

Ascension Lutheran Church

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost July 25, 2021

Welcome, All, In the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord!

For six weeks this summer we are gathering for worship and asking questions of God, Scripture and each other as we explore who we are called to be as God's church in the world, drawing nearer to God's presence and inviting others to do the same.

*Congregation stands

PRELUDE

Preparing your heart and mind for worship, answer one or more of the questions for yourself:

Do you make a better host or a better guest?

How did you get to this church family?

Take a moment to pray for all the church, past members, current members, children, new members.

Answer with the first thing that comes to your head. Specific and silly reasons are great!

Please stand as you are able.

***CALL TO WORSHIP:** (based on the words of Mother Teresa)

Christ grant us the joy of our baptism

Joy is prayer

Help our joy in small things to continue

Joy is strength

Let us take joy in one another

Joy is love

Teach us how to share Joy with one another

Joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls. Let us rejoice together today!

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

In the name of the Father,
and of the † Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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

Silence for reflection

Gracious God,
have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

Please remain seated.

We are not singing in worship; please take this time to reflect on the music and lyrics.

HYMN #785

“It is Well with my Soul”

1 When peace like a river attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll,
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
it is well, it is well with my soul.

Refrain

It is well (it is well)
with my soul, (with my soul,)
it is well, it is well with my soul.

2 Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
let this blest assurance control,
that Christ has regarded my helpless estate,

and has shed his own blood for my soul. *Refrain*

3 He lives--oh, the bliss of this glorious thought;
my sin, not in part, but the whole,
is nailed to his cross and I bear it no more.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul! *Refrain*

4 Lord, hasten the day when our faith shall be sight,
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
the trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend;
even so it is well with my soul.

Text: Horatio G. Spafford, 1828-1888

***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**

Soul of Christ, sanctify me, Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, refresh me. Water from Christ's side, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. Be with me as I go, assured of myself as a beloved and baptized child of God.

Amen.

Please be seated.

FIRST READING: 1 Corinthians 10:1-4

[A] A reading from First Corinthians.

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

You may remain seated.

SECOND READING: Hebrews 12:1-2

A reading from Hebrews.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ²looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CREATIVE ACTIVITY TO SEE GOD

Plant Seeds, Pray for those names that are brought in.

Please be seated.

SERMON **Thomas Johnston**

Please remain seated.

We are not singing in worship; please take this time to reflect on the music and lyrics.

HYMN #650

“In Christ there is no east or west”

1 In Christ there is no east or west,
in him no south or north,
but one community of love
throughout the whole wide earth.

3 Join hands, disciples of the faith,
whate'er your race may be.
All children of the living God
are surely kin to me.

2 In Christ shall true hearts ev'rywhere
their high communion find;
his service is the golden cord
close binding humankind.

4 In Christ now meet both east and
west,
in him meet south and north;
all Christly souls are one in him
throughout the whole wide earth.

Text: John Oxenham, 1852-1941, alt.

Please stand.

***APOSTLES' CREED**

God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, 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. 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.

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

[A] Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

Silence is kept for reflection.

We pray for the church. Bless the ministries of our neighboring congregations. Empower churches throughout the world and encourage missionaries who accompany global neighbors. Kindle in us a spirit of collaboration, that all people may know your loving works. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and come to the aid of those enduring sweltering heat. Nurture wheat and barley crops grown for the nourishment of your people and conserve aquatic habitats and fish populations. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for those who govern. Cast out arrogance, selfishness, and corruption and instruct those who lead to practice compassion and humility. Inspire them with a vision of the common good and a commitment to ensure that all who hunger are fed. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for those bowed down by heavy burdens: those who are unemployed or underemployed, those unable to find affordable housing, and those without health insurance. Console those who grieve and hear the cries of those who call to you for healing. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray especially for those we name aloud now or silently in our hearts...

Diane Alexander (JoAn Allen's sister-in-law), **Martha** Beam (Eleanor Hendrick's friend), **Dan** Birch (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Adam** Bridges & **Brittany** Smith (Libby Stone's cousin and his fiancé), **Cody** Bryant (Bob Bryant's grandson), **Kathy** Callahan (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Mike** Callahan (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Chris** Carman (Judy Bridges' friend), **Edna** Cooper (Bill Bridges' Aunt), **Phil** Costello (Donna Lilly's friend), **The Davenport Family**

(Dave and Priscilla Williams' friends), **Charles and Mary** Degree (Karen Long's friends), **Saher** Degree (Gail Sherman's friend), **Tim** Farmer (Pastor Christina and Jamie's friend), **Ashton** Fields (Carol Berger's friend), **Avan** Fields (Carol Berger's friend), **Ann** Fitzsimmons (Steve and Jenny White's friend), **Carol Ann** Forgas (Bill Bridges' friend), **Mike** Greene (Gail Sherman's friend), **Carl** Greenwald (DeBell's friends), **Joe** Hutchinson (William Coyne's friend), **Debbie** Irvin (Bill Bridges' friend), **Patti** Jenkins (Priscilla Williams' friend), **Kay** Johnson (Eleanor Hendrick's cousin), **Steve** Jolly (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Mark** Kent (Majorie Olsen's son), **Rachel** Kidwell (Dave William's niece), **Muriel** Lambert (Jennie and Dave Lambert's sister-in-law), **Bryan** Legrand (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Jim** Lilly (Dick and Donna Lilly's son), **Sonya and Gerald** Lovelace (Bill Bridges' friend), **Brenda** Lowery (Gail Sherman's friend), **Pam** Lucas (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Eva** McCombs (Sandra Waldrop's mother), **Janice** McGoven (Eleanor Hendricks' sister), **Sheri Dawn** Mack (Relative of Karen Hubbard), **Ed** Marler (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Maribeth** Norris Mies (Carol Berger's cousin), **Mary Bell** Moore (Lacy's neighbor), **Jane** Morrow (Daryl and Rose Cook's friend), **Pat** Mullen (Johanna Gillespie's friend), **Wanda** Mullinax (Edith Kelly's niece), **Teresa** Olsen (Marjorie Olsen's daughter-in-law), **Steve** Olson (Carol Berger's friend), **Bob** Patzer (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Linda** Patzer (Carol Berger's sister), **Lynn** Perry (Jenny and Steve White's friend) **Gerard** Peruzzi (Carol Berger's brother), **Margaret** Peruzzi (Carol Berger's mother), **Liz and Ron** Dal Poggetto (Judy Bridges' friends), **John** Reid (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Beth** Rhyne (Ladley and Jane Burn's friend), **Shannon** Sellers (Libby Stone's cousin), **Jean and Jim** Tesseneer (Bill Bridges friend), **Jerry** Tessener (Daryl and Rose Cook's friend), **Beth** Thomas (Carol Berger's daughter), **Georgeanne** Thomas (Judy Bridges friend), **David** Waldrop (Sandra Waldrop's husband), **Edith** Walker (Allen and Lisa Philbeck's friend's mother), **Molly and Darryl** Waterstraat (Karen Hubbard's friends), **Alfie** Welch (Renee Buchanan's brother), **Christopher** Willever (David Williams' grandson), **Mary Ann** Woolley (Sandra Waldrop's aunt).

Members: **Dean** Davis, **Lin** Washburn, **Dot** Paul, **Bob** Bryant, **William** Coyne, **Jim** Wilson, **Bobbie** Johnson, **Gerald** Washburn, **Ray** Valentine, **Lucinda** Wallen, **Lisa** Upton, **Sandy** Harman, and **Ann** Sipe.

In Undergraduate College: Emma Auch, Brooke Buchanan, Samantha Hoffman, Jacob Stone, Catherine Lilly.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for this congregation. Deepen our resolve to use what we have to serve those in need. When we worry that we do not have enough resources for ministry, assure us of your abundance. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We give thanks for those who have died. As you sustained them through all their days, so dwell in our hearts, that we may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE PEACE OF CHRIST (We are not “passing” the peace in any physical way. Online you are invited to share a greeting of peace in the comments.)

May the peace of Christ be with you always.

May we share that peace with those who are with us today.

Let us gather into our hearts and minds those who are not with you today, whom you love, and send them peace from your heart.

Let us gather into our hearts and minds those with whom we have disagreement or discord and send them peace as well, as Christ would have you do.

Let us gather into our hearts and minds the peace that Christ sends you now.

OFFERING

*Make a one time or recurring gift using **the website** or **the GivePlus app** on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.*

*Or **text 844-906-2283** and enter the amount you wish to donate.² Click the registration link and enter your payment information.³ Receive a verification text as well as an email receipt.*

For future giving, simply send a text to the same number with the amount you wish to give, and your donation will process automatically.

*Or **mail your regular tithe or offering** to PO Box 266, Shelby, NC 28151.*

Please remain seated.

We are not singing in worship; please take this time to reflect on the music and lyrics.

OFFERTORY HYMN #184 “Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful”

Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,
and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.
Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,
that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and dreams of all;
unite them with the prayers we offer.
Grace our table with your presence,
and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.

Please stand.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

[A] Let us pray.

Jesus, Bread of life,
you have set this table with your very self,
and called us to the feast of plenty.

Gather what has been sown among us, and strengthen us in this meal.
Make us to be what we receive here, your body for the life of the world.

Amen.

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

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.

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,
through 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 praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.**

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**

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**

Christ has set the table with more than enough for all.
Come!

Please be seated.

DISTRIBUTION

This is the body and blood of Christ, given and shed for you. **Amen.**

Please remain seated.

If you are not communing, please receive this blessing for you:
"Jesus loves you and keeps you all the days of your life."

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

[A] Let us pray.

Living God, you have greeted us in our brokenness
and nourished us with the body of Christ, broken for us.
Risen to new life with you,
send us now to bear your healing love into the wounded world,
in the name of our risen Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

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

Please remain seated.

We are not singing in worship; please take this time to reflect on the music and lyrics.

HYMN #775 **“Jesus, Priceless Treasure”**

source of purest pleasure,
truest friend to me:
ah, how long I've panted,
and my heart has fainted,
thirsting, Lord, for thee!
Thine I am, O spotless Lamb;
nothing in this world can hide thee,
naught I ask beside thee.

2 In thine arm I rest me;
foes who would molest me
cannot reach me here.
Though the earth be shaking,
every heart be quaking,
Jesus calms my fear.

Lightnings flash and thunders
crash;
yet, though sin and hell assail me,
Jesus will not fail me.

3 Hence, all fears and sadness,
for the Lord of gladness,
Jesus, enters in.
God, who dearly loves us,
from all trial saves us,
gives sweet peace within.
I have borne this worldly scorn;
still in thee lies purest pleasure:
Jesus, priceless treasure!

Text: Johann Franck, 1618-1677; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

HOMEWORK

Find someone who doesn't go to church, say you and some of your friends at church are trying to figure out how to make our church even more open to new people so you are conducting interviews. Tell them you've been a Christian so long, you don't have a good perspective on it anymore. Over (safe) lunch or coffee ask questions. Listen without interrupting. Don't give advice or answers, just ask clarifying questions. Take notes.

1. What pops in your mind when you hear the word church
2. Has anyone invited you to their church? What did you think when they asked you? Did you go? If you went how did that feel? If you didn't go why not?
3. Have you ever had a sense of God or Jesus communicating with you?
4. If you could ask God any question what would it be?
5. Would you like prayer for anything (pray there if it's not awkward. If not pray throughout the week/bring that prayer to church.)

Get back to the person if they asked for prayer a week later and ask how that situation is going.

STUDY VERSE

Read it, journal it, draw it, memorize it, engage in a way that works for you!

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely,^{*} and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us—Hebrews 12:1

Assisting Today

Presiding Minister: The Rev. Christina Auch
Preacher: Thomas Johnston
Organist: Steve White
Ushers: Gail Sherman and Mike Hubbard

Assisting August 1, 2021

Organist: Steve White
Assisting Minister: Lisa Philbeck
Ushers: Allen Philbeck and Robert Buchanan

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Holy Communion When you are worshiping at home, you are encouraged to set up a temporary altar called a tabernacle at home. Find a small table or bench, place on it a nice plate and a cup or goblet. Find a slice or loaf of bread and use either wine or grape juice in the cup. When the time comes for communion, lift the bread and wine with the pastor, giving thanks to God for the gift of communion that offers us forgiveness, community, and new life in Christ.

In person Bible study, led by Pastor Christina, meets weekly in the classroom across from the office on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. We are using the Augsburg Fortress quarterly materials.

Fellowship Hall Use: The fellowship hall is available for use. No food or drink is allowed. The kitchen remains closed. Contact Debby in the church office for more information.

Prayer Concerns: Please call or email the office or text Pastor Christina at 704-472-7783 to update prayer requests. You may leave a voicemail but please provide the spelling of any names, and your relationship to the person being prayed for.

Please continue your tithes and offerings. Make a one time or recurring gift using **the website** or **the GivePlus app** on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.

Or **text 844-906-2283** and enter the amount you wish to donate. Then click the registration link and enter your payment information. You will receive a verification text as well as an email receipt.

Or **mail your regular tithe or offering** to PO Box 266, Shelby, NC 28151.

A LOOK AHEAD

Sunday, August 1 — Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

9:30 a.m. Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion

(also on Facebook & Zoom)

Tuesday, August 3 - 7:00 p.m. - Congregation Council Meeting

Sunday, August 8 — 11th Sunday after Pentecost

9:30 a.m. Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion

(also on Facebook & Zoom)

Sunday, August 15 — 12th Sunday after Pentecost

9:30 a.m. Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion

(also on Facebook & Zoom)

Series designed by The Reverend Katy Stenta, Pastor, New Covenant Presbyterian Church, Albany, NY.

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Ascension Lutheran Church

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