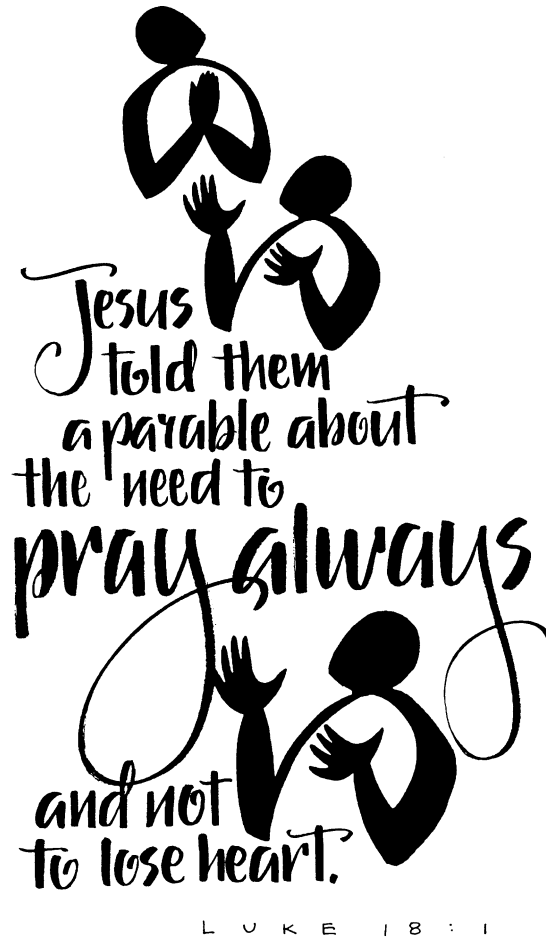


SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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"Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church, following the example of Jesus Christ, seeks to live in the confidence and fullness of God's grace; to preach the Good News boldly and truthfully; to support and serve others in faith; to work in harmony with all creation."

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
OCTOBER 16, 2022

October 16, 2022
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Pray always. Do not lose heart. This is Christ's encouragement in the gospel today. Wrestle with the word. Remember your baptism again and again. Come regularly to Christ's table. Persistence in our every encounter with the divine will be blessed.

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who is eager to forgive
and who loves us beyond our days.

Amen.

Dear friends, together let us acknowledge
our failure to love this world as Jesus does.
God of mercy and forgiveness,
we confess that sin still has a hold on us.
We have harmed your good creation.
We have failed to do justice,
love kindness,
and walk humbly with you.
Turn us in a new direction.
Show us the path that leads to life.
Be our refuge and strength on the journey,
through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend.
Amen.

Beloved of God:
your sins are forgiven ✝ and you are made whole.
God points the way to new life in Christ,
who meets us on the road.
Journey now in God's abiding love
through the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

GATHERING SONG *What God Ordains Is Good Indeed* (all verses)

What God Ordains Is Good Indeed



- 1 What God or - dains is good in - deed, for all life well pro - vid - ing.
- 2 What God or - dains is good in - deed: my light, my life, my Sav - ior!
- 3 What God or - dains is good in - deed. When hope seems like de - lu - sion,
- 4 What God or - dains is good in - deed. My Lord will nev - er fail me



The will of God is best for me, the ground of my con - fid - ing.
No ill can get the best of me; God's care will nev - er wa - ver.
I taste the bit - ter cup and plead, "Lord, quench my fear, con - fu - sion."
on dan - ger's path, in deep - est need, when death in grief shall veil me.



My faith - ful God, on ev - 'ry road you know the way un -
Through joy and pain I shall at - tain the dawn dis - clos - ing
God ends the night, re - stores de - light; by faith I face to -
My God so dear will draw me near, in lov - ing arms will



fold - ing and my hand you are hold - ing.
clear - ly that God has loved me dear - ly.
mor - row and yield to God all sor - row.
hold me, at last in light en - fold me.

Text: Samuel Rodigast, 1649–1708; tr. Martin A. Seltz, b. 1951

Music: WAS GOTT TUT, Severus Gastorius, 1646–1682

Text © 2000 Augsburg Fortress

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GREETING

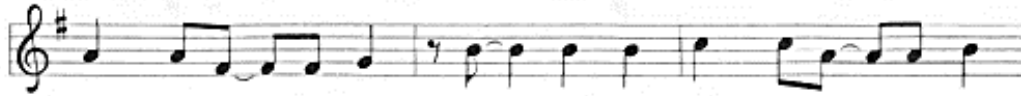
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE



1 The trum - pets sound, the an - gels sing, the feast is
2 Ta - bles are la - den with good things; oh, taste the
3 The hun - gry heart he sat - is - fies, of - fers the



read - y to be - gin. The gates of heav'n are o - pen wide,
peace and joy he brings. He'll fill you up with love di - vine;
poor his par - a - dise. Now hear all heav'n and earth ap - plaud



and Je - sus wel - comes you in - side.
he'll turn your wa - ter in - to wine.
the a - maz - ing good - ness of the Lord.



Sing with thank - ful - ness songs of pure de - light.



Come and rev - el in heav - en's love and light.



Take your place at the ta - ble of the King.



The feast is read - y to be - gin;



the feast is read - y to be - gin.

Text: Graham Kendrick, b. 1950

Music: Graham Kendrick

Text and music © 1989 Make Way Music, admin. Music Services in the Western Hemisphere

THE FEAST IS READY

LM and refrain

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O Lord God, tireless guardian of your people, you are always ready to hear our cries. Teach us to rely day and night on your care. Inspire us to seek your enduring justice for all this suffering world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM *PEOPLE NEED THE LORD*

FIRST READING: Genesis 32:22-31

A reading from Genesis.

Returning to the home he had fled many years before after stealing his brother's birthright and his father's blessing, Jacob wrestles all night long with a divine adversary who ultimately blesses him and changes his name to "Israel," a name that means "he wrestles with God."

²²The same night [Jacob] got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²³He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. ²⁴Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. ²⁵When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. ²⁶Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." ²⁷So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." ²⁸Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." ²⁹Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. ³⁰So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved." ³¹The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 121

(sung responsively between choir and congregation, beginning with the choir)



Psalm tone reproduced from *Psalter for Worship Year C* © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.
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¹I lift up my eyes | to the hills;
from where is my | help to come?

²**My help comes | from the LORD,
the maker of heav- | en and earth.**

³The LORD will not let your | foot be moved
nor will the one who watches over you | fall asleep.

⁴**Behold, the keep- | er of Israel
will neither slum- | ber nor sleep;**

⁵the LORD watches | over you;
the LORD is your shade at | your right hand;

⁶the sun will not strike | you by day,
nor the | moon by night.

⁷The LORD will preserve you | from all evil
and will | keep your life.

⁸The LORD will watch over your going out and your | coming in,
from this time forth for- | evermore.

SECOND READING: 2 Timothy 3:14--4:5

A reading from 2 Timothy.

The writer of this letter continues his instruction of Timothy, his younger colleague in ministry, by emphasizing the importance of faithful teaching despite opposition.

¹⁴But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, ¹⁵and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

^{4:1}In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: ²proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. ³For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, ⁴and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. ⁵As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Hal-le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le -
- le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le -
lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah.

Music: Caribbean traditional

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GOSPEL: Luke 18:1-8

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus tells a parable of an unjust judge who is worn down by a widow's pleas. Jesus is calling God's people to cry out for justice and deliverance. For if an unethical judge will ultimately grant the plea of a persistent widow, how much more will God respond to those who call.

¹Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. ²He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. ³In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my opponent.' ⁴For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, ⁵yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.'"
⁶And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? ⁸I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON PASTOR BARB

HYMN OF THE DAY *Rise Up, O Saints of God!* (all verses)

Rise Up, O Saints of God!



- 1 Rise up, O saints of God! From vain am - bi - tions turn;
- 2 Speak out, O saints of God! De - spair en - gulfs earth's frame;
- 3 Rise up, O saints of God! The king - dom's task em - brace;
- 4 Give heed, O saints of God! Cre - a - tion cries in pain;
- 5 Com - mit your hearts to seek the paths which Christ has trod;



Christ rose tri - um - phant that your hearts with no - bler zeal might burn.
as heirs of God's bap - tis - mal grace, the word of hope pro - claim.
re - dress sin's cru - el con - se - quence; give jus - tice larg - er place.
stretch forth your hand of heal - ing now, with love the weak sus - tain.
and, quick - ened by the Spir - it's pow'r, rise up, O saints of God!

Text: Norman O. Furness, b. 1936

Music: FESTAL SONG, William H. Walter, 1825-1893

Text © Norman O. Furness, admin. Augsburg Fortress

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Please join me as we confirm our faith together in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

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 THE CHURCH *(Please respond.)*

P: Hear us, O God. C: Your mercy is great.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

OFFERTORY



Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,



give thanks be-cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son.



Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,



give thanks be - cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son.



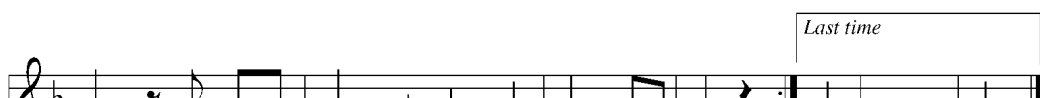
And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am



rich," be - cause of what the Lord has done for us. And



now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am



rich," be-cause of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks!

Text: Henry Smith
Music: GIVE THANKS, Henry Smith

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OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious God,
in your great love you richly provide for our needs.
Make of these gifts a banquet of blessing,
and make us ready to share with all in need;
through Jesus Christ, who sets a table for all.
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.

PREFACE

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:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



San-to, san - to, san - to Dios de glo - ria y po - der,
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly God of pow - er and might,



cie - los y tie - rra pro - cla - man tu glo - ria.
heav - en and earth . . . are full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na en los cie - los.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na en los cie - los.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.



Ben - di - to a - quel que vie - ne en el nom - bre de Dios.
Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of our God.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na en los cie - los.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na en los cie - los.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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.

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.**

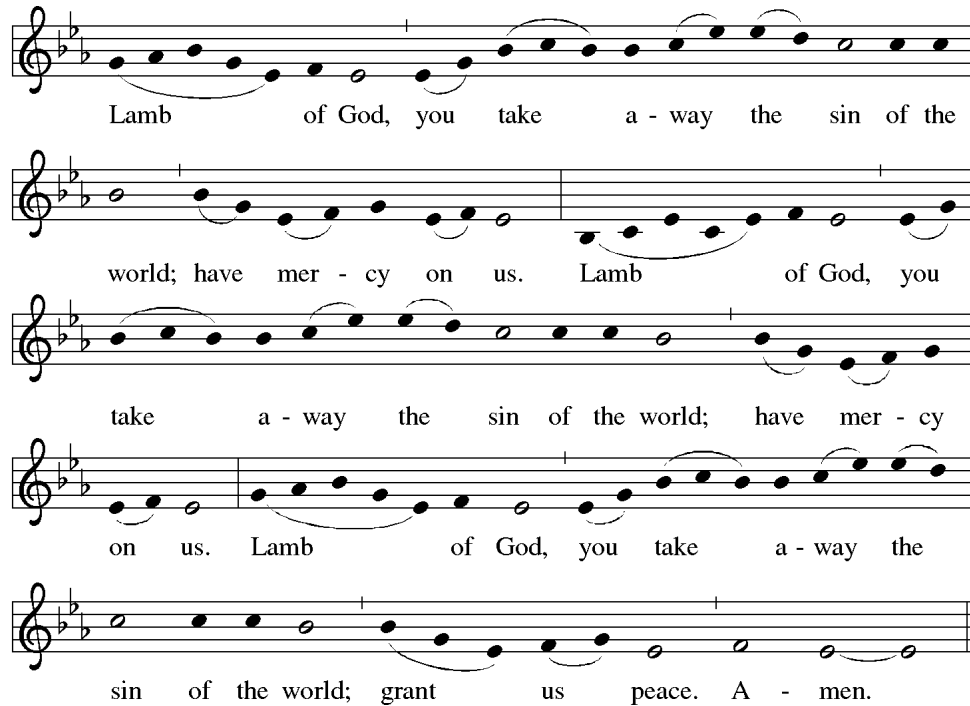
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Christ invites you to this table.
Come, taste and see.

COMMUNION

Continuous - Please continue down center aisle at the direction of the usher. After you receive the bread, you may take a cup of red wine or white grape juice from the tray. Please place your empty communion cup in the tray. Gluten free wafers are available, ask the pastor when you come forward.

COMMUNION SONG



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. A - men.

HYMN DURING COMMUNION *Day by Day* (all verses)



- 1 Day by day, your mer - cies, Lord, at - tend me, bring - ing com - fort
- 2 Day by day, I know you will pro - vide me strength to serve and
- 3 Oh, what joy to know that you are near me when my bur - dens



to my anx - ious soul. Day by day, the bless - ings, Lord, you send me
 wis - dom to o - bey; I will seek your lov - ing will to guide me
 grow too great to bear; oh, what joy to know that you will hear me



draw me near - er to my heav'n - ly goal. Love di - vine, be - yond all
 o'er the paths I strug - gle day by day. I will fear no e - vil
 when I come, O Lord, to you in prayer. Day by day, no mat - ter



mor - tal mea - sure, brings to naught the bur - dens of my quest; Sav - ior,
 of the mor - row, I will trust in your en - dur - ing grace. Sav - ior,
 what be - tide me, you will hold me ev - er in your hand. Sav - ior,



lead me to the home I trea - sure, where at last I'll find e - ter - nal rest.
 help me bear life's pain and sor - row till in glo - ry I be - hold your face.
 with your pres - ence here to guide me, I will reach at last the prom - ised land.

COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

POST COMMUNION



“Go, make dis - ci - ples, bap - tiz - ing them, teach - ing them.

Go, make dis - ci - ples, for I am with you till the end of time.

Go, be the salt of the earth. Go, be the light for the world.

Go, be a cit - y on a hill, so all can see that you’re

serv - ing me. Go, make dis - ci - ples.”

Text: Handt Hanson, b. 1950
Music: GO, MAKE DISCIPLES, Handt Hanson
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PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of the abundant table,
you have refreshed our hearts in this meal
with bread for the journey.
Give us your grace on the road
that we might serve our neighbors with joy;
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you
with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor
and ✝ give you peace.
Amen.

SENDING SONG *If You But Trust in God to Guide You* (all verses)

If You But Trust in God to Guide You



1 If you but trust in God to guide you with gen - tle
2 What gain is there in anx - ious weep - ing, in help - less
3 The Lord our rest - less hearts is hold - ing, in peace and
4 Sing, pray, and keep God's ways un - swerv - ing, of - fer your



hand through all your ways, you'll find that God is there be -
an - ger and dis - tress? If you are in your Sav - ior's
qui - et - ness con - tent. We rest in God's good will un -
ser - vice faith - ful - ly. Trust heav - en's word; though un - de -



side you when cross - es come, in try - ing days. Trust then in
keep - ing, in sor - row will he love you less? For Christ who
fold - ing, what wis - dom from on high has sent. God, who has
serv - ing, you'll find God's prom - ise true to be. This is our



God's un - chang - ing love; build on the rock that will not move.
took for you a cross will bring you safe through ev - 'ry loss.
cho - sen us by grace, knows ver - y well the fears we face.
con - fi - dence in - deed: God nev - er fails in time of need.

Text: Georg Neumark, 1621–1681; tr. composite
Music: WER NUR DEN LIEBEN GOTT, Georg Neumark
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SENDING IN SERVICE

Go in peace, with Christ beside you.

Thanks be to God.

EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE/SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE

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SERVING TODAY

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Church Office Email Address	office@solomonslutheran.org
Organist	Doug Mummert
Head Usher	Larry Socks
Acolyte	Janice McEntire
Lector.....	Terry Fell
Securing Offering	Edna Harris & Becky Pecha
Communion Set-Up.....	Ilona & Jerry Laney
Communion Clean-Up	Ilona Laney
Communion Bread	Zoe Mummert
Communion Assist	Marjorie Dale & Ilona Laney
Attendance last Sunday	69

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The altar flowers this morning are placed to the Glory of God in loving memory of Jay Hunter, beloved husband and father given by his family.

Welcome Visitors! We welcome you to our worship service. We hope your visit with us will be a time of blessing. If you have any concerns, please talk to the Head Usher. We invite you to worship with us again!

For now, the offering plate will continue to be placed in the back of the church in front of the Baptismal Font. Thank you for your continuing support of the ministries of Solomon's as we join God in the work of sharing Christ's love.

Prayer requests for the following *Barbara Beckner, Tracy Fredericks, Louis Norman, Lanny Haugh, Heather Carman Shull, Betty Sterner, Jenny Barnes, Ray Rotz, Matthew, Lexi and Brooke Bowen, Sarge and Barb Weaver, Patricia Furry, Tina Smith, Nancy Marshall, Milissa Fogle, Marie Dovey, Beth Floyd, Jean Jackson, David Johnson, Joe and Karen Wolfinger, Jennie Matthews, Patricia Yetter, Carol Locke, Linda Wepking, Frances Kramer, Darrell Veilleux, Ukrainian Nation, Peace for the World.* If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire. **Note:** At the beginning of each month, the Prayer Request List will start anew. If you would like to remain listed on the next month's list, or if you would like to have your name removed from the list before the end of the month, please call the office.

Office Hours for Pastor Barb are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. until 12 noon or call for an appointment.

Choir Practice - Thursdays at 7:00PM.

Help is needed to serve a dinner on Thursday, October 20. See sign-up sheet on table in Sunday School room.

CONFIRMATION 101 is now being offered in the daytime for folks who were unable to join us on Wednesday evening. Please join us for this special adult class in the **Conference Room in the Fellowship Center on October 20 at 1:00 PM.** We'll explore the meaning of some basic ideas in our life together as church. **What does it mean for us to be Lutheran Christians?** We'll discuss the meaning of Grace, Baptism, Holy Communion, the Bible and being part of the Body of Christ.

Hurricane Relief: In response to Hurricane Ian, Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) is partnering with the Florida-Bahamas, Southeastern, North Carolina and South Carolina synods, as well as Lutheran Services Carolinas, to provide both immediate and long-term support. LDR anticipates relief will include water, food supplies, tarps, cleaning materials and other needs for those who have lost or damaged homes. **Please hold the victims and relief workers daily in your prayers.** Pray that God will deliver comfort to those who mourn and strength to those working diligently to provide aid. **Prayerfully consider a generous donation to provide tangible support. Make your check out to Solomons Lutheran Church with the memo space clearly marked "Hurricane Relief."** If you are using cash, clearly mark the envelope. **Thank you for your care and support of God's people.**

Sunday School is in Session - Adult Sunday School classes begin at 9:00 a.m. in the Sunday School room. Children's Church will be held during morning worship and will meet downstairs at 10:20 a.m. Confirmation Class will be held at 9:00 a.m. in the Conference Room in the Fellowship Center.

Apple Butter and Candy Order forms are here! Candy making – mark your calendars **Thursday 11/3/22 & Friday 11/4/22**. We will be making candy on Thursday, November 3rd. Keep Friday, November 4 open as an extra day of candy making if needed. Apple Butter & Candy Order Forms are in the newsletter or see Zoe Mummert for a copy. Apple Butter Order Forms will need to be turned in by Sunday, Oct. 9. **Candy Order Forms will need to be turned in by Sunday, Oct. 23**. We will **set up on Wednesday evening, November 2 at 6:30 pm**. Sign-up sheets are on the table in the Sunday School Room. Candy can be picked up Saturday, Nov. 5 10-12, and Sunday Nov. 6 after church.

Many thanks to Edna Harris for all the time and energy she gave to fulfill her duties as treasurer for the past two years. Edna will be stepping down from treasurer at the end of the year. Prayerfully consider if you feel called to serve in this ministry.

Power Pack Meals: The power pack program has resumed for the 2022-2023 school year. We have been notified that they are now serving 24 children. Please be generous. It is what Jesus would have us do. Please place the items you donate in the gray tote in the Sunday School room. Monetary donations are also accepted, write your check to Solomon's, and put Power Pack in the memo line.

Sign-up Sheets for worship assistants for the rest of the year will be on the side table in the Sunday School room. Communion: bread, set-up, clean-up, and assistant will be on a monthly basis. If you can't commit to the entire month, please see if you can share the month with someone else. Acolytes and Lectors are on a weekly basis. If you find you can't fulfill a chosen date, please call someone to take your place. Let Kimberly in the office know so the bulletin and newsletter info stays up to date. Thank you for your commitment to help provide opportunities for meaningful worship at Solomons. Kimberly will publish the schedule for each month in the newsletter.

Bulletin Announcement Forms are located in both pamphlet racks. Please submit all bulletin announcements to the office by the Wednesday prior to the Sunday for inclusion in the bulletin.

Council Minutes, Monthly Financial Statement and Committee Minutes are available in the library for anyone to read.

OCTOBER 16, 2022
NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Do not lose heart.



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 18:1-8	Parable of the persistent widow
Monday	Genesis 32:22-31	God renames Jacob
Tuesday	2 Timothy 3:14–4:5	Paul’s instruction to Timothy
Wednesday	Psalms 31:19-24	A prayer for protection
Thursday	Ephesians 3:7-13	Paul’s ministry to the Gentiles
Friday	Hebrews 12:1-12	The example of Jesus
Saturday	Psalms 121	Assurance of God’s protection
Sunday	Luke 18:9-14	A Pharisee and tax collector pray

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart.

Luke 18:1 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, for those lives torn by injustice and pain, give us faith to pray always and to trust in you, through Jesus Christ, the one who comes in glory at the end of time. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear Lord, we thank you for the gift of this food and that you neither slumber nor sleep but watch diligently over us to keep us safe. Amen. (Psalm 121:4-8)

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord Jesus keep watch over you and protect you always.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Talk or think about a time when you or someone you know faced something that was unfair.
- What gives you courage to go on when unfairness seems to win time and again?

HYMN OF THE WEEK

Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil



DEVOTIONS

Read: Luke 18:1-8.

Jesus is telling us in this parable: *“Keep the faith; keep praying for the reign of God; don’t become complacent with an unjust world.”* This parable of the persistent widow is a good example of why we should not use Jesus’ parables as analogies comparing God to us. We certainly don’t want to see God as an unjust judge. The point is that if even an unjust judge can give in to the persistence of the widow, how much more will our merciful God listen to and respond to our cries for help. What begins as a call to pray constantly, ends as a focus on faith itself. When Christ, the Son of Man returns, will he see faith on earth? Faith is expressed as a constant prayer to God for the justice and mercy of God.

Discuss: When is a time you have prayed without ceasing for God’s justice and mercy?

Pray: **Come, Lord Jesus, come into our world and into our lives that we may pray without ceasing for your power and justice and not lose heart. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week and the theme, who do you know that is “losing heart” and how can you pray for them?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

In Genesis 32:28 God changes Jacob’s name to *Israel* which means, *“you have striven with God and with humans and have prevailed.”* We don’t often see our lives of faith as wrestling with God, yet that is exactly what God honors and expects from us. This week, question God in your prayers, asking, “Lord, how come . . . ?” Let this questioning of God’s intent be an example of building a strong and trusting relationship with God. Conclude by praying the Lord’s Prayer.