23rd Sunday after Pentecost

November 16th, 2025



Divine Service 9am

St. James Lutheran Church 1213 US Hwy 22 Phillipsburg, NJ

www.strawchurch.org

strawchurch@gmail.com



908.454.2864

Welcome to St. James!

Founded in 1750, the year 2025 marks our 275th anniversary of being God's church. We're so glad you're here! We pray you feel warmly welcomed as we gather to celebrate God's unconditional love in Jesus Christ. He who is the same, yesterday, today, and forever!

<u>If you are visiting today:</u> Thank you for joining us today! If you have any questions, please ask! Pastor Levi and the members of our church-community would be glad to help you out. Please sign the guest book or complete a hospitality card located in the pew racks.

<u>Following along in the bulletin:</u> *indicates the congregation stands. In our liturgical worship, **bold words** are spoken by the congregation. LBW refers to content found in the green hymnbook *Lutheran Book of Worship*. WOV refers to content found in the blue hymnbook *With One Voice*.

Presiding Minister The Rev. Dr. Timothy Wengert

Assisting Minister Dan Gulick Musician Dave Miller

I. GATHERING

*CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Th sign of the cross + may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from whom 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 Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Almighty and most Holy God,

we confess that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, through our own fault, our own most grievous fault. We acknowledge our lack of faithfulness in holy service, our lack of discipline and obedience, and our lack of love. And so, we pray to you, O God, have mercy upon us, for the sake of Jesus Christ, your dear Son, our Lord. Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of +Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

*GATHERING HYMN: LBW 233 - Thy Strong Word

*GREETING

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

And also with you.

*CANTICLE OF PRAISE: ELW 184 – Let the Vineyards be Fruitful



*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Prayer of the Day: O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without you nothing is strong, nothing is holy. Embrace us with your mercy, that with you as our ruler and guide, we may live through what is temporary without losing what is eternal, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

II. WORD

FIRST READING: Malachi 4:1-2a

A reading from Malachi.

¹ See, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. ^{2a} But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. *The word of the Lord.*

Thanks be to God.

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PSALM 98

The Psalm is read responsively.

- ¹ Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done marvelous things, whose right hand and holy arm have won the victory.
 - ²O LORD, you have made known your victory, you have revealed your righteousness in the sight of the nations.
 - ³ You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.
 - ⁴ Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands; lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.
 - ⁵ Sing to the LORD with the harp, with the harp and the voice of song.
 - ⁶ With trumpets and the sound of the horn shout with joy before the king, the LORD.
 - ⁷ Let the sea roar, and all that fills it, the world and those who dwell therein.
- ⁸ Let the rivers clap their hands, and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, who comes to judge the earth.
 - ⁹ The LORD will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with equity.

SECOND READING: 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

A reading from 2 Thessalonians.

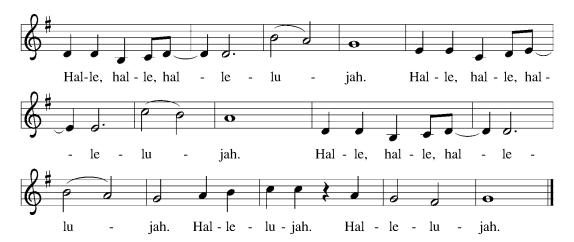
⁶ Now we command you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from every brother or sister living irresponsibly and not according to the tradition that they received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not irresponsible when we were with you, ⁸ and we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day so that we might not burden any of you.

⁹ This was not because we do not have that right but in order to give you an example to imitate. ¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: anyone unwilling to work should not eat. ¹¹ For we hear that some of you are living irresponsibly, mere busybodies, not doing any work. ¹² Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right. *The word of the Lord.*

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: ELW 172 – Halle, Halle, Hallelujah

{sung before and after gospel lesson}



GOSPEL READING: Luke 21:5-19

The holy gospel according to St. Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

⁵ When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, [Jesus] said, ⁶ "As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down."

⁷ They asked him, "Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?" ⁸ And he said, "Beware that you are not led astray, for many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is near!' Do not go after them.

⁹ "When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified, for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately." ¹⁰ Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom; ¹¹ there will be great earthquakes and in various places famines and plagues, and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

¹² "But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. ¹³ This will give you an opportunity to testify. ¹⁴ So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance, ¹⁵ for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. ¹⁶ You will be betrayed even by parents and siblings, by relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷ You will be hated by all because of my name. ¹⁸ But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹ By your endurance you will gain your souls."

The gospel of the Lord.

*APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic church.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY: LBW 331 - Jerusalem, My Happy Home

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 into hell. 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.

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends: "...God of grace, **receive our prayer."**Prayers conclude: "Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior." **Amen.**

*Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.
The assembly is seated.

III. THE LORD'S SUPPER

OFFERTORY



Scan the QR Code to give electronically. An offering plate is in the back of the sanctuary if you wish to give check or cash. You are welcome to give to the ministry of St. James Lutheran Church freely and spontaneously. There is no guilt or shame. If you do give, give with a cheeful heart.

*OFFERING VERSE: TFF 216 - Give Me a Clean Heart



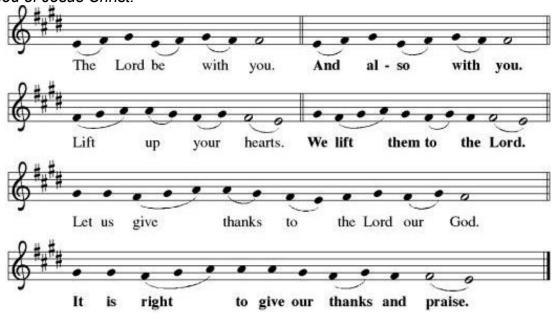
Give me a clean heart, a clean heart and I will fol-low thee. Give me a clean heart, a clean heart and I will fol-low thee.

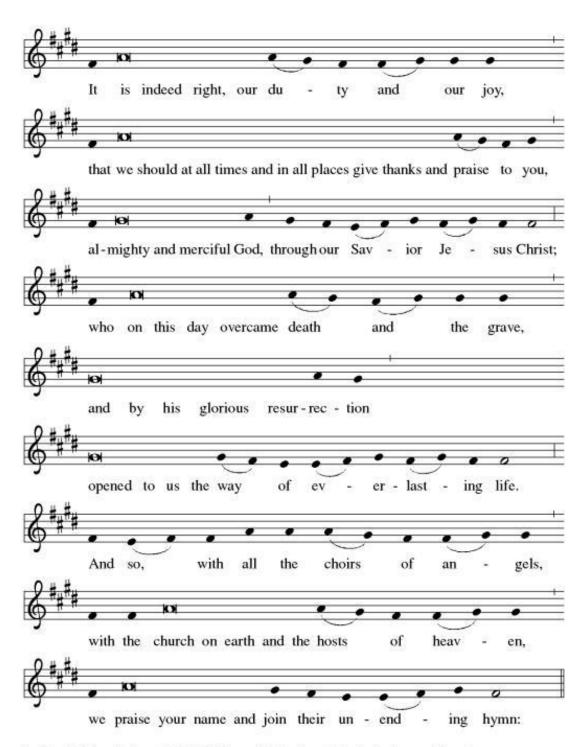
*OFFERING PRAYER

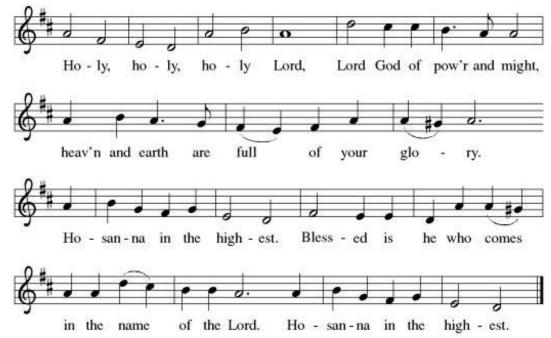
Prayer concludes: Amen.

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

Together with the bread and the cup we receive the body and the blood of Christ. We invite all baptized Christians to this sacrament. Children and adults who do not yet receive Holy Communion are invited to come forward with arms folded for a blessing. If you need communion brought to you, please let an usher know. We commune in tables of 10-15 people. The pastor will give you the bread, an assistant will give you a cup. Then two will come to pour into your cup-the first with grape juice, the second with wine. Whoever partakes receives orally the body and blood of Jesus Christ.







*THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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.

*THE 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

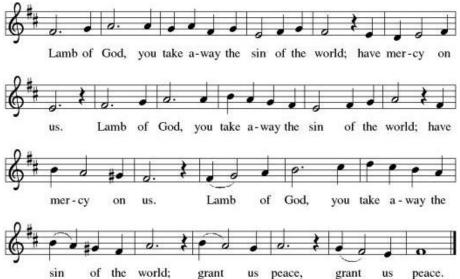
COMMUNION

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say
The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
and each person may respond
Amen.

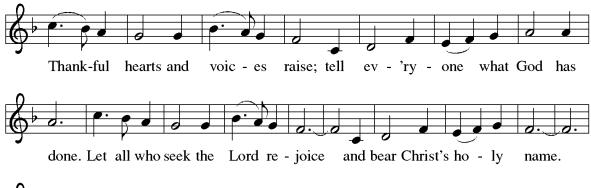
POST COMMUNION TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our risen Lord Jesus Christ strengthens you and keeps you in his grace. **Amen.**

LAMB OF GOD



*POST COMMUNION SONG: ELW 206 – Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise







*POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Prayer concludes: Amen.

IV. SENDING

*BLESSING

The Lord blesses you and keeps you. The Lord's face shines on you with grace and mercy. The Lord looks upon you with favor and gives you peace. **Amen.**

*SENDING SONG: LBW 346 - When Peace, like a River

*DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Remember the poor.

Thanks be to God.

Worship Helpers: Joanne Willauer will be coordinating the monthly schedule. Please contact her at 610-393-6317 or jdwillauer@rcn.com with your available dates!

Social Ministry Donation Collections:

• Food Drive collection: Social Ministry supports 175 Families thru River of Life & St. Luke's Church in Phillipsburg.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This week's flowers donated by Sandy Wismer in honor of Bob Wismer's birthday. "Bob, you are the love of my life and with the grace of God, we will celebrate many more."

Pastor Levi was selected to attend the International Theological Seminar for Pastors by the Lutheran World Federation. This continuing education opportunity will take place November 8th through 22nd in Wittenberg, Germany. If you need the on-call pastor while he is away, please contact our church president Jon Slaton at 908-319-3992.

- Tuesday, 11/18: Church Council 7pm at the church
- Wednesday, 11/19: Fellowship at Sharky's 4pm-6pm
- Thursday, 11/20: NO Proverbs Bible Study with Pastor Levi resumes 12/4

UPCOMING

- **Sunday, 11/23:** Thanksgiving Brunch after church. Sign up sheet on bulletin board in hallway.
- Tuesday, 11/25: Church Council meeting 7pm at the church.
- Sunday, 12/14: Live Nativity Noon-2 Craft Fair – Noon-3

THIS WEEK'S WORSHIP HELPERS

Usher/Greeter: Bob Agans

Lector: Joanne Willauer

Altar Guild: Steve Stocker

Tellers: Carol/Lois Steible

NEXT SUNDAY'S WORSHIP HELPERS(11/23)

Usher/Greeter: Jon Slaton

Lector: Sue Hazelton

Altar Guild: Steve Stocker

Tellers: Steve Stocker/Jon Slaton

Let us remember in prayer: The Family & Friends of Brett Palmer, The Family & Friends of Max Williams, The Family & Friends of Brett Marino, Carol, Kelly, Justin, Stacey, Keith, Sara, Bob, Patrick, John, Gary, Sharon and those unable to attend church service; Janet, Janice, Greg, Helen, Alayne and Elsie.