

THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Sunday, September 13, 2026

9:30 AM

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Welcome to ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

We are happy you have joined us for worship today. Wherever you are on your journey with or toward God, you are welcome here—you are a blessing to this assembly. We welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or relationship status.

We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Christ.

Lutherans believe, teach, and confess that in, with, and under the bread and wine in Holy Communion we receive the true Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation. All who are drawn in faith are welcome to join in this confession and receive the Sacrament.

We invite and encourage your full participation in our worship this morning. With this service bulletin you can follow and participate in this morning's liturgy.

New to St. Paul? If you have questions or want more information, please fill out a newcomer form with the QR code at the right. Questions about transferring membership from another Lutheran church, or for beginning the process for baptism, confirmation, membership, or transferring from one of the other Christian traditions, may be directed to the Church Office at 781-646-7773 or parishadmin@stpaularlington.org.



SUNDAY SERVICE

9:30am | Holy Communion & livestreamed

10:30am | Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall or outdoors

LIVESTREAMING

Worship is streamed on our Facebook page StPaulArlingtonMA. A Facebook account is not necessary to stream, but without a Facebook account the stream works on a computer browser only and not on a phone.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY TODAY

Marie Breitenbach and

Jennifer Parker, *Altar Guild*

Eric Carlson, *Lector*

Sandy Walker, *Assisting Minister*

Mat Carter, *Livestream Broadcast Team*

Peter Schmidt and Lisa Chiulli Lay, *Coffee Guild*



*When the instruction for standing * appears, please stand as you are able and as seems comfortable. At the ☒, you may make the sign of the cross, which reminds us of our baptism. The congregational responses are printed in **bold**.*

GATHERING

PRELUDE

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose compassion endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your lovingkindness. In your great mercy, wash away our iniquity and cleanse us from our sin.

Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Do not remove us from your presence; do not take your Spirit away.

Restore to us the joy of your salvation, and sustain us with your Spirit. Amen.

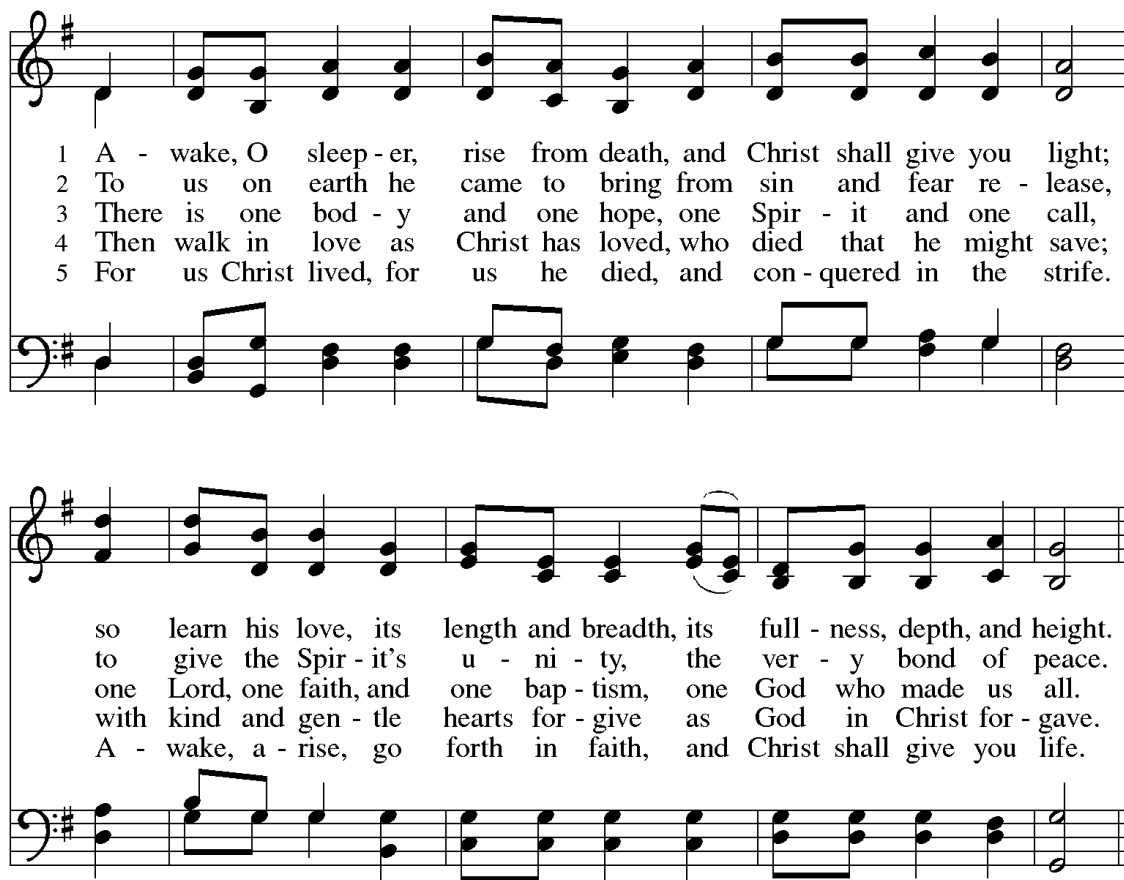
God is merciful and gracious, granting forgiveness through Jesus Christ to all who confess their sin. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sin, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

*** GATHERING HYMN**

“Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death”

ELW 452



1 A - wake, O sleep - er, rise from death, and Christ shall give you light;
 2 To us on earth he came to bring from sin and fear re - lease,
 3 There is one bod - y and one hope, one Spir - it and one call,
 4 Then walk in love as Christ has loved, who died that he might save;
 5 For us Christ lived, for us he died, and con - quered in the strife.

so learn his love, its length and breadth, its full - ness, depth, and height.
 to give the Spir - it's u - ni - ty, the ver - y bond of peace.
 one Lord, one faith, and one bap - tism, one God who made us all.
 with kind and gen - tle hearts for - give as God in Christ for - gave.
 A - wake, a - rise, go forth in faith, and Christ shall give you life.

*** 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.**

*** KYRIE**

Refrain

Assistant: *Congregation:*



In peace, in peace, let us pray to the Lord, have mer-cy,

to Verses

Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy.

Assistant: For the Reign of God, and for peace throughout the world, for the unity of all . . . (to Refrain)

Assistant: For your people here, who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your Word . . . (to Refrain)

Assistant:



Help, save and de - fend us, O

Congregation:



God. A - men.

* HYMN OF PRAISE

Refrain



Now the feast and cel - e - bra-tion, all of cre - a - tion

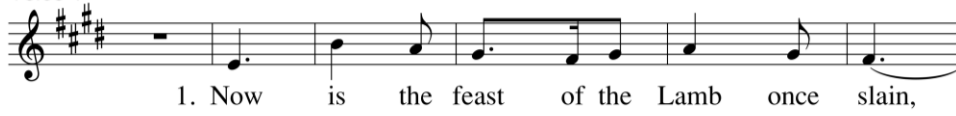


sings for joy, to the God of life and love and free-dom;



praise and glo - ry for - ev - er - more!

Verse 1



1. Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain,



whose blood has freed and u - nit-ed us



to be one great peo - ple of God. D.C.

Verse 2



2. Pow-er and rich-es, wis-dom and might, all hon - or and



glo - ry to Christ for - ev - er. D.C.

Verse 3



3. For God has come to dwell with us, to make us



peo-ple of God; to make all things new. D.C.

* PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Genesis 50:15-21

A reading from the book of Genesis.

Realizing 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?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, '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. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even 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. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalms 103:[1-7] 8-13

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

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

who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases;

**who redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;**

who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

**O Lord, you provide vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.**

You made known your ways to Moses
and your works to the children of Israel.

**Lord, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**

you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.

**You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**

For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

**As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**

As 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.

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

Some 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. Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

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

Why 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. For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

* GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Congregation:

Al-le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we

go? You have the words of e - ter - nal

life. Al - le - lu - ia! *Optional Repeat*

*** GOSPEL**

Matthew 18:21-35

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, the 18th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Peter came and said to [Jesus,] "Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But 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.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So 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.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE AND SERMON

Pastor Don Larsen

*** HYMN OF THE DAY**

1 Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail, there God is ev - er found;
 2 With grate - ful joy and ho - ly fear, God's char - i - ty we learn;
 3 Let us re - call that in our midst dwells Christ, God's ho - ly Son;
 4 Let strife a - mong us be un - known; let all con - ten - tions cease.
 5 Let us for - give each oth - er's faults as we our own con - fess,

brought here to - geth - er by Christ's love, by love we thus are bound.
 let us with heart and mind and soul now love God in re - turn.
 as mem - bers of each bod - y joined, in him we are made one.
 Be God's the glo - ry that we seek; be his our on - ly peace.
 that we may love each oth - er well in Chris - tian gen - tle - ness.

APOSTLES CREED

With praise and gratitude, we confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried;
 he descended into hell.**

**On the third day he rose again;
 he ascended into heaven,
 he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
 and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**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 INTERCESSION

As is our custom, please face one another across the center aisle. The deacon invites us to prayer and offers the first intercession. As you are moved to pray, you are invited to pray any of the following intercessions aloud.

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

A brief silence

Move your church throughout the world away from judging and despising others. Lead us to embody the forgiveness you have given us in Jesus. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

The endless beauty of your creation reminds us of your mercy. Protect those who care for farms and ranches. Guide those who lead us to wonder at your creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Guide us and grant us good courage as we approach midterm elections in our country this November. Empower us to hold all in authority accountable, and to work together to resolve the many issues facing our country. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We remember those who lost their lives twenty-five years ago on 9/11 and in the

* PEACE

Keep your hands together or make the peace sign if you'd rather not pass the peace with touch.

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

warfare which followed. Comfort those who still mourn, be the companion of those who still live with injuries sustained, and grant us the vision and the will to pursue peace in our own time. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Calm the fears of all in need with your promises. Compassionately free the lives of any who feel bound by their failures. Remember your children in need

Bobby, Dan, Heather, Hollie, Jim, Kate, Lynn, Mark, Meredith, Naomi, Paul, Roberta, and Susan. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Ground this congregation in the welcome you show us in forgiving our sin. Inspire each of us to welcome others for your honor and glory. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For what else do we pray? *Other prayers, silent or aloud, are invited.*

With you is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember all those who have gone before us. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

MEAL

OFFERING

You may give an offering through the Givelify app by scanning this QR code:



* OFFERING SONG

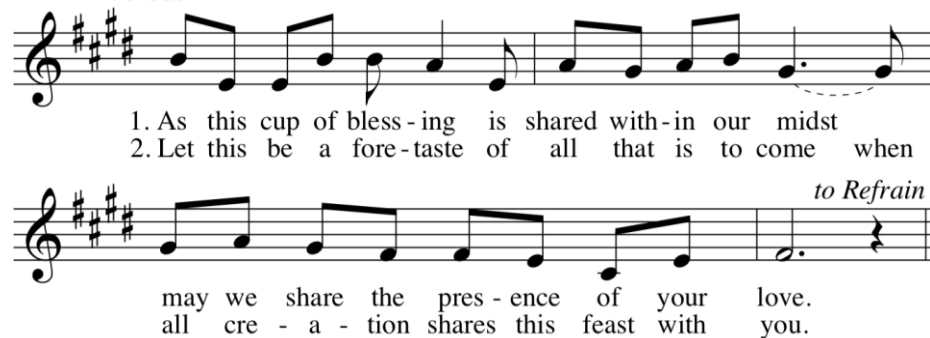
Refrain

Congregation:



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread;
so may all your peo-ple from all the ends of earth be
gath-ered in - to one in you.

Verses



1. As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst
2. Let this be a fore-taste of all that is to come when
to Refrain
may we share the pres-ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

*OFFERING PRAYER

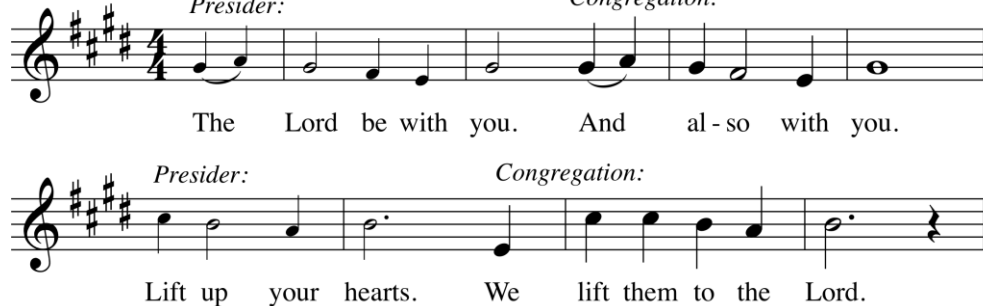
Let us pray.

Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. **Amen.**

* GREAT THANKSGIVING

Presider:

Congregation:



The Lord be with you. And al-so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Presider: *Congregation:*

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is
right to give God thanks and praise.

It is our duty and delight, that we should everywhere and always offer thanks and praise to you, O God, through Jesus Christ; who calls us to follow his way of humble service and love, And so, with the church on earth, all creation and the host of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Congregation:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and
might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est!
Bless - ed is the One who comes in your name. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

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

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.

COMMUNION

All are welcome to receive the bread and the wine. Gluten free wafers are available on request. Both wine (red) and grape juice (white) are available in each tray. Come forward in the center aisle starting at the front of the church. The pastors will motion the first people forward.



1. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
2. Lamb of God, you break the chains of ha - tred and fear;
3. Lamb of God, you are the way of jus - tice and peace:
4. Lamb of God, you are the way of mer - cy and love:



have mer - cy on us, mer - cy on us, mer - cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world:



grant us peace, grant us peace, grant us peace.

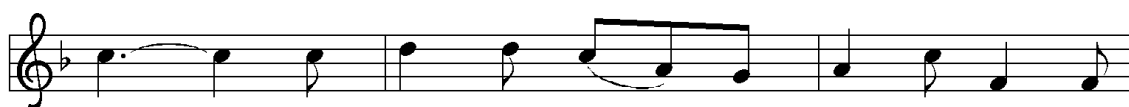
COMMUNION HYMN

"I Come with Joy"

ELW 482



- 1 I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and
- 2 I come with Chris - tians far and near to find, as all are
- 3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud di - vi - sion
- 4 The Spir - it of the ris - en Christ, un - seen, but ev - er
- 5 To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound by all that God has



free, the life of Je - sus to re - call in
fed, the new com - mu - ni - ty of love in
ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and
near, is in such friend - ship bet - ter known, a -
done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the



love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.
 Christ's com-mu-nion bread, in Christ's com-mu-nion bread.
 strang-ers now are friends, and strang-ers now are friends.
 live a-mong us here, a-live a-mong us here.
 love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.

* TABLE BLESSING

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

* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

* BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor ☩ and grant you peace. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

* SENDING HYMN

"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!

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Altar flowers are given by Dave and Darby Hering
 in celebration of our Anniversary and for Rally Day.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING HAPPENINGS at ST. PAUL

MEALS FOR THE JOURNEY

St Paul is re-establishing a meal ministry to support members of our congregation who are navigating grief, recovery, or life transitions. If you'd like to help by cooking a meal or delivering one, we'd love to have you.

We want to have a system to respond when there is a need so if you are open to even occasionally participating, please sign up to be included on the distribution list where we'll arrange specific needs. Please fill in this [St. Paul Meal Information Form](#) if you'd like to help by either making a meal, delivering a meal, or buying a gift card to help someone.

Lisa Hynes (lmhynes@gmail.com) and Jan Sniffen (JSniffen.js@gmail.com) will organize volunteers and liaise with members as they accept this form of support. We're honored to walk alongside our church family in trying times.

INVITATION FROM ARLINGTON EATS

September is Hunger Action Month. Arlington Eats is co-hosting an event with True Story Theater, Food Link, and the Robbins Library exploring Stories of Hunger Awareness and Action. True Story Theater brings together the delight of improvisation with the courageous vulnerability of people sharing their personal truth.

This is our second year collaborating on this event, and we really hope you can join us. Every year is different, and it is such a great way to see stories and experiences come to life. Please help represent Arlington EATS and put Thursday, September 24th, from 6:30-8:00 on your calendar. The event will take place in the Community Room of the Robbins Library.

September Spotlight Items:

- Gluten Free items - cereal, pasta, crackers, granola bars
- Quinoa
- Farro
- Pasta sauce
- Coconut milk
- Laundry detergent
- Dish soap

RALLY DAY

This promises to be an exciting fall season at St. Paul. God has so much good in store for you: We mark September 13 as Rally Day with a single outdoor service at 9:30 AM and lots of activities, both inside and outside, after the service (weather permitting). Good idea to bring a lawn chair and an extra, if you have one. If you forget to bring one, no worries, we have plenty.

LUTHERAN BASICS

Ever wonder what makes Lutheranism tick? What its contribution is to the Christian story and our witness? You are invited to participate in a conversation about Lutheran basics over four Wednesdays in September, beginning September 9, at 7 PM. We'll meet at church.

THURSDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY RESUMES

Online Bible Study resumes on Thursdays at 7 PM beginning September 17.

FALL SCHEDULE RESUMES NEXT SUNDAY! (September 20)

We return to two services next week with Holy Communion at 8:15 and 10:30 AM. Fall activities normally held between the services also resume: **Sunday School, Adult Forum, and choir rehearsal.** We will also conduct **acolyte training** between the services. These activities begin at 9:30 AM.



SAINT PAUL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS

www.stpaularlington.org | 781-646-7773

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Sandy Walker, *Vice President*

Eric Haugen, *Treasurer*

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Altar Guild

Faith Formation Committee

Intern Committee

Social Ministry Committee

Nomination Committee

Worship & Music Committee

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Audit Committee

Usher Committee

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Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



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