

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN "BLUE" CHURCH

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The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost – September 6, 2021

PRELUDE – “Sweet Hour of Prayer” – Lucy Ann Warriner ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, whose teaching is life, whose presence is sure, and whose love is endless. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sins to the one who welcomes us with an open heart.

Silence for reflection

God our comforter,
like lost sheep, we have gone astray. We gaze upon abundance and see scarcity. We turn our faces away from injustice and oppression. We exploit the earth with our apathy and greed. Free us from our sin, gracious God. Listen when we call out to you for help. Lead us by your love to love our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. By the gift of grace in ✠ Christ Jesus, God makes you righteous. Receive with glad hearts the forgiveness of all your sins. **Amen.**

HYMN #858 PRAISE TO THE LORD, THE ALMIGHTY

GREETING

From God our Father and the LORD Jesus Christ, grace and peace be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray...Gracious God, throughout the ages you transform sickness into health and death into life. Open us to the power of your presence, and make us a people ready to proclaim your promises to the whole world, through Jesus Christ, our healer and LORD. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON:

ISAIAH 35:4-7A

PSALM 146 *Spoken responsively*

¹Hallelujah!

Praise the LORD, O my soul!

²**I will praise the LORD as long as I live;**

I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

³Put not your trust in rulers,
in mortals in whom there is no help.

⁴**When they breathe their last, they return to earth,
and in that day their thoughts perish.**

⁵Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,
whose hope is in the LORD their God;

⁶**who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;
who keeps promises forever;**

⁷who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.

The LORD sets the captive free.

⁸**The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those
who are bowed down;**

the LORD loves the righteous.

⁹The LORD cares for the stranger;

the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

¹⁰**The LORD shall reign forever,**

your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

SECOND LESSON:

JAMES 2:1-10 (11-13) 14-17

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 7th Chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

THE HOLY GOSPEL:

MARK 7:24-37

The Gospel of the LORD.

Praise to you, O Christ.

THE SERMON

HYMN #612

HEALER OF OUR EVERY ILL

APOSTLES' CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our LORD.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He 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, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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.

THE PRAYERS

Response : hear our prayer.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER *The pastor offers the prayer.*

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,**

HOLY COMMUNION

BLESSING

The Body and Blood of our LORD Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER

Let us pray...Lord of life, in the gift of your body and blood you turn the crumbs of our faith into a feast of salvation. Send us forth into the world with shouts of joy, bearing witness to the abundance of your love in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

People of God, you are Christ's body, bringing new life to a suffering world. The holy Trinity, ✠ one God, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

HYMN #719 WHERE CROSS THE CROWDED WAYS OF LIFE

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. The living Word dwells in you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE – “POSTLUDE” – DE MONTI



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WELCOME TO ALL IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST!

We especially welcome those who are visiting. We invite you to sign our guest register in the narthex. Blank envelopes in the pews are for visitors.

“God’s purpose for St. Paul’s Lutheran Blue” Church is to spread the Good News of Christ’s love for all people in the Southern Lehigh community and beyond.” –Blue Church Mission Statement, adopted 2012

ABOUT THE SCRIPTURE READINGS.....

James tells us to stop showing favoritism in the assembly, treating the rich visitor with more honor than the poor one. Jesus himself seems to show partiality in his first response to the Syrophenician woman in today’s gospel. Was he testing her faith in saying Gentiles don’t deserve the goods meant for God’s children? Or was he speaking out of his human worldview, but transcended those limits when she took him by surprise with her reply? Either way, the story tells us that God shows no partiality. Everyone who brings her or his need to Jesus is received with equal honor as a child and heir.

ISAIAH 35:4-7a: *These verses are a word of hope to the exiles in Babylon. Chapter 34 portrays God’s vengeance on Edom, Israel’s age-old enemy, which makes the path from Babylon to Zion safe for the exiles’ return. The desert itself will flow with water to give drink to the returning exiles.*

JAMES 2:1-10 (11-13) 14-17: *Faithful Christians do not show partiality to the rich and powerful of the world, especially at the expense of the poor and weak. Likewise, faith does not pay mere lip service to God’s will. Instead, a living Christian faith expresses itself in acts of compassion and mercy for those in need.*

MARK 7:24-37: *In Mark’s gospel, encounters with women usually signify turning points in Jesus’ ministry. Here, a conversation with a Syrophenician woman marks the beginning of his mission to the Gentiles.*

PRAYER FOR PENTECOST 15: Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. (See Isaiah 35:4)

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK: Your power heals those who trust in you, O God. Draw near and heal those who cry to you. Amen.

BLUE CHURCH PRAYS FOR...Cyndie Cline, Sandra Denora, Bill Exner, Bob Gibiser, Ann Greensweig, Frank Kelly, Robin King, Beverly Lerch, Candice Robinson, Sue Storat, Kathy, Connie, Stephen.

Other concerns:

Note: This is a short-term list, for those who are in "acute care" situations—hospitalized or in recovery, dying, facing the recent death of a loved one, or presently facing a severe life crisis. The names of those for whom we pray will be kept on the list for one month. If you wish to have them placed back on the list please contact the church office.

LEADING OUR WORSHIP

CELEBRANT	The Rev. James Hammond
ORGANIST	Dr. Jennifer Dodd
ASSISTING MINISTER	Maggie Fried
LECTOR	Maggie Fried
GREETERS	
CHURCH COUNCIL REP	Ed Risi

THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER IS BLUE CHURCH'S MONTH TO STAFF BETTY LOU'S PANTRY. Volunteers are needed for Saturday September 11th, and September 25th. We need 3 more people for September 11th, (if possible one person who can lift boxes). We need 6 people for September 25th (if possible 2 people who can lift). The time is from 8:30 AM to about 10:30/11 AM. We are still not having patrons come inside, so there is no close contact as before). There is a sign up on the blackboard in Fellowship Hall. Contact Deb Stover at 484-437-3831 if you can help.

BLUE CHURCH GARDEN OF GIVING is still overflowing with lots of tomatoes. Check it out and take what you can use. Simply give a donation marked "Garden of Giving" and it will be forwarded to Betty Lou's Food Pantry.

The construction on the Church tower has begun. It will take a few weeks to complete.

LOOKING AHEAD

PLEASE NOTE - Beginning September 12, the services will change back to the 10:30 AM Worship time.

SEPT. 12 – 10:30 AM Worship and Picnic at Upper Saucon Township Park. NOTE CHANGE...Due to the current changing situation with the virus, we are now asking you to bring your own picnic lunch for after worship.

SEPTEMBER 19 – 10:30 AM Worship in the Fellowship Hall. The Services will continue in Fellowship Hall through the month of September.

OCTOBER 3 – 9:00 AM Choir Rehearsal resumes. If you enjoy singing please join us at this time. New members are always welcome.

OCTOBER 3 – 10:30 AM Worship in the Sanctuary.

WEEKLY GIFTS, PRESENTED TO THE GLORY OF GOD: BULLETINS...by Dean and Deb Stover in honor of Drew, Dani and Justin's Birthdays.
COMMUNION BREAD & WINE...by Wendy and Greg Storat

BETTY LOU'S PANTRY UPDATE...Most needed donations at the pantry right now:

Tuna Helper Chunky Soups Canned Pasta Boxed Potatoes

Other things always needed:

Toilet paper, jelly (other than grape), non-sugared cereal, hygiene products (other than soap)

THINKING AHEAD OF CHRISTMAS PRESENTS FOR OUR PANTRY FAMILIES. In view of the still unstable virus spread, we will again forego physical presents and give gift cards so parents can purchase gifts for the children. Donations can be put in the collection plate on Sundays or sent to the church by mail. Just please remember to put in the memo line that your donation is for BLP Christmas gift cards. Thanks for all your help!

LESSONS

Isaiah 35:4-7a – 1st Lesson

Say to those who are of a fearful heart,

‘Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.’

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

James 2:1-10 (11-13) 14-17 – 2nd Lesson

2 My brothers and sisters,* do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? * ²For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your

assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, ³and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, ‘Have a seat here, please’, while to the one who is poor you say, ‘Stand there’, or, ‘Sit at my feet’,* ⁴have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? ⁵Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters.* Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? ⁶But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? ⁷Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

8 You do well if you really fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁹But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. ¹¹For the one who said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’, also said, ‘You shall not murder.’ Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹²So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. ¹³For judgement will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgement.

14 What good is it, my brothers and sisters,^{*} if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? ¹⁵If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, ¹⁶and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill', and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? ¹⁷So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

Mark 7:24-37 - Gospel

24 From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre.^{*} He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, ²⁵but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. ²⁶Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷He said to her, 'Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' ²⁸But she answered him, 'Sir,^{*} even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.' ²⁹Then he said to her, 'For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.' ³⁰So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

31 Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of

Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. ³²They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. ³³He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. ³⁴Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, 'Ephphatha', that is, 'Be opened.' ³⁵And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. ³⁶Then Jesus^{*} ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. ³⁷They were astounded beyond measure, saying, 'He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.'

St. Paul's Lutheran "Blue" Church
Prayers ✕ 14th Sunday after Pentecost ✕
September 5, 2021

A: Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need, responding,

"hear our prayer."

A brief silence

A: Holy One, you bring your people together in worship. Enliven your church. Guide all evangelists, preachers, prophets, and missionaries who seek to share your love through word and deed. Lord, in your mercy,

"hear our prayer."

A: You provide water for thirsty ground and sunshine to feed hungry plants. Bless all who advocate for healthy forests, unpolluted air, and clean waterways. Inspire all people to show care for the world you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

"hear our prayer."

A: You show no partiality. Increase justice in all nations. Encourage leaders and governments to work with one another for the good of our common world. Especially as we celebrate Labor Day, unite us in seeking the health, safety, and dignity of all. Lord, in your mercy,

"hear our prayer."

A: You accompany those who are most in need. Shelter all fleeing violence or persecution, protect any who are in danger, and sustain them through uncertain and unstable times. Today we pray especially for: Cyndie, Sandra, Bill, Bob, Ann, Frank, Robin, Beverly, Candice, Sue, Kathy, Connie, Stephen, and everyone who has asked for our prayers or known only to the Lord. Lord, in your mercy,

"hear our prayer."

A: You support the work of your disciples. Continue to nurture the leadership and ministries of Blue Church. Lord, in your mercy,

"hear our prayer."

A: You embrace all who have died in the faith and brought them into your glorious presence. We thank you for their example and rejoice in their lives. Lord, in your mercy,

"hear our prayer."

Pastor: Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord . Amen.