
*WELCA
Tri-Church
Progressive Meal*

Monday, November 2, 2026
5:30-7:30pm

St. John's Lutheran Church - 703 Third Ave Sterling

Bring a hat or mittens for local school children.

Sign up at one of the three churches by Sunday, October 18



Sunday, October 18, 2026
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

During the month of October, our children's offering at worship is going toward Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) Holiday Hope Chest. LSSI offers children and their families gifts for Christmas through the purchase of gift cards to specific vendors. Thank you for helping young people served by LSSI have gifts for Christmas this year! More information will be coming in regards to purchasing gift cards/gifts on your own.

Pastor Mark Luepke, Part-time Interim

pastormark@stpaulsterling.com

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Twenty first Sunday after Pentecost

In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

Prelude

"Almighty, Unchangeable God"

Cindy Berry

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, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth.

All: Amen.

P: Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

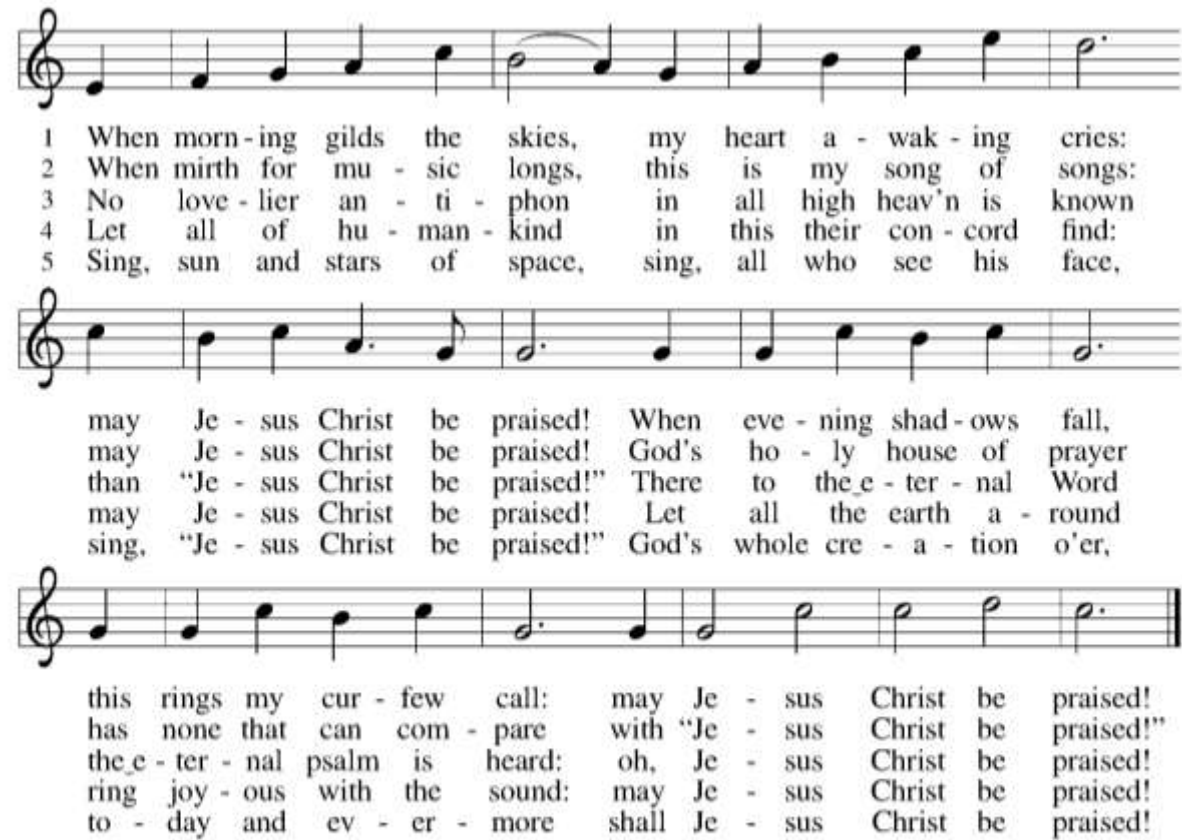
P: Compassionate God,

All: we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.

P: Hear this good news: We have peace with God through † Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

All: Amen.

Gathering Hymn
“When Morning Gilds the Skies”
ELW #853



1 When morn - ing gilds the skies, my heart a - wak - ing cries:
2 When mirth for mu - sic longs, this is my song of songs:
3 No love - lier an - ti - phon in all high heav'n is known
4 Let all of hu - man - kind in this their con - cord find:
5 Sing, sun and stars of space, sing, all who see his face,

may Je - sus Christ be praised! When eve - ning shad - ows fall,
may Je - sus Christ be praised! God's ho - ly house of prayer
than "Je - sus Christ be praised!" There to the e - ter - nal Word
may Je - sus Christ be praised! Let all the earth a - round
sing, "Je - sus Christ be praised!" God's whole cre - a - tion o'er,

this rings my cur - few call: may Je - sus Christ be praised!
has none that can com - pare with "Je - sus Christ be praised!"
the e - ter - nal psalm is heard: oh, Je - sus Christ be praised!
ring joy - ous with the sound: may Je - sus Christ be praised!
to - day and ev - er - more shall Je - sus Christ be praised!

Text: German hymn, 19th cent.; tr. Robert Bridges, 1844–1930, alt.
Music: LAUDES DOMINI, Joseph Barnby, 1838–1896

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.

Kyrie



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.

Hymn of Praise

Refrain



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



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

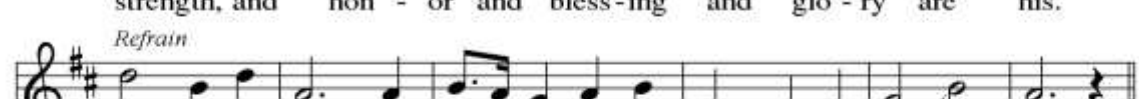


free to be peo-ple of God. Pow-er and rich-es and wis-dom and

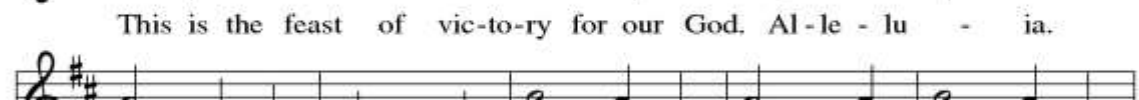


strength, and hon-or and bless-ing and glo-ry are his.

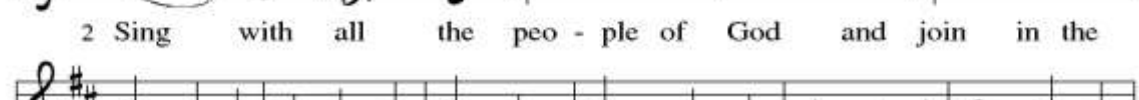
Refrain



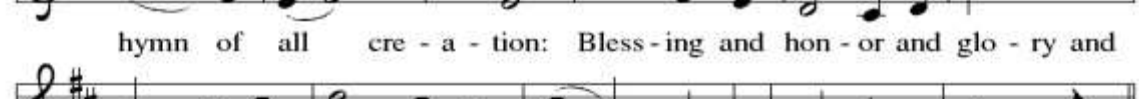
This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



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

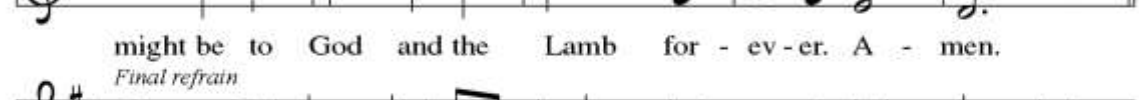


hymn of all cre-a-tion: Bless-ing and hon-or and glo-ry and

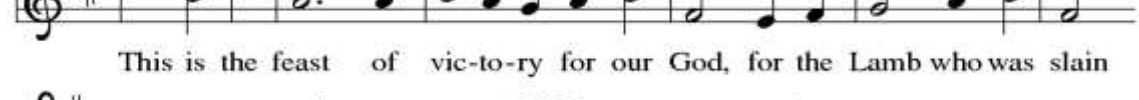


might be to God and the Lamb for-ev-er. A-men.

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be-gun his reign. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray together:

All: Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 45:1-7

¹ Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him— and the gates shall not be closed:

² I will go before you and level the mountains; I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron;

³ I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name.

⁴ For the sake of my servant Jacob and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name; I give you a title, though you do not know me.

⁵ I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides me there is no god. I arm you, though you do not know me,

⁶ so that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other.

⁷ I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe; I the LORD do all these things.

R: Word of God, Word of Life,

All: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

¹ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

² We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³ remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus

Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy from the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For they report about us what kind of welcome we had among you and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

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

Gospel Acclamation



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel: Matthew 22:15-22

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 22nd chapter.
All: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁵ The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶ So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in

accordance with truth, and show deference to no one, for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” ¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰ Then he said to them, “Whose head is this and whose title?” ²¹ They answered, “Caesar’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s.” ²² When they heard this, they were amazed, and they left him and went away.

P: The Gospel of the Lord,
All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Children’s Message

Sermon

“Give Yourself to God”

Hymn of the Day

“We Give Thee but Thine Own”
ELW #686



1 We give thee but thine own, what - e’er the gift may be;
2 May we thy boun - ties thus as stew - ards true re - ceive,
3 The cap - tive to re - lease, to God the lost to bring,
4 And we be - lieve thy word, though dim our faith may be:
all that we have is thine a - lone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.
and glad - ly, as thou bless - est us, to thee our first - fruits give.
to teach the way of life and peace—it is a Christ - like thing.
what - e’er we do for thine, O Lord, we do it un - to thee.

Text: William W. How, 1823–1897, alt.
Music: HEATH, L. Mason and G. Webb, *Cantica Lauda*, 1850

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: Seeking the Spirit of God who makes all things new, we pray for the church and the world.

A brief silence.

P: Hear us, God.

All: Your mercy is great.

P: Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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.

Offering

"Your Name"

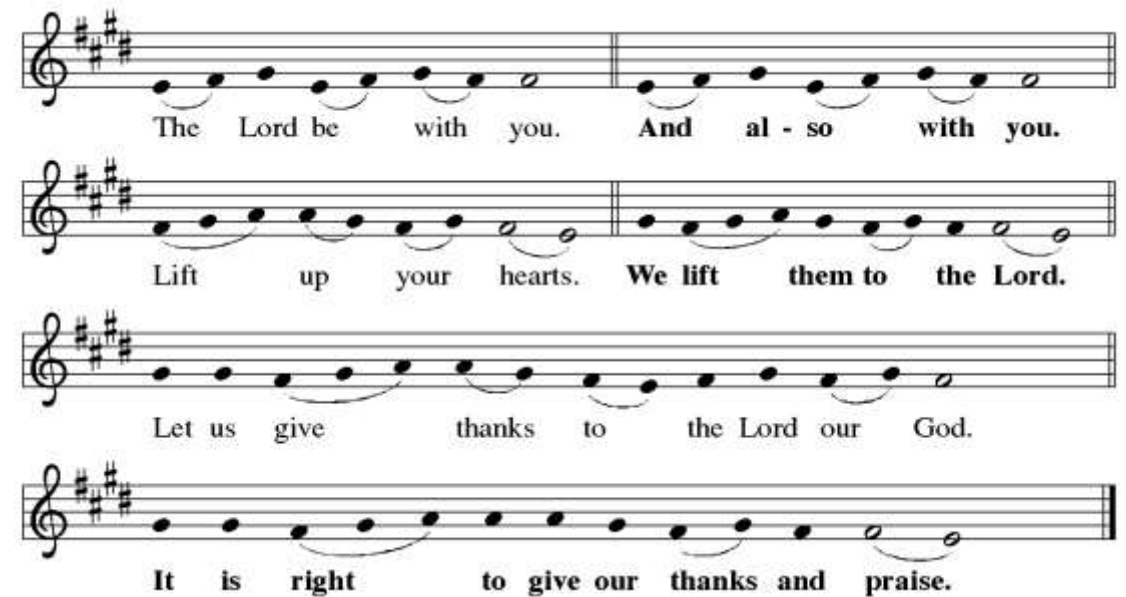
arr. Phillip Keveren

Offering Prayer

P: God of creation, you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always.

All: Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving



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. 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”



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.**

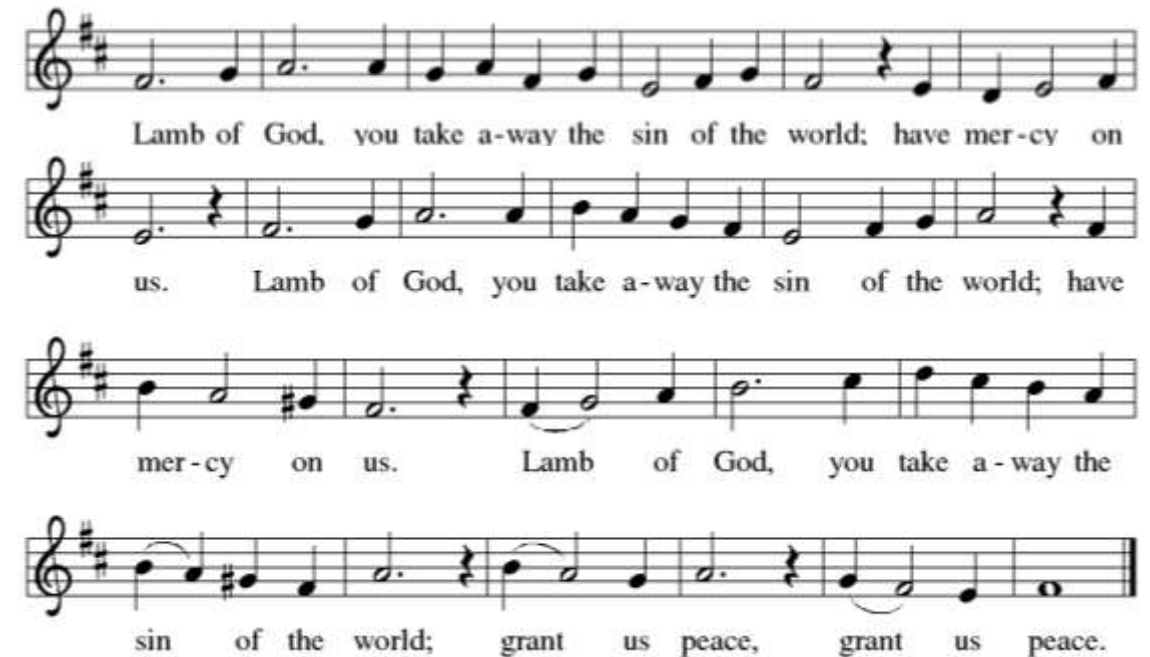
**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

Communion

“Lamb of God”



Communion Music

“Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart”

stg. David Cherwien

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.

Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy

world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.

All: Amen.

Blessing

P: The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind, in the body of Christ Jesus.

All: Amen.

P: The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit.

All: Amen.

P: The God of grace ☩ bless you now and forever.

All: Amen.

Sending Song

“How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord”

ELW #580

1 How clear is our vo - ca - tion, Lord, when once we heed your call
2 But if, for - get - ful, we should find your yoke is hard to bear;
3 We mar - vel how your saints be - come in hin - dranc - es more sure;
4 In what you give us, Lord, to do, to - geth - er or a - lone,

to live ac - cord - ing to your word and dai - ly learn, re - fresh - ed, re - stored,
if world - ly pres - sures fray the mind and love it - self can - not un - wind
whose joy - ful vir - tues put to shame the ca - sual way we wear your name,
in old rou - tines or ven - tures new, may we not cease to look to you,

that you are Lord of all and will not let us fall.
its tan - gled skein of care: our in - ward life re - pair.
and by our faults ob - scure your pow'r to cleanse and cure.
the cross you hung up - on, all you en - deav - ored done.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000
Music: REPTON, C. Hubert H. Parry, 1848–1918
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Dismissal

P: Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

All: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“Sing a New Song Unto the Lord!”

Daniel Schutte

Coffee Fellowship will be served following worship this morning, hosted by Nancy Eilers. All are welcome!

We Remember in Prayer; those on our Home Visitation list and those on our prayer list: Gary Fields, Mary Ann DeJonge, Tricia M., Ken & Stephanie, Richard J., Callahan McCallister, Brock Woessner, Lori Dewey, Michelle Klinger, Matt Friel, Sandy Julifs, Mike, and Phyllis Jacobson.

Worship Assistants:

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – Dawn Waite

Acolytes – Altar Guild

Greeters – Bob & Judy Bartel

Ushers – Ruben & JoAnn Garcia

Reader – Greg Zeigler

Sound – Greg Zeigler

Communion Assistant – Gary Fields

Altar Guild – Ann Beswick, JoAnn Garcia

Musicians:

Julie Woessner DeJonge

Dawn Zeigler

Next Week – October 25

Worship Assistants:

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – *Volunteer Needed*

Acolytes – Arians family

Greeters – Janie Billings, Susan Kuehl

Ushers – Ann Beswick, Mel Johnson

Reader – Ann Beswick

Sound – Bradyn Arians

Communion Assistant – Janie Billings

Altar Guild – Ann Beswick, JoAnn Garcia

Coffee Fellowship – Nancy Beck and Nancy Eilers