

# Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

July 16, 2023

## Order of Worship: Holy Communion, Setting Four

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**PRELUDE & BELLS** *We observe a moment of silence for prayer and meditation.*

**WELCOME** *congregation responds* **and unto ages of ages. Amen.**

*We stand* **OPENING HYMN**

#533

“Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty”

### ✠BRIEF RITE FOR CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS OF SINS✠

*The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

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 thought 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.**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*1 John 1:8-9*

*Silence is kept for reflection and personal confession.*

Most merciful God... **we confess that we are born 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 forgive you- who believe and repent- of all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

✠HOLY COMMUNION✠

APOSTOLIC 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.**

SONG OF PRAISE

“Glory to God in the Highest”

*p. 148 Luke 2:14*



**A** Glo-ry to God in the high- est, and peace to his peo- ple on earth.



**B** Lord God, heav- en- ly king, al- might- y God and Fa - ther:



We wor- ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo- ry.



Lord Je- sus Christ, on- ly Son of the Fa- ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a- way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



You are seat- ed at the right hand of the Fa- ther; re- ceive our prayer.



For you a- lone are the Ho - ly One, you a- lone are the Lord,



you a- lone are the Most High, Je- sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir- it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa- ther. A - men

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray...Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## WORD

Next Steps Weekly Memory Verse: DEUTERONOMY 30:14

*The word is very near to you, it is in your mouth and in your heart.*

*We sit* FIRST READING: ISAIAH 55:10-13

<sup>10</sup>For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, <sup>11</sup>so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. <sup>12</sup>For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. <sup>13</sup>Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

RESPONSE & MEDITATION: PSALM 65:1-14

<sup>1</sup>You are to be praised, O God, in Zion;  
to you shall vows be performed in Jerusalem.

**<sup>2</sup>To you that hear prayer shall all flesh come,  
because of their transgressions.**

<sup>3</sup>Our sins are stronger than we are,  
but you will blot them out.

**<sup>4</sup>Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your courts to dwell there!  
They will be satisfied by the beauty of your house, by the holiness of your temple.**

<sup>5</sup>Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation,  
O Hope of all the ends of the earth and of the seas that are far away.

**<sup>6</sup>You make fast the mountains by your power;  
they are girded about with might.**

<sup>7</sup>You still the roaring of the seas,  
the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of the peoples.

**<sup>8</sup>Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs;  
you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy.**

<sup>9</sup>You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous;  
the river of God is full of water.

**<sup>10</sup>You prepare the grain,  
for so you provide for the earth.**

<sup>11</sup>You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges;  
with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.

**<sup>12</sup>You crown the year with your goodness,  
and your paths overflow with plenty.**

<sup>13</sup>May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing,  
and the hills be clothed with joy.

**<sup>14</sup>May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak themselves  
with grain; let them shout for joy and sing.**

SECOND READING: ROMANS 8:1-11

<sup>1</sup>There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. <sup>3</sup>For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup>so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. <sup>5</sup>For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup>To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. <sup>7</sup>For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, <sup>8</sup>and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. <sup>9</sup>But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. <sup>10</sup>But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup>If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

*We stand.* GOSPEL VERSE: JOHN 6:68

P151

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

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

GOSPEL READING: MATTHEW 13:1-9, 18-23

**Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. <sup>2</sup>Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. <sup>3</sup>And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup>And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. <sup>5</sup>Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. <sup>6</sup>But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. <sup>7</sup>Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. <sup>8</sup>Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup>Let anyone with ears listen!” <sup>18</sup>“Hear then the parable of the sower. <sup>19</sup>When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. <sup>20</sup>As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; <sup>21</sup>yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. <sup>22</sup>As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. <sup>23</sup>But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

The Gospel of the Lord **Praise to You, O Christ!**

HYMN OF THE DAY

#516

“Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast”

*We sit.* SERMON

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

*Whose Kingdom Is It?*

**Kingdom's Seeds**

*We stand.* PROFESSION OF FAITH    Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic\* and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the + resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.** \*means whole, entire Christian Church

#### PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Let us lift our hearts, hands, and voices in prayer to God on behalf of all people.

*A brief silence is kept.*

Heavenly Father, thank you for the simple images of seeds and soil. Thank you for using what we're familiar with to convey deep truths. Thank you that we don't need a Ph.D. or a million Twitter followers to bear rich fruit. Let us always give you glory and nourish people hungry for your healing and love.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Fill the Church with the Holy Spirit. Make it beautiful with holiness and rich with wisdom. Let your Word take root in it and accomplish your purpose. Draw all people into its courts. Hear their prayers, forgive their sins, and accomplish their salvation.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Grant patience, courage, and faith to those who are persecuted for Jesus' sake. Do not let their witness to you return to you empty. Uproot the stones and weeds from the hearts of all who hate them, so they, too, bear the fruits of repentance and are saved.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Deal mercifully with this congregation. We pray for our mission to develop fully devoted followers of Jesus; to support Solid Rock our mission in action, and that you send us adults for baptism. Make everything we say and do faithful and fruitful. Uproot the deep-rooted weeds and remove the stubborn stones of sin from the fields of our lives. Break down the hard-trodden paths of worldly customs. Make your Word grow richly in us, so that many are fed by it.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Thank you for favorable weather and fruitful earth; for the fields and orchards, flocks and herds, streams and seas, which nourish us all. Bless farmers and ranchers, fishers and shepherds, gardeners and all whose knowledge and effort helps to protect, preserve, and wisely use the gifts of creation. Help us to be generous stewards of your bounty, sharing with all who are in need.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for this nation, beset by troubles and strife, yet still our beloved country. Reform its laws, purify its speech, instruct its leaders, and soften every heart to see one another as your beloved children, created in your image and redeemed at great cost by your dear Son.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Help us to walk alongside just one other person who struggles with doubt, grief, or despair. Help us speak words that are clear, faithful, truthful, and loving. Help us to enrich their faith in you. Help us, and them, to bear much fruit, to your glory and for the sake of those still hungering for your goodness.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bring healing and hope to everyone who is afflicted by sorrow, suffering and sin, including: {List}. Lead them out of their darkness into the brightness of your saving love. Grant peace to their hearts and joy to their loved ones. Give them clear reason to praise your awesome deeds of salvation.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Thank you, dear Father, for all who have died trusting in you. We pray for the families of {List}. Lead and guide us, who still walk a road that is stony and desolate, overgrown with the thorns of sin and briars of violence. Refresh us in this wilderness. Give us nourishment for our bodies, hope for our hearts, and your Spirit to abide with us along life's way. Crown our years with blessing. By the merits of your dear Son, gather us safely to yourself, where with all whom you have redeemed, we may sing with joy forever.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Hear our prayers, dear Father, as they touch your heart through the Spirit who searches our hearts. For the sake of your beloved Son, answer them as may be best for us and give you glory. **Amen**

#### SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also, with you.**

*We briefly greet those in our row with the words "Peace be with you."*



*We sit.* OFFERING, OFFERTORY SONG & PRAYER- *Giving back to God*



*First- and second-time guests are not expected to give a monetary offering; your Connection Card and your presence this morning are your gifts. Safe, secure & easy electronic giving is available on our website [stpeterhallettsville.org/giving](http://stpeterhallettsville.org/giving) or by scanning this code.*

*We stand* #184

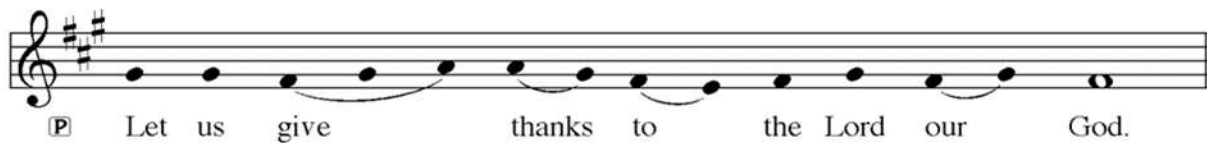
“Let the Vineyards”

*Isaiah 5:1, Psalm 23:5, others*

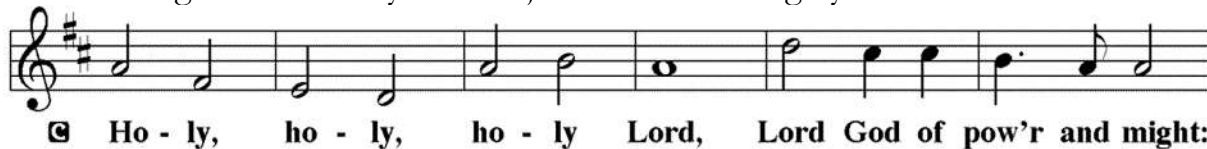
Let the vine- yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless- ing. Gath- er a har- vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be  
fed with the bread of life. Gath- er the hopes and dreams of all; u -  
nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your  
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Blessed are you, O Lord, our God, king of the universe. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, 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



It is indeed right and salutary . . . and join their unending hymn:



## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER & WORDS OF INSTITUTION

You are indeed holy...

In the night in which he was betrayed, ... Do this for the remembrance of me.

All honor and glory are yours...now and forever. **Amen**

## LORD'S PRAYER

*Matthew 6:9-13*

**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.**

*We sit.* INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

*Holy Communion is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ present and received in, with, and under the bread and wine. All who are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and who believe the Lord's words "This is my body given for you" and "This is my blood poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins" may receive Communion. Young children, not yet receiving Communion, may receive a blessing.*

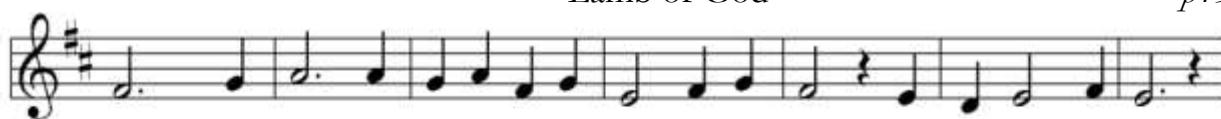
(Matt 26:26ff, Mark 14:22ff, Luke 22:19ff, 1 Cor. 11:24ff)

*Communion administration occurs in a continuous fashion at the Communion rail. The ushers will guide you to the rail. To receive the elements, extend your hand, palm up, to the ministers. White grape juice is available in the center of the trays. For those unable to consume either bread or wine, the Church affirms the Lord's full presence in each element alone. Once you have received the elements, return to your seat by the side aisles. If you do not desire to receive Holy Communion, you may remain seated.*

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"Lamb of God"

p154 John 1:29



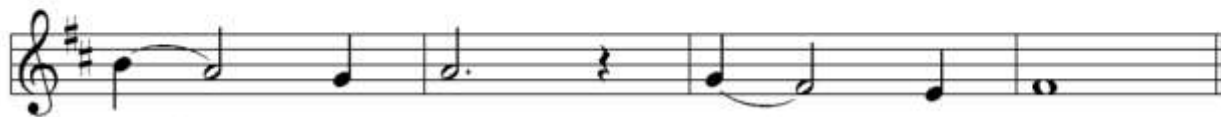
**Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.**



**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.**

We stand POST-COMMUNION BLESSING, SONG, & PRAYER  
May the true body and blood...keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

“Lord Now You Let Your Servant”

Luke 2:29-32



♩ Lord, now you let your ser- vant go in peace; your word has been ful -  
filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre -  
pared in the sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: A light to re - veal you to the  
na - tions and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.  
Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it,  
as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now,  
and will be for - ev - er. A - men

Let us pray... Pour out upon us the spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of those whom you have fed with one heavenly food; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn  
#508

“As Rain from the Clouds”

ST. PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH  
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Our mission is Christ's mission – "I will build my church"  
by developing fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

**Opening Hymn; "Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty" (#533)**

Text by Catherine Winkworth; Music by Joachim Neander

1 Open now thy gates of beauty,  
Zion, let me enter there,  
where my soul in joyful duty  
waits for God who answers prayer.  
Oh, how blessed is this place,  
filled with solace, light, and grace!

2 Gracious God, I come before thee;  
come thou also unto me;  
where we find thee and adore thee,  
there a heav'n on earth must be.  
To my heart, oh, enter thou,  
let it be thy temple now!

3 Here thy praise is gladly chanted,  
here thy seed is duly sown;  
let my soul, where it is planted,  
bring forth precious sheaves alone,  
so that all I hear may be  
fruitful unto life in me.

4 Thou my faith increase and quicken,  
let me keep thy gift divine;  
howsoe'er temptations thicken,  
may thy word still o'er me shine  
as my guiding star through life,  
as my comfort in all strife.

5 Speak, O God, and I will hear thee,  
let thy will be done indeed;  
may I undisturbed draw near thee  
while thou dost thy people feed.  
Here of life the fountain flows;  
here is balm for all our woes.

## **Hymn of the Day: “Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast” (#516)**

Text by John Cawond; Music by J. Day

**1 Almighty God, your word is cast  
like seed into the ground;  
now let the dew of heav'n descend  
and righteous fruits abound.**

**2 Let not the sly satanic foe  
this holy seed remove,  
but give it root in ev'ry heart  
to bring forth fruits of love.**

**3 Let not the world's deceitful cares  
the rising plant destroy,  
but let it yield a hundredfold  
the fruits of peace and joy.**

**4 So when the precious seed is sown,  
life-giving grace bestow,  
that all whose souls the truth receive  
its saving pow'r may know.**

## **Closing Hymn: “As Rain from the Clouds”(#508)**

Text by Delores Dufner; Music by Jonathan E. Spilman

**1 As rain from the clouds will your word come to earth,  
as snow from the heavens refreshing the land.**

**Then soften our soil that the good seed may grow  
and ripen rich fruit to return to your hand.**

**We praise you, our God, for the dew of your word;  
we thank you, good gard'ner, for your tender toil.**

**We bless you, best farmer, for hundredfold yield,  
for harvest of grace in our once-barren soil.**

**2 As grain that is scattered your word has been sown  
on rocks and on roadways, in good earth and sand.**

**Make fertile our soil that the good seed may grow  
and ripen rich fruit to return to your hand.**

**We praise you, our God, for the seed of your word;  
we thank you, good gard'ner, for your tender toil.**

**We bless you, best farmer, for hundredfold yield,  
for harvest of grace in our once-barren soil.**

**2 As rays of the sun shall your word light the world,  
awaking and warming and healing our land.**

**Then shine in our hearts that the good seed may grow  
and ripen rich fruit to return to your hand.**

**We praise you, our God, for the light of your word;  
we thank you, good gard'ner, for your tender toil.**

**We bless you, best farmer, for hundredfold yield,  
for harvest of grace in our once-barren soil.**