

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

*Gathering at St. John's Episcopal Church
1676 S. Belcher Rd., Clearwater, FL 33764*

**Sunday, August 3, 2025
Lectionary 18, Year C**



Introduction

Jesus urges us to take care and be on guard against all kinds of greed. We who have died with Christ in holy baptism have also been raised with him and are encouraged to elevate our thinking, seeking the “things that are above.” To that end we seek the sustenance of the Lord’s supper and the encouragement of God’s word.

Welcome

Prelude: Blest Be the Tie That Bind – Wilson

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,

**you free us to love others,
but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way.
You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace,
but we turn away from the abundant life you offer.
You surround us with patience, kindness, and generosity,
but we grow weary in doing what is right.
In your mercy, forgive us. Do not give up on us.
Heal us, break our bonds, and show us the path of life. Amen.**

You belong to Christ Jesus
and you are God's children through faith.
In the cross of ✠ Christ,
and through the power of the Holy Spirit,
your sins are forgiven.
Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation.
Amen.

Hymn: O God Beyond All Praising – ELW 869



1 O God be-yond all prais-ing, we wor-ship you to-day
 2 The flow'r of earth-ly splen-dor in time must sure-ly die,
 3 Then hear, O gra-cious Sav-ior, ac-cept the love we bring,

and sing the love a-maz-ing that songs can-not re-pay;
 its frag-ile bloom sur-ren-der to you, the Lord most high;
 that we who know your fa-vor may serve you as our King;

for we can on-ly won-der at ev-'ry gift you send,
 but hid-den from all na-ture the e-ter-nal seed is sown-
 and wheth-er our to-mor-rows be filled with good or ill,

at bless-ings with-out num-ber and mer-cies with-out end:
 though small in mor-tal stat-ure, to heav-en's gar-den grown:
 we'll tri-umph through our sor-rows and rise to bless you still:

we lift our hearts be-fore you and wait up-on your word,
 for Christ, your gift from heav-en, from death has set us free,
 to mar-vel at your beau-ty and glo-ry in your ways,

we hon-or and a-dore you, our great and might-y Lord.
 and we through him are giv-en the fi-nal vic-to-ry.
 and make a joy-ful du-ty our sac-ri-fice of praise.

Text: Michael Perry, 1942–1996

Music: THAXTED, Gustav Holst, 1874–1934

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Prayer of the Day

Benevolent God, you are the source, the guide, and the goal of our lives. Teach us to love what is worth loving, to reject what is offensive to you, and to treasure what is precious in your sight, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Semicontinuous First Reading: Hosea 11:1-11

Hosea compares God's love for Israel to the love parents have for their children. Whether teaching toddlers to walk or dealing with a child's rebellion, good parents continue to love their children as they try to lead them to life. In the same way, God's love will not let Israel go.

A reading from the prophet Hosea.

- ¹ When Israel was a child, I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.
² The more I called them,
the more they went from me;
they kept sacrificing to the Baals
and offering incense to idols.
³ Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk;
I took them up in my arms,
but they did not know that I healed them.
⁴ I led them with cords of human kindness,
with bands of love.
I was to them like those
who lift infants to their cheeks.
I bent down to them and fed them.
⁵ They shall return to the land of Egypt,
and Assyria shall be their king,
because they have refused to return to me.
⁶ The sword rages in their cities;
it consumes their oracle priests
and devours because of their schemes.
⁷ My people are bent on turning away from me.
To the Most High they call,

but he does not raise them up at all.

- ⁸ How can I give you up, Ephraim?
How can I hand you over, O Israel?
How can I make you like Admah?
How can I treat you like Zeboiim?
My heart recoils within me;
my compassion grows warm and tender.
⁹ I will not execute my fierce anger;
I will not again destroy Ephraim,
for I am God and no mortal,
the Holy One in your midst,
and I will not come in wrath.
¹⁰ They shall go after the LORD,
who roars like a lion;
when he roars, his children shall come
trembling from the west.
¹¹ They shall come trembling
like birds from Egypt
and like doves from the land of Assyria,
and I will return them to their homes,
says the LORD.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Semicontinuous Psalm: Psalm 107:1-9, 43

Reader: Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good,
for God's mercy endures forever.

**ALL: Let the redeemed of the LORD proclaim
that God redeemed them from the hand of the foe,**

Reader: gathering them in from the lands;
from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.

**ALL: Some wandered in desert wastes;
they found no path to a city where they might dwell.**

Reader: They were hungry and thirsty;
their spirits languished within them.

**ALL: Then in their trouble they cried to the LORD,
and you delivered them from their distress.**

Reader: You led them on a straight path
to go to a city where they might dwell.

**ALL: Let them give thanks to you, LORD, for your steadfast love
and your wonderful works for all people.**

Reader: For you satisfy the thirsty soul
and fill the hungry with good things.

**ALL: Whoever is wise will ponder these things,
and consider well the LORD's steadfast love.**

Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-11

Life in Christ includes a radical reorientation of our values. Just as the newly baptized shed their old clothes and put on new garments, so Christians are called to let go of greed and take hold of a life shaped by God's love in Christ.

A reading from Paul's letter to the Colossians.

¹ So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth, ³ for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). ⁶ On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient. ⁷ These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life. ⁸ But now you must get rid of all such things: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. ¹¹ In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, enslaved and free, but Christ is all and in all!

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah



Music: Caribbean traditional

Gospel: Luke 12:13-21

In God's reign, the 'rich will be sent away empty.' Jesus uses a parable to warn against identifying the worth of one's life with the value of one's possessions rather than one's relationship with God.

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³ Someone in the crowd said to [Jesus,] "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." ¹⁴ But he said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" ¹⁵ And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." ¹⁶ Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. ¹⁷ And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' ¹⁸ Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry. ²⁰ But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' ²¹ So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon: Pr. Pam Wellons

Hymn: Be Thou My Vision – ELW 793

1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,

naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!

thou my best thought both by day and by night,
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,
 thou and thou on - ly, the first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Text: Irish, 8th cent.; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860–1935, alt.; tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1880–1931
 Music: SLANE, Irish traditional

Apostle's 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 power of 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

Please respond to each invocation: God of grace, hear our prayer.

Peace

Pastor:

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Offering

All that we have, physically and spiritually comes from God.
Our offering, of time, talent and treasure is a response to our awareness
that God is the creator of all things and that we are redeemed
through life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
Your support of this ministry and the faith life of this community is appreciated.

Hymn: Loving Spirit – ELW 397



- 1 Lov - ing Spir-it, lov-ing Spir - it, you have cho - sen me to be—
- 2 Like a moth-er you en - fold me, hold my life with - in your own,
- 3 Like a fa - ther you pro - tect me, teach me the dis - cern - ing eye,
- 4 Friend and lov - er, in your close-ness I am known and held and blessed:
- 5 Lov - ing Spir-it, lov-ing Spir - it, you have cho - sen me to be—



you have drawn me to your won - der, you have set your sign on me.
feed me with your ver - y bod - y, form me of your flesh and bone.
hoist me up up - on your shoul-der, let me see the world from high.
in your prom - ise is my com - fort, in your pres-ence I may rest.
you have drawn me to your won - der, you have set your sign on me.

Text: Shirley Erena Murray, b. 1931

Music: RESTORATION, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

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Offering Prayer

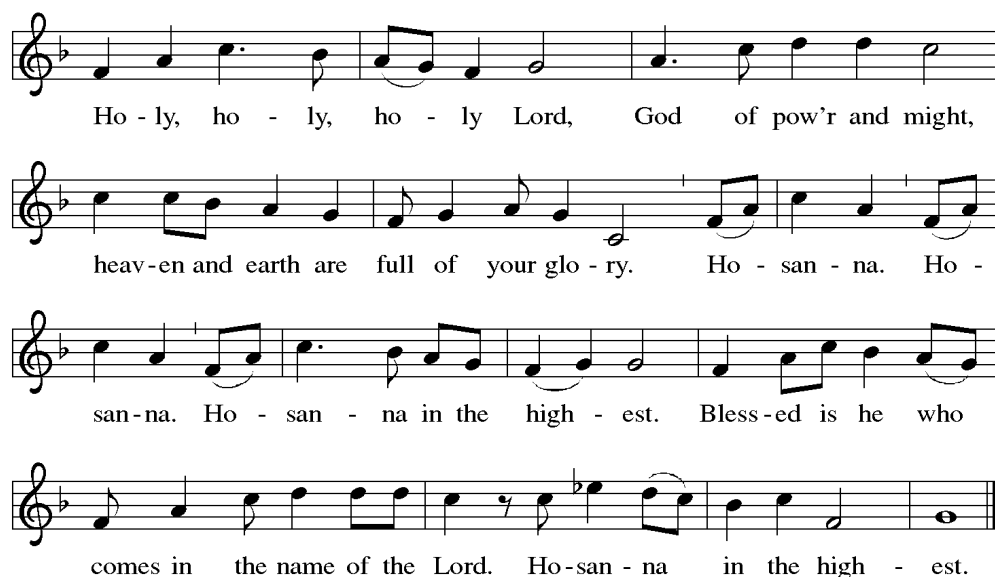
Creator God,
in your wisdom
you bring forth all that is good,
and the harvest is plentiful.
Strengthen us at your table
with these gifts of the earth and our labor,
that we may work for the good of all;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

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.



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.



Christ has died. Christ is ris - en. Christ will come a - gain.



A - men, a - men, a - men.

LORD'S PRAYER

**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 kingdom of God is set before you. Eat and rejoice.

Invitation to Communion

We believe that Holy Communion is the body and blood of Jesus. In this sacrament we are invited to have a personal experience of Christ's presence. This is the Lord's table. All who desire to be in relationship with Christ are welcome to receive.

We receive communion using bread and wine. If you need to receive a gluten free host, please ask the communion minister. For those who prefer to receive grape juice rather than wine you will find white grape juice in the center of the trays as communion is given. If you have a question, please ask the minister as you receive. The bread and wine should be consumed here in the church before you return to your seat. If for some reason, you are unable to consume either the bread or wine please bring what was not consumed to the ushers or the pastor as soon as the service is completed.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

Hymn: Communion: Take My Life, That I May Be – ELW 685

1 Take my life, that I may be con - se - crat - ed, Lord, to thee;
2 Take my hands and let them move at the im - pulse of thy love;
3 Take my voice and let me sing al - ways, on - ly, for my King;
4 Take my sil - ver and my gold, not a mite would I with - hold;
take my mo-ments and my days; let them flow in cease-less praise.
take my feet and let them be swift and beau - ti - ful for thee.
take my lips and let them be filled with mes - sag - es from thee.
take my in - tel - lect, and use ev - 'ry pow'r as thou shalt choose.

5 Take my will and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.

6 Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store;
take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879, alt.
Music: PATMOS, William H. Havergal, 1793–1870

Hymn: Come and Fill Our Hearts – ELW 528

The musical score is written for a two-part setting in G major (one sharp). The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first system covers the first two lines of the hymn, and the second system covers the last two lines. The music is in 4/4 time.

Con - fi - te - mi - ni Do - mi - no quo - ni - am bo - nus.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You a-lone, O Lord, are ho - ly.

Con - fi - te - mi - ni Do - mi - no. Al - le - lu - ia!
Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: Psalm 136:1 (Latin); Taizé Community
Music: CONFITEMINI DOMINO, Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994
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Prayer after Communion

Mothering God, you gathered us to your table and we drank deeply of your grace.
Send us out by your Spirit to love our neighbors as ourselves
and proclaim your love in Jesus 'name.

Amen.

Announcements:

Blessing

The love of God abound in you;
the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ fill your hearts;
and the life of the Spirit
✠ bless you and give you peace.

Amen.

Hymn: In Christ There Is No East Or West – ELW 650



- 1 In Christ there is no east or west, in him no south or north,
- 2 In Christ shall true hearts ev-'ry-where their high com-mu-nion find;
- 3 Join hands, dis-ci-ples of the faith, what-e'er your race may be.
- 4 In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north;



but one com-mu-ni-ty of love through-out the whole wide earth.
his ser-vice is the gold-en cord close bind-ing hu-man-kind.
All chil-dren of the liv-ing God are sure-ly kin to me.
all Christ-ly souls are one in him through-out the whole wide earth.

Text: John Oxenham, 1852–1941, alt.

Music: MCKEE, African American spiritual; adapt. Harry T. Burleigh, 1866–1949

Dismissal

Go in peace. Live by the Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

SUNCOAST CONFERENCE GATHERING

Saturday, August 9

9:00 - Noon

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
now gathering at St. John's Episcopal

Agenda
Election of Conference Chair
Election of Conference Dean

Program
Hurricane Prep for Home and Church
Worship

*Join us for a morning of fellowship,
church business, and important
reflection and learning.*

Refreshments will be served.

**1676 S. BELCHER RD.
CLEARWATER, FL 33764**

Announcements:

**August Newsletter will be given out on the way out of church today.
Please take it home and mark your calendars.**

Some upcoming events to highlight:

**August 9 – 9:00 – NOON – Suncoast Conference Gathering
We are hosting here at St. John's. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE
plan on attending and helping!**

We will have a potluck as part of our Lunch and Learn next Sunday, August 10. Please see Janan to sign up for the potluck. The Largo Police Department will be here to discuss "Scams and Frauds."

Wednesday, August 13 – Taizé Prayer

Saturday, August 16 – Soul Injury Workshop

"Pop-Up" Food Giveaway at St. Paul's Property – 407 S. Saturn – Every Thursday from 11:00 – 12:45. Please reach out to Sandy Weaver or Mary Pheasant for more information.

Quilt Ministry meets at St. John's Hall on Thursday, August 7 & August 21 at 9:00AM . All are welcome to participate. For more information, reach out to Rhona Diamond.

Grief Forum – A new group will begin in September. Contact Becca Bass for more information.

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Gathering at St. John's Episcopal 1676 S. Belcher Rd., Clearwater, FL

A Reconciling in Christ Congregation

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, a Reconciling in Christ congregation, embodies God's love, and promise of salvation through faith in Christ by extending inclusion and welcome to all.

We welcome the full, active participation of all who worship and minister with us. If you are interested in learning more about Jesus, God's life and action in the world and our lives, the Lutheran faith, or this congregation and how you can be more involved, please reach out to Pastor Anne.

Phone Number: 727- 446-7718

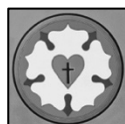
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St. Paul's Spirituality Center

an outreach ministry of St. Paul's Lutheran Church



Florida-Bahamas Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



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