

"So he called to him,
**'FATHER ABRAHAM,
HAVE PITY ON ME
and send Lazarus to
dip the tip of his finger
IN WATER AND
COOL MY TONGUE,**
because I am
in agony in this fire.'"

LUKE 16:24, NIV

**Sunday, September 28, 2025
9:00 a.m.**

Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church

It is a joy to gather together for worship!

St. Paul Purpose Statement

Living Christ centered lives so we may love all, serve our community, and share the Word.

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. In-person worship with Holy Communion

10:15 a.m. In-person Sunday School – September – May

Communion

We celebrate Jesus' presence each week in Holy Communion. This is the Lord's Supper and Jesus invites us: whether you are a lifelong Lutheran, or just considering Christianity; if you are an infant or elderly; if your family has been in the United States for generations, or has only recently arrived; if you are LGBTQIA+ or straight; if you live with disabilities, chronic illness, or are able-bodied and currently healthy; if you are home-blessed or homeless; ... YOU are welcome at God's meal of grace at St. Paul.

Accessibility

Handicap parking, entrance, wheelchair, and restrooms are available. Sound amplifiers and large print bulletins are available. Please ask an usher for assistance.

Children's Offering

The September Children's offering will go to towards The Buddy Bag program. Last year they saw a big increase in participation and were able to meet the need thanks to generous donations. Last spring they were packing and distributing 160 bags each week! At a cost of approximately \$3.44 per bag currently, the costs add up quickly. Be assured that every penny donated goes only to the cost of purchasing the food. All administrative costs are covered separately.

Pastor Mark Luepke, Part-time Interim

pastormark@stpaulsterling.com

1701 16th Ave. Sterling, IL 61081

815-625-3069

Church email: stpaulsterling@comcast.net

www.stpaulsterling.com

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude

"Footsteps of Jesus"

By Asa B. Everett

Arranged by Lani Smith

"Touch the Sky"

Words and Music by Joel Houston, Dylan Thomas and Michael Guy Chislett

Arranged by John Cumberland

Welcome/Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

(All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.)

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, our maker, our helper, and our keeper.

All: Amen.

P: Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Merciful and loving God,

All: we are your stiff-necked people. We trample on the needy. We grumble about your grace to others. We turn away from the poor. Have mercy on us and forgive our sins. Rejoice over us as ones who were lost and have been found. Amen.

P: Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. You who were lost have been found. In the name of ☩ Jesus, your sins are forgiven!

All: Amen.

Gathering Hymn
“Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven”
ELW #864



1 Praise, my soul, the God of heav - en; joy - ful - ly your trib-ute bring.
2 God be praised for grace and fa - vor to our fore-bears in dis-tress.
3 Frail as sum-mer's flow'r we flour - ish, blows the wind and it is gone;
4 An - gels sing in ad - o - ra - tion, in God's pres-ence, face to face.



Ran-somed, healed, re - stored, for - giv - en, ev - er - more God's prais-es sing.
God be praised, the same for - ev - er, slow to chide and swift to bless.
but, as mor - tals rise and per - ish, God en - dures un-chang-ing on.
Sun and moon and all cre - a - tion, all who dwell in time and space.



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Prais - es ev - er - last - ing ring!
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Glo - rious is God's faith - ful - ness!
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise the great E - ter - nal One!
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise with us the God of grace!

Text: Henry F. Lyte, 1793–1847; alt. Walter R. Bouman, 1927–2005
Music: PRAISE, MY SOUL, John Goss, 1800–1880

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

Prayer of the Day
P: Let us pray together:
All: O God, rich in mercy, you look with compassion on this troubled world. Feed us with your grace, and grant us the treasure that comes only from you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

First Reading: Amos 6:1a, 4-7
1a Woe to those who are at ease in Zion and for those who feel secure on Mount Samaria.
4 Woe to those who lie on beds of ivory and lounge on their couches and eat lambs from the flock and calves from the stall, 5 who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp and like David improvise on instruments of music, 6 who drink wine from bowls and anoint themselves with the finest oils but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph! 7 Therefore they shall now be the first to go into exile, and the revelry of the loungers shall pass away.

R: Word of God, Word of Life,
All: Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 146
R: Hallelujah! Praise the LORD, O my soul!
All: I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.
R: Put not your trust in rulers, in mortals in whom there is no help.
All: When they breathe their last, they return to earth, and in that day their thoughts perish.
R: Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help, whose hope is in the LORD their God;

All: who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; who keeps promises forever;
R: who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger. The LORD sets the captive free.
All: The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.
R: The LORD cares for the stranger; the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.
All: The LORD shall reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 6:6-19
6 Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment, 7 for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of

it, ⁸ but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. ⁹ But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

¹¹ But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you ¹⁴ to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ which he will bring about at the right time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. ¹⁶ It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

¹⁷ As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches but rather on God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸ They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, ¹⁹ thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

R: Word of God, Word of Life,

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Music: Fintan O'Carroll and Christopher Walker
Music © 1985 Fintan O'Carroll and Christopher Walker, admin. OCP Publications, Inc. 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.
All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 16th chapter.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ¹⁹ “There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰ And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹ who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. ²² The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In Hades, where he was being tormented, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴ He called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in agony in these flames.’ ²⁵ But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things and Lazarus in like manner evil things, but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. ²⁶ Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.’ ²⁷ He said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house ²⁸ for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.’ ²⁹ Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.’ ³⁰ He said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ ³¹ He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

P: The Gospel of the Lord,

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Children’s Message

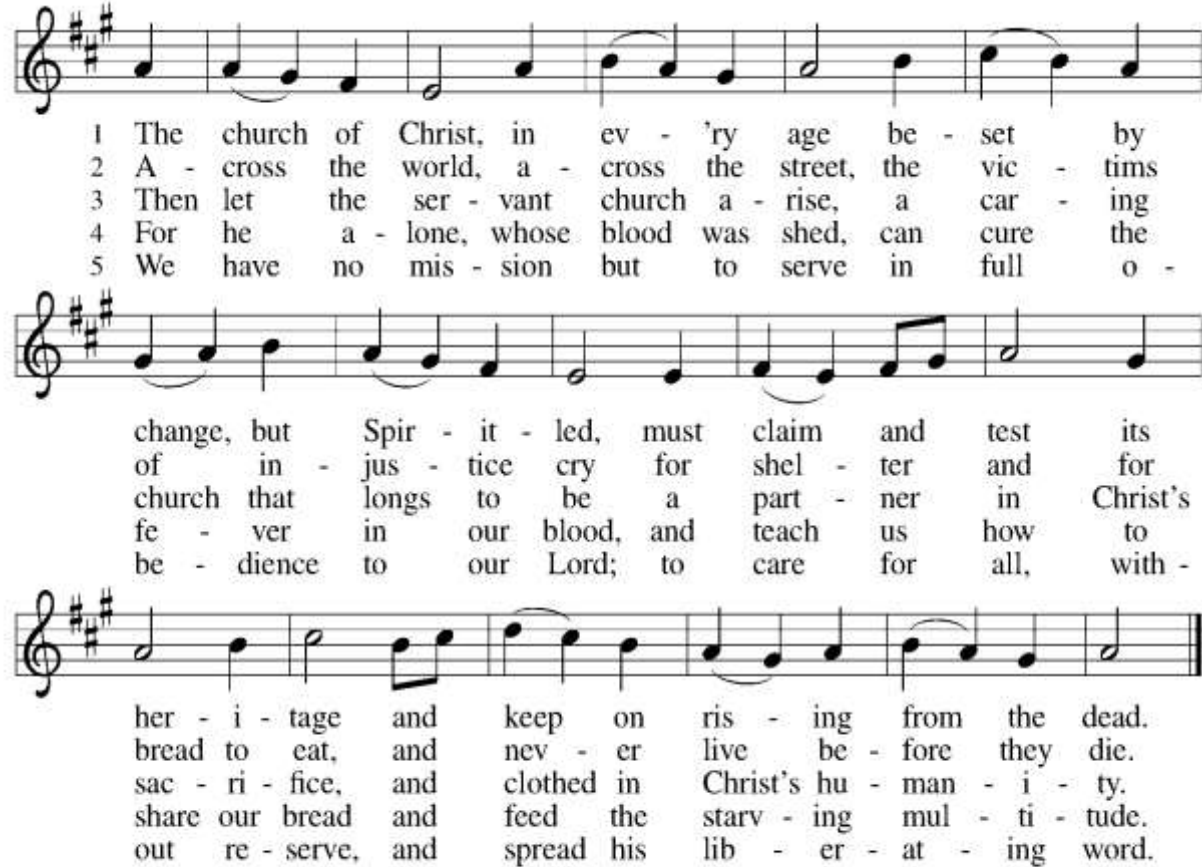
Sermon

“Called to Take Our Binders Off”

Hymn of the Day

“The Church of Christ, in Every Age”

ELW #729



1 The church of Christ, in ev - 'ry age be - set by
2 A - cross the world, a - cross the street, the vic - tims
3 Then let the ser - vant church a - rise, a car - ing
4 For he a - lone, whose blood was shed, can cure the
5 We have no mis - sion but to serve in full o -

change, but Spir - it - led, must claim and test its
of in - jus - tice cry for shel - ter and for
church that longs to be a part - ner in Christ's
fe - ver in our blood, and teach us how to
be - dience to our Lord; to care for all, with -

her - i - tage and keep on ris - ing from the dead.
bread to eat, and nev - er live be - fore they die.
sac - ri - fice, and clothed in Christ's hu - man - i - ty.
share our bread and feed the starv - ing mul - ti - tude.
out re - serve, and spread his lib - er - at - ing word.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000

Music: WAREHAM, William Knapp, 1698–1768

Text © 1971 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Quilt & Kit Blessing*

Leader: God, you call us to love our neighbors as ourselves. Send forth your Spirit today as we call upon you to bless our work and make it holy. Help these quilts and kits, our offerings of hope, to travel across the furthest distances to reach our most weary neighbors and surround them with your grace and peace.

All: Jesus, open our hearts to love our neighbors.

L: God, we give you thanks for the pieces of fabric, thread, sewing machines, and the items collected for the kits. May their presence be a sign of your faithful promise, may these quilts wrap our neighbors in unending love, and may these kits offer dignity and healing.

All: Jesus, open our hearts to love our neighbors.

L: God, we give thanks for all those who have taken part in creating these quilts and kits. May you guide us to greater empathy for our neighbors in crisis, for mothers who struggle to feed their hungry children, for the fearful, the anxious, the isolated. May these quilts and kits provide comfort and relief to those who are downtrodden around the world.

All: Jesus, open our hearts to love our neighbors.

L: God, be with those who will receive these gifts — neighbors we have never met, neighbors who are far away, neighbors who, like us, long for your grace and mercy. May the work crafted from our humble hands serve as a beacon of light and hope to those who are desolate and hopeless and fill them with the peace that is only found in you.

All: Jesus, open our hearts to love our neighbors.

L: We thank you for this ministry of service and for the opportunity to comfort those in their darkest hours, to remind our neighbors in Christ of your loving presence. Bring us ever closer to your heart and our neighbors in need throughout the world. We pray all this in the name of Jesus, the one who is our hope.

All: Amen.

L: Emboldened by God's eternal and unconditional love for all people, let us go and do likewise, and share our blessings with neighbors near and far, in the name of the Father, the Son +, and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

* from LWR Mission Quilt Resources

Apostles Creed

P: Trusting in Christ’s life, death, and resurrection, let us profess our faith through the words of the Apostles Creed:

All: 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 power of 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

P: Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need.

P: God of grace,

All: receive our prayer.

P: We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend.

All: Amen.

Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

All: And also with you!

P: Let us share a sign of Christ’s peace in whatever way you are comfortable.

MEAL

Offering

“Shall We Gather at the River”

By Robert Lowry

Arranged by Lyndell Leatherman

Offering Prayer

P: 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. Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are suffering and in need, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving



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.

P: 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:

“Holy, Holy, Holy”



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, my heart, my heart a - dores you.

My heart is glad to say the words: You are ho - ly, God.

Text: Argentine traditional
Music: ARGENTINE SANTO, Argentine traditional

The Words of Institution

Lord’s Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

All: 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

P: Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them.
Come to this meal of mercy.

Communion

Communion Music

“Lamb of God”



1 Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us, have mer - cy on
us. 2 Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the

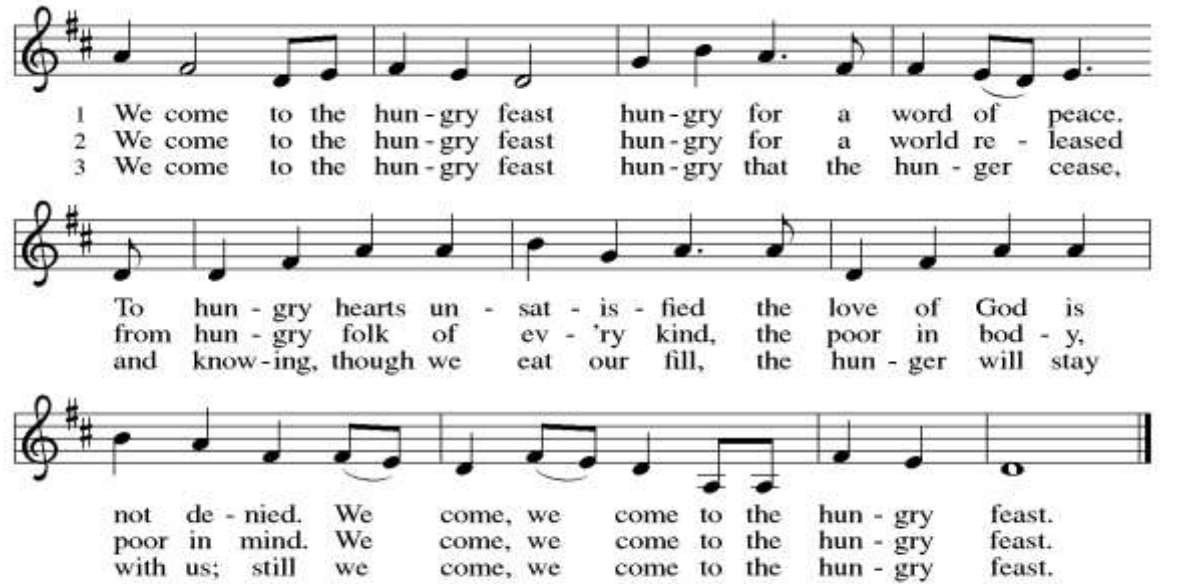


world; have mer - cy on us, have mer - cy on us.
3 Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; grant us
peace, grant us peace.

Music: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
Music © 1992 CPH Publishing

“We Come to the Hungry Feast”

ELW #479



1 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a word of peace.
2 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a world re - leased
3 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry that the hun - ger cease,
To hun - gry hearts un - sat - is - fied the love of God is
from hun - gry folk of ev - 'ry kind, the poor in bod - y,
and know - ing, though we eat our fill, the hun - ger will stay
not de - nied. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
poor in mind. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
with us; still we come, we come to the hun - gry feast.

Text: Ray Makeever, b. 1943
Music: HUNGRY FEAST, Ray Makeever
Text and music © 1982 Ray Makeever, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

“For the Bread Which You Have Broken”

ELW #494



- 1 For the bread which you have bro - ken, for the wine which you have poured,
- 2 By this prom - ise that you love us, by your gift of peace re - stored,
- 3 With the saints who now a - dore you, seat-ed at the heav'n - ly board,
- 4 In your ser - vice, Lord, de - fend us; in our hearts keep watch and ward;



for the words which you have spo - ken, now we give you thanks, O Lord.
by your call to heav'n a - bove us, hal - low all our lives, O Lord.
may the church still wait - ing for you keep love's tie un - bro - ken, Lord.
in the world to which you send us let your king - dom come, O Lord.

Text: Louis F. Benson, 1855–1930, alt.

Music: OMNI DIE, *Gross Catolisch Gesangbuch*, Nürnberg, 1631

Text © Robert F. Jefferys Jr.

Prayer after Communion

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

All: Amen.

P: Let us pray.

O God, through this meal you have strengthened us and appointed us to be your servants. Send us to do good and to share our possessions with all in need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

All: Amen

Blessing

P: The God of righteousness, who gives justice to the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry, who sets the prisoners free, ☩ bless you now and forever.

All: Amen.

Sending Song

“To Be Your Presence”

ELW #546



- 1 To be your pres - ence is our mis - sion here, to show com -
- 2 To be your pres - ence is our mis - sion bold, to feed the
- 3 To be your pres - ence is our mis - sion blest, to speak for
- 4 We are your heart, O Christ, your hands and voice, to serve your



pas - sion's face and lis - t'ning ear, to be your heart of mer - cy
poor and shel - ter home - less cold, to be your hands of jus - tice,
all the bro - ken and op - pressed, to be your voice of hope, your
peo - ple is our call and choice, and in this mis - sion we, the



ev - er near,
right up - hold, al - le - lu - ia!
love ex - pressed,
church, re - joice,

Text: Delores Dufner, o.s.b., b. 1939

Music: ENGELBERG, Charles V. Stanford, 1852–1924

Text © 2000 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.

All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Do not lose heart.

All: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“Ancient of Days (with Immortal, Invisible)”

Words and Music by Jamie Harvill and Gary Sadler

Arranged by Bethany K. Smith and Mary McDonald

We Remember in Prayer; those on our Home Visitation list and those on our prayer list: Raymond Graftaas, Matt Friel, Sandy Julifs, Mike, Lori Dewey, Dylan Wescott, Ken & Sharon Mager, Phyllis Jacobson, Betty Steinke, and Larry Wahler.

Worship Assistants:

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – Stacey Avelar

Acolytes – Avelar family

Greeters – Bob & Judy Bartel

Ushers – Dan Dir, Janie Billings

Reader – Stacey Avelar

Sound – Braydn Arians

Communion Assistant – Janie Billings

Altar Guild – Judy Bartel, Donna Kendall

Musicians:

Lori Attig

Julie Woessner-DeJonge

Next Week – October 5**Worship Assistants**

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – Greg Zeigler

Acolytes – Altar Guild

Greeters – Nancy Beck, Bev Graunke

Ushers – Keith Peugh, Mel Johnson

Reader – Keith Peugh

Sound – Greg Zeigler

Communion Assistant – Nancy Beck

Altar Guild – Audrey & Cathy Cox

Coffee Fellowship – *Volunteer Needed*