

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN "BLUE" CHURCH

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The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost – August 22, 2021

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy. **Amen.**

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance, let us confess our sin.

Silence for reflection

God our provider,
help us. It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn? Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for life in the world. Amen.

Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, ☩ the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life. **Amen.**

HYMN #638 BLESSED ASSURANCE

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...Holy God, your word feeds your people with life that is eternal. Direct our choices and preserve us in your truth, that, renouncing what is false and evil, we may live in you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and LORD. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON:

JOSHUA 24:1-2A, 14-18

PSALM 34:15-22 *Spoken responsively*

¹⁵The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous,
and God's ears are open to their cry.

¹⁶**The face of the LORD is against those who do evil,
to erase the remembrance of them from the earth.**

¹⁷The righteous cry, and the LORD hears them
and delivers them from all their troubles.

¹⁸**The LORD is near to the brokenhearted
and saves those whose spirits are crushed.**

¹⁹Many are the troubles of the righteous,
but the LORD delivers them from everyone.

²⁰**God will keep safe all their bones;
not one of them shall be broken.**

²¹Evil will bring death to the wicked
and those who hate the righteous will be punished.

²²**O LORD, you redeem the life of your servants,
and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.**

SECOND LESSON:

EPHESIANS 6:10-20

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 6th Chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

THE HOLY GOSPEL:

JOHN 6:56-69

The Gospel of the LORD.

Praise to you, O Christ.

THE SERMON

HYMN #810 O JESUS, I HAVE PROMISED

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...Jesus, Bread of life, we have received from your table more than we could ever ask. As you have nourished us in this meal, now strengthen us to love the world with your own life. In your name we pray. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, ✠ be upon you now and forever. **Amen.**

HYMN #879 FOR THE BEAUTY OF THE EARTH

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

✠ ✠ ✠

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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

THE DAY IN THE CHURCH YEAR...THE 14th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

ABOUT THE SCRIPTURE READINGS.....

In today's gospel many people take offense at Jesus' invitation to eat his flesh and drink his blood; even many of Jesus' disciples peel off. This is the backdrop in John's gospel for Peter's confession of faith. "To whom can we go?" asks Peter, in words we sometimes sing just before the gospel is read. "You have the words of eternal life." In order to take such a stand, as Peter and Joshua did, Paul tells us to arm ourselves with the word of God. We pray in the Spirit that we might be bold ambassadors of the gospel.

JOSHUA 24:1-2a, 14-18: *In the Near East, covenant means agreement or alliance. It describes relationships and is the primary word used to characterize the relationship between God and Israel. By delivering Israel, God has already begun the relationship. Joshua calls upon the people to respond.*

EPHESIANS 6:10-20: *Like a general giving a rousing speech to troops before battle, this letter closes by calling on Christians to be equipped for spiritual warfare against evil. The full armor of God includes truth, righteousness, peace, faith, the gift of salvation, and the word of God inspired by the Spirit.*

JOHN 6:56-69: *The "hard saying" that offends Jesus' disciples is his claim that his followers must eat his flesh and drink his blood. The followers who return to their old lives know something about how odd this sounds. Simon Peter, on the other hand, knows something about the scarcity of living, gracious words. He asks the most important question: "To whom shall we go?"*

PRAYER FOR PENTECOST 14: Let my life proclaim the gospel of peace. (See Ephesians 6:15)

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK: Lord Jesus, we believe you are the holy one of God. Stay with us and guide us in the work you have given us to do in daily life. Amen.

BLUE CHURCH PRAYS FOR...Cyndie Cline, Sandra Denora, Bill Exner, Bob Gibiser, Ann Greensweig, Andrea Incacattera, Frank Kelly, Robin King, Beverly Lerch, Peter Link, Carl Ritter, Candice Robinson, Jerry Smith, Dick Storat, 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	Amy Ortwein
LECTOR	Amy Ortwein
GREETER	Maggie Fried
CHURCH COUNCIL REP	Ron Fried

BLUE CHURCH GARDEN OF GIVING is overflowing with fresh produce (tomatoes, beans, zucchini, eggplant, etc. 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.

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)

The construction on the Church tower will begin at the end of August. More details will follow.

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.

LOOKING AHEAD

AUGUST 29 - 9:30 AM Worship in the Fellowship Hall. The Fellowship Hall is air-conditioned for the summer Worship services. The Services will continue in Fellowship Hall through the month of September.

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.

Stewardship Snippet

Aug. 22, 2021 (13th Sunday after Pentecost)

John 6:68 – Simon Peter answered Jesus, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life."

We hear so many voices in our culture luring us to follow by promising us prosperity, power, fun, escape, prestige, etc. But steward disciples know that only Jesus has the words of true life, eternal life. We listen only for Jesus' words.

LESSONS

Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18 – 1st Lesson

24 Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. ²And Joshua said to all the people, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods.

14 'Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.'

16 Then the people answered, 'Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; ¹⁸and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.'

Ephesians 6:10-20 – 2nd Lesson

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For our* struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶With all of these,* take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. ¹⁹Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,* ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

John 6:56-69 - Gospel

⁵⁶Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.' ⁵⁹He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

60 When many of his disciples heard it, they said, 'This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?' ⁶¹But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, 'Does this offend you? ⁶²Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴But among you there are some who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. ⁶⁵And he said, 'For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.'

66 Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷So Jesus asked the twelve, 'Do you also wish to go away?' ⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.'*

St. Paul's Lutheran "Blue" Church
Prayers ✠ 13th Sunday after Pentecost ✠
August 22, 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: God of courage, bless all leaders of your church. Make them ready to proclaim the gospel of peace and strengthen them to preach your loving word. Lord, in your mercy,

"hear our prayer."

A: God of creation, bless fields and orchards. Protect the land from drought and bring life-giving rain to support growth. Instruct your people in wise treatment of the world you have provided for all your creatures. Lord, in your mercy,

"hear our prayer."

A: God of community, bless all who seek justice between nations and peoples. Give guidance to bridge-builders, heal divisions, and inspire cooperation in times of crisis, disaster, and war. Lord, in your mercy,

"hear our prayer."

A: God of compassion, bless all who are in any need. Accompany all who are lonely and feeling abandoned and remind them of your abiding presence. Accompany all who are persecuted and exploited and open us to their cries. Today we pray especially for: Cyndie, Sandra, Bill, Bob, Ann, Andrea, Frank, Robin, Beverly, Peter, Carl, Candice, Jerry, Dick, 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: God of change, bless our transitions. Guide all who are embarking on new stages in life such as a new job, new school, or new community. Sustain enduring friendships and kindle new relationships and interests. Lord, in your mercy,

“hear our prayer.”

A: God of comfort, bless all who mourn the deaths of their beloved ones. We give you thanks for the saints who have gone before us. Renew our confidence in your promise of resurrection and life in the world to come. 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.