

The Lutheran Church of the Covenant
***“Reaching Out, Reflecting Christ, Renewing
Lives”***



Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
August 28, 2022



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



We welcome you to worship here at the Lutheran Church of the Covenant! As long as the weather cooperates, we gather outside in God's Creation to worship with singing and loud shouts of praise (if not, we will worship in the sanctuary).

- Bulletins and Communion (wheat or gluten-free wafers, wine or grape juice options) are available to be picked up at the side driveway. Please keep in mind potential wind that may affect your Communion cups.
- You may stay in your vehicle or setup a chair anywhere you like. Speakers will be set up front by the worship leaders so that everyone can hear and participate from their respective spots.
- We encourage you to participate throughout the worship by speaking the **bold** print and singing along with the hymns!
- You will not be asked to stand during the worship, so feel free to remain seated throughout.
- An offering basket is placed up-front by the podium.

Our Worship Leaders & Staff

Ministers
Presiding Minister
Pianist
Flutist
Lector
Parish Administrator
Custodian

All People
The Rev. Bradley Ross
Robin Crawford
Ann Droste
Ted Lockmiller
Jennifer Lasher-Dobush
Vince Besednjak

*The Lutheran Church of the Covenant
19000 Libby Rd.
Maple Heights, OH 44137
Phone: 216-662-0370 Website: covenantmaplehts.org
Email: covenantlc@sbcglobal.net*

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Invited and inviting—that is the nature of the church. By God’s grace in holy baptism, we all have a place at Christ’s banquet table. When, by the power of the Holy Spirit, humility and mutual love continue among us, the church can be even more inviting still.

Prelude *Flee as a Bird* (Page)

Welcome & Greetings

Confession & Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, uniting us as one family in Christ, and setting us free to serve as his disciples for the sake of the world.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen!**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we have not always followed a path of steadfast love
but have often chosen our own way.**

**Instead of putting others before ourselves,
we long to take the best seats at the table.**

When met by those in need, we have too frequently passed by on the other side.

Help us to see the path of new life and hope.

Save us from ourselves, and free us to love our neighbors with joy. Amen!

Hear the good news! God does not deal with us according to our sins,
but thoroughly delights in granting pardon and mercy.

In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

You are set free to love as God loves the whole world.

Amen!

Canticle of Praise *Now the Feast*

Refrain

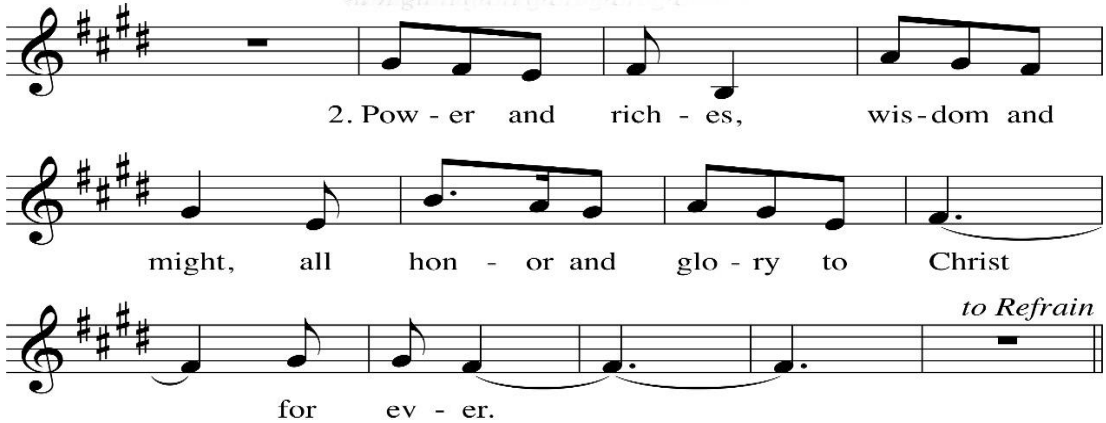
Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion,
all of cre - a - tion sings for joy
to the God of life and love and
free-dom: praise and glo - ry for ev -
er - more!

Verse 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

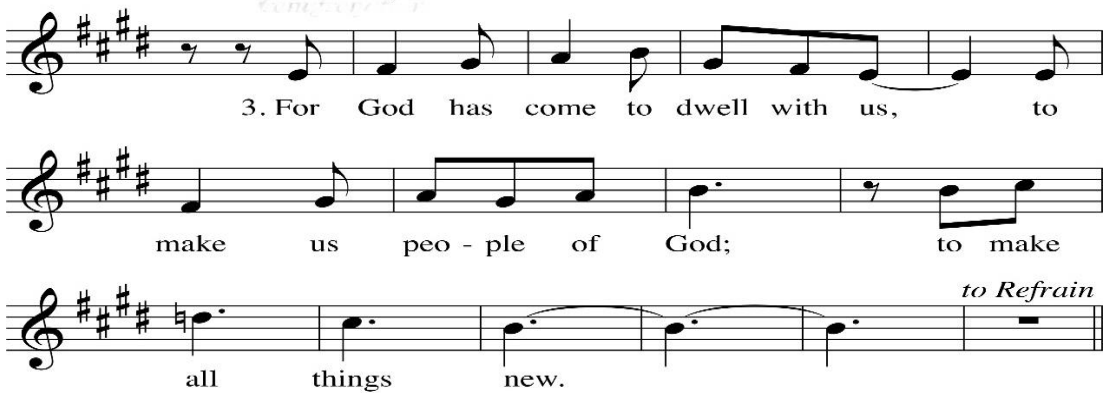
Verse 2



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



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

Wondrous God, you bless us all with the grace of new life. Continue to give us the gentle humility of your Son, that we may embody the loving generosity of Jesus Christ, our Risen Savior and Lord. **Amen!**

First Lesson

Proverbs 25:6-7

The book of Proverbs is part of a collection of writings known as wisdom literature. Wisdom literature gave directions to Israel's leaders and people for the conduct of daily life. Today's reading is about humility.

⁶Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence
or stand in the place of the great;
⁷for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"
than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.

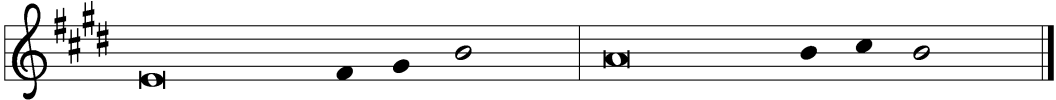
Word of God, word of life!

Thanks be to God!

Psalm

Psalm 112

The bold verses are sung by the congregation using the tone below.



Antiphon: *The righteous are merciful and full of compassion.* (Ps. 112:4)

¹Hallelujah! Happy are they who ¹ fear the LORD
and have great delight in ¹ God's commandments!
²**Their descendants will be mighty | in the land;
the generation of the upright | will be blessed.** *Antiphon*
³Wealth and riches will be ¹ in their house,
and their righteousness will ¹ last forever.
⁴**Light shines in the darkness | for the upright;
the righteous are merciful and full | of compassion.**
⁵It is good for them to be gener- ¹ ous in lending
and to manage their af- ¹ fairs with justice.
⁶**For they will nev- | er be shaken;
the righteous will be kept in everlast- | ing remembrance.** *Antiphon*
⁷They will not be afraid of any ¹ evil rumors;
their heart is steadfast, trusting ¹ in the LORD.
⁸**Their heart is established and | will not shrink,
until they see their desire up- | on their enemies.**
⁹They have given freely to the poor, and their righteousness stands ¹ fast forever;
they will hold up their ¹ head with honor.
¹⁰**The wicked will see it and be angry; they will gnash their teeth and | pine away;
the desires of the wick- | ed will perish.** *Antiphon*

The conclusion of the letter to the Hebrews contains suggestions for the conduct of a holy life, all of which are shaped by God’s love toward us in Jesus Christ.

¹Let mutual love continue. ²Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. ³Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. ⁴Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers. ⁵Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, “I will never leave you or forsake you.” ⁶So we can say with confidence,

“The Lord is my helper;
I will not be afraid.
What can anyone do to me?”

⁷Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. ⁸Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. ¹⁵Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. ¹⁶Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Word of God, word of life!

Thanks be to God!

Gospel Verse

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!

Gospel

Luke 14:1, 7-14

Jesus observes guests jockeying for position at the table. He uses the opportunity to teach his hearers to choose humility rather than self-exaltation. Jesus also makes an appeal for hosts to imitate God's gracious hospitality to those in need.

The Gospel according to Luke, 14th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord!

¹On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely.

⁷When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable.

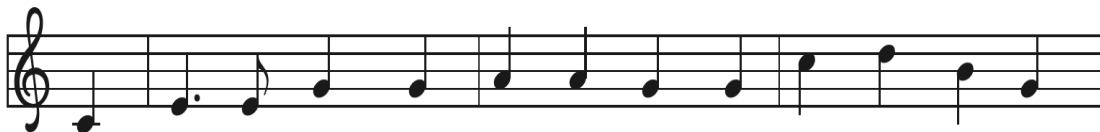
⁸“When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; ⁹and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, ‘Give this person your place,’ and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. ¹⁰But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher’; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. ¹¹For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

¹²He said also to the one who had invited him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. ¹³But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. ¹⁴And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

This is the holy Gospel of our Lord!

Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon



1 God, bless the hands stretched out in love through floods be - low and
 2 Bring com - fort to the hearts that mourn, left bro - ken, emp-tied
 3 O God, our strength and ref - uge sure, our hope while storms of



storms a - bove; they search and res - cue, com - fort, calm, give
 by the storm. Give hope to those in deep - est grief; em -
 life en - dure: teach us to live in har - mo - ny with



shel - ter, of - fer heal - ing balm. Oh, guard them by your
 pow - er us to bring re - lief. To you, O God, we
 earth and riv - er, sky and sea, pre - serv - ing wa - ters,



stead - fast hand; reach out in love to help us stand.
 raise our hands. Save us, we pray, from sink - ing sands.
 air, and lands as ho - ly work for hu - man hands.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: MELITA, John B. Dykes, 1823–1876

Text © 2019 GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved.

Apostles' Creed

**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

Trusting in God's extraordinary love, let us pray to the Holy One who is near to us always.

A brief silence.

Universal God, watch over your whole church. Uphold all deacons, pastors, and bishops who serve and teach your people, including our Presiding Bishop Eaton and Bishop Barbins. Awaken in your church a spirit of invitation that reaches ever outward. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Caring God, continue to tend to the well-being of creation and its inhabitants. Stir in us reverent awe for the beauty of the natural world, for oceans and lakes, rivers and streams, forests and deserts. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

It is our duty and delight that we should everywhere and always offer thanks and praise to you, O God, through Jesus Christ who calls us to follow his way of humble service and love. And so, with the church on earth and the host of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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!

Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy God,
 our Maker, Redeemer, and Healer,
 in the harmonious world of your creation,
 the plants and animals,
 the seas and stars
 were whole and well in your praise.

When sin had scarred the world,
you sent your Son to heal our ills
and to form us again into one.

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 acts of healing,
his body given up,
and his victory over death,
we await that day when all the peoples of the earth
will come to the river to enjoy the tree of life.

Holy Spirit, continue to come upon us and upon this meal:
as grains scattered on the hillside become one bread,
so let your church be gathered from the ends of the earth,
that all may be fed with the Bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
both now and forever. **Amen!**

**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

In Christ's presence there is fullness of joy.
Taste the banquet of everlasting life!
Thanks be to God!

Communion

Music Interlude *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say* (Powell)

Prayer after Communion

Life-giving God,
through this meal you have bandaged our wounds
and fed us with your mercy.
Now send us forth to live for others,
both friend and stranger,
that all may know your never-ending love.
This we pray in the name of Jesus, our Risen Lord. **Amen!**

Blessing

The God of peace,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you, comfort you,
and show you the path of life
this day and always. **Amen!**



1 On our way re - joic - ing glad - ly let us go.
 2 Un - to God the Fa - ther joy - ful songs we sing;



Christ our Lord has con - quered; van - quished is the foe.
 un - to God the Sav - ior thank - ful hearts we bring;



Christ with - out, our safe - ty; Christ with - in, our joy;
 un - to God the Spir - it bow we and a - dore,



who, if we be faith - ful, can our hope de - stroy?
 on our way re - joic - ing now and ev - er - more.

Refrain



On our way re - joic - ing; as we for - ward move,



hear - ken to our prais - es, O blest God of love!

Text: John S. B. Monsell, 1811-1875, alt.
 Music: HERMAS, Frances R. Havergal, 1836-1879

Dismissal

Go in peace. Love your neighbor as yourselves!
Thanks be to God!

Postlude *Alleluia!* (Mozart/Schrader)

Praying Together

... for those who are homebound, ill, hospitalized or recuperating: Gayle Agg, Sheena Cameron, Joan Clarke, Barbara Fossa, Carolyn Frajter, Ken Frajter, Donna Franz, Karla Franz, Barb Gaglione, Michelle Garnett, Rosa Garnett, Clare Hanusz, Alex Hohenstein, Dylan King, Jason Lanese, Sara Mendes, Phyllis Nemeth, Sam Reddig, Steve Senderak, Gary Smith, Arlene Stoltz, Marie Storms, Tom Susaneck, Phyllis Treichel, Phyllis Welker, Wilma Dancy, Bill Helmick, Nancy Helmick, Robert Lambrecht, Kim (Novak) Leonhardt, Laura Mele, Judy Morgan, Kris Sandor, Bill Wilkens, Eugene Winfrey, the Copeland/Lane Family.

General Fund receipts for week ending 8/21/2022: \$1942

To the glory of God, and in loving memory of Bob Buettner, a memorial was given by Joan & Mike Garvin.



Mark Gabor is kindly requesting to carpool as a passenger with those making the trip to Blossom Music Center for Rogers & Hammerstein's "The Sound of Music" performance on September 4 (7pm). He is generously willing to assist with travel expenses.

Feel free to contact him at markgabor40@gmail.com or 5374 Lee Road, Apt. 101, Maple Heights.

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS

We are delighted that 2022 marks 75 years of ministry as a Covenant family! And so, we will boldly celebrate on Reformation Sunday (October 30) with worship in the sanctuary at 9am and a catered brunch following the worship in our fellowship hall. Bishop Emeritus Abraham Allende will preach, and we will also have our ecumenical handbell choir and the Wolf Creek brass quintet join us to make the day all the more special as we give thanks to God for the honor to be part of this wonderful body of Christ. We ask that if you do plan on joining us, please RSVP to Jen Lasher-Dobush by Sunday, October 16, as we need a head-count for the meal. We hope to see you here!

Lectionary Blog: Rising Up and Lowering Down

One of the recurring themes of the Gospels—indeed, all of Scripture—is the way God calls humans to overturn established order of who is “greater” and who is “lesser.” Hannah, a barren woman in a contentious polygamous marriage, rejoiced in the Lord and proclaimed, “[God] raises the poor from the dust, and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honor” (1 Samuel 2:8). It seems that God has always been switching seating charts to show how societal esteem is frequently at odds with God’s valuation of humans. Jesus gives another example of this principle in this week’s Gospel reading.

Jesus was invited to share a Sabbath meal at the home of a prominent Pharisee, and all those present watched him eagerly to learn from such a popular and powerful teacher. First, Jesus noted the presence of a man afflicted by excessive swelling. Luke notes that the man was “in front of” or “opposite” Jesus (Luke 14:2). If Jesus was seated at the head of the assembly where everyone could see him, the man with the swelling was toward the back, where only Jesus would have been able to see him. Jesus chose to offer his first teaching of the night by reiterating the lesson we read about last week—Sabbath healing is not only allowable but necessary. The Pharisees assembled neither questioned nor replied to this teaching (4, 6). Indeed, it seems that from the earliest stages, Rabbinic Judaism insisted that healing on the Sabbath—miraculously or not—was appropriate. After Jesus healed the man, he sent him away before beginning his next lesson (4).

Then Jesus began to teach those remaining at the dinner party about seating arrangements. Presumably the location of the man with the swelling, opposite the place where esteemed guests jockeyed for positions next to Jesus, was the occasion for his next parable. Jesus told of a wedding feast in which people tried to secure the best positions for themselves, only to be demoted and asked to vacate their seat when someone more important arrived. Imagine the shame as they looked around for another place as everyone watched! Instead, Jesus instructed those present that they should pick a humble place for themselves. If they stayed in the same spot, at least they would avoid the shame and ignominy of being displaced by someone more important.

But it might happen that the host would notice them in their humble place and call them up to a higher, more prestigious seat. Then they would be honored in the presence of all the guests. Jesus was referencing a proverb that gave exactly this advice (Proverbs 25:6-7). Jesus had called a man relegated to an inferior position forward, healed him and then dismissed him before calling out those who had chosen better spots for themselves.

Jesus instructed those present that they should pick a humble place for themselves. If they stayed in the same spot, at least they would avoid the shame and ignominy of being displaced by someone more important.

Jesus then turned to his host and offered a commendation and reproof. First, he told him to not invite only his friends, family or wealthy neighbors because they could offer reciprocity, invite him to their parties and thereby repay him. These were exactly the people who were left at the banquet after Jesus dismissed the person he had healed. Instead, Jesus insisted that the host should invite more like the man who was there first, but who had been relegated to an inferior position by the other guests—poor people, people with disabilities, folks with limps and blind folks (Luke 14:13).

The leader of the Pharisees had invited some of the right people but had allowed the other guests to honor themselves and shame others. Jesus honored the man he healed, and then excused him so that he would not hear Jesus use his treatment by the other guests as an object lesson for how people are to interact with others. Thus, Jesus doubly guarded the man's dignity.

Friends, let us be like Jesus and guard and preserve the dignity of those whom others would relegate to positions of unimportance. God has always lifted up those whom the world discards and brought down those who honor themselves. It's probably best to leave the bringing down of the prideful to God. Jesus invites us into seeing, honoring and joining those who are relegated to positions of dishonor. To do anything else risks God sweeping us aside in order to bring up the downtrodden.

This Lectionary Blog, and other resources for the journey of faith, available at LivingLutheran.org.

*Cory Driver is an ELCA missionary serving as the director of graduate studies at the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Cairo (Egypt). His book on wilderness spirituality, *Life Unsettled*, is available from Fortress Press.*

A Lesson in Humility

"For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." Luke 14:11 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Luke 14:7-14



M P V G E S M P E M D Q I F T
U C M L T G K D A Y P X Z T U
Z C B S L M O K F E A S T N M
G A E S X Z B N D L B P M U D
T U S P C L H O N O R L G A X
G Z S Z B R K V L A M E I G Y
C D E O I A A E L E A S T N M
B I A V N A H R A S Q Q K X D
J N T X V P W L C U V X S D Q
F N A Y I L P E X A L T T H W
Z E T C T J L Z V D R A B L T
R R B I E B Y P O O R W E S K
U I U V M M O S T F E R O P S
J D C U M P B X T F R I E N D
J F H H F R H U T M O B G M N

POOR	EXALT	FEAST	HONOR	DINNER
FRIEND	SEAT	TABLE	HUMBLE	RICH
LAME	INVITE	GUESTS	LEAST	BLIND