



Petersburg Lutheran Church

**Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
July 23, 2023**

**Pastor Deborah Gelerter
Pastor Tim Bernard**

Our Mission: To Know Christ, to Grow in Christ, and to Show the Love of Christ

Welcome to worship! We are glad that you have joined us today! We hope that you experience us as a place of grace in Petersburg; a place where all are welcome to receive the gift of God's grace through the bread and the wine in Holy Communion.

Children are welcome as they too "make a joyful noise unto the Lord." During worship, they will be invited to come forward for the Children's Message if they want to; a trusted adult is welcome to come forward with them.

If you have a prayer concern or would like to schedule a visit from a pastor – whether you are a member or a visitor – please fill out one of the "care cards" in the hymnal rack and place it in the offering plate. Again, we thank you for being with us today!

Prelude

Sue Paulsen

GATHERING

Welcome

Please stand as you are able.

Confessions and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God, **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. 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 sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Gathering Song

HYMN 786

O Holy Spirit, Enter In

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.**

Prayer of the Day

Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Please be seated

Children's Message

WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 44:6-8

A reading from Isaiah

⁶Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god. ⁷Who is like me? Let them proclaim it, let them declare and set it forth before me. Who has announced from of old the things to come? Let them tell us what is yet to be. ⁸Do not fear, or be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? You are my witnesses! Is there any god besides me? There is no other rock; I know not one.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Psalm 86:11-17

The reader will read the light print, the congregation will read the bold print

¹¹Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

¹²**I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and glorify your name forevermore.**

¹³**For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the pit of death.**

¹⁴The arrogant rise up against me, O God, and a band of violent people seeks my life; they have not set you before their eyes.

¹⁵**But you, O Lord, are gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.**

¹⁶Turn to me and have mercy on me; give your strength to your servant, and save the child of your handmaid.

¹⁷**Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame; because you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.**

Second Reading: Romans 8:12-25

A reading from Romans

¹²So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh ¹³for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, ³

but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. ¹⁸I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; ²³and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand for the gospel!

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

²⁴[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ ²⁸He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ ²⁹But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

³⁶Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” ³⁷He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man;

³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated

Sermon

Hymn of the Day:

HYMN 952

The Reign of God, like Farmer's Field

Note: We will be singing the words from #952 but using the tune from 632

The Reign of God, like Farmer's Field

- 1 The reign of God, like farmer's field,
bears weeds along with wheat;
the good and bad are intertwined
till harvest is complete.
- 2 The reign of God is like a pearl
on barren land concealed.
If once you find that precious pearl,
go out and buy that field.
- 3 Though hidden now, the reign of God
may, yet unnoticed, grow;
from deep within it rises up,
like yeast in swelling dough.
- 4 Like mustard tree, the reign of God
from tiny seed will spread,
till birds of ev'ry feather come
to nest, and there be fed.
- 5 The reign of God is come in Christ;
the reign of God is near.
Ablaze among us, kindling hearts,
the reign of God is here!

Please be seated

Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Confident that God receives our joys and concerns, let us offer our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of creation. *A brief silence.*

O God, you call your people not to judge others, but instead, to announce the gospel of truth and reconciliation. Guide us as we grow in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You brought forth all creation and called it good. Direct policymakers to protect lands and seas. Bring rain to sun-parched fields in the South and protect areas impacted by natural disasters, especially those coping in the Northeast with flooding. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You desire peace among nations and peoples. Guard our neighborhoods from hatred, watch over police officers and firefighters, and teach us to advocate for those who live in fear. Keep safe our fishermen, deckhands, and cannery workers. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You are gracious and merciful, comforting those who suffer any affliction. We pray for Al, Roxy, Joseph, Jamie, Christen, Stan, Bill, Gary, Annette, Colleen, and these people we name aloud or hold in the sanctuary of our hearts. *(pause)*

Sustain your people living with food insecurity, provide shelter for all who are unhoused, and release any who are unjustly imprisoned. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You name each of us as your children. Guide our hospitality ministry to welcome all, our education ministry to equip us for faithful living, and our social ministry to enact the gospel in our community. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You send faithful people to proclaim freedom from bondage and to renew your church. Encourage us by the witness of the faithful departed, so that we live into that same hope. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, in the name of the one who reconciled all creation to himself, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Peace

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

MEAL

Offering

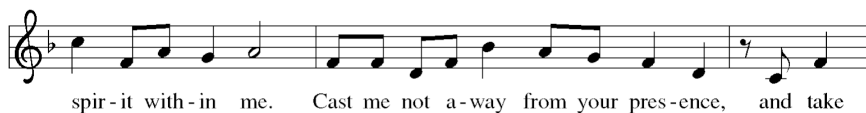
Please be seated.

Please stand as you are able.

Offering Song

Create in Me a Clean Heart

Offering Song



Offering Prayer

Let us pray. Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Dialogue

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Preface

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
 heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;**

**and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

This is the Lord's Supper. It is by the Lord's invitation that all are welcome to receive the gift of God's grace. Gluten-free wafers are available – please ask the server.

Please be seated

Communion Song



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Communion Hymns

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come
Praise and Thanksgiving
As the Grains of Wheat

HYMN 693
HYMN 689
HYMN 465

Stand as you are able

Table Blessing

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray. God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

Amen.

Please be seated

Announcements

Stand as you are able.

Closing Hymn

HYMN 399

O Holy Spirit, Root of Life

Dismissal

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

Lessons for Next Week, July 30th 1 Kings 3:5-12, Psalm 119:129-136, Romans 8:26-39, Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52



This Week at Petersburg Lutheran Church

Today, July, 23rd

8:30 am...Adult Bible Class

10:00 am ... Worship Service 88.5 FM

Facebook: Petersburg Lutheran Church 2018+

2:00 pm ... 'The Lutheran Hour' on 88.5 FM

Wednesday, July 26th

10:00-2:00 Rain Country Quilters meet in the Ed. Room

6:30 pm Church council meeting in HCH

Thursday, July 27th

10:30am Worship at Mt. View Manor

Friday, July 28th

Arts council

Saturday, July 29th

4:00 pm Bible Study in Ed. Room

Sunday, July 30th

8:30 am...Adult Bible Class

10:00 am ... Worship Service 88.5 FM

Facebook: Petersburg Lutheran Church 2018+

2:00 pm ... 'The Lutheran Hour' on 88.5 FM

Announcements

Thank you

Thanks to all who planned the picnic, brought food, chairs, grills (and more food - there was more than enough!) and attended last week's picnic. It was well attended and it was a good opportunity to be with each other. (There is one fork that was left behind. See the pastor's if you are missing one.)

Humanity In Progress (HIP)

Today we will bring our tub of donations to HIP. Our donations help feed our hungry neighbors. We still support the Salvation Army, but HIP serves a different segment of our population. Please remember when you are grocery shopping that you put a few items into your cart for others. This is making a direct link between the gospel's call for us to love our neighbors and carrying out that call in actual, tangible service.

These are the items we collect each month: kitchen bags, noodles, canned meat Tuna/Chicken, Cream of Mushroom soup, canned veggies, bread, peanut butter and jelly, canned fruit, protein/granola bars, pop-top canned foods, individually-packed snacks, fruit cups, beef jerky.

Sharing Peace a variety of ways

Please remember that there are many ways to share the peace of Christ without moving about and shaking hands. You can remain seated and simply look at people, give a nod of your head as you say, "Peace be with you." You can also stand where you are and give a little bow acknowledging the Christ in the other. And, of course, there is still the moving about shaking hands, sometimes even hugging the other based upon your relationship with them. The key for all of these is not to force yourself upon the other, but to respect the needs of others in our midst.

Standing in worship

When we ask you to stand in worship, please note that if you are not able to (for a variety of reasons), it is ok to remain seated. The reasons we stand sometimes are two-fold: One, there are parts that are more reverent and so we stand out of respect. Two, we stand during most hymns because it is a better posture for singing God's praises.

Good Beginnings Preschool is hiring!

Good beginnings Preschool is hiring for a new assistant teacher. The primary role of the assistant teacher is to assist the director/lead teacher in helping children grow spiritually, physically, academically, and socially. \$18/hour 20-25 hours per week. Request an application by emailing goodbeginningspsg@gmail.com or talk to Hayley Short.

July 23, 2023

A Righteous Harvest

One of the lessons of history is that when humans try to do the weeding, things end badly. Whenever we try to divide the world into good guys and bad guys, people get hurt. Everyone winds up being a bad guy to somebody, and you can do anything to the bad guys. You can lie about them. You can hurt them. You can hurt other people on your way to getting the bad guys, and that's regrettable. But it's okay to sacrifice some of the good guys in order to get the bad guys, right?

But the kingdom of heaven is not like the farmer who pulled up half of the wheat seedlings while going after the weeds. The kingdom of heaven is more like Jesus, who was so unwilling to cause harm to others that he died instead. Instead of pulling up the weeds and casting them into the fire, Jesus went into the fire himself.

Therefore, the harvest is fruitful beyond imagining, because the harvest is Jesus himself! Jesus bears the fruit of righteousness, reconciliation, and peace. He will gather all people into his care, and they will not be troubled by sickness, or violence, or hatred, or death. This will happen, not because Jesus will destroy all enemies, but because Jesus, by his death, will transform enemies into friends.

The weeds and the wheat are still growing in this world. Although Jesus has already done all that is needed for the final harvest, all of us growing here on this earth still need the help of our neighbors. Just as the farmer in the story instructed his servants to care for the wheat until it was time for the harvest, so God calls us to actively work with Jesus to make things better for people right here and right now.

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