

# *15th Sunday After Pentecost*

## *September 10, 2023*



1812 North Highland Avenue

Clearwater, Florida 33755

Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

727-446-5026

[office@GraceCLW.com](mailto:office@GraceCLW.com)

Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

Welcome! Conflict is a part of relationships and life in community. Jesus' words in today's gospel are often used in situations having to do with church discipline. The prophet Ezekiel tells of warning the wicked to turn from their ways, and Paul reminds us that love is the fulfilling of the law. We gather in the name of Christ, assured that he is present among us with gifts of peace and reconciliation.

Some practical things for you to know:

**Children:** All children, even those who are noisy, upset, or otherwise discombobulated, are always welcome here!

**Restrooms** are located to the left out of the doors you entered in to the narthex or lobby; ushers can further direct you.

**Holy Communion:** All baptized Christians are welcome to the Lord's Table. Our ushers will guide you.

## THE ORDER OF OUR WORSHIP

### PRELUDE

*We stand as we are able.*

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Blessed be God, the one who forms us, ✠ Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete. **Congregation: Amen.**

Pastor: Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.  
*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Pastor: Steadfast and faithful God,

**Congregation: 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.**

Pastor: 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. **Congregation: Amen.**

### GATHERING HYMN

*As We Gather at Your Table*

ELW 522

### GREETING

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

## KYRIE

Leader

In peace, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Assembly

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have

For the reign of God, and for

mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peace through-out the world, for the u-ni-ty of all, let us pray to the

Lord. For your

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peo - ple here who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your

word, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have

Help, save, and de - fend us, O God.

mer - cy. A - men.

Text: *Lutheran Book of Worship*, adapt. Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: *Now the Feast and Celebration*, Marty Haugen

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## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O Lord God, enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy. Without your help, we mortals will fail; remove far from us everything that is harmful, and lead us toward all that gives life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Congregation: Amen.**

*We sit.*

## FIRST READING

### Ezekiel 33:7-11

Page 701

*God appointed Ezekiel as a sentinel for the house of Israel. Ezekiel must faithfully convey God's warnings to the people. Remarkably, God—who is about to attack Jerusalem—gives a warning with the hope that repentance will make the attack unnecessary.*

<sup>7</sup>So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. <sup>8</sup>If I say to the wicked, “O wicked ones, you shall surely die,” and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. <sup>9</sup>But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

<sup>10</sup>Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: “Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?” <sup>11</sup>Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

The reading is concluded:

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

## SECOND READING

**Romans 13:8-14**

Page 923

*The obligation of Christians is to love one another and so fulfill the heart and goal of the law. Clothes make the person as we “put on the Lord Jesus Christ” and live today in light of the future God has in store for us.*

[Paul writes:] <sup>8</sup>Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup>The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet”; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>10</sup>Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

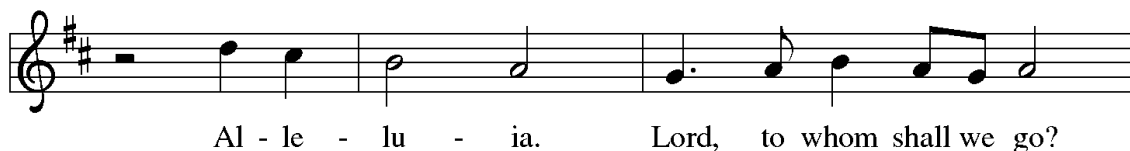
<sup>11</sup>Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; <sup>12</sup>the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; <sup>13</sup>let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. <sup>14</sup>Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

The reading is concluded:

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

*We stand.*

## ALLELUIA VERSE





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

## GOSPEL

**Matthew 18:15-20**

Page 799

*Jesus offers practical advice to his disciples on how individuals—and the church as a whole—should go about restoring relationships when one member has sinned against another.*

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew in the 18th chapter.

**Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>15</sup>“If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. <sup>16</sup>But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup>If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. <sup>18</sup>Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

*After the reading...*

Pastor: The gospel of the Lord. **Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.**

*We Sit*

## SERMON

*We Stand*

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love*

ELW 708 vs. 1-3

*We Sit*

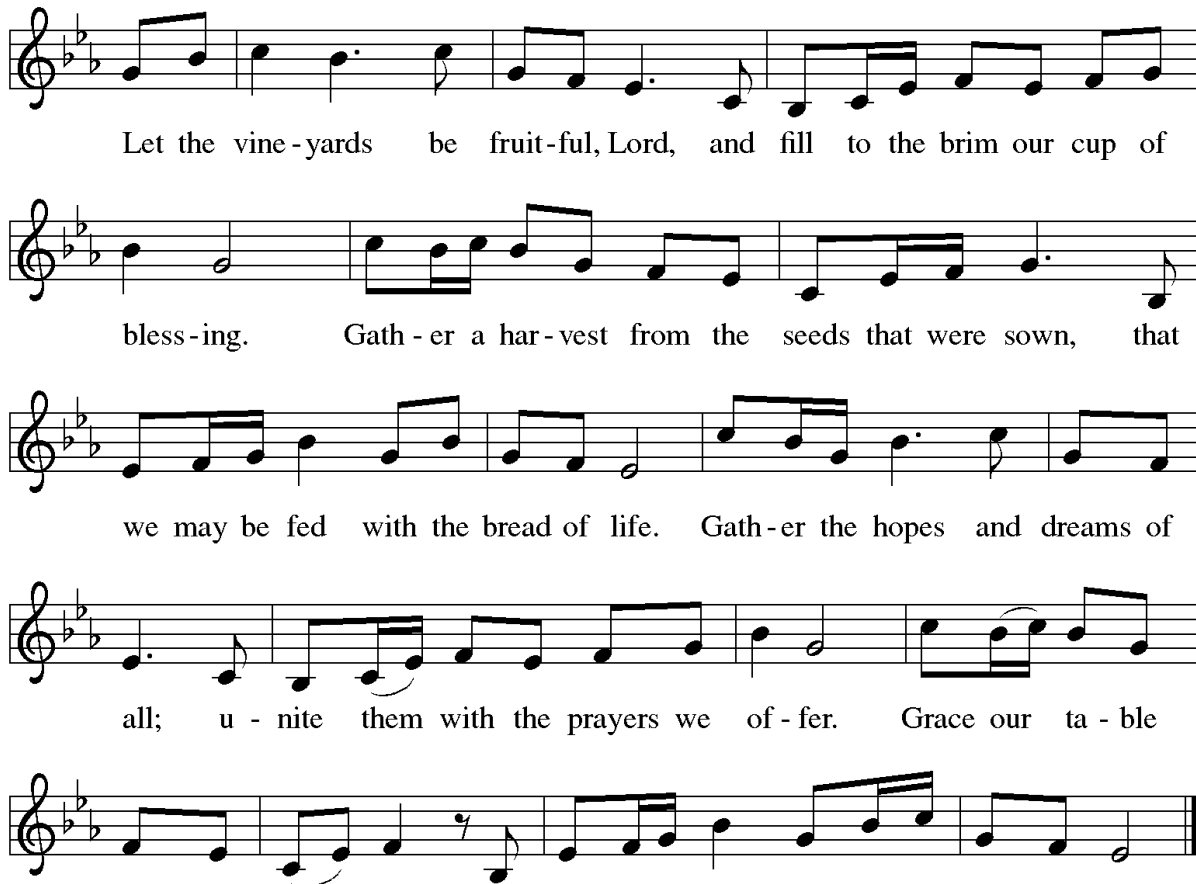
## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Each petition ends either* “Lord, in your mercy,” and we respond **“Hear our prayer.”**  
*OR* “Hear us, O God” and we respond **“Your mercy is great.”**

## OFFERING

*We Stand*

## OFFERTORY



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.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980

Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927

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## OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. 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.

**Congregation: Amen.**

## DIALOGUE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**Congregation: And also with you.**

versuchung, sondern erlöse  
uns Von dem Bösen.  
Denn dein ist das Reich, Und die Kraft,  
und die Herrlichkeit in Ewigkeit. Amen.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

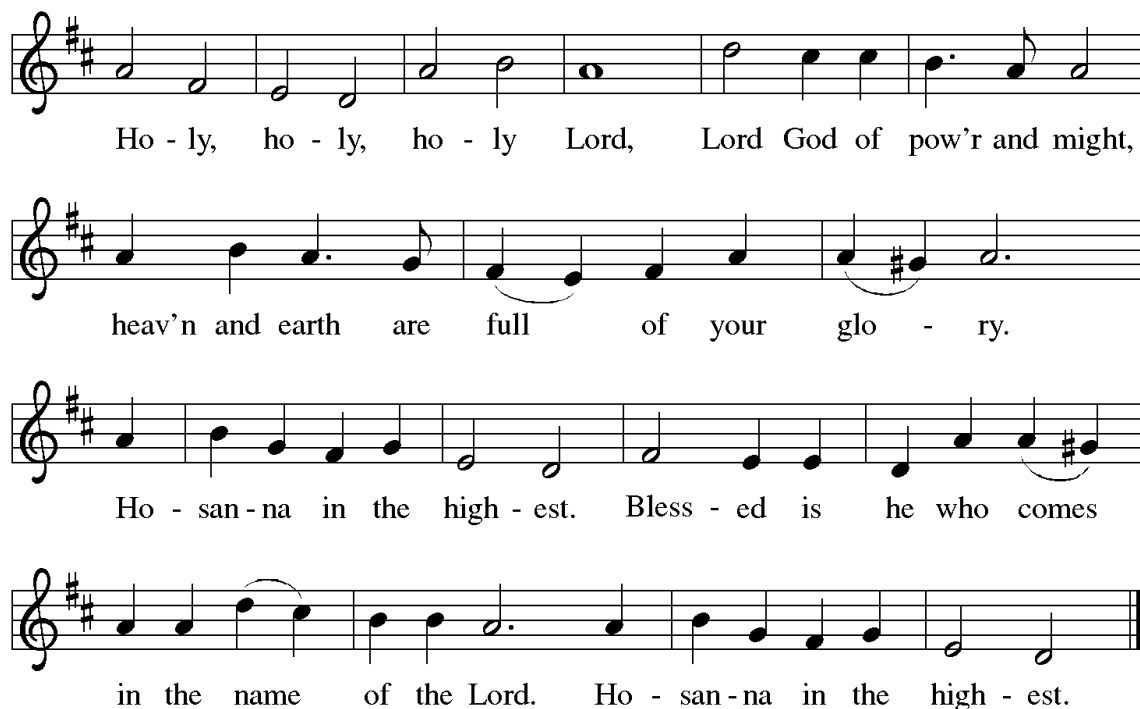
**Congregation: We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**Congregation: 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, 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 hymn:



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

Pastor: 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.

**Congregation: Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in whichever language is closest to our hearts.

**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.**

**Vater unser, der du bist im Himmel,  
Geheiligt werde dein Name,  
Dein Reich komme,  
Dein Wille geschehe,  
Auf Erden, wie im Himmel.  
Gib uns heute unser tägliches Brot;  
Und vergib uns unsere Schuld,  
Wie wir vergeben unserem  
Schuldigern;  
Und führe uns nicht in  
Versuchung, sondern erlöse  
uns Von dem Bösen.  
Denn dein ist das Reich, Und die Kraft,  
und die Herrlichkeit in Ewigkeit. Amen.**

**Padre nuestro, que estás en el cielo,  
santificado sea tu Nombre;  
venga a nosotros tu reino;  
hágase tu voluntad  
en la tierra como en el cielo.  
Danos hoy nuestro pan de cada día;  
perdona nuestras ofensas, como también  
nosotros perdonamos  
a los que nos ofenden;  
no nos dejes caer en la tentación,  
y líbranos del mal.  
Porque tuyo es el reino, el Poder,  
y la gloria por los siglos de los siglos.  
Amén.**

*We Sit*

## **SPECIAL MUSICAL OFFERING**

*After all have receive Communion, we stand.*

### **TABLE BLESSING**

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

**Congregation: Amen.**

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Assisting Minister: Let us pray. 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. **Congregation: Amen.**

### **SENDING OF COMMUNION**

Pastor: Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick, homebound, or imprisoned. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Congregation: Amen.**

### **BLESSING**

Pastor: The God of glory, ✠ Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever.

**Congregation: Amen.**

### **SENDING SONG**

*Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee*

ELW 836

### **SHARING OF PEACE & DISMISSAL**

Together we have heard God's Word and shared in the Lord's Supper, we have given and have been forgiven. The peace of the Lord be with you all.

**Congregation: And also with you.**

Now as this service of worship is ending, this week's service to the world is beginning! Go in peace. God is at work in you. **Congregation: Thanks be to God!**

*Light refreshments are served after the church service on the front porch just to the left as you exit. Please come join us for cookies and conversation.*

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