

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

EMAIL: [info@solomonslutheran.org](mailto:info@solomonslutheran.org)  
WEB SITE: [www.solomonslutheran.org](http://www.solomonslutheran.org)  
FACEBOOK SEARCH: Solomon's Lutheran Facebook



*Go on your way*  
carry no purse,  
no bag,  
no sandals

*"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."*

**SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**  
**JULY 27, 2025**

**July 27, 2025**  
Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

*Persistence in prayer is encouraged by Jesus and wins the attention of God when Abraham intercedes for Sodom. The life of the baptized—to be rooted and built up in Christ Jesus—is to be nurtured with prayer. God hears and answers prayer and so strengthens God’s own. “When I called, you answered me; you increased my strength within me.”*

**GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ORGAN PRELUDE**     *Sinfonia* to Cantata No. 156     Johann Sebastian Bach

**LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

In the name of the Father,  
and of the ✙ Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.

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.**

**\*GATHERING SONG *Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven* (ELW 864)**



- 1 Praise, my soul, the God of heav - en; joy - ful - ly your trib-ute bring.
- 2 God be praised for grace and fa - vor to our fore-bears in dis-tress.
- 3 Frail as sum-mer's flow'r we flour - ish, blows the wind and it is gone;
- 4 An - gels sing in ad - o - ra - tion, in God's pres-ence, face to face.



Ran-somed, healed, re - stored, for - giv - en, ev - er - more God's prais-es sing.  
God be praised, the same for - ev - er, slow to chide and swift to bless.  
but, as mor - tals rise and per - ish, God en - dures un - chang - ing on.  
Sun and moon and all cre - a - tion, all who dwell in time and space.



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Prais - es ev - er - last - ing ring!  
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Glo - rious is God's faith - ful - ness!  
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise the great E - ter - nal One!  
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise with us the God of grace!

Text: Henry F. Lyte, 1793–1847; alt. Walter R. Bouman, 1927–2005  
Music: PRAISE, MY SOUL, John Goss, 1800–1880

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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 *Let the Whole Creation Cry* (ELW 876) Verses 1&3**



1 Let the whole cre - a - tion cry, "Glo - ry to the Lord on high!"  
2 Ser - vants striv - ing for the Lord, proph - ets burn - ing with the word,  
3 Men and wom - en, young and old, raise the an - them loud and bold,



Heav'n and earth, a - wake and sing, "Praise to our al - might - y king!"  
those to whom the arts be - long add their voic - es to the song.  
and let chil - dren's hap - py hearts in this wor - ship take their parts;



Praise God, an - gel hosts a - bove, ev - er bright and fair in love;  
Pow'rs of knowl - edge and of law, to the glo - rious cir - cle draw;  
from the north to south - ern pole let the might - y cho - rus roll:



sun and moon, lift up your voice; night and stars, in God re - joice.  
all who work and all who wait, sing, "The Lord is good and great!"  
"Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly One; glo - ry be to God a - lone!"

Text: Stopford A. Brooke, 1832–1916, alt.  
Music: SALZBURG, Jakob Hintze, 1622–1702

**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, you are always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and you gladly give more than we either desire or deserve. Pour upon us your abundant mercy. Forgive us those things that weigh on our conscience, and give us those good things that come only through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**FIRST READING: Genesis 18:20-32**

A reading from Genesis.

*In today's reading, Abraham undertakes the role of a mediator between God and sinful humanity. Appealing to God's justice, Abraham boldly asks for mercy for the city of Sodom for the sake of the few righteous people there, including Abraham's nephew, Lot.*

<sup>20</sup> Then the LORD said, “How great is the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin! <sup>21</sup> I must go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me, and if not, I will know.”

<sup>22</sup> So the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the LORD. <sup>23</sup> Then Abraham came near and said, “Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? <sup>24</sup> Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you then sweep away the place and not forgive it for the fifty righteous who are in it? <sup>25</sup> Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?” <sup>26</sup> And the LORD said, “If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place for their sake.” <sup>27</sup> Abraham answered, “Let me take it upon myself to speak to my lord, I who am but dust and ashes. <sup>28</sup> Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?” And he said, “I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there.” <sup>29</sup> Again he spoke to him, “Suppose forty are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of forty I will not do it.” <sup>30</sup> Then he said, “Oh, do not let my lord be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there.” He answered, “I will not do it, if I find thirty there.” <sup>31</sup> He said, “Let me take it upon myself to speak to my lord. Suppose twenty are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it.” <sup>32</sup> Then he said, “Oh, do not let my lord be angry if I speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.”

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **PSALM: Psalm 138**

*(read responsively between lector and congregation, beginning with the lector)*

<sup>1</sup> I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with <sup>|</sup> my whole heart;  
before the gods I will <sup>|</sup> sing your praise.

<sup>2</sup> **I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name, because of your  
steadfast <sup>|</sup> love and faithfulness;  
for you have glorified your name and your word a- <sup>|</sup> bove all things.**

<sup>3</sup> When I called, you <sup>|</sup> answered me;  
you increased my <sup>|</sup> strength within me.

<sup>4</sup> **All the rulers of the earth will praise <sup>|</sup> you, O LORD,  
when they have heard the words <sup>|</sup> of your mouth.**

<sup>5</sup> They will sing of the ways <sup>|</sup> of the LORD,  
that great is the glory <sup>|</sup> of the LORD.

<sup>6</sup> **The LORD is high, yet cares <sup>|</sup> for the lowly,  
perceiving the haughty <sup>|</sup> from afar.**

<sup>7</sup> Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you <sup>|</sup> keep me safe;  
you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right <sup>|</sup> hand shall  
save me.

<sup>8</sup> You will make good your pur-<sup>1</sup>pose for me;  
O LORD, your steadfast love endures forever; do not abandon the works<sup>1</sup> of your hands.

## SECOND READING: Colossians 2:6-15 [16-19]

A reading from Colossians.

*The writer of this letter warns the congregation in Colossae about “the empty lure” of philosophies and traditions that compromise faith. Through the gift of faith, the church is mystically connected with Christ in his death and resurrection which is enacted in baptism.*

<sup>6</sup> As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, <sup>7</sup> rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

<sup>8</sup> Watch out that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental principles of the world, and not according to Christ. <sup>9</sup> For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, <sup>10</sup> and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority. <sup>11</sup> In him also you were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision, by the removal of the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ; <sup>12</sup> when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. <sup>13</sup> And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, <sup>14</sup> erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it. [

<sup>16</sup> Therefore, do not let anyone condemn you in matters of food or drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or Sabbaths. <sup>17</sup> These are only a shadow of what is to come, but the body belongs to Christ. <sup>18</sup> Do not let anyone disqualify you, insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, initiatory visions, puffed up without cause by a human way of thinking, <sup>19</sup> and not holding fast to the head, from whom the whole body, nourished and held together by its ligaments and tendons, grows with a growth that is from God.]

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 205)**



**GOSPEL: Luke 11:1-13**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*In teaching his disciples this prayer, Jesus also reminds them to focus on God's coming reign, God's mercy, and the strengthening of the community. Jesus encourages his disciples to childlike trust and persistence in prayer.*

<sup>1</sup> [Jesus] was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."<sup>2</sup> So he said to them, "When you pray, say:

Father, may your name be revered as holy.

May your kingdom come.

<sup>3</sup> Give us each day our daily bread.

<sup>4</sup> And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial."

<sup>5</sup> And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread,' <sup>6</sup> for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.' <sup>7</sup> And he answers from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' <sup>8</sup> I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything out of friendship, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

<sup>9</sup> "So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. <sup>11</sup> Is there anyone among you who, if your child asked for a fish, would give a snake instead of a fish? <sup>12</sup> Or if

the child asked for an egg, would give a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If you, then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

The gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON** Rev. Alan Wilson

**\*Please stand as you are able for the final verse**

**HYMN OF THE DAY** *Lord, Teach Us How to Pray Aright* (ELW 745)



- 1 Lord, teach us how to pray a - right, with rev - 'rence and with fear.
- 2 We per - ish if we cease from prayer; oh, grant us pow'r to pray.
- 3 Give deep hu - mil - i - ty; the sense of god - ly sor - row give;
- 4 Faith in the on - ly sac - ri - fice that can for sin a - tone;
- 5 Give these, and then your will be done; thus strength-ened with all might,



Though dust and ash - es in your sight, we may, we must draw near.  
And when to meet you we pre - pare, Lord, meet us on our way.  
a strong de - sire, with con - fi - dence, to hear your voice and live;  
to cast our hopes, to fix our eyes on Christ, on Christ a - lone.  
we, through your Spir - it and your Son, shall pray, and pray a - right.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt.  
Music: SONG 67, Orlando Gibbons, 1583–1625

**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: God of grace, C: hear our prayer.*

**\*PEACE**

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

**\*OFFERTORY** *We Are an Offering* (ELW 692)

We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you: we are an  
of-fer-ing. Lord, use our voices, Lord, use our hands, Lord, use our  
lives, they are yours: we are an of-fer-ing. All that we have, all that we are,  
all that we hope to be, we give to you, we give to you.  
We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you:  
we are an of-fer-ing, we are an of-fer-ing.

## **\*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.**

## **\*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 *Holy, Holy, Holy: Santo, santo, santo* (ACS 1089)**



Text: Traditional; English text, hymnal version  
Music: ARGENTINE SANTO, Argentine traditional  
English text © 2020 Augsburg Fortress

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**\*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**

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

## **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 basket. Gluten free wafers are available, ask the Pastor when you come forward. Notify the Head Usher if you would appreciate receiving Communion at your seat rather than walking up to the altar, the Pastor and Communion Assistant will be happy to bring Communion to you.*

## COMMUNION SONG *Come to the Table* (ELW 481)



Come to the ta - ble of mer - cy, pre - pared with the wine and the bread.



All who are hun - gry and thirst - y, come, and your souls will be fed.



Come at the Lord's in - vi - ta - tion; re - ceive from his nail - scarred hand.



Eat of the bread of sal - va - tion; drink of the blood of the Lamb.

Text: Claire Cloninger, b. 1942

Music: COME TO THE TABLE, Martin J. Nystrom, b. 1956

Text and music © 1991 Integrity's Hosanna! Music: Juniper Landing Music, admin. Word Music; and Word Music.

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## COMMUNION HYMN *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* (ELW 742)



- 1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
- 2 Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y - where?
- 3 Are we weak and heav - y - lad - en, cum - bered with a load of care?



What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!  
We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged—take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge—take it to the Lord in prayer.



Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit; oh, what need - less pain we bear—  
Can we find a friend so faith - ful who will all our sor - row share?  
Do your friends de - spise, for - sake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.



all be - cause we do not car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!  
Je - sus knows our ev - 'ry weak - ness—take it to the Lord in prayer.  
In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a so - lace there.

## \*COMMUNION BLESSING

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

## POST COMMUNION HYMN *Come with Us, O Blessed Jesus* (ELW 501)



Come with us, O bless - ed Je - sus, with us ev - er - more to be.



And, in leav - ing now thine al - tar, let us nev - er - more leave thee!



Let thy bright ce - les - tial cho - rus nev - er cease the heav'n - ly strain;



but in us, thy lov - ing chil - dren, come with peace, good will to reign.

Text: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891

Music: WERDE MUNTER, Johann Schop, 1600–1665

## \*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.**

## \*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.**

**\*SENDING SONG *Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing* (ELW 545)**



1 Lord, dis - miss us with your bless-ing, fill our hearts with joy and peace;  
2 Thanks we give and ad - o - ra - tion for your gos - pel's joy - ful sound.  
3 Sav - ior, when your love shall call us from our strug - gling pil - grim way,



let us each, your love pos - sess-ing, tri - umph in re - deem-ing grace.  
May the fruits of your sal - va - tion in our hearts and lives a - bound.  
let no fear of death ap - pall us, glad your sum - mons to o - bey.



Oh, re - fresh us; oh, re - fresh us, trav - 'ling through this wil - der-ness.  
Ev - er faith-ful, ev - er faith-ful to your truth may we be found.  
May we ev - er, may we ev - er reign with you in end-less day.

Text: attr. John Fawcett, 1740–1817, sts. 1–2, alt.; Godfrey Thring, 1823–1903, st. 3, alt.

Music: SICILIAN MARINERS, Sicilian, 18th cent.

**\*DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Live by the Spirit.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLES/SILENT PRAYER**

**POSTLUDE**      *Fugue in C Major*      Johann Sebastian Bach

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## SERVING TODAY

Supply Pastor.....Rev. Alan Wilson  
Church Office Email Address .....[office@solomonslutheran.org](mailto:office@solomonslutheran.org)  
Organist .....Mary-Jo Bedsworth  
Head Usher..... Marjorie Dale  
Acolyte ..... Aaron Shreiner  
Lector..... Martie Veilleux  
Securing Offering.....Marjorie Dale & Becky Mull  
Communion Set-Up..... Marjorie Dale  
Communion Clean-Up ..... Marjorie Dale  
Communion Bread ..... Marjorie Dale  
Communion Assist..... Martie Veilleux  
Attendance last Sunday.....28

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The altar flowers** this morning are placed to the Glory of God in honor of Rich McEntire's 79<sup>th</sup> birthday on July 28, 2025, given by Janice and family.

**Please welcome Rev. Alan Wilson** with a warm "thank you" for preaching this morning.

**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** *Nancy Deardorff, Susie Bingaman, Patsy Wildeson, Glenn Wildeson, James Bersch, Evelyn Gomez, Kristen Hardman, Brandan DeShong, Kaitlyn Dovey, Charles Carl, Marty Wenger, Don Wildeson, Nancy Marshall, Betty Amt, our world & country, Debbie Aschmann, Donna, Karen, Chuck Bedsworth, Linda Mumaugh, Katy Klutz, Becky Ensinger, and all the Homebound. If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire, 717-264-3702.*

**Please Be Aware:** *We wish to be a praying congregation, and especially for those who are sick or experiencing difficult times. We will continue to name person's (first name only) aloud each Sunday, and we will hold each name for a month. In order to keep our list updated we ask that by the final Thursday of the month, but please call Janice McEntire 717 264-3702 to keep the name on for an extra month. Any name can remain for as long as desired, but we need to hear from the person adding the name, or we will presume the name can be removed. Thank you for your understanding.*



**Hymn Sing request forms** are located on the Sign-up table in the Sunday School room or see Mary-Jo Bedsworth and tell her your favorite hymn.

**Pastoral Coverage in Time of Emergency** - Until Pastor Julia Brown begins her interim work here on November 3, the Congregation Council and Pastor Mike have agreed that Pastor Mike will cover pastoral emergencies such as hospital visits, funerals or other types of pastoral care, when he is available. Please still let Ron Coldsmith or Janice McEntire or the church office (or Pastor Mike directly) be aware of such situations.

**There's nothing like an adult bible class to get the Holy Spirit working for you.** So please consider attending on Sundays at 9am prior to the church service. The subject will be on how ethics have been replaced by rules in today's society and the need to reverse this.

**Power Pack Meals** - We will not be collecting food during June or July. The program will resume in August for the 2025-2026 school year. **Beginning in August**, please place the items you donate in the 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.

**Please note that you will no longer receive a 6 month contribution letter.** If you would like to have one, please contact Janice McEntire.

**If you are not taking your altar flowers home**, please let Kathy Bowen know to whom or to where you would like them donated. Thanks.

**The 2025 Chart for Altar flowers is on the table in the Sunday School room.** The cost of the two vases will be \$60.00 per week. You will continue to provide Kimberly with the information for the bulletin prior to the week before the Sunday you choose. Include the cost of \$60.00 with the bulletin information.

**The 2025 sign-up charts for Acolyte, Lector etc. are on the table in the Sunday School room.** Please sign up for as many as you can.

**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.

## Music Notes/Hymn Notes:

Our gathering hymn this morning, “Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven,” was written by Henry Lyte, one of England’s greatest hymnists. For 23 years he served as a pastor at a local church in Brixham. In spite of frail health and weak lungs, Lyte established a Sunday School of 800 children in Brixham. In addition to preaching and serving his church, Lyte wrote hymns and ministered to sailors on the docks. In 1884, he published a small book that included this hymn, based on Psalm 103. Queen Elizabeth II used this hymn for her wedding hymn in Westminster Abbey on November 20, 1947. In his early fifties, Lyte realized his lung issues had deteriorated to tuberculosis, and after preaching his last sermon on September 4, 1847, he walked over the grounds of his home and worked on his hymn, “Abide with Me.” He died on November 20, 1847 and is buried in Nice. (Then Sings My Soul: Robert J. Morgan; page 63). Today’s communion hymn is “What a Friend We Have in Jesus.” The author of the text was Joseph M. Scriven whose life was hard and filled with tragedy. On the eve of his wedding, his fiancée died tragically. He moved to Canada from Ireland, and again, lost a second fiancée from a sudden illness. Shortly after moving to Canada, he wrote the text to “What a Friend” to send to his mother back in Ireland to comfort her in a time of sorrow. After its publication, a neighbor asked Scriven if he really did write it and he replied, “The Lord and I did it between us” (*Lutheran Hymnal Handbook*). As one of the best known and well-loved hymns of comfort, it is certain that the Lord used Scriven to bless many in their own time of sorrow. (Hymnary.org)

Tomorrow, July 28, 2025, marks the 275<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Johann Sebastian Bach. His death on July 28, 1750, is attributed to complications due to unsuccessful eye surgery, leading to a stroke and high fever. Bach was born in 1685 into an already accomplished musical family. He married twice and was the father of 20 children, only 10 who survived to adulthood. Today, his work is regarded as among the finest of mature baroque music (c. 1600-1750). More famous as an organist than as a composer in his own lifetime, Bach's rich legacy encompasses sacred and secular works, notably cantatas, of which 209 have survived to this day, organ pieces, and concertos which influenced many later composers. Today, we recognize and honor the genius of Bach and his contributions to church music, especially to the Lutheran Church. Bach harmonized many chorales, but sadly only 8 are included in our current ELW hymnal. If time permits during communion distribution, some of these will be played today.

Today’s prelude is *Sinfonia* from Cantata #156, written for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany in 1729. The postlude, *Fugue in C Major*, is part of his Eight Little Preludes and Fugues, written during his early years, commonly referred to as his youthful period, while he was court organist at Weimar. ([www.worldhistory.org](http://www.worldhistory.org); [chambermusicsociety.org](http://chambermusicsociety.org); [www.biography.com](http://www.biography.com); and *Eight Little Preludes and Fugues*, Caspar Koch).

One additional note, the Canticle of Praise and the Post Communion hymn we sing today are both Bach harmonizations included in our current ELW hymnal.