

Holy Nativity Lutheran Church

3 Lenape Trail
Wenonah, NJ 08090

OUR MISSION

Graced by a loving God to be a caring community of faith the fellowship of Holy Nativity is called to support one another, warmly welcoming others into our community, sharing in the mission of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed, and reaching out in witness and service to the communities to which we belong as one in the Body of Christ.

Worship Service for Sunday, September 13, 2026

16th Sunday after Pentecost LBW Holy Communion Setting One

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

In response to God's overwhelming love, we stand in awe of the wideness of God's mercy and by God's Spirit we welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace. In faithfulness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, mindful of our Lutheran emphasis on grace, and rejoicing in the celebration of our shared baptismal journey, we welcome all as members of our church family including any who have ever felt excluded by the Church for any of the reasons that too often divide us.

We are so glad you have joined us today!

First-time guests: *Please fill out a Communion Card and place it in the offering plate.* Newcomer orientations are held on various days several times a year for those who are interested in learning more about HNLC.

Restrooms are located in the hallway between the lobby and our fellowship hall.

Today's Altar Flowers and Sanctuary Candle are given to the Glory of God.

PRELUDE

Earth and All Stars

Robert Hobby



Introduction to the day

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

GATHERING The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

LITANY FOR CREATION SEASON (The congregation responds with text in bold print.)

Glory to you, O God: you speak a word of power, and so you create the world.

We praise you, O God: **We praise you, O God.**

For the Spirit hovering to bring forth life, for the earth ordered from chaos, and for light and dark, we bless you, O God: **We bless you, O God.**

For the cosmos beyond our earth, for the sky above our heads, and for the cycle of evening and morning, we exalt you, O God: **We exalt you, O God.**

For the seas, the lakes, and the rivers, for the land with its mountains and plains, and for the trees, the plants, and their fruits, we magnify you, O God: **We magnify you, O God.**

For the sun to rule the day, for the moon to brighten the night, and for the shining stars, we extol you, O God: **We extol you, O God.**

For the fish in the sea, for the birds of the air, and for the monsters in the deep, we glorify you, O God: **We glorify you, O God.**

For wild animals and creatures of all kinds, for cattle and all livestock, and for everything that creeps on the earth, we adore you, O God: **We adore you, O God.**

For humankind made in your image, for setting us on your good earth, and for providing us food to eat, we worship you, O God: **We worship you, O God.**

Bless us, your creatures. Accept our praise, and make us worthy of your marvelous creation. We praise you, O God: **We praise you, O God.**

Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to you, our God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

Reprinted from *Pray, Praise, and Give Thanks: A Collection of Litanies, Laments, and Thanksgivings at Font and Table* by Gail Ramshaw, copyright © 2017 Augsburg Fortress.

GATHERING SONG *God's Work Our Hands* (to the tune of LBW 558 Earth and All Stars)

1 God's work, our hands: work - ing to - geth - er,
2 God's work, our feet: trav - 'ling to - geth - er,
3 God's work, our voice: sing - ing to - geth - er,
4 God is at work in and a - round us:

build - ing a fu - ture, re - pair - ing the world,
fol - low - ing Je - sus to plac - es un - known,
prais - ing, pro - claim - ing to all who will hear,
seed - lings are sprout - ing and bread's on the rise!

rais - ing up homes, plant - ing new gar - dens,
walk - ing as friends, march - ing for free - dom,
pray - ing for peace, shout - ing for jus - tice,
Washed and set free, hum - bled and hon - ored,

feed - ing the hun - gry and shelt - 'ring the cold,
run - ning the race with God's fu - ture the goal,
claim - ing God's love for the lost and the least,
gift - ed by grace, we re - spond in God's love.

Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,
Bless, God, our feet as we fol - low your way,
Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,
Bless, God, our lives as we an - swer your call,

shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.

GREETING

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

KYRIE

A In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **C** Lord, have mer - cy.

A For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mer - cy.

A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mer - cy.

A For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. **C** Lord, have mer - cy.

A Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. **C** A - men

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray. *A brief silence is kept before the prayer.* O Lord God, merciful judge, **you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

WORD God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21 A reading from Genesis.

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

¹⁵ Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 103:[1-7] 8-13 (The Psalm is sung responsively by verse.)



REFRAIN: LORD, | you are full * of compas- | sion and mercy. (Ps. 103:8)

REFRAIN: LORD, | you are full * of compas- | sion and mercy.

[¹ Bless the LORD, | O my soul, * and all that is within me, bless God's | holy name.

² **Bless the LORD, | O my soul, * and forget not | all God's benefits—**

³ who forgives | all your sins * and heals all | your diseases;

⁴ **who redeems your life | from the grave * and crowns you with steadfast | love and mercy;**

REFRAIN: LORD, | you are full * of compas- | sion and mercy.

⁵ who satisfies your desires | with good things * so that your youth is renewed | like an eagle's.

⁶ **O LORD, you provide | vindication * and justice for all who | are oppressed.**

⁷ You made known your | ways to Moses * and your works to the chil- | dren of Israel.

] ⁸ **LORD, you are full of compas- | sion and mercy, * slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love;**

REFRAIN: LORD, | you are full * of compas- | sion and mercy.

⁹ you will not al- | ways accuse us, * nor will you keep your an- | ger forever.

¹⁰ **You have not dealt with us according | to our sins, * nor repaid us according to | our iniquities.**

¹¹ For as the heavens are high a- | bove the earth, * so great is your steadfast love for | those who fear you.

¹² **As far as the east is | from the west, * so far have you removed our transgres- | sions from us.**

¹³ As a father has compassion | for his children, * so you have compassion for those who fear | you, O LORD.

REFRAIN: LORD, | you are full * of compas- | sion and mercy.

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12 A reading from Romans.

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

¹ Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and

those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷ For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

¹² So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

WE RISE TO GREET THE GOSPEL

Alleluia. We have an advocate, Jesus ¹ Christ the righteous;* your sins are forgiven on account ¹ of his name.

Alleluia. (1 John 2:1, 12)



GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35 The holy gospel according to Matthew.



When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

²¹ Peter came and said to [Jesus,] “Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²² Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³ “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he

would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The gospel of the Lord.



HOMILY *Silence for reflection follows the sermon.*

HYMN OF THE DAY *Where Charity and Love Prevail (LBW 126)*



- 1 Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail, there God is ev - er found;
- 2 With grate-ful joy and ho - ly fear, God's char - i - ty we learn;
- 3 Let us re - call that in our midst dwells Christ, God's ho - ly Son;
- 4 Let strife a - mong us be un - known; let all con - ten - tions cease.
- 5 Let us for - give each oth - er's faults as we our own con - fess,



brought here to - geth - er by Christ's love, by love we thus are bound.
let us with heart and mind and soul now love God in re - turn.
as mem - bers of each bod - y joined, in him we are made one.
Be God's the glo - ry that we seek; be his our on - ly peace.
that we may love each oth - er well in Chris - tian gen - tle - ness.

APOSTLES' CREED (LBW p. 64)

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell.* On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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**

*Or, He descended to the dead.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, died 407 Sunday, September 13, 2026

John was a priest in Antioch and an outstanding preacher. His eloquence earned him the nickname "Chrysostom" ("golden mouth"). Appointed bishop of Constantinople, seat of the empire, he criticized corruption in the court. As a result, he was exiled by the empress.

Holy Cross Day Monday, September 14, 2026

Helena, mother of Constantine, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and found what may be the actual site of Jesus' crucifixion. Her son built two churches there, and the dedication of one of them gave rise to this celebration of our Lord's victory on the cross.

Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, martyr, died around 258 Wednesday, September 16, 2026

Cyprian served as a bishop during a time of great persecution of Christians. He insisted on receiving back those who had left the faith under duress. He also provided medical care during a severe epidemic.

Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, died 1179 Thursday, September 17, 2026

A mystic who was widely influential within the church, Hildegard advised and reproved kings and popes, wrote poems and hymns, and produced treatises in medicine, theology, and natural history. She was also a musician and artist.

Dag Hammarskjöld, renewer of society, died 1961 Friday, September 18, 2026

A Swedish diplomat, Hammarskjöld served as the second Secretary General of the United Nations until his death in a plane crash while trying to negotiate peace in present-day Zambia. His journal, published as *Markings*, revealed the depth of his Christian faith.

PRAYER LIST

Prayers for Gloucester County residents affected by this week's storm, Prayers for the people of Norway as they mourn the passing of King Harald V, The family, friends and fans of Dolly Parton as they mourn her passing, Prayers for the victims of the flooding in the Grand Canyon and in Nepal-Tibet, Prayers for former President Joe Biden, Prayers for the friends and family of Lindsay Graham as they mourn his passing, Prayers for Bishop Christa Compton and her family with the passing of her mother Nancy, Prayers for St. Ambrose in Pennsville as they continue their pastoral search, Prayers for our service men and women serving in the current military actions, especially for those we have lost, Holly & Duane, The family of Norman Albinson as they mourn his passing, Dawn Allen, Anna-Beth Arnes, The family of Anthony Assante as they mourn his passing, Nicholas Baud, John Belko, Jessica Black, Lorraine Brecht, Wanda Bryan, Madelene Budd, Mike Bundy, Sal Castelli, Jenn Causey and family, Tracey Causey, Lisa Clark, Josh Clarke, Maverick Cleavenger, Baby Landyn and Kristen Compagoni, Sherwood Cotton, Bob Counbs, Craig (diagnosed with cancer), Rocco Cristinzio, Leslie Criston, Milton Cuevas, Sr., Milton Cuevas, Jr., The family of John Cusack as they grieve his passing, The family of Nicholas Damiani as they mourn his passing, Lou Deaine, The family of Tony DelMonte as they mourn his passing, Dylan Dinh, Kathy Drew, Kristen Dymond, Barbara Esposito, Barbara Facchine, Bill Flynn, Francis, Jeannie Gapinski, Alma Garcia, Stephen and Juliet Genovese, The family of Walter Gifford as they mourn his passing, Gavin Gigliotti, Lauren Stott Gilbert, Jay Goheen and family, Andrew Gordon, Randi Gordon, Collet Grasso, The family and friends of Gretchen Gravinese as they mourn her passing, The family of Steve Harris as they mourn his passing, the Hatcher family, The friends and family of Jim Hynes as they mourn his passing, Heather and Kim Hyson and family in their time of bereavement, the Hogan family, Ed Jeffers, The friends and family of Tom Jones as they mourn his passing, Marilyn Kaiser, Chaley Klotz, Prayers for the friends and family of Ralph Konschak as they mourn his passing, Martha Kryzwonas, Grace Laphan, Pat Larkin, Joe Lewandowski, Desmond Licata, Joseph Lonia, Bill Ludwig, Bill Mann, Joseph Mansfield, John Markovski, Janaq Minzy and her family, Jim Montisano, The friends and family of Mary Alice Morrison as they mourn her passing, George Muth, Bob and Sue Nevins, Lisa Nobile, Janet Ostrowski, Lucas Otey, Loretta O'Neill, Otis, Donna Paone, Rita Paul, Danielle Peters, Debbie Post, Lauren Rebstock, The family of Bill Reese as they mourn his passing, The family of Lewis Richards as they mourn his passing, Jen Rossi, The family of Scott Rust as they mourn his passing, Noreen Ruyuh, Dylan Sauer, Ken Sauer, Mark Sauer, Joseph Schiffer, Meleta Seher, Billy Shea, Helen Simkunas & Family, Joyce and Arvin Skramsdad, Ronnie Snyder, The family of Deb Solt as they mourn her passing, Julia Stanz, The family and friends of Rita Stein as they mourn her passing, Claudia Storhoff, Nathan Storhoff, Samantha Sumner, Donna Testa, Mark & Candy Tryson, Ed Tutka, The friends and family of Lynne Rasmussen Walker as they mourn her passing, Sharon Walker, Wayne Weaver, The Wilke family including Tim & Catherine, Jill Wilt, Glenn Wrigley.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us. *A brief silence.*

Move your church throughout the world away from judging and despising others. Lead us to embody the forgiveness you have given us in Jesus. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

The endless beauty of your creation reminds us of your mercy. Protect those who care for farms and ranches. Guide those who lead us to wonder at your creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Raise up leaders (*like John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, whom we remember today*) to hold all in authority accountable for any misuse of the power entrusted to them. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Calm the fears of all in need with your promises. Compassionately free the lives of any who feel bound by their failures. Remember your children in need (*especially*). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Ground this congregation in the welcome you show us in forgiving our sin. Inspire each of us to welcome others for your honor and glory. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

With you is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember (*name/s, and*) all those who have gone before us. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.** *The ministers and congregation may greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

MEAL God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERTORY *Take My Life* Wilbur Held

STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE—*Supporting Relationships With Others*

Matthew 18:21-35

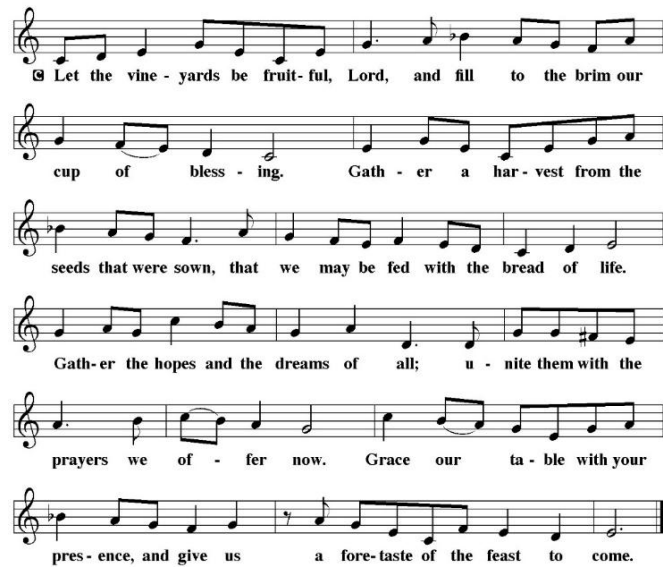
Our text today centers around forgiveness. When we think about forgiveness in the church, we probably first think about God forgiving us. And that is the foundation of all other forgiveness. But our text focuses on forgiving one another, particularly when someone has done something to violate you or to violate community.

When something is unforgiven, it stands like a roadblock between two people, between a person and community, or between communities. Only when it is removed can each party fully give to the relationship and receive from the relationship and engage in the mutual support that should characterize true community.

We are stewards of our time, talent, money, and other resources. We are stewards of forgiveness. We are stewards of possibility for individuals, households, and larger communities.

When we use our resources to support the church, we vote for a world in which we put the roadblocks aside and replace them with the free flow of traffic in real community.

OFFERTORY VERSE



OFFERING PRAYER FOR CREATION SEASON

O God, maker of heaven and earth, **your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

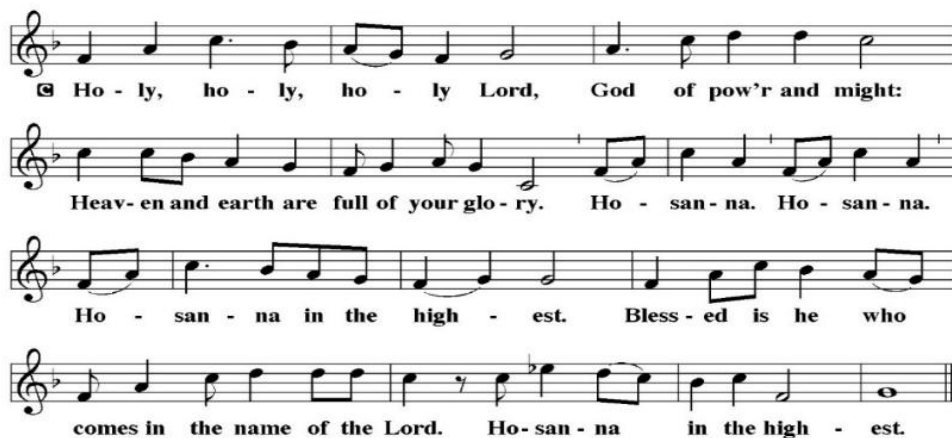
DIALOGUE, PREFACE AND SANCTUS

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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:



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE (ELW p. 145)

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

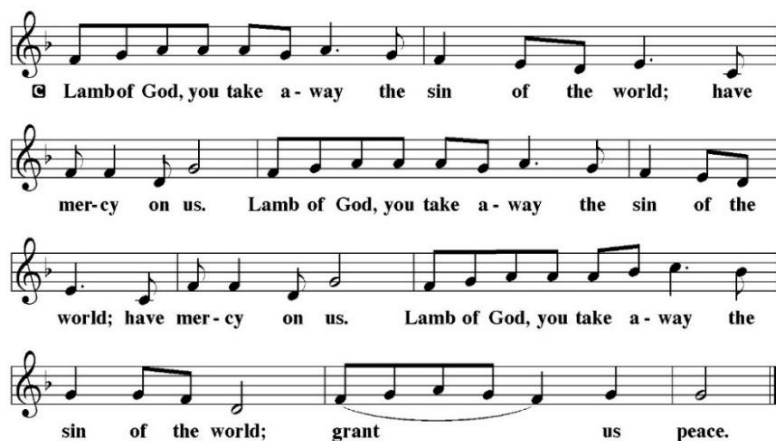
Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The gifts of creation for God's beloved creatures. Come and share.

COMMUNION SONG



COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

COMMUNION MUSIC

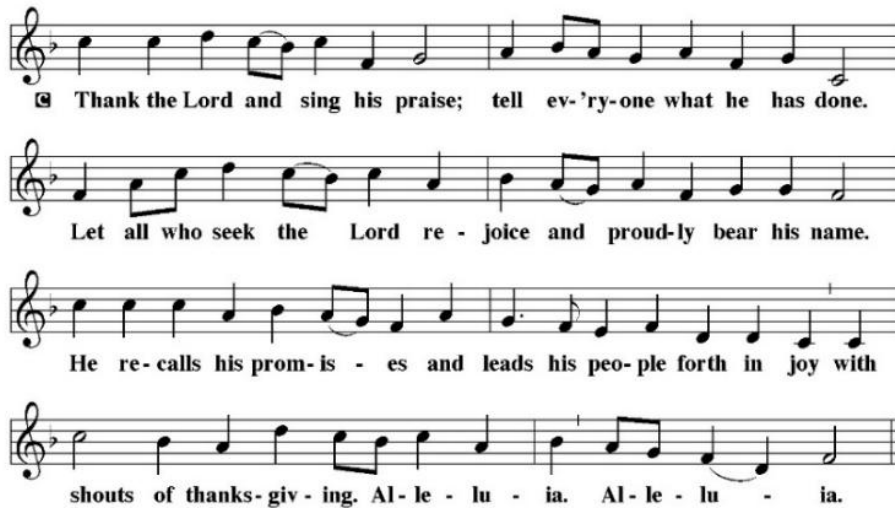
Let Us Break Bread Together

Susanna Keeney

COMMUNION BLESSING

May the body and blood of our risen savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you now and forever in God's grace. **Amen**

SONG AFTER COMMUNION



PRAYER AFTER HOLY COMMUNION FOR CREATION SEASON

God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

SENDING OF COMMUNION

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are *sick, homebound, and imprisoned*. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING FOR CREATION SEASON

Creator God bless you and keep you. Creating Christ (+) shine through you with grace and mercy. Creative Spirit nourish you and give you peace. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG *In Thee Is Gladness* (LBW 552)



1 In thee is glad-ness a - mid all sad-ness, Je - sus, sun - shine of my heart.
2 If he is ours, . . we fear no pow - ers, not of earth or sin or death.



By thee are giv - en the gifts of heav-en, thou the true re-deem-er art.
He sees and bless-es in worst dis-tress-es; he can change them with a breath.



Our souls thou wak - est; our bonds thou break - est. Who trusts thee sure - ly
Where-fore the sto - ry tell of his glo - ry with heart and voic-es;



has built se - cure - ly and stands for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!
all heav'n re - joic - es in him for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!



Our hearts are pin - ing to see thy shin - ing, dy - ing or liv - ing,
We shout for glad - ness, tri - umph o'er sad - ness, love him and praise him



to thee are cleav - ing; naught us can sev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!
and still shall raise him glad hymns for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Offering received September 5th and 6th - \$1856.00. Weekly amount needed to meet the spending plan-- \$2614.00. Total received to date—\$90164.77. Amount needed to date--\$94104.00. **(Please don't forget the church if you will be away!)**
- The weekly bulletin is emailed to members each Thursday or Friday prior to the weekend. If for some reason you did not receive the email or have trouble opening the file, you can also access the bulletin on the church's website.
- Reminder! If you sign up to sponsor altar flowers (\$35) or sanctuary candle (\$10), please remember your payment. Also, please let the church office know how you would like your dedication to read in the bulletin.
- **BREAKFAST MINISTRY**—Christ Episcopal Church in Woodbury has launched a new breakfast ministry. It offers free cold breakfast to the Woodbury community on the 3rd Saturday of the month from 8 am to 10 am in the Parish Hall at 62 Delaware Avenue. Please keep this ministry in your prayers. The next date is September 19, 2026.
- Donations through Venmo and PayPal--Please note that, per council policy, if you make an electronic donation through Venmo or PayPal, it will not be recorded on your annual giving statement. It is the member's responsibility to track these donations for tax purposes.
- Shop Rite shopping cards are available for purchase after the services.
- **ST. PETER'S COMMUNITY PANTRY** is here to help serve those facing food insecurity in Gloucester County. If you are having a difficult time buying food for yourself, or your family, please let us try to make a small difference for you. The Pantry is located behind St. Peter's Episcopal Church at 304 Kings Highway in



Donate

Clarksboro. We are open every 3rd Saturday of the Month from 9 AM to 1 PM. Next distribution date: Saturday, September 19, 2026.

- **GREATER WOODBURY COOPERATIVE MINISTRIES** is a joint effort by 13 **Faith Communities** to serve people within our area. A major part of the services offered by the GWCM is through our **Food Pantries** and **Clothing Distribution Center**. Clients in need of assistance are given a standard assortment of grocery items according to the size of their family, plus fresh fruits and vegetables and special treats. They are also now asking for donations of laundry detergent. They will also be distributing school supplies in July, so they are looking for donations. These donations may be left in the basket in the Narthex and we will deliver them to the Cooperative Ministries. They will be collecting the following items for Thanksgiving baskets: instant mashed potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce, stuffing mix, muffin mix, cake mix and icing.
- Coffee hour between services is scheduled for the first Sunday of each month, hosted by the 8:30 service. Please come and join us for coffee and fellowship this Sunday, September 13th. (Please note this is a rescheduled date due to the Labor Day holiday,)
- Save the following dates:
 - * 1st and 3rd Thursdays through September—Wenonah Farmer's Market. Vendors, food trucks, etc.
 - * Sunday, September 13th—God's Work, Our Hands (We will be working on projects to help maintain our property.)
 - * Saturday, September 19th—Wenonah's "One Night of Song and Dance" at Wenonah Lake—6:30 pm-? (Please note that our own Pastor Andy will be performing.)
 - * Tuesday, September 29th—Red Cross Blood Drive (1-6pm.)
 - * Wednesday, October 21st—Chili Night (5-7 pm.)
 - * Saturday, October 31—Potluck following the service, sponsored by the Saturday night attendees. All are welcome!
- **HOLY NATIVITY MEMORIAL GARDEN ENGRAVED PAVERS**--Our congregation created a memorial garden in our back yard years ago to honor or memorialize loved ones. We are offering the opportunity once again to purchase a paver to honor a loved one(s). The cost of each engraved paver is \$60. If you are interested in purchasing one please fill out the form found in the narthex and include it with payment in the offering plate or deliver to Pastor Andy or Kim Theriault. Each paver can have up to 5 lines/ 15-17 characters per line. There is a sample paver in the narthex for viewing. All pavers purchased by September 15th will be dedicated on All Saint's Day (Nov. 1st). Any questions, please see or contact Kim Theriault (609)420-8453.
- **GROWING IN FAITH: THE DIAKONIA PROGRAM** Growing in Faith is a ministry within the ELCA committed to fostering learning environments for followers of Jesus to grow in faith. Lay members of congregations are integral to healthy discipleship in the church and community. If you would be interested in this program, check out the website www.njdiakonia.com for more information.
- There are two Planet Aid clothing bins in the parking lot. Clean items may be placed in the yellow bins: including clothing, shoes, bedding, towels, curtains, sleeping bags, socks, underwear, bras. They do not accept items that are tattered beyond repair, dirty, wet or moldy.
- If you have someone that you would like on the prayer list, please fill out a form in the narthex and place it in the offering plate or contact the church office email: hnlc.secretary@hotmail.com.
- The choir is on hiatus until fall. **The first rehearsal is September 13th**. (Choir rehearsals are on Sunday mornings @ 9:40.) All are welcome to join us.
- Live Sunday School sessions are on hiatus until September. Sessions will resume on September 13th. Church school resources continue to be available on our website on a weekly basis.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Flourish with creation. **Thanks be to God.**

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GOSPEL MESSAGE (Forgiven and Freed)

Today's gospel reading is all about forgiveness. In the complex web of human relationships, forgiveness often feels messy. We may not understand it, and it may at times feel entirely out of reach. Yet, as Christians, we are called to wrestle with the promise that even when forgiveness feels impossible, there is room for us and for others in the wideness of God's mercy. How do we make sense of this?

We might begin by experiencing God's forgiveness ourselves. Many worshiping communities begin the service with a time of confession and forgiveness. Together we name out loud the ways we have failed to love God and neighbor, the ways we have failed to recognize ourselves or one another as beloved children of God. We name how we have been complacent in systems of injustice, how we have harmed one another directly, and the hurtful things we don't even know we've done.

This practice may seem deeply unsettling; after all, where else do we greet each other with a list of all the things we've done wrong? But confession is also freeing. It gives us permission to stop pretending we have it all together. It allows us to shed the weight of our mistakes and lay down our burdens so our hands and hearts are ready to receive God's mercy.

And then, week after week, we hear God's words of forgiveness for us and for our neighbors. We are reminded that there is always and forever enough of God's grace and forgiveness to go around. The public declaration of our forgiveness frees us to enter into the rest of our worship service with open and grateful hearts. And then God's forgiveness sends us out in the world to practice the hard work of forgiving others and receiving their forgiveness in turn, knowing that God will meet us again and again with mercy and grace.

HOLY NATIVITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

3 Lenape Trail

Wenonah, NJ 08090

856-468-5760

hnlc.secretary@hotmail.com

Pastor: Andy Gordon Music Director: Chris Robinson

Guest Organist: Mary Johnson

5:00—Harriet Vico; 8:30—Lori Kershaw; 10:30—Fay Stafford-Rambo

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

April Montana—Christian Education

Vince Montana—Property

Joyce Bradbury—Council Member

Donna DeFrank—Secretary/Stewardship

Lori Kershaw—President/Social Ministry and Outreach

Kim Theriault—Vice President/Social Ministry and Outreach

Juliet Genovese—Council Member

Stephen Genovese—Council Member

Karen Cusack—Finance

Brett Montana—Youth Representative

Caryl Carthew—Financial Secretary/Worship and Music

Diane Yandach—Treasurer