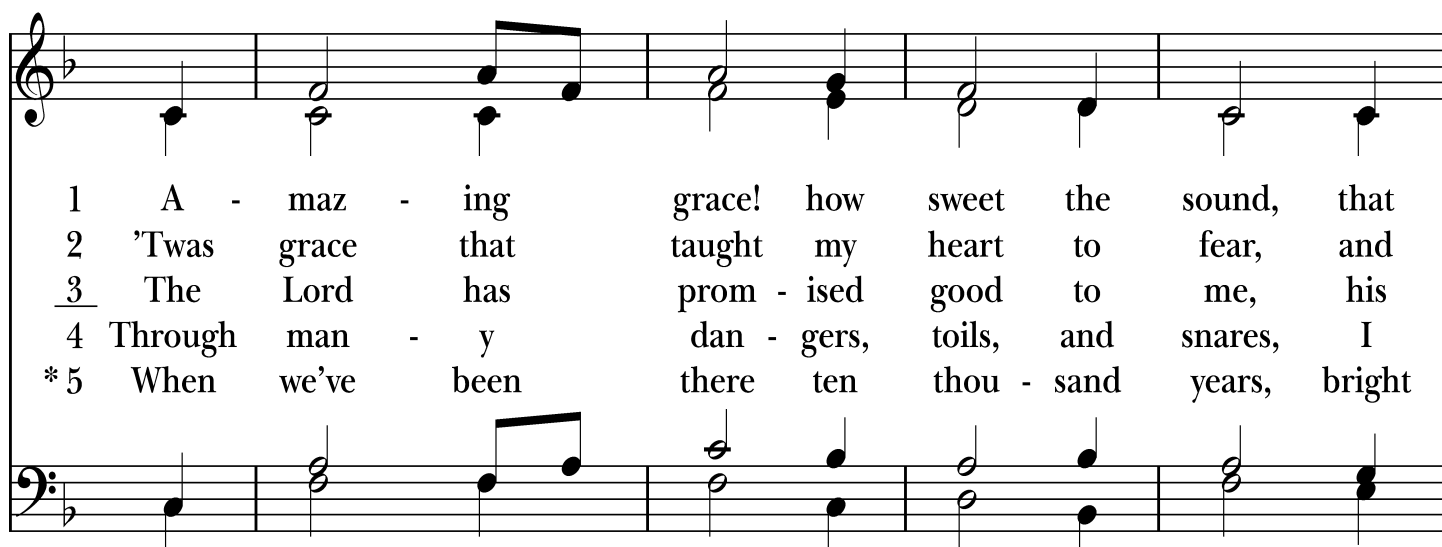
I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

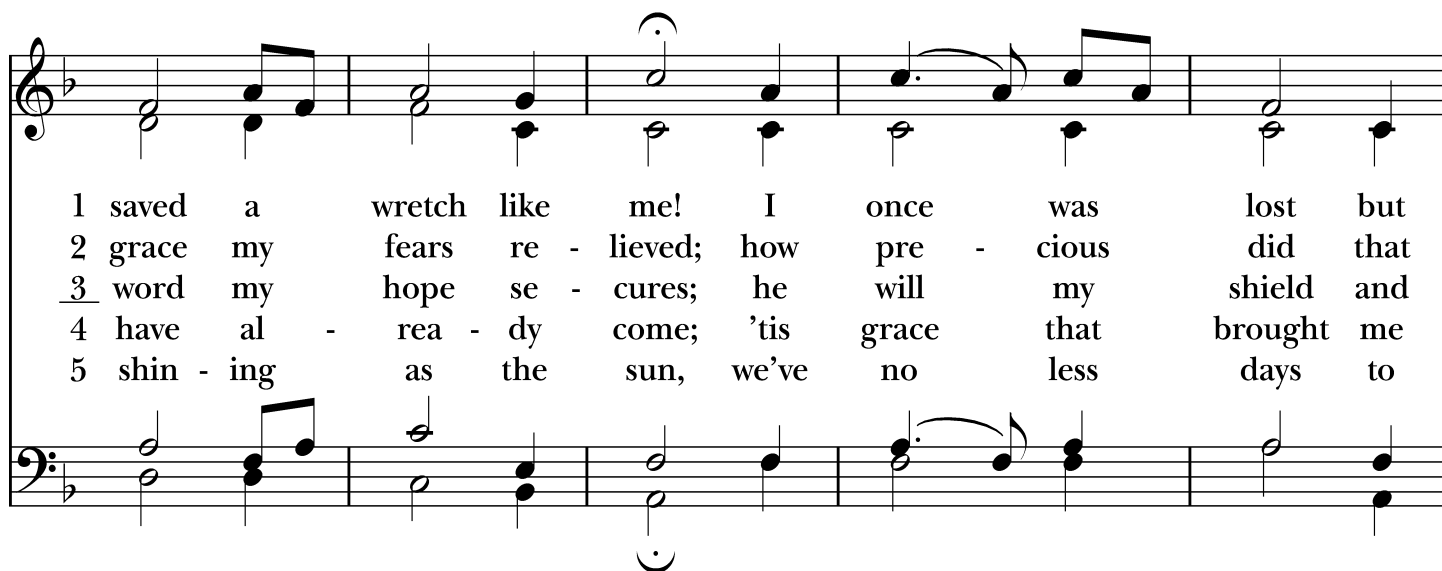
All: Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are most comfortable.

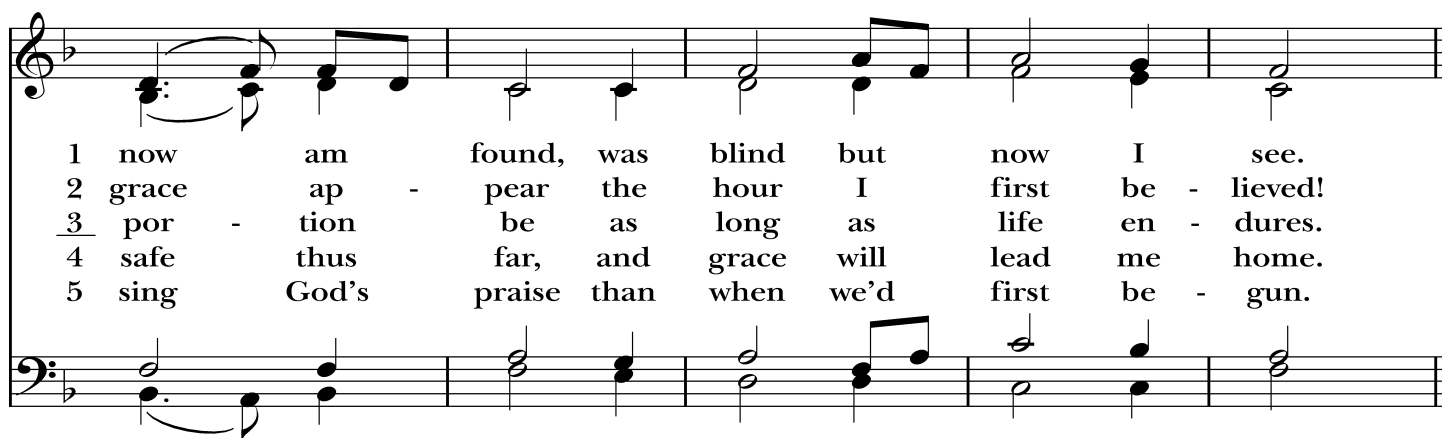
Sequence Hymn #671 Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound



1 A - maz - ing grace! how sweet the sound, that
2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
3 The Lord has prom - ised good to me, his
4 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I
* 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



1 saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but
2 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
3 word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and
4 have al - rea - dy come; 'tis grace that brought me
5 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to



1 now am found, was blind but now I see.
2 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
3 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
4 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
5 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

The melody may be sung in canon at distances of either two or three beats.

Words: John Newton (1725-1807), alt.; st. 5, from *A Collection of Sacred Ballads*, 1790; compiled by Richard Broaddus and Andrew Broaddus. Music: *New Britain*, from *Virginia Harmony* 1831; adapt. att. Edwin Othello Excell (1851-1921); harm. Austin Cole Lovelace (b. 1919). Harmonization Copyright © 1974 by Abingdon Press.

The Gospel

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Presider: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus put before the crowd 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.’”

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

Presider: The Gospel of the Lord

People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

All are seated.

The Sermon

The Rev. Stephanie E. Parker

A time of silence following the sermon.

Prayers of the People

Leader: Gracious and generous God, creator of all, in the cycle of summer, of sun and warmth, of the green earth and blue skies, we give thanks for the beauty of creation that flows from you to us.

Silence

Gracious and generous God, creator of all, pouring your love into the world through your Christ; Jesus shows us your steadfast promise of love, hope, and Abundant Life; May we follow where he leads and become a blessing in our world.

Silence

Gracious and generous God, merciful lover of souls, tend to those who grieve. We pray for the suffering of this world: of body, mind, and spirit, May your healing love embrace the pain and hold it with your tender care.

Silence

Gracious and generous God, merciful lover of souls, take our worries and the brokenness of the world and heal it as only you are able. May we allow your Word to be spoken through our lives and help us to become instruments of your love and healing.

Silence

Gracious and generous God, the voice of hospitality to the stranger, help us to have the courage to transform our fears and prejudices so that we may become a people of intentional welcome. May our love shine though in our openness, our worship, our fellowship and our common life. May we love both the stranger and one another.

Silence

Presider: Loving God, you know us so well. When we hide, you seek and find us. Hear us now when words can confuse and alienate us, when the world is both too much and not enough, when we feel too hungry to be filled. You are our light, our truth and our hope. Grant that we may always find our confidence in the promises of mercy and grace. **Amen.**

An Affirmation of Faith

We affirm that human beings are made for God and for one another. We celebrate the diversity of our human family and respond to God's call in the world through acts of mercy and justice.

We affirm that all creation belongs to God and is a manifestation of God's goodness. Humans, nonhuman animals, plants, and other forms of life are a part of a web of community that depends on each other. We affirm our sacred call to be good stewards of all that has been entrusted to us.

We profess that all we are and all that we possess, belongs to God. We are temporary stewards of resources and material goods that should be used to serve God and our neighbor. We recognize economic challenges of scarcity, but pledge to live into a Kingdom of God where all are cared for and all have enough.

We affirm that our involvement in political systems is rooted in the Gospel imperative to love our neighbor, to do justice, and to care for the vulnerable. Our political action is to be aimed at a common good and not a pursuit of power.

I believe that the Triune God is a God that is community, and that God created humanity to be in community. We are called to be holy, and are made holy through the saving work of Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Confession of Sin

Please stand or kneel as you are most comfortable.

New Zealand Prayer Book

God has promised forgiveness
as a gift of freedom and grace.

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Moment of silence observed.

God of all mercy,
**we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives.
We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us
the evil we have done,
and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love
and serve only your will. Amen.**

Absolution

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins
through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness,
and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace

✧ *“**The Peace**” is a Christian tradition deriving its roots from Jesus himself who greeted people saying, “Peace be with you.” “The Peace” may feel awkward if you are new or an introvert or trying not to be noticed. We take this portion of our worship seriously as we live in a deeply divided world full of violence. These actions in God’s house model what we are called to do in the world.*

Presider: The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: And also with you.

Presider: Invitation to the Great Thanksgiving

Offertory Anthem

Jerusalem

Hubert Parry

*And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God,
On England's pleasant pastures seen?*

*And did the Countenance Divine,
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these dark satanic mills?*

*Bring me my bow of burning gold:
Bring me my arrows of desire:
Bring me my spear: O clouds unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!*

*I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand:
Till we have built Jerusalem,
In England's green & pleasant land.*

--William Blake, 1810

The Great Thanksgiving

Please stand, as able.

Eucharistic Prayer C, BCP page 369

Presider All things come of thee, O Lord.

People And of thine own have we given thee.

Presider The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them to the Lord.

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Presider It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth., through Jesus Christ our Lord. For by water and the Holy Spirit you have made us a new people in Jesus Christ our Lord, to show forth your glory in all the world.

Eucharistic Prayer C invites standing.

God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.

Glory to you for ever and ever.

At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.

By your will they were created and have their being.

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust: and we turned against one another.

Thank you for your mercy when we fall short of your hope for the human family.

Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.

By his love, he reconciled us.

By his wounds, we are healed.

And therefore, we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and said, “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,
We celebrate his death and resurrection,
as we await the day of his coming.

Lord, God of our Fathers and Mothers; God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; God of Sarah, Rebekah and Leah; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the bread.

Accept these prayers and praises, Father, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation. **AMEN.**

The Lord's Prayer

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

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 for ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

A period of silence is kept.

Fraction

We are one bread, one body, one spirit. Alleluia.

Let us love one another as Christ loves us—Alleluia!

The Invitation to Communion

Presider: The gifts of God for the people of God...
God's holy gifts for God's holy people.

This is the table of the Lord. It is made ready for those who love him and who want to love him more. So come, you who have much faith and you have little, you who have been here often and you have not been here long, you who have tried to follow and you who have failed. Come, for it is the Lord who invites you.

You will now have three ways to receive communion:

In one kind--this means you receive only the bread or only the wine. Receive the bread by extending your hands, palm upward, when the presider comes to you and then leaving the rail or crossing your hands over your chest when the chalice comes to you.

To receive the wine only, cross your hands when the bread is presented and then drink from the chalice by gently assisting the chalice bearer by grasping the base of the chalice lightly to help guide it to your lips.

Intinction (having the bread dipped in the wine and placed in your hand) is only done by the presider from the intinction tray. To receive communion by intinction simply keep your hands down by your sides as we have been doing. Then raise them to take intincted bread between thumb and forefinger.

In two kinds--this is where you consume both the bread and the wine either by receiving the bread and then drinking from the chalice or by Intinction.

There is no intinction by multiple individuals from the chalice.

Gluten free wafers available upon request.

Post Communion Prayer

Presider: Let us pray,

**God of abundance, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation;
you have united us with Christ and one another;
and you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth.
Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit,
that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world
and continue for ever in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.**

The Blessing

Go out into the world,
and bring forth new life.
Dream dreams, pursue visions
and speak of God's goodness
to all who will hear.

And may the God who breathed life into creation be your delight.
May Jesus Christ give hope to your dreaming,
and may the Holy Spirit, your Advocate and supporter
set your hearts ablaze with a passion for justice. **Amen.**

Please stand or kneel as you are comfortable.

Recessional Hymn #344 Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line of each system. The melody is a simple, hymn-like tune with a mix of quarter and eighth notes. The piano accompaniment provides a steady harmonic support with chords and moving lines in the bass.

1 Lord, dis - miss us with thy bless - ing; fill our hearts with
2 Thanks we give and a - dor - a - tion for thy Gos - pel's
3 so that when thy love shall call us, Sa - vior, from the
joy and peace; let us each, thy love pos - sess - ing,
joy - ful sound: may the fruits of thy sal - va - tion
world a - way, fear of death shall not ap - pall us,
tri - umph in re - deem-ing grace: O re - fresh us,
in our hearts and lives a - bound: ev - er faith - ful,
glad thy sum - mons to o - bey. May we ev - er,
O re - fresh us trav - eling through this wil - der - ness.
ev - er faith - ful to thy truth may we be found;
may we ev - er reign with thee in end - less day.

Words: Att. to John Fawcett (1739/40-1817). Music: *Sicilian Mariners*, Sicilian melody; first published *The European Magazine and London Review*, 1792, alt.

The Dismissal

Presider: Let us go forth rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

People: Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Postlude

If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee

J.S. Bach

PRAYER LIST

Please remember in your prayers: All who are ill or unemployed and those who are on our prayer list.

Short-term

Kim Tetzlaff, Doug Merritt, Shannon Ryan, Jamie Tate

Long-term

Ruth Harris, Michael Morrison, Cade Gibbs, Ray Call, Steve Jackson, Ken Asel, Shane Jenkins, Da'Shon Horton, Rose Andrews, Margo Hurd

Armed Forces

Let us pray for the safety of **all our troops**, especially John Craine, Micha Duerk, Faith Lankford, Cole Griffith, Zach Necessary, Jason Westmeyer, and all others who serve throughout the world.

Prayer requests can be submitted through the prayer request form by scanning the QR code below, or by contacting the office.





July 19th—Joseph Richardson

July 23rd—Sandra Oliver

July 24th—Margo Hurd

July 19th—Bob & Lynn Houghton



Hermitage Matching Donation Challenge

Dear Friends of the Hermitages,

If you've visited the Hermitages at the Valle Crucis Conference Center, you know how special they are as a place of respite, prayer, and renewal. They are truly a powerful gift of ministry.

And if you've tried to book a Hermitage in the past few years, you know how difficult it is to find any time at all in them! The Hermitages stay 85-90% occupied most months of the year. Guests from all over the Southeast treasure their time in retreat here. Expanding this ministry would enable more guests to find the balm of peaceful quiet.

Bishop José McLoughlin has pledged \$150,000 to create up to two more Hermitages!

Bishop José's generosity highlights his enduring love for the holy ground of the mountains and the people of Western North Carolina.

Now is your chance to make this gift even more meaningful.

With two new buildings will come the need for robust infrastructure to support them—a new well and plumbing lines, electrical wiring, grading, and all the background work that makes new retreat lodging possible. And the existing Hermitages will need some sprucing as well!

Your donations will help make the new Hermitages a reality AND support the existing ministry of retreat!

Pledge now to honor Bishop José's generosity.

Scan the QR code below to be taken to the giving platform, visit vcconferences.org, or send a check to VCCC, P.O Box 654, Valle Crucis, NC 28691, with a note in the memo as a Hermitage gift in honor of Bishop José.



Serving Today

Altar Guild: Laurie Love, Reba Whittington, Kendall Forester

Reader/Acolyte: Mark Williams

Usher: Ron Myers

Bread Bakers: Mark Williams & Ben Staley

Streaming Ministry: Rachel Minick, Gerry Peabody

Vestry Lock-Up for July: Scott Jessee



The Rt. Rev José McLoughlin
Bishop of the Diocese of Western North Carolina

St. Paul's Vestry 2026

Jeff Beard

Jim Burch, Jr. Warden

Chuck Forester

Scott Jessee, Sr. Warden

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Dean Carlton, *Sexton*