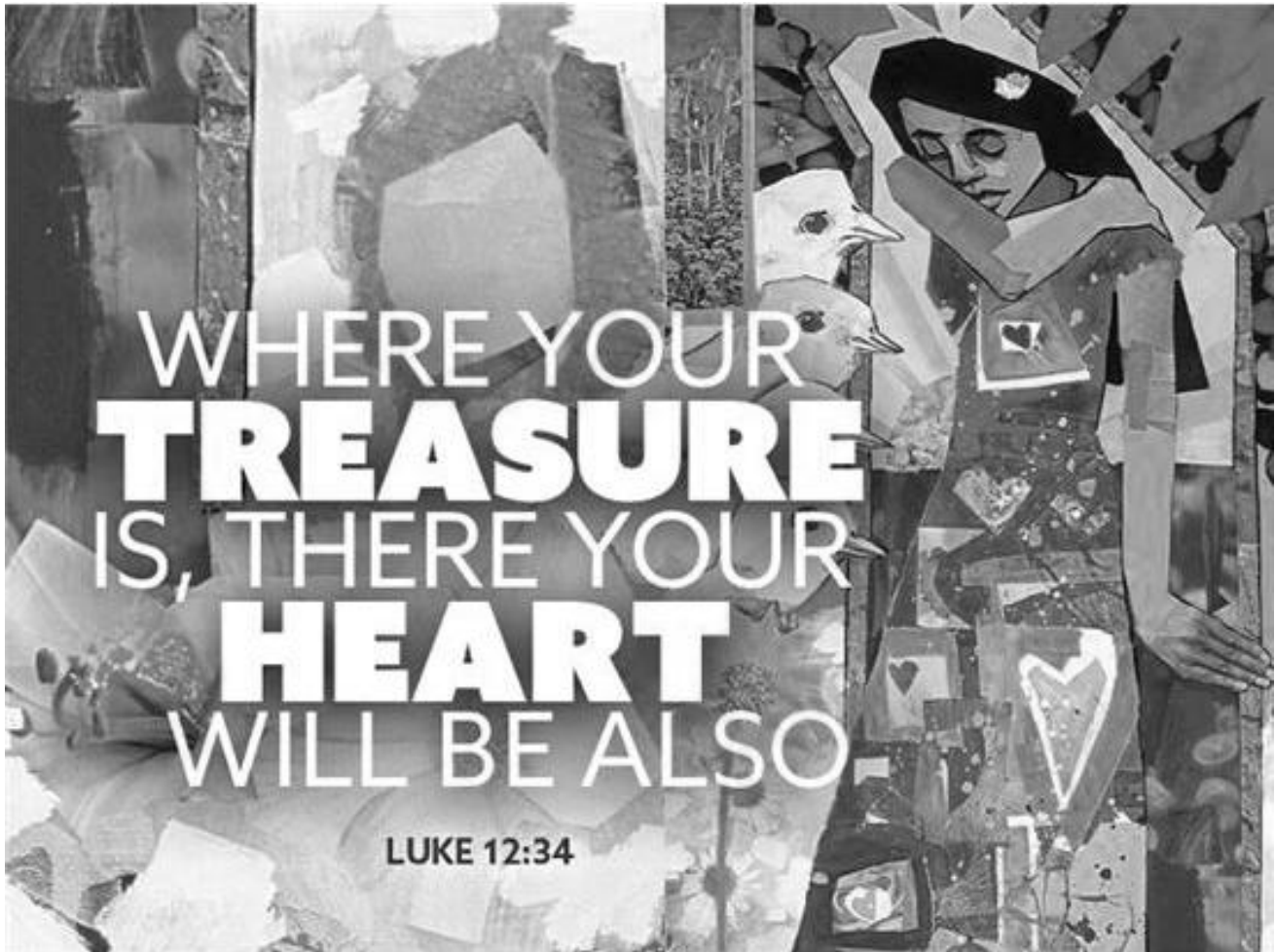


**SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**4856 WAYNE ROAD**  
**CHAMBERSBURG, PA 17202**  
**(717) 267-2266**

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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."*

**NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**  
**AUGUST 10, 2025**

**August 10, 2025**  
**Ninth Sunday after Pentecost**

*Jesus says, “It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” It is God’s promise from the beginning—to Abraham, to the early church, and to the “little flock” of which we are a part in today’s assembly. Faith, God’s baptismal gift, trusts the promises of God. Have no fear.*

**GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ORGAN PRELUDE**     *Improvisation on “Holy Manna” - David Lasky*

**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 *God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens* (ELW 771)**



1 God, who stretched the span - gled heav - ens in - fi - nite in time and place,  
2 We have ven - tured worlds un - dreamed of since the child-hood of our race;  
3 As each far ho - ri - zon beck - ons, may it chal-lenge us a - new:



flung the suns in burn-ing ra - diance through the si - lent fields of space:  
known the ec - sta - sy of wing-ing through un - trav-eled realms of space;  
chil - dren of cre - a - tive pur - pose, serv - ing oth - ers, hon - 'ring you.



we, your chil - dren in your like-ness, share in - ven - tive pow'rs with you;  
probed the se - crets of the at - om, yield-ing un - i - mag - ined pow'r,  
May our dreams prove rich with prom-ise; each en-deav-or well be - gun;



great Cre - a - tor, still cre - at - ing, show us what we yet may do.  
fac - ing us with life's de - struc - tion or our most tri - um-phat hour.  
great Cre - a - tor, give us guid - ance till our goals and yours are one.

Text: Catherine Cameron, b. 1927

Music: HOLY MANNA, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

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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 *Holy God, We Praise Your Name* (ELW 414) Verses 1 & 4**



1 Ho - ly God, we praise your name; Lord of all, we  
 2 Hark! The glad ce - les - tial hymn an - gel choirs a -  
 3 Lo, the ap - os - tol - ic train join your sa - cred  
 4 Ho - ly Fa - ther, ho - ly Son, Ho - ly Spir - it,



bow be - fore you. All on earth your scep - ter claim,  
 bove are rais - ing; cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim,  
 name to hal - low; proph - ets swell the glad re - frain,  
 three we name you, though in es - sence on - ly one;



all in heav'n a - bove a - dore you. In - fi - nite your  
 in un - ceas - ing cho - rus prais - ing, fill the heav'ns with  
 and the white-robed mar - tyrs fol - low; and from morn to  
 un - di - vid - ed God we claim you and, a - dor - ing,



vast do - main, ev - er - last - ing is your reign.  
 sweet ac - cord: "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord!"  
 set of sun through the church the song goes on.  
 bend the knee while we own the mys - ter - y.

Text: source unknown; tr. Clarence A. Walworth, 1820–1900  
 Music: GROSSER GOTT, *Katholisches Gesangbuch*, Vienna, 1774

**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your church. Open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may be ready to receive you wherever you appear, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**SOLO**    *Draw Near to Me (Bist du bei mir)*    -    Johann Sebastian Bach

***Draw Near to Me (Bist du bei mir)***

Draw near to me! Thee would I follow,  
Wherever Thou shalt lead me, Lord,  
My mind and heart are stayed on Thee.  
Though storms arise, Thou art beside me,  
No darkness can dispel thy light,  
Through Thee alone mine eyes shall see.  
In Thee I dwell, My Guide and Father.  
Though raging tempest surge around me,  
My joy and shelter Thou shalt be.  
Thy face I see; Thy voice is saying,  
"When troubled waters would o'ercome thee, I am forever at thy side."  
Then would I die, Dying victorious!  
In death or life I shall not fear! I know my soul shall rest in Thee.

**FIRST READING: Genesis 15:1-6**

A reading from Genesis.

*God promises childless and aging Abram that a child of his own will be his heir and that his descendants will number as many as the stars. Abram trusts God's promise, and through this faith he is considered righteous.*

<sup>1</sup> After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." <sup>2</sup> But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" <sup>3</sup> And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." <sup>4</sup> But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." <sup>5</sup> He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." <sup>6</sup> And he believed the LORD, and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM: Psalm 33:12-22

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

- <sup>12</sup> Happy is the nation whose God <sup>|</sup> is the LORD!  
Happy the people chosen to <sup>|</sup> be God's heritage!
- <sup>13</sup> **The LORD looks <sup>|</sup> down from heaven,  
and sees all <sup>|</sup> humankind.**
- <sup>14</sup> God sits firmly en- <sup>|</sup> throned and watches  
all who dwell <sup>|</sup> on the earth.
- <sup>15</sup> **God fashions <sup>|</sup> all their hearts  
and observes <sup>|</sup> all their deeds.**
- <sup>16</sup> A king is not saved by the size <sup>|</sup> of the army,  
nor are warriors rescued by <sup>|</sup> their great strength.
- <sup>17</sup> **The horse gives vain <sup>|</sup> hope for victory;  
despite its great strength it <sup>|</sup> cannot save.**
- <sup>18</sup> Truly, your eye is upon those who fear <sup>|</sup> you, O LORD,  
upon those who wait for your <sup>|</sup> steadfast love,
- <sup>19</sup> **to deliver their <sup>|</sup> lives from death,  
and to keep them alive in <sup>|</sup> time of famine.**
- <sup>20</sup> Our innermost being waits for <sup>|</sup> you, O LORD,  
our helper <sup>|</sup> and our shield.
- <sup>21</sup> **Surely, our heart rejoic- <sup>|</sup> es in you,  
for in your holy name we <sup>|</sup> put our trust.**
- <sup>22</sup> Let your lovingkindness, O LORD, <sup>|</sup> be upon us,  
even as we place our <sup>|</sup> hope in you.

## SECOND READING: Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

A reading from Hebrews.

*Abraham and Sarah exemplify the vision of faith that people of God enact in every age. Their hope and trust in God's promise allowed them to face an unknown future and to receive the promise of God.*

<sup>1</sup> Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. <sup>2</sup> Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. <sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

<sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance, and he set out, not knowing where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. <sup>10</sup> For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. <sup>11</sup> By faith, with Sarah's involvement, he received power of procreation, even though he was too old, because he considered himself faithful who had promised. <sup>12</sup> Therefore from one person, and

this one as good as dead, descendants were born, “as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.”

<sup>13</sup> All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, <sup>14</sup> for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. <sup>15</sup> If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> But as it is, they desire a better homeland, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *Halle, Halle, Hallelujah* (ELW 172)**



Music: Caribbean traditional

**GOSPEL: Luke 12:32-40**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus encourages disciples to invest their hearts and live fully into God's reign. Instead of facing life with fear, those who know God's generosity are always ready to receive from God and to give to others.*

[Jesus said:] <sup>32</sup> “Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. <sup>33</sup> Sell your possessions and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. <sup>34</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

<sup>35</sup> “Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; <sup>36</sup> be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. <sup>37</sup> Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. <sup>38</sup> If he comes during the middle of the night or near dawn

and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

<sup>39</sup> “But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. <sup>40</sup> You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

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** *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* (ELW 733)



1 Great is thy faith - ful - ness, O God my Fa - ther; there is no  
2 Sum - mer and win - ter and spring - time and har - vest, sun, moon, and  
3 Par - don for sin and a peace that en - dur - eth, thine own dear



shad - ow of turn - ing with thee; thou chang - est not, thy com -  
stars in their cours - es a - bove join with all na - ture in  
pres - ence to cheer and to guide; strength for to - day and bright



pas - sions they fail not; as thou hast been, thou for - ev - er wilt be.  
man - i - fold wit - ness to thy great faith - ful - ness, mer - cy, and love.  
hope for to - mor - row, bless - ings all mine, with ten thou - sand be - side!

*Refrain*



Great is thy faith - ful - ness! Great is thy faith - ful - ness! Morn - ing by



morn - ing new mer - cies I see; all I have need - ed thy



hand hath pro - vid - ed; great is thy faith - ful - ness, Lord, un - to me.

Text: Thomas O. Chisholm, 1866–1960

Music: FAITHFULNESS, William M. Runyan, 1870–1957

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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: 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)**

The musical score is written on six staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. The music is in treble clef and 3/4 time. There are several triplets marked with a '3' over the notes. The lyrics are: We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering. Lord, use our voices, Lord, use our hands, Lord, use our lives, they are yours: we are an offering. 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 offering, we are an offering.

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)

San - to, san - to, san - to, oh Dios del u - ni - ver - so:  
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God of might and mer - cy,

. . . lle-nos es-tán el cie - lo y la tie - rra de tu glo - ria.  
your glo - ry fills all heav-en and earth. . . You are ho - ly, God.

Ben - di - to el que vie - ne en nom - bre del Se - ñor. . .  
. . . Bless - ed be the Sav-ior, the one who comes in your name.

Ho - san - na en el cie - lo. San - to\_e-res, oh Dios.  
Ho - san - na in the high - est. You are ho - ly, God.

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

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## COMMUNION HYMN *O Master, Let Me Walk with You* (ELW 818)



1 O Mas - ter, let me walk with you in low - ly  
2 Help me the slow of heart to move by some clear,  
3 Teach me your pa - tience; share with me a clos - er,  
4 In hope that sends a shin - ing ray far down the



paths of ser - vice true; tell me your se - cret;  
win - ning word of love; teach me the way - ward  
dear - er com - pa - ny, in work that keeps faith  
fu - ture's broad - 'ning way, in peace that on - ly



help me bear the strain of toil, the fret of care.  
feet to stay, and guide them in the home - ward way.  
sweet and strong, in trust that tri - umphs o - ver wrong,  
you can give; with you, O Mas - ter, let me live.

Text: Washington Gladden, 1836–1918, alt.  
Music: MARYTON, H. Percy Smith, 1825–1898

### \*COMMUNION BLESSING

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

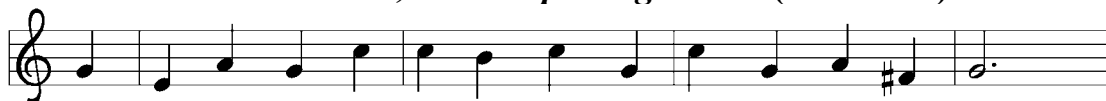
### \*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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 *O God, Our Help in Ages Past* (ELW 632)**



- 1 O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,  
2 Un - der the shad - ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se - cure;  
3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood or earth re - ceived its frame,  
4 A thou - sand a - ges in your sight are like an eve - ning gone,



our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:  
suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.  
from ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same.  
short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

- 5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,  
bears all our years away;  
they fly forgotten, as a dream  
dies at the op'ning day.
- 6 O God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
still be our guard while troubles last  
and our eternal home.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.

Music: ST. ANNE, William Croft, 1678–1727

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**\*DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Live by the Spirit.  
**Thanks be to God.**

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

**POSTLUDE**      *O God, Our Help in Ages Past* - Heinrich Fleischer

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## SERVING TODAY

Supply Pastor.....	Rev. Michael Allwein
Church Office Email Address .....	<a href="mailto:office@solomonslutheran.org">office@solomonslutheran.org</a>
Organist .....	Mary-Jo Bedsworth
Head Usher .....	Frances Reichard
Acolyte .....	Wayne Dale
Lector.....	Janice McEntire
Securing Offering.....	Frances Reichard & Kathy Bowen
Communion Set-Up.....	Janice McEntire & Becky Pecha
Communion Clean-Up .....	Janice McEntire & Becky Pecha
Communion Bread .....	Janice McEntire
Communion Assist.....	Martie Veilleux
Attendance last Sunday.....	32

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The altar flowers** this morning are placed to the Glory of God in honor of Donna Heisey, our daughter given by Donald and Virginia Detwiler.

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

**At Mary-Jo's invitation, Audrey Shenberger will be offering special music this morning, accompanied by her mother, Heidi.** She will be singing an English translation of the J.S. Bach composition, "Bist du bei mir," written in 1725, with the English sacred text added later by Margaret Bristol. Audrey is grateful to share in worship this morning, and grateful for all the love and support she has received from Solomon's over the years! Audrey graduated from Shalom Christian Academy in the spring, and will be leaving the area later this month to begin her studies at Patrick Henry College in Purcellville, VA. Audrey received a music scholarship for voice, and will be pursuing a Minor in Music. She has not yet declared a major, but is considering International Politics and Policy, Journalism, and Strategic Intelligence as options. Thank you, Audrey for sharing your talent with us this morning...and thank you Heidi for accompanying her.

**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.*

**Weekly Calendar Reminders:**

August 10 - Adult Bible Class 9am

11 Council 7pm

12 Christian Ed 7pm

**“God’s Work. Our Hands” Sunday is Rally Day September 7.** Solomon’s is participating with thousands of other congregations across the country to serve our communities on “*God’s Work. Our Hands*” Sunday. Join Social Ministry in the Fellowship Center immediately following worship to assemble the world relief personal care kits.

**Power Pack Meals:** Beginning this month, we are once again collecting nutritious food for New Franklin Elementary School students in need during the 2025-2026 school year. Please place the items you donate in the tote in the Sunday School room. If you would like to give a monetary donation, please make your check payable to Solomon’s Lutheran Church and put Power Pack Meals in the memo of your check.

**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.

**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 Hymn of the Day this morning, "Great Is Thy Faithfulness," was written by Thomas Chisholm, who was born in Kentucky in 1866. He lived a pretty unremarkable life, working as a school teacher, a newspaper editor, an insurance agent, and also doing evangelistic work. Through all sorts of ups and downs in his life, including on-going health problems, he discovered new blessings from God every morning. The 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter of Lamentations became special to him: "His compassions fail not. They are new ever morning; Great is Your faithfulness." Unlike many hymns that have heart-wrenching stories behind them, "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" is inspired by the simple realization that God is at work in our lives on a daily basis. Chisholm wrote, "My income has not been large at any time due to impaired health. I must not fail to record here the unfailing faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God, who has given me many wonderful displays of His providing care, for which I am filled with astonishing gratefulness." The hymn reminds us that God doesn't only work in dramatic or miraculous ways, but also in simple, everyday ways. It also reminds us that Jesus has never failed us in the past, so we have no reason to doubt his faithfulness in the future. Chisholm spent his retirement years at the Methodist Home for the Aged in New Jersey, where he died in 1960, having written 1200 poems and hymns during his lifetime. (Hymnary.org; *Then Sings My Soul*: Morgan, pg. 285).

Isaiah 41:9-10 says, "I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you. I said, 'You are my servant'; I have chosen you and have not rejected you. So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." No matter our situation, no matter our struggles and fears, no matter doubts, we are told to have courage, for the Lord is our God. And as Isaac Watts writes so powerfully in our sending hymn, "O God, Our Help in Ages Past," our God is everlasting, and will be our help through all of our years. The very first verse gives us every assurance we need: God is our help, our hope, and our home. This does not simply dismiss our fears and troubles. They are, and always will be, very real. But it does assure us that even if we cannot feel the immediate comfort, or even when all we can do is grieve, we have a God that withstands the storms of life and the tests of time, and who protects us and hears our cries. (Hymnary.org).