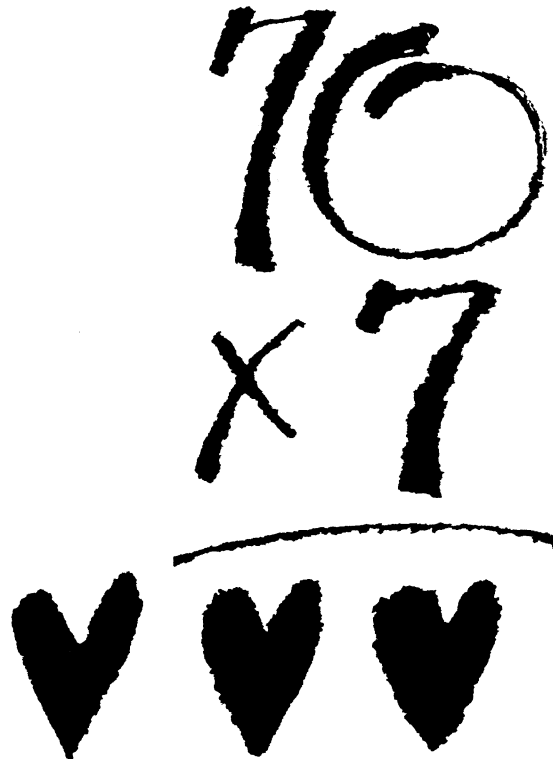


SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
4856 WAYNE ROAD
CHAMBERSBURG, PA 17202
(717) 267-2266

EMAIL: info@solomonslutheran.org
WEB SITE: www.solomonslutheran.org
FACEBOOK SEARCH: Solomon's Lutheran Facebook



MATTHEW 18:22

"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."

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SEPTEMBER 17, 2023

September 17, 2023
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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.

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

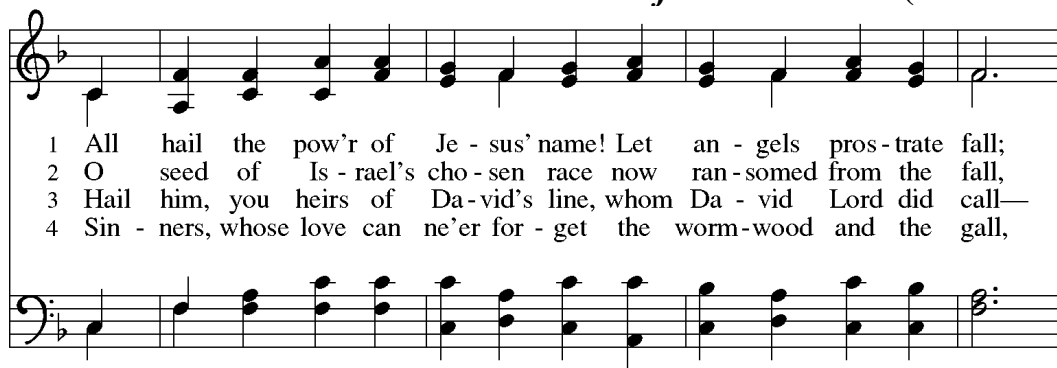
CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

It is in our confession where we realize our desire for God and our hope for God's mercy. It is in admitting the truth of our lives that we take the first step toward wholeness and healing. So let us make our confession, before God and one another.

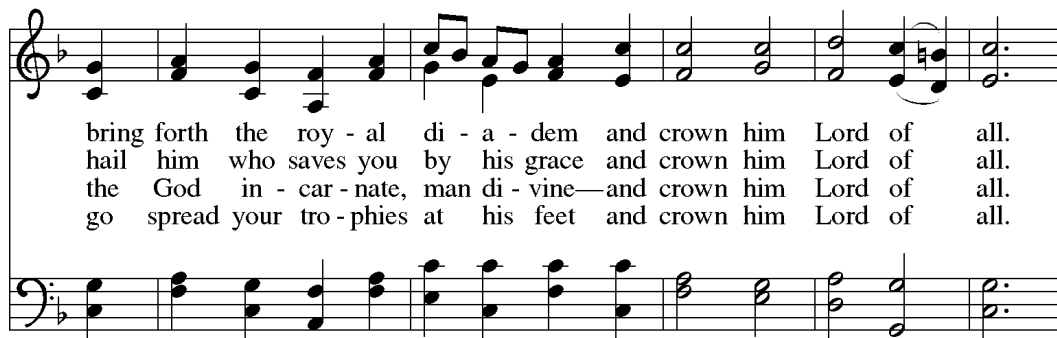
Good and gracious God, we would be saint-like — holy, good, patient, and loving. Yet we end up feeling more like sinners — full of failures of morality, selfish, and mean. Perhaps you see us simply as human — as beloved, and flawed, and trying, sometimes failing and sometimes succeeding. In all of this, forgive the wrong that we have done, and bless the good we have accomplished. Keep on loving us, and helping us, and molding us more and more into the image of Christ, in whose name we pray.

Friends, hear this Good News: the love of God is beyond measure, and you are included in that love. Know that you are forgiven and thus freed to love and serve. **Amen.**

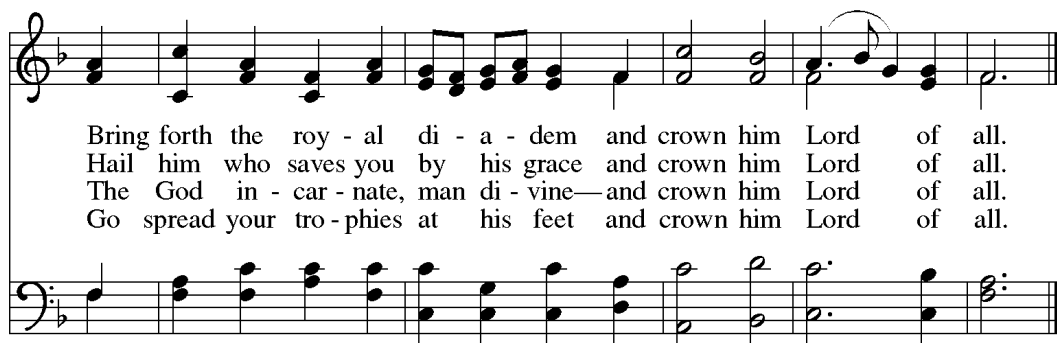
GATHERING SONG *All Hail the Power of Jesus'! Name* (ELW 634)



1 All hail the pow'r of Je - sus' name! Let an - gels pros - trate fall;
2 O seed of Is - rael's cho - sen race now ran - somed from the fall,
3 Hail him, you heirs of Da - vid's line, whom Da - vid Lord did call—
4 Sin - ners, whose love can ne'er for - get the worm - wood and the gall,



bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem and crown him Lord of all.
hail him who saves you by his grace and crown him Lord of all.
the God in - car - nate, man di - vine—and crown him Lord of all.
go spread your tro - phies at his feet and crown him Lord of all.

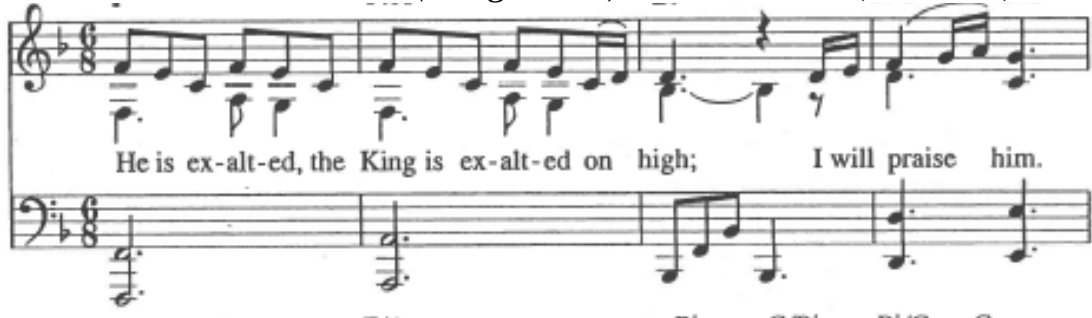


Bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem and crown him Lord of all.
Hail him who saves you by his grace and crown him Lord of all.
The God in - car - nate, man di - vine—and crown him Lord of all.
Go spread your tro - phies at his feet and crown him Lord of all.


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 (Sung Twice) He Is Exalted (W&P 55)



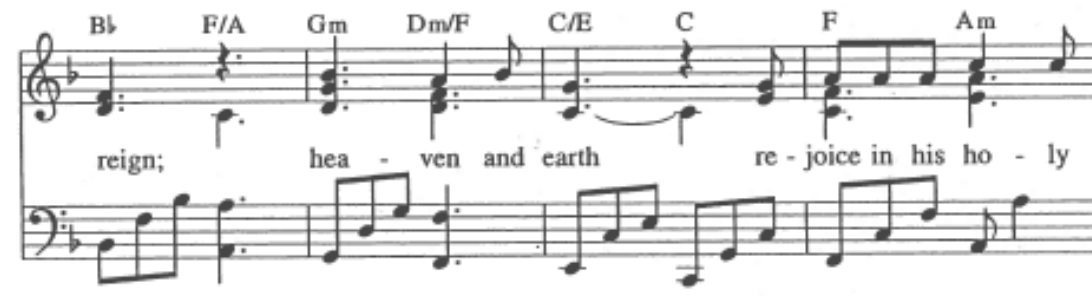
He is ex-alt-ed, the King is ex-alt-ed on high; I will praise him.



He is ex-alt-ed, for-ev-er ex-alt-ed, and I will praise his



name. Je-sus is Lord, for-ev-er his truth shall



reign; hea-ven and earth re-joice in his ho-ly



name. He is ex-alt-ed, the King is ex-alt-ed on high.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

We pray together: **You, gracious God, are love itself, and perfect love casts out fear. Come to us in merciful patience, we pray, to love us from fear to trust, from anger to grace, from doubt to faith. Love us from our self-centeredness to hearts that willingly give themselves in selfless sacrifice and service. Love us out of our scarcity to hearts overflowing with generosity. Love us from brokenness to wholeness, from resentments and forgiveness withheld to forgiveness freely offered just as it has been freely offered to us.**

Come to us, Lord, overwhelming us with your love that we might love as you have first loved us. Amen.

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.

¹⁵Realizing 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?" ¹⁶So 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. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even 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. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13

(Read responsively between lector and congregation, beginning with the lector)

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

²**Bless the LORD, ¹O my soul,
and forget not ¹all God's benefits—**

³who forgives ¹all your sins
and heals all ¹your diseases;

⁴**who redeems your life | from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast | love and mercy;**
⁵who 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.**
⁷You 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;**
⁹you 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.**
¹¹For 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.**
¹³As a father has compassion | for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear | you, O LORD.

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.

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions.
²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those 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. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants 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.

⁵Some 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. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If 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. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why 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. ¹¹For it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.”
¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *Open Our Eyes, Lord* (W&P 113)

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The lyrics are: "O - pen our eyes, Lord; we want to see Je - sus, to reach out and touch him, and say that we love him. O - pen our ears, Lord, and help us to lis - ten. O - pen our eyes, Lord, we want to see Je - sus."

The guitar chords for each line of music are as follows:

- Line 1: D, G², G, Em⁷/A, A⁷
- Line 2: G/D, D, A/C#, Bm, D/A, GM⁹
- Line 3: Em, A⁷, G/D, D², D
- Line 4: DM⁷, A/G, G, Em⁷, A⁷
- Line 5: G/D, D, A, Bm⁷, D/A, GM⁹
- Line 6: Em⁷, A⁷, Em/D, D

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²²Jesus 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. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But 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.’ ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So 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.

Praise to you, O Christ.

MESSAGE

REV. ELAINE DENT

HYMN OF THE DAY *This Is My Father's World* (ELW 824)



1 This is my Fa-ther's world, and to my lis-t'ning ears all
2 This is my Fa-ther's world; the birds their car-ols raise; the
3 This is my Fa-ther's world; oh, let me not for-get that,



na - ture sings, and round me rings the mu - sic of the spheres.
morn - ing light, the lil - y white, de - clare their mak - er's praise.
though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the rul - er yet.



This is my Fa-ther's world; I rest me in the thought of
This is my Fa-ther's world; he shines in all that's fair. In the
This is my Fa-ther's world; why should my heart be sad? The



rocks and trees, of skies and seas; his hand the won - ders wrought.
rus - tling grass I hear him pass; he speaks to me ev-'ry-where.
Lord is king, let heav - en ring; God reigns, let earth be glad!

Text: Maltbie D. Babcock, 1858–1901
Music: TERRA PATRIS, Franklin L. Sheppard, 1852–1930, adapt.

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: Merciful God, C: receive our prayer.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERTORY *Create in Me a Clean Heart (Hopkins) (W&P 35)*

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, that I might serve

you; cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, that

I might be re - newed. So fill me and

heal me, and bring me back to you. Cre -

ate in me a clean heart, O God, that I might serve you.

Chords: C/D mn Dm/C, C⁷ sus C⁷ F C/E C/D Dm Dm/C, Gm F/A F/Bb C F Am⁷ Dm⁷, Am⁷ Dm⁷ Gm⁷ Gm/D C⁷ sus C⁷, F C/E C/D Dm Dm/C Gm F/A F/Bb C F

OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious God, your gifts to us are boundless: **life and liberties, vibrant color and melodious sounds, forgiveness and your divine presence, intelligence and creativity, work and worship, love and compassion.** There is no end to your goodness and generosity toward us, and we thank you. We offer our gifts of time, money and our very selves in response to all you have shared with us, for we always and only give you what is already yours. 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.

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

Receive Jesus fully present in the bread and cup of Holy Communion. Come, eat and find food for your soul.

COMMUNION

Please remain in your seats. The bread and cup will be brought to you by the Pastor and Communion Assistants.

The body of Christ given for you.
The blood of Christ shed for you.

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, grant us peace.

HYMN AFTER COMMUNION *When We Are Living: Pues si vivimos* (ELW 639)



<i>Pues si vi - vi - mos,</i>	<i>pa - ra él vi - vi - mos,</i>
1 When we are liv - ing,	it is in Christ Je - sus,
2 'Mid times of sor - row	and in times of pain,
3 A - cross this wide world,	we shall al - ways find



<i>y si mo - ri - mos</i>	<i>pa - ra él mo - ri - mos.</i>
and when we're dy - ing,	it is in the Lord. . . .
when sens - ing beau - ty	or in love's em - brace,
those who are cry - ing	with no peace of mind;



<i>Sea que vi - va - mos</i>	<i>o que mu - ra - mos,</i>
Both in our liv - ing	and in our dy - ing,
wheth - er we suf - fer,	or sing re - joic - ing,
and when we help them,	or when we feed them,



<i>so - mos del Se - ñor,</i>	<i>so - mos del Se - ñor.</i>
we be - long to God,	we be - long to God.
we be - long to God,	we be - long to God.
we be - long to God,	we be - long to God.

REPRINTED UNDER ONELICENSE #A-71900. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Used by Permission. CCLI #11066173

TABLE BLESSING

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

SONG AFTER COMMUNION *We Rejoice in the Grace of God* (W&P 151)

The musical score is written on five staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and joyful, with lyrics written below each staff. The lyrics are: "We re-joice in the grace of God poured up-on our lives; lov-ing-kind-ness has come to us be-cause of Je-sus Christ. We re-joice in the grace of God, our hearts o-ver-flow. What a joy to know the grace of God!"

We re-joice in the grace of God poured up - on our lives;
lov - ing - kind - ness has come to us be -
cause of Je - sus Christ. We re - joice in the
grace of God, our hearts o - ver - flow.
What a joy to know the grace of God!

Text: Steve Cook and Vicki Cook

Music: WE REJOICE IN THE GRACE, Steve Cook and Vicki Cook

Text and music © 1988 Integrity's Hosanna! Music and PDI Music (ASCAP). All rights reserved. International © secured.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

Used by Permission. CCLI #11066173

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of grace and glory, we are thankful for your abiding presence here and in our lives. Even when we have done something to displease you, you invite us to your table to partake of a banquet only you can host. With a sense of humility, we accept your forgiveness and generous hospitality. We're grateful for the Word and the meal that sustain us like no other. Renewed and strengthened by the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, we will strive to share your hospitality, forgiveness, and love with all we encounter. Amen.

BLESSING

Commitment to following Jesus means relinquishing everything that stands in the way of his coming into your life. Commitment to following Jesus means receiving him on his terms, following in his footsteps. Commitment to following Jesus means going forth as apostles of forgiveness, healing, peace, joy and loving service. God bless you in the name of the Father, the Son (+) and the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

SENDING SONG *Now Thank We All Our God* (ELW 839)



1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voic - es,
2 Oh, may this boun-teous God through all our life be near us,
3 All praise and thanks to God the Fa - ther now be giv - en,



who won-drous things has done, in whom this world re - joic - es;
with ev - er joy - ful hearts and bless - ed peace to cheer us,
the Son, and Spir - it blest, who reign in high - est heav - en,



who, from our moth - ers' arms, has blest us on our way
and keep us all in grace, and guide us when per - plexed,
the one e - ter - nal God, whom earth and heav'n a - dore;



with count-less gifts of love, and still is ours to - day.
and free us from all harm in this world and the next.
for thus it was, is now, and shall be ev - er - more.

SENDING IN SERVICE

Go, loved and forgiven children of God to proclaim Jesus' message of love, joy, peace, and forgiveness. **Thanks be to God!**

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Permission to reprint, podcast, and/or stream the music in this service obtained from ONELICENSE with license #A-719004. All rights reserved.

SERVING TODAY

Pastor	Rev Elaine Dent
Church Office Email Address	office@solomonslutheran.org
Organist	Doug Mummert
Head Usher	Phil Johnson
Acolyte	N/A
Lector.....	Kathy Bowen
Securing Offering.....	Marjorie Dale & Larry Socks
Communion Set-Up.....	Peggi & Wayne Norman
Communion Clean-Up	Peggi & Wayne Norman
Communion Bread	Janice McEntire
Communion Assist.....	Janice McEntire & Peggy Norman
Attendance last Sunday.....	41

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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!

Prayer requests for the following: *Lilly Chiado, Bernie Harris, Phyllis Brehm, Catherine Plummer, Bonnie Hudson, Marty Wenger, Virginia Detwiler, Callie Mummert, Matthew, Lexi and Brooke Bowen, Jim & Carole Darr, Beth Floyd, Sarge and Barb Weaver, Tina Smith, Patricia Yetter, Nancy Marshall, Darrell Veilleux, Linda Wepking, Bill and Jane Brindle, Esther Gift, Jean Jackson, Marjorie McMullin, Joe Mock, Ina Shreiner, Genny Grant, Frances Kramer, Linda Russ, Carol Locke, Betty Amt, Ukrainian Nation, Peace for the World.* If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire. **Please Be Aware:** *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.*

Weekly Calendar Reminders:

September 21 - Choir Practice 7PM

A special thank you to Rev. Elaine Dent for filling in as supply pastor this morning.

Our air-conditioning unit in the Fellowship Center kitchen has become unrepairable and needs to be replaced. We have a quote of approximately \$6600.00 to replace this unit. To make this replacement, we need congregational approval. Please attend a brief meeting on September 24, 2023, immediately following worship services to approve this replacement. Thank you, Ron Coldsmith.

If you are in need of pastoral care, please notify Ron Coldsmith, Council President. Pastor Jane Nicholson, pastor of First Lutheran, Chambersburg, has agreed to provide this care for Solomon's until such time as an interim or settled pastor is called to serve.

Fall Picnic/Campfire: Saturday, September 30, 2023 - In the Church Picnic Woods Starts at 5:00 pm; Eat at 5:30 pm. Menu: Roast your own Hotdogs, Baked Beans, Mac & Cheese; Chips; Watermelon; Roast your own S'mores & Drink.

Solomon's Relay for Life Team: Is having a Hammer & Stain Fundraiser – “Stained Resin Wine Glasses or Metal Tumblers Workshop” on Sunday, October 22, 2023 from 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm at: Hammer & Stain, 31 South Main Street, Chambersburg. Go on-line to register & pay at: hammerstainchambersburg.com. Scroll down on the home page until you see our listing. – “Click on” 10/22/23 Relay for Life Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church Fundraiser; then you pick which item you want to make; pay directly on the site. **Sign-up deadline is October 8, 2023.** If you have any questions please see Becky Mull or Zoe Mummert. Snacks and Water will be provided. Join us for a fun afternoon!

Apple Butter and Candy Order forms are here! Candy Making – Mark your calendars – **Thursday October 26, 2023 & Friday October 27, 2023.** We will be setting up for candy making on Thursday October 26 at 10:00 am. We will be making candy on Friday October 27 at 8:00 am. Apple Butter & Candy Order Forms are in the newsletter and on table in the Sunday School Room. **Apple Butter & Candy orders will need to be turned in by Sunday, October 8, 2023.** Sign-up Sheets are on the bulletin board in the Sunday School Room. Candy can be picked up Saturday Oct. 28th 9:00 – 11:00 am and Sunday Oct. 29th after Church.

Dine To Donate Fundraiser - The SpiriTrust Lutheran Chambersburg Auxiliary invites you to dine out at the Chambersburg Applebee's located at 1050 Wayne Ave, Chambersburg on Monday, September 18th from 4:00 to 8:00PM. Applebee's will donate 20% of your total purchase amount (alcohol not included) to the Auxiliary. All proceeds support SpiriTrust Lutheran, The Village at Luther Ridge and SpiriTrust Lutheran Home Care & Hospice in Franklin County.

Power Pack Meals: The need for nutritious food for New Franklin Elementary School students in need starting in September. Please consider donating individual serving size fruit and vegetable cups, individual packages of mac-n-cheese, Chef Boyardee, 8 oz bottles of water, juice boxes, and yahoo chocolate drink. Monetary donations are accepted as well, please write “power pack meals” in the memo of your check.

SpiriTrust Lutheran Chambersburg auxiliary has discount cards available for \$5.00. Cards are good until Sept. 1, 2024. All proceeds go to support programs at Luther Ridge. Lots of great places to save. See Bonney Coldsmith, Marjorie Dale, Becky Pecha, or Frances Reichard if you'd like to have a card.

Sign-up Sheets for worship assistants for July – December 2023 are on the bulletin board 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 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.

SEPTEMBER 17, 2023
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

God is merciful and gracious, full of love.



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Matthew 18:21-35	A parable about forgiveness
Monday	Genesis 50:15-21	Joseph forgives his brothers
Tuesday	Romans 14:1-12	Do not judge one another
Wednesday	2 John 1:1-6	Truth and love
Thursday	Lamentations 3:18-24	There is still hope
Friday	2 Peter 1:1-11	Do all you can to show God's love
Saturday	Psalms 103:1-13	Thanksgiving for God's goodness
Sunday	Matthew 20:1-16	Parable of the vineyard workers

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Psalm 103:8 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God of mercy and grace, give us hearts full of compassion, ready to forgive others as you have forgiven us through Christ Jesus, who died that we may live. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

God of abundant love, we thank you for this food that you give to us and to all. Help us to share your goodness and mercy with others through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God of mercy and grace who sustains you, give you joy.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- How do you respond when you are in conflict with a particular person or group?
- Jesus sets us free to love others. What does this mean to you?

HYMN OF THE WEEK

The Numberless Gifts of God's Mercies



DEVOTIONS

Read: Romans 14:1-12.

The world is divided in many ways. Countries are divided into parties and loyalties. Families can be divided by strong and diverse views. Even congregations can be divided by different viewpoints. Paul gives us a word that we need to hear today. We are to keep the main thing the main thing, and that is this: Christ died to be the Lord of all. Therefore, why pass judgment and despise those for whom Christ died? As the saying goes, "When you look into the eyes of another, you are looking at someone God loves." Be careful not to judge and condemn. As Psalm 103:8 reminds us, "*The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.*" Our God who is slow to anger should be a strong caution to us not to be quick to judge. Whether it is over diet, piety, political or economic convictions, our judgments will all pass away, but God's judgment is eternal, and that judgment is most clearly seen from the cross of Christ. Jesus died for us that we may be set free to love others, in spite of our differences.

Discuss: What relationship do you have with someone where you could use a kinder word to reconcile that relationship through Christ our Lord?

Pray: **Almighty and living God, help us to see beyond our self-righteous judgments of others and to receive your forgiveness with joy and gladness through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, who in your life can you reach out to with a word or action that expresses forgiveness?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Genesis 50:15-21 is the story of Joseph forgiving his brothers for throwing him in a pit and selling him into slavery. Forgiving someone who has hurt you is not easy. Think or talk about a time when you forgave someone or someone forgave you and how it may have changed your relationship. *Pray:* **Dear Lord, help me to open my heart and mind to know when to forgive and when to ask for forgiveness for my words or actions towards another. In Jesus' name, amen.**