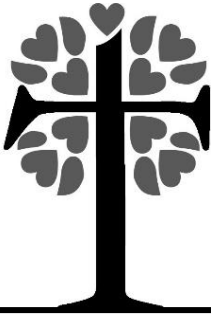


Welcome to Tree of Life Lutheran Church



September 7, 2025 – 13th Sunday After Pentecost

Leader in regular type, **congregation in bold type**

↑ means stand as you are able

Restrooms are by the kitchen and by the Wiggle Room

Wiggle Room is available for anyone needing a brief break from worship, at the end of the piano wing of the sanctuary

WiFi is available: Look for TOL-GUEST; password is OdessaTOL1

We Gather as God's People

PRELUDE

You can use this time for quiet reflection, prayer and preparation for worship.

↑ AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

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

Amen.

Joined to Christ in the waters of Baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. On this Rally Day, as we celebrate the start of Tree of Life's ministries for the fall, let us come before God to reaffirm our faith in Christ Jesus and our commitment to Christian life.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that draw you from God?

I renounce them.

Do you believe in God the Father?

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.**

**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.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in Holy Baptism: to live among God's faithful people; to hear God's Word and share in the Lord's Supper; to proclaim the Good News of God in Christ through word and deed; to serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus; and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

Let us pray: We give you thanks, O Lord, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in us the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence both now and forever. **Amen.**

↑ HYMN

"O God Beyond All Praising"

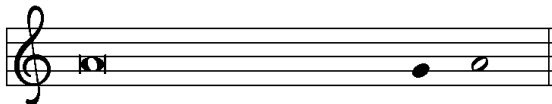
RED HYMNAL #880

↑ **APOSTOLIC GREETING**

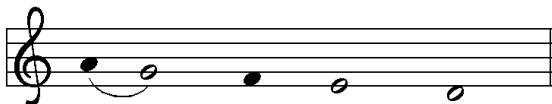
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

↑ KYRIE

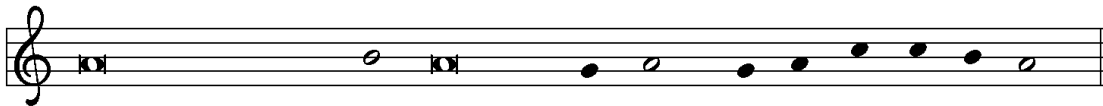
ELW p. 147



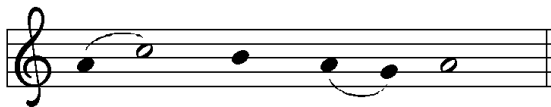
In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



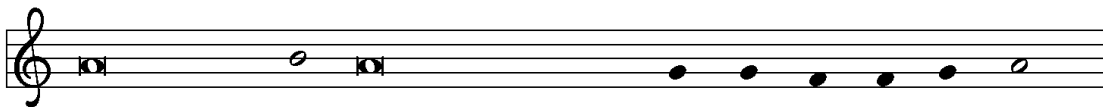
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



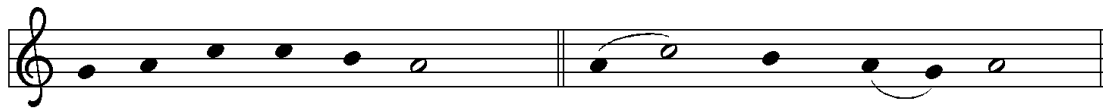
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

Assisting minister



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.

All



1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow-er and rich-es and wis-dom and



strength, and hon-or and bless-ing and glo-ry are his.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



2 Sing with all the peo-ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre-a-tion: Bless-ing and hon-or and glo-ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for-ev-er. A-men.



↑ PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray: Direct us, O Lord God, in all our doings with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

We Hear God's Word

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 30:15-20

A reading from Deuteronomy:

[Moses said to the Israelites:] ¹⁵"See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. ¹⁶If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. ¹⁷But if your heart turns away and you do not hear but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸I declare to you today that you shall certainly perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

¹⁹"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, ²⁰loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him, for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."

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

PSALM: Psalm 1

- ¹ Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!
- ² **Their delight is in the law of the Lord,
and they meditate on God's teaching day and night.**
- ³ They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season,
with leaves that do not wither; everything they do shall prosper.
- ⁴ **It is not so with the wicked; they are like chaff which the wind blows away.**
- ⁵ Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes,
nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.
- ⁶ **For the Lord knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked shall be destroyed.**

SECOND READING: Philemon 1-21

A reading from Philemon:

¹ Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to our beloved coworker Philemon, ² to our sister Apphia, to our fellow soldier Archippus, and to the church in your house:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I thank my God always when I mention you in my prayers, ⁵ because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. ⁶ I pray that the partnership of your faith may become effective as you comprehend all the good that we share in Christ. ⁷ I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

⁸ For this reason, though I am more than bold enough in Christ to command you to do the right thing, ⁹ yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love — and I, Paul, do this as an old man and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. ¹⁰ I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. ¹¹ Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me. ¹² I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. ¹³ I wanted to keep him with me so that he might minister to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel, ¹⁴ but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced.

¹⁵ Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for the long term, ¹⁶ no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother — especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷ So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸ If he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to me. ¹⁹ I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self.

²⁰ Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹ Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

↑ GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW p. 151



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



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

↑ GOSPEL: Luke 14:25-33

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁵ Now large crowds were traveling with [Jesus], and he turned and said to them, ²⁶ "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple.

²⁷ Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

²⁸ "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, ³⁰ saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'

³¹ "Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes

against him with twenty thousand? ³² If he cannot, then while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace.

³³ “So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

↑ HYMN

“Will You Come And Follow Me”

RED HYMNAL #798

BLESSING OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Dear friends in Christ: United with all the baptized and anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are joined in God’s mission for the life of the world. We are called to that mission in our daily lives, and in the ministries we share as the church of God. Today, it is our privilege to recognize and support those who are engaged in the work of education, both at Tree of Life and in our community.

Let us pray for those who serve the Christian education ministries at Tree of Life:

Participants in Tree of Life’s education ministries are invited to stand.

O God of wisdom, in your goodness you provide faithful teachers for your church. Bless those who serve as leaders and participants in Kingdom Kids, Confirmation, Adult Study Group, WELCA Bible Study, and all our Christian education ministries. Help us all to study your Word and engage your world, that together we may grow in knowledge and love, pursue what is good, and seek to do your will; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Let us pray for all who are beginning a new school year, that both students and teachers will be blessed in their academic endeavors:

All teachers and students are invited to stand.

Almighty God, you give wisdom and knowledge. Grant teachers the gift of joy and insight, and students the gift of diligence and openness, that all may grow in what is good and honest and true. Support all who teach and all who learn, that together we may know and follow your ways; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

May God bless all teachers and learners, here and everywhere, in the name of the Father, and the +Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

↑ **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

By the power of the Holy Spirit, let us pray for the Church, the world, and all people according to their needs:

Holy Father, you call all people to follow your way of goodness and life. Help Christians around the world to be faithful followers of your Son. Grant that your Church may delight in your Law and proclaim your Gospel, rooted in the living waters of Christ. God of grace... **Hear our prayer.**

Bless trees blossoming with fruit and streams flowing with water, and all your creation. Make us faithful stewards of all that you have made. God of grace... **Hear our prayer.**

Protect and guide our nation, its leaders and all who serve for its protection. Give wisdom and righteousness to those who govern, that they may turn away from all wickedness and scornfulness, and turn to your ways of freedom, justice and peace. God of grace... **Hear our prayer.**

Comfort and heal those who are poor, sick, suffering or in any trouble of body, mind or spirit. We especially pray for Annalise, Bill, Bob, Chris, Dan, Danielle, Dot, Elizabeth, Erika, Hanne-Lore, Patrick, Paul, Sarah, William, Winnie and those we name with our lips or in our hearts... *(Time for personal petitions)* God of grace... **Hear our prayer.**

Give Tree of Life a heart of discipleship, generosity and faithfulness. Make us willing to give whatever is needed in order to fulfill the mission you have given us: to praise you, to serve in your name, and to spread the Gospel. Bless our bishops, Elizabeth and William; our pastor, Robbie; Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church and its pastor, Karen; and St. Philip's Lutheran Church and its pastors, Patrick and Amy. God of grace... **Hear our prayer.**

Accept our thanksgiving for those whose earthly discipleship has ended, and who now rest with you and all the saints. Console those who mourn, and sustain us in hope until the day when we are all reunited before your throne. God of grace...
Hear our prayer.

We lift up these and all our prayers to you, O Lord, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

↑ **PEACE**

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

We Share God's Holy Meal

OFFERING

↑ **OFFERTORY**

RED HYMNAL #884

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye Heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost**

↑ **OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray together: **Lord of the harvest, we return to you a portion of what you have given to us. Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches, but on you, who richly provides for us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

↑ **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

ELW p. 152

The Lord be with you. And al - so 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.

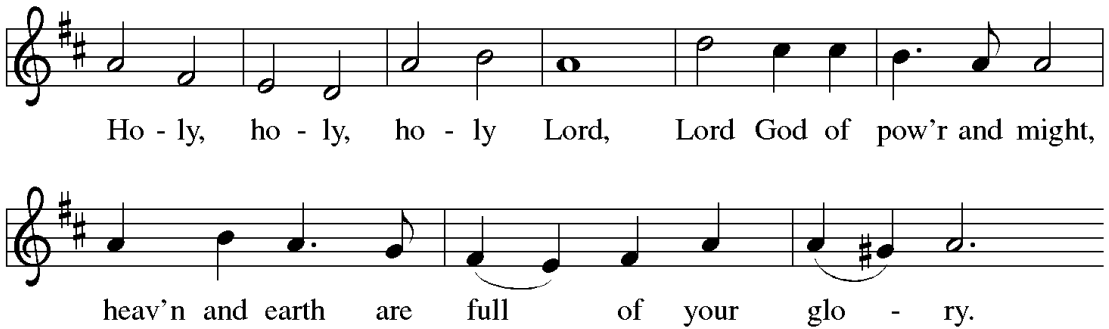
The thanksgiving continues with the preface for the day. The congregation responds:

↑ **SANCTUS**

ELW p. 153

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,

heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



↑ **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER & WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

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**

**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**

**Taste and see that the Lord is good.
Thanks be to God.**

All baptized Christians are welcome to commune. Wine and white grape juice are in the individual cups. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

COMMUNION

ELW p. 154



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.

HYMNS

“One Bread One Body”
“Bread Of Life From Heaven”

RED HYMNAL #496
RED HYMNAL #474

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray together: **O God, we give you thanks that you have set before us this feast, the body and blood of your Son. By your Spirit, strengthen us to serve all in need and to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

God Sends Us in Mission

ANNOUNCEMENTS

↑ **BENEDICTION**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

↑ **HYMN**

"Lift High The Cross"

RED HYMNAL #660

↑ **MISSION STATEMENT**

What is our Mission? **To be faithful children of God, called by grace through Christ, and sharing this gift with Middletown, Odessa, Townsend and the World.**

↑ **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace; serve the Lord!
Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

You may listen to the music or depart to do God's work.

Please join us for refreshments in the fellowship room after the service.

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How will you serve this year?

As we begin a new season of ministry at Tree of Life, we need *you* to help carry out our mission! Whatever your talents and whatever your interests, there's a place for you! If you're already helping out, *thank you!* If you'd like to explore ways to serve, pick up a *Faith in Action* booklet at the front of the sanctuary, which describes our congregation's many ministries. If you'd like to join one of those ministries, talk to the contact person listed in the booklet – or just check a box below, and someone will be in touch! Thank you for being part of God's work at Tree of Life!

I'd like to join these ministries this year:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Study Group | <input type="checkbox"/> MyGrief |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Altar Guild | <input type="checkbox"/> Older Wiser Lutheran Seniors (OWLS) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Card Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Our Daily Bread |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choir & Music Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach Committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Church Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Stewardship Committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities & Property | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation Bible School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fellowship Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Website, Social Media, YouTube |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Review Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Women Of The ELCA (WELCA) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kingdom Kids | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship Assistants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Knot Quilters & Project Linus | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship & Music Committee |

My name: _____

Best way to contact me: _____

Upcoming Events

September 7

Deadline to register for OWLS Chester River Cruise

September 10

Knot Quilters, 10 a.m.

September 14

First Adult Study Group, on Christianity and Technology, 9 a.m.

September 15

OWLS Chester River Cruise, Noon

September 21

First Kingdom Kids & Confirmation, Noon

October 11

Blessing of the Animals at Middletown Dog Park, Noon-2 p.m.

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE!

Tree of Life's Choir is back, and everyone is invited to join!



Rehearsals:

1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 2 p.m.
2nd and 4th Sundays, after worship



Interested? Questions? Talk to Duane Dillard!