

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

P. O. Box 267, 201 Veterans Dr., Columbus, TX 78934

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October 21 & 22, 2023

Twenty-first Sunday of Pentecost

Senior Pastor	Alan Kethan	<u>Home:</u> (979)-942-9060	<u>Cell:</u> (830)-708-1200
Youth & Family Specialist			Stephanie Polasek
Congregational Chair			Donna Maas
St. Paul Christian Learning Academy Director			Briana Bedford
Secretary			Elena Holub
Custodian			Tomasa Rosales
Parish Nurse Program Coordinator			DyAnn Lauzon
Organist			Joan Hunsicker

MISSION STATEMENT: Love God, Love Neighbor (Luke 10:27)

VISION STATEMENT: We will work to strengthen and grow closer in relationship to God and to one another.

- *As we enter into a sacred time and space, a friendly reminder to please set your cell phone to vibrate.*
- ***We want to welcome all of our guests today and thank you for worshipping with us. If you have any questions or would like more information regarding our services, programs, day care, or preschool programs at St. Paul, please visit our Welcome Center in the narthex immediately following our service, and an attendant will be more than happy to assist you. If this is your first time at St. Paul, we hope you will take a gift along with you. We also have a gift bag for children.***
- *Hearing Assist devices are available for those who need assistance in hearing worship service better. Please see a person in the Sound Room (Usher Room) to request the use of a device during worship.*

* This symbol indicates that the congregation is invited to stand physically or in spirit.

INTRODUCTION

In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SIGNING OF ATTENDANCE PADS

(Ushers will be handing out Attendance Pads during the announcements. Please be sure to sign your name and contact information.)

* **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P Blessed be God, the one who forms us, † Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

C **Amen.**

P Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin first privately then together publicly.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Steadfast and faithful God,

C **you have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you. We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering. We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others. For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us. For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation, forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor, forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path; in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

P Beloved in Christ, God's justice stretches beyond all understanding. God's compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us. In † Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

C **Amen.**

* **HYMN ELW - #526 "God Is Here!"**

1. **God is here! As we your people meet to offer praise and prayer, may we find in fuller measure what it is in Christ we share. Here, as in the world around us, all our varied skills and arts wait the coming of the Spirit into open minds and hearts.**

2. **Here are symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace; here are table, font, and pulpit; here the cross has central place. Here in honesty of preaching, here in silence, as in speech, here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each.**

3. **Here our children find a welcome in the Shepherd's flock and fold; here as bread and wine are taken, Christ sustains us as of old. Here the servants of the Servant seek in worship to explore what it means in daily living to believe and to adore.**

4. **Lord of all, of church and kingdom, in an age of change and doubt,
keep us faithful to the gospel; help us work your purpose out.
Here, in this day's dedication, all we have to give, receive;
we, who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!**

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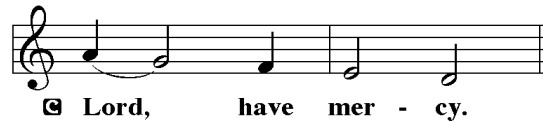
* **GREETING**

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

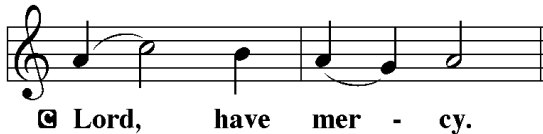
C And also with you.

* **KYRIE** (Responses Sung)

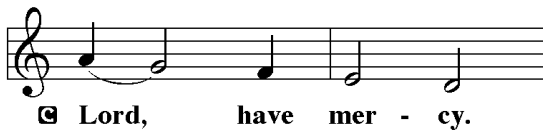
P In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



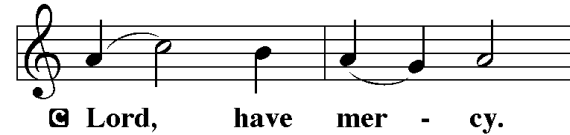
P For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



P For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



P For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.



P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



* **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 45:1-7

A Our first reading is from Isaiah, chapter 45, verses 1-7.

The prophet announces that Cyrus the Persian emperor is the one the LORD has anointed to end Israel's exile. The LORD makes this choice so that the whole world will recognize this LORD as the only God. Persia had a god of light and a god of darkness; the LORD claims sovereignty over both light and darkness.

The reading begins:

¹Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him — and the gates shall not be closed: ²I will go before you and level the mountains, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron, ³I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name. ⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I surname you, though you do not know me. ⁵I am the Lord, and there is no other; besides me there is no god. I arm you, though you do not know me, ⁶so that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one besides me; I am the Lord, and there is no other. ⁷I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe; I the Lord do all these things.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]

A The Psalm today is from Psalm 96, verses 1-13. We will read the Psalm responsively. The congregation will please respond by reading the words in bold print.

¹Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

²**Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD; proclaim God’s salvation from day to day.**

³Declare God’s glory among the nations and God’s wonders among all peoples.

⁴**For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods.**

⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.

⁶**Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

⁸**Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.**

⁹Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

[¹⁰**Tell it out among the nations: “The LORD is king! The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity.”**

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

¹²**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD, for you come to judge the earth.**

¹³You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth.]

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

A Our second reading is from 1 Thessalonians, chapter 1, verses 1-10.

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

The reading begins:

¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace. ²We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true

God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead — Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

A Please stand as you are comfortable for the gospel.

* **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:** (Sung)

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

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

* **GOSPEL:** Matthew 22:15-22

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God’s people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

P The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, chapter 22, verses 15-22.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” ²¹They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” ²²When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

* **HYMN ELW - #705 "God of Grace and God of Glory"**

1. **God of grace and God of glory, on your people pour your pow'r:
crown your ancient church's story; bring its bud to glorious flow'r.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.**
2. **Lo! The hosts of evil round us scorn the Christ, assail his ways!
From the fears that long have bound us free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage for the living of these days,
for the living of these days.**
3. **Cure your children's warring madness; bend our pride to your control;
shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, lest we miss your kingdom's goal,
lest we miss your kingdom's goal.**
4. **Save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore;
let the gift of your salvation be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, serving you whom we adore,
serving you whom we adore.**

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* **APOSTLES' CREED**

- A With the whole church, let us confess our faith.
- C 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.**

(The congregation may be seated during the prayers.)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

- A Trusting in the transformative power of God's loving Spirit, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

- A Faithful God, your Spirit animates the church throughout the world and binds believers near and far into the body of Christ. Equip us for the work of faith, and enlarge our hearts for the labor of love. God of grace,
C hear our prayer.
- A We pray for peace in all the world, especially in war-torn areas of Ukraine, Sudan, Niger and Israel. Bring an end to wars and the destruction of lives and your creation. God of grace,
C hear our prayer.
- A We pray for the family and friends of August Henry Jones, Sr. who passed away this past week. Be with them and comfort them during this difficult time. God of grace,
C hear our prayer.
- A We pray for all those in need of healing and whose needs are diverse and known to you including:
Maecon Caviness; Jessica Siewert; Sonya Saul; Becky Collins; Ken Braden; those on our Prayer Team's list; and those we name in our hearts before you (*Pause*). God of grace,
C hear our prayer.
- A We pray for all those battling cancer and especially for:
Michael Yancey; Cindi Tanner; Amanda Aramijo; Zachary Schulke; Herbie Kollatschny; Darrell Pagel; Sylvia McLelland Teykl; Tom Russell, Jr.; Melda Coleman; Al Gene Canik; Larry Bookout; Mike Wostarek; Elizabeth Frisby; Virginia Fritsch; Kristina Acevedo; George Krenek; Anne Dimas; Carl Geisler; Laura Walla; Randy Wendt; Heather Deviney; Lydia Rojas; Paul Casinger; Dr. Tom Hancher; Leonard Kahlden; and Bob Loy that they may know comfort and strength. God of grace,
C hear our prayer.
- A We pray for all expectant mothers and especially for:
Cassidy Zajicek Parks; Courtney Busselman; Nancy Gorman; Camille Stancik; Kyndall Beettner; Jamee Albert; and Kristen O'Leary Bridges that they have healthy terms and deliveries, and if not, may they find comfort and peace. God of grace,
C hear our prayer.
- A We pray for all those who reside in care facilities and the homebound and especially for:
Joey Denby; Paul Minar, Sr.; Adrian Fritsch; Coy Dell Schindler; Madeline Menke; Doris Horndt; Helen Perrard; Jane Booker; Pat Brasher; Walter Glaeser, Jr.; Dolores Hoelscher; Jesse Grabow; Joyce Dehmer; Donna Dehmer; Cherie Moore; Lauren Lamb; and Lydia Rojas that they receive your caring and compassion. God of grace,
C hear our prayer.
- A We pray for all law enforcement officers, fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers, 9-1-1 dispatchers, and active duty military personnel that they are protected and kept safe. (*Pause for those we are praying for.*) God of grace,

Law Enforcement Officers: Charles Jobb; Joseph Smith; Todd Jacobs; Troy Neisner; Jacob Gorman; Nancy Gorman; Johnny Kovar; Abigail Weido; Dustin Lattimore; Zane Weido; Josh Jones; as well as Donnie Templeton and Jason Templeton who are also fire fighters. For all fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers and 9-1-1 dispatchers, especially Brent Gorman, Sr.; Brent Gorman, Jr.; Reid Brasher; Dusty Dittmar; John Maertz; Ron Luedke; Pastor Alan Kethan; Kristi Weyand; Eric Weyand; Bradley Berger; Jon Berger; James Chollett; Edward Thraen, Jr.; Kyle Burris; Dylan Walcik; Travis Neuendorff; Nathan Bookout; Brenda Henkes; Jan Willette; and Terri Neunendorff, as well as those active duty military members including Kyle Appelt; Montana Appelt; Douglas Neuendorff; Scott Cherniss; Kameron Page; Dalton Kapel; Kevin Gonzalez; Evelyn Rojas; and Nelson Beettner.

C hear our prayer.

A We pray for the church throughout the world. May we all proclaim the good news of your love effectively. We ask, especially, that you would bless the ministry of our sister congregations Cristo Rey and their Pastor Armando Capcha and Iglesia Cristiana Camino de Santidad and their leaders Pastors Gumer and Naomi Anton in Peru, all Missionaries, especially St. Paul's supported missionary, Dina Anton de Espinoza, and our companion synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Central African Republic. God of grace,

C hear our prayer.

P Gracious God, into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your unending love and amazing grace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

*** PEACE**

P The peace of the risen Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.** *(Share the "Peace of the Lord" with your neighbors.)*

(We will be collecting offerings before and after worship each week. This includes Power of One dollars.)

OFFERING and POWER OF ONE

"Power of One" is a ministry sponsored by your Stewardship Team. We are asking each and every one of our members to give \$1.00 above what your normal giving would be. We are asking each member to place this \$1.00 bill or change in the offering plate each week. The team is also inviting all children to participate to develop the habit of giving as part of their worship experience. Parents, a penny, nickel, dime, quarter, or dollar bill, any of these will do to help your children develop a habit of giving. These "Power of One" dollars will be used to support local ministries and ministries abroad. The purpose of this ministry is to demonstrate that something as small as one dollar can be used to make a difference in the lives of others.

*** OFFERTORY** *(Sung)*



C Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bles-sing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be



fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your



pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

*** OFFERING PRAYER**

P God of power, God of plenty, all things belong to you. We bring your gifts to the table, that all might be fed. Form us into the body of your Beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C **Amen.**

*** EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**

*** LORD'S PRAYER**

P Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

C **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**

P Come and receive all that you need, Jesus Christ himself.
C **Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION (Continuous with Individual Cups)

{Distribution will be continuous. **All are welcome for communion.** Please come down the center aisle starting from the front. Follow directions of the ushers, coming up one side at a time. Pastor will hand you the bread. If you wish to have a gluten-free wafer, please tell Pastor "Gluten-free, please." Afterward, you will choose either wine or white grape juice from the individual cups in the tray – white grape juice in the center with wine surrounding. Place the empty cups in the baskets located off to the side. Although communion is continuous, you are welcome to kneel at the rail in prayer after receiving communion. Please return to your seat by the side aisles.}

*** BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION**

P Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
C **Amen.**

*** POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE** (Sung)



☩ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let ev-'ry-one who seeks the Lord re-joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-calls his prom-is-es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

*** PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word, Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray.
C **Amen.**

*** BLESSING**

P The God of glory, ☩ Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever.
C **Amen.**

*** HYMN "God's Work, Our Hands"**

1. **God's work, our hands: working together, building a future, repairing the world, raising up homes, planting new gardens, feeding the hungry and shelt'ring the cold. Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name, sharing the good news of your Gospel.**
2. **God's work, our feet: trav'ling together, following Jesus to places unknown, walking as friends, marching for freedom, running the race with God's future the goal. Bless, God, our feet as we follow your way, sharing the good news of your Gospel.**
3. **God's work, our voice: singing together, praising, proclaiming to all who will hear, praying for peace, shouting for justice, claiming God's love for the lost and the least. Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name, sharing the good news of your Gospel.**
4. **God is at work in and around us: seedlings are sprouting and bread's on the rise! Washed and set free, humbled and honored, gifted by grace, we respond in God's love. Bless, God, our lives as we answer your call, sharing the good news of your Gospel.**

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*** DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace, blessed to be a blessing. **C Thanks be to God, and we will.**

POSTLUDE

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USHERS: SAT: Brent Gorman Family

SUN: Sonny & Tiffany Lauzon

LAY READERS: SAT: Brent Gorman, Sr.

SUN: Tiffany Lauzon

ACOLYTES: SAT: Gracelyn Gorman

SUN: Tucker Stancik

STREAMING:

SUN: Brian Lighthill

SOUND:

SUN: Sydney Eaton

ALTAR GUILD: Janeen Venghaus and Kelly Zajicek

WELCOME: “To the church of St. Paul Lutheran in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace” (see 1 Thessalonians 1:1).

ALTAR WALL FLOWERS are placed by John & Terri Brasher in thanks for God's many blessings and in loving memory of Terri's father Dale Strauss for the anniversary of his birth.

We extend our Christian sympathy to Marian Frand Andy Jones and their families for the loss of Marian's brother and Andy's grandfather August Henry Jones, Sr. who passed away this past week. May God comfort them during their time of loss.

COLLECTION OF OFFERING: Offering for the worship services is collected before and after worship. Offering bowls are placed in the back entrance and inside the side sanctuary door for you to place your offering in. This includes “Power of One” dollars.

Amount needed for average weekly budgeted expenses: \$8,405.00

Attendance: October 14 & 15, 2023 – 167

Contributions: Oct. 14 & 15 – \$6,587.01

Power of One: October 14 & 15, 2023 – \$33.00

Building Fund: Oct. 14 & 15 – \$233.23

Thank you to those who contributed to last week's offerings. Loving God/Loving Neighbor.

Wednesday Night Attendance: – Wed., Oct. 18 – **97 Total**

BLAST/Confirmation: 79

Support Staff: 18

ATTENTION: Names on the prayer list *in the bulletin* will be printed for 2 weeks. After 2 weeks, the names will be removed from the bulletin unless the church office has been notified to keep them.

► **Children's Activity Bags** are available for use by our young members and guests! You can find them on the coat hooks in the coat area of the narthex. After worship, **please place the used activity bags and their contents in the receptacle in the narthex.**

Thank you! ☺



**God's work.
Our hands.**

GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS: St. Paul will once again participate in the annual God's Work Our Hands day! This year we will work this event **Sunday, October 22, 2023.** The time will be **12:15-3:00 PM.** A light lunch will be

served in the Lighthouse before we begin our work. This is an opportunity for all ages to work together to bring about positive changes in our community.



High School Ski Trip: The high school youth group is going skiing

December 27-31, 2023 at Wolf Creek Ski Area. The plan is to drive to Pagosa Springs, Colorado where we will stay for three days. Two of the days we will ski at Wolf Creek Ski Area, and one of the days will be spent exploring Pagosa

Springs and checking out the hot springs. Students will attend a half day of ski school on the first day we ski. We will pack as much food for meals as we can during travel to save on cost and will cook meals together while at the cabin. We will come together daily for devotion and time to spend on our relationship with God. **Cost is \$150 per student. You will need to let Stephanie know ASAP or by Wednesday, October 25, 2023 if you plan to attend.** Be on the look out for a couple of fundraisers to support this trip.

♪♪♪ St. Paul will be celebrating Reformation during Reformation Weekend with *regular holy communion worship on Saturday, October 28, 2023 at 7:00 PM* and an **“Oktoberfest” on Sunday, October 29, 2023 at 10:00 AM.** Be sure to wear red for Reformation at each service! On **Sunday** for the “Oktoberfest”, participate in singing hymns to the tunes of Polkas. Guest musicians will be joining us again this year to add that “something extra” to the service. Following the service on Sunday, join the youth in the parking lot for Trunk-or-Treat, either as a youth collecting the treats or as the one with the trunk of treats. There will be a German-style lunch including sausage and sauerkraut in The Lighthouse for all to enjoy after worship and all of the trunk-or-treating! The main course will be provided, and everyone is asked to bring either a side dish or dessert to accompany the main course. **Please sign the sign-up sheet in the narthex if you plan to attend the meal and indicate what you will bring (side dish and/or dessert).** Come join us! It will be wunderbar!!

TRUNK-OR-TREAT!! Kids are invited to wear their costume to church on **Sunday, October 29, 2023** to the 10:00 AM worship service. Following the service, kids will be invited to stay in the sanctuary to get ready for Trunk-or-Treating while our trunks get ready. St. Paul members will have their cars lined up in the church parking lot for kids to come by and collect goodies. ***Congregation Members with Trunks and Treats are Wanted!*** If you would like to be a part of setting up your trunk and handing out treats to our youth, **please sign up in the narthex (foyer) or**

contact Stephanie at 979-732-1858. You will have a parking spot with your name on it on that Sunday, October 29. (*Decorated trunks and dressed up members are encouraged but not necessary to participate.*)

**** NOTICE -- Congregational Meeting!!** There will be a *special called congregational meeting* on **Sunday, November 5, 2023** between the two worship services at **10:00 AM** in the sanctuary. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss future staffing needs and to give an update on space challenges we now have at the Lighthouse for BLAST. This is a very important meeting, so, be sure to mark your calendars! **



Communion Instruction Class: Youth in the 5th grade are invited to attend the next milestone in their Christian education. Communion instruction is a formal teaching on the Sacraments of the Altar and will begin the process of getting students ready for confirmation ministry. Students will meet on **Sunday, November 5, 2023 from 12:30-2:30 PM in the Lighthouse.** Lunch will be served. Whether you are already taking communion or have waited for this class, all 5th graders are encouraged to attend. Parents are invited to attend with their child as well so they may continue the conversations at home. Please let Stephanie Polasek know if you plan to attend by Thursday, November 2, 2023 (979-732-1858 or stephaniepolasek@yahoo.com).

MEALS TO HEAL: Meals to Heal will have a **cook session** on **Sunday, November 12, 2023 at 1:00 PM** in the Lighthouse kitchen. We will be making two main dish casseroles, bagging vegetables, and assembling meals to go in the freezer. Join us if you can! If you have any questions, please contact Terri Brasher at 979-732-1127.

• **Women of JOY Bible Study:** The Women of JOY Bible Study group meets on Mondays to cook and have interesting Bible study and discussions. The **first Monday** of the month we **meet in the Lighthouse to cook** for BLAST. The **2nd and 4th Mondays** of the month we meet in the **high school room (old choir room) for Bible Study.** We are currently reading The Story. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Gerri Hackfeld at 979-732-4711.

♥ **Grief Support Group:** The Grief Support Group is for anyone who has lost a loved one, either recently or a few years ago. We share and support each other. Come join us and get support from others walking this journey. We meet at **5:30 PM** in the youth room (formerly the choir room) the **third Thursday of the month.** **NOTE:** You do not have to share or talk until you are ready! If you have questions, please contact Peggy Geisler at 979-732-0350.

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Today (Oct. 22) – 12:15-3:00 PM – God's Work Our Hands Day (Lighthouse)
6:00-8:00 PM – The Gathering
6:00-8:00 PM – Marriage Course (Lighthouse)

Mon., Oct. 23 – 9:00 AM – Staff Meeting

Tues., Oct. 24 – 9:00 AM-12:00 PM – Quilters (Lighthouse)
12:00 PM – Noon Bible Study (library)
6:00 PM – CLA Board

Wed., Oct. 25 – 9:00 AM – CLA Chapel
10:00 AM – Nursing Home Team & Pastor to Columbus Oaks
2:00 PM – Nursing Home Team & Pastor to The Oaks
5:00 PM – Meal
5:30 PM – BLAST, Confirmation and HS Youth

Thurs., Oct. 26 – 10:00-11:30 AM – Manna for Moms (Lighthouse)

Fri., Oct. 27 – 10:30 AM – Adult Bible Study (library)

Sat., Oct. 28 – 7:00 PM- Holy Communion Worship and Blessing of the Quilts

Next Sun., Oct. 29 – 9:00 AM – Adult Sunday School and Confirmation
10:00 AM – Oktoberfest Service and Blessing of the Quilts
11:30 PM – Trunk or Treat (church parking lot)
12:00 PM – German Meal (Lighthouse)
6:00-8:00 PM – Marriage Course (Lighthouse)

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Monday, October 23, 2023 James of Jerusalem, martyr, died around 62

One of three early-church leaders named James, this man is identified in the New Testament and by a historian of the time as a brother of Jesus. Scholars are uncertain whether this means a blood brother. He was a leader of the church in Jerusalem.

Thursday, October 26, 2023 Philipp Nicolai, died 1608; Johann Heermann, died 1647; Paul Gerhardt, died 1676; hymnwriters

These great hymnwriters all worked in seventeenth-century Germany in times of war and plague. Nicolai, a pastor, lost 1,300 parishioners to plague, 170 in one week. He wrote "O Morning Star, how fair and bright" and "Wake, awake, for night is flying." Heermann's hymns, including "Ah, holy Jesus," often express the emotions of faith. Gerhardt, perhaps the greatest Lutheran hymnwriter, was a pastor in Berlin.

Saturday, October 28, 2023 Simon and Jude, Apostles

We know little about these apostles. Simon is listed as "the zealot" or Cananean in New Testament lists. Jude, also called Thaddeus, asked Jesus at the last supper why he had revealed himself to the disciples but not to the world.

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SERVICE OVERVIEW: WHAT’S IN YOUR WALLET?

The Pharisees approach Jesus in a thinly veiled attempt to trap him on issues of financial obligations to the Roman government. Their question of Jesus, simplified to the extreme, is “who gets your wallet?” If Jesus answered one way, he would be guilty of treason. If he answered the other way, he would have been considered guilty of heresy in the eyes of the religious leaders. Jesus responds by issuing a challenge of his own - give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and give to God what belongs to God. This statement challenges us to ponder: if God created the world and everything in it, what doesn’t belong to God? God wants a whole lot more than just your wallet. We fully commit our lives. That means financial treasures but also our time and our individual special talents with which God has blessed us all.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

Today all three readings allude to the relationship of believers to their civil government. We contemplate this complex issue as a community of believers. Welcome to worship! Pray for wisdom to be God’s people in our time and in our place. Be grateful to God as we gather together at the table for sustenance.

The gospel narrator exposes the motives of the groups that present Jesus with the question about taxes. They believe his answer will force Jesus to reveal whose side he is on, but in reality their question is an either/or trap resulting in Jesus being guilty of either heresy or treason. Each group had their motives for calling Jesus out. The Herodians fortunes were the result of their loyalty to Roman authority. The Zealots were a revolutionary party that sought Jewish independence from Rome. The Pharisees opposed both Roman rule and Jewish revolution, but even more so wanted Jesus to go away because his teachings did not follow the rules they set forth. All parties believed they were acting in the interest of God.

When political movements or insurrections are undergirded by the belief that God is orchestrating them behind the scenes, things can verge into dangerous territory. Consider where your politics and faith overlap. Do you see where real world power and living out your faith intersect?

Jesus tells those who question him - and also tells us - to give to God what is God’s and to the emperor what is the emperor’s. As children, we learn to share what we have with others. How are you sharing more than just your belongings or money? Your talents, skills, knowledge, and love are also gifts from God. Giving to God what is God’s can mean a constant reminder to take a step back, recognize our gifts, and devote our time and energy away from our own desires and toward spreading the gospel message of Jesus in both our words and our actions. Remember that the Holy Spirit works in a way that is still forming and shaping both you and the community of God’s people.

KID STUDY:

Get some coins and look closely at them. A penny pictures Abraham Lincoln and the Lincoln Memorial. A nickel, Thomas Jefferson and his home Monticello. A dime, Franklin Roosevelt, along with a torch to signify liberty, an olive branch for peace, and an oak branch for victory. A

quarter depicts George Washington and either an eagle or a symbol of one of the fifty states of the union. Each of these images ties us as Americans to something centrally important as citizens of the United States.

In today’s story, the religious leaders again try to get Jesus into trouble by asking him a trick question. When they ask him if it is right to pay taxes, Jesus asks whose image is on the coin for the tax. It was the emperor’s image. Jesus replied that people should give to the emperor what belongs to the emperor, and give to God what belongs to God. What has God’s image on it? We do! Who is made in God’s image? We are! So who do we belong to? God! We are made in God’s image, so we are connected to something very important as the people of God.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:

We are accepted and affirmed by God and so do not need to prove ourselves to him. We have been set free, and our liberation is total and comprehensive - it includes being set free from political, social and economic structures that are oppressive and unjust, since these would enslave us and make us less than God intends us to be. There is little about “pie in the sky when you die” in the gospel of Jesus Christ, for Christianity is the most materialistic of the major religions. There is nowhere that the writ of God does not run, for everything belongs to him. Caesar must be accorded what is appropriate for him, and God must have all - including Caesar’s domain; otherwise there would be a part of the universe, of life, that did not fall under God’s control. - Desmond Tutu [Desmond Mpilo Tutu, Hope and Suffering, ed. John Webster (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 58-59.]

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Next Week’s Theme (Oct. 28 & 29): Reformation Weekend

Next Week’s Scriptures (Oct. 28 & 29):

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34
“I will write my law in their hearts, says the LORD.”

Psalm: Psalm 46
“The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.” (Ps. 46:7)

Second Reading: Romans 3:19-28
“Justified by God’s grace as a gift.”

Gospel: John 8:31-36
“Jesus says, Continue in my word and you will know the truth.”