

*We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Anishinabek Nations, and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. This territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.*

*This territory is also covered by the Toronto Purchase, Treaty 13 of 1805, and the Williams Treaties of 1923.*

*Today, our community is home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island. We gather by these territorial lands and waters to worship, listen, learn, share, and heal together in the name of our Creator, the Holy One of Blessing.*



**A Mighty River**  
Amos 5: 24

## **Let Justice and Peace Flow**

Season of Creation 2023

*The Season of Creation is the annual Christian celebration to pray and respond together to the cry of Creation: the ecumenical family around the world unites to listen and care for our common home, the Oikos of God. The Season "Celebration" begins on 1 September, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, and ends on 4 October, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology beloved by many Christian denominations. This year we will unite around the theme, "Let Justice and Peace Flow."*

### **ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**Pentecost 16      SEPTEMBER 17, 2023**

WELCOME

**HYMN ELW # 864 PRAISE MY SOUL**

**Praise, my soul, the God of heaven;  
joyfully your tribute bring;  
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven  
evermore God's praises sing.**

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Praises everlasting ring!**

**God be praised for grace and favour  
to our forebears in distress;**

**God be praised the same forever,  
slow to chide, and swift to bless:**

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Glorious is God's faithfulness!**

**Frail as summer's flower we flourish,  
blows the wind and it is gone;  
but, as mortals rise and perish,  
God endures unchanging on.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise the great Eternal one!**

**Angels, sing in adoration,  
in God's presence face to face.  
Sun and moon and all creation,  
all who dwell in time and space.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise with us the God of grace!**

#### 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.**

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**

#### EXODUS 14:19-31

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty.

The Egyptians said, 'Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt.'

Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers.' So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

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

PSALM 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
**and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
**and forget not all God's benefits—**

who forgives all your sins

**who heals all your diseases;**

who redeems your life from the grave

**and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,**

who satisfies your desires with good things

**so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.**

O Lord, you provide vindication

**and justice for all who are oppressed.**

You made known your ways to Moses,

**and your works to the people of Israel.**

Lord, you are full of compassion and mercy,

**slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

You will not always accuse us,

**nor will you keep your anger forever.**

You have not dealt with us according to our sins  
**nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**

For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
**so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.**

As far as the east is from the west,  
**so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**

As a father has compassion for his children,  
**so you have compassion for those who fear you, O Lord.**

ROMANS 14:1-12

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarrelling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgement on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgement on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honour of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honour of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honour of the Lord and give thanks to God.

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Why do you pass judgement on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. For it is written,

'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,  
and every tongue shall give praise to God.'

So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

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

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

**Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

*Speak Lord, your servant is listening.*

*You have the words of everlasting life.*

**Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Matthew 18:21-35

Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

**HYMN ELW # 359 WHERE CHARITY AND LOVE PREVAIL**

**Where charity and love prevail, there God is ever found;  
Brought here together by Christ's love,  
by love are we thus bound.**

**With grateful joy and holy fear God's charity we learn;  
Let us with heart and mind and soul  
now love God in return.**

**Let us recall that in our midst dwells Christ, God's holy Son;  
As members of each body joined,  
In him we are made one.**

**Let strife among us be unknown, let all contentions cease;  
Be God's the glory that we seek,  
be his our only peace.**

**Let us forgive each other's faults as we our own confess;  
That we may love each other well  
in Christian gentleness.**

**APOSTLES' CREED**

**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 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 life everlasting. Amen.**

## PRAYERS

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbours.

*A brief silence*

We pray for the church. Bless the mission and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood.

Merciful God..... **receive our prayer.**

We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and healing to rivers clogged with pollution. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops as they are harvested and needed to feed communities.

Comfort and care for the lands and people living in the midst of hurricanes, floods and fires. We remember the Canadian north and west where a summer of fires has scarred creation, Libya where flood waters wash over the land and its people, the Canadian and American east as Hurricane Lee brings severe wind and rain.

Merciful God..... **receive our prayer.**

We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in authority to lead with empathy, to practice forgiveness, and care for all. May peace prevail in Ukraine, Russia, Japan, Palestine and Israel and all lands where reconciliation and justice seek a home. Bring your blessing on those throughout the world who pray, reflect and seek healthy global community on the United Nations International Day of Peace.

Merciful God..... **receive our prayer.**

We pray for our neighbours who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially, for all living with chronic pain, the disease of addiction, or otherwise afraid or in harm's way. Protect all who cry out for mercy. We bring before you those in our minds and hearts.....

*pause*

Merciful God..... **receive our prayer.**

We pray for this congregation. Open our hearts to practice intentional invitation. Help us to forgive each other, practice patience, and choose welcome over judgement. Move us to care for those in our community seeking refuge and safety.

Merciful God..... **receive our prayer.**

Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

## SHARING OF THE PEACE and OFFERING

The peace of God be with you all.

**In God's justice is our peace.**

Brothers and sisters,

Christ calls us to live in unity with each other and with the whole of Creation.

**We seek to live in the Spirit of Christ.**

*The offering will now be received and may God bless the gifts of our life.*

## MEAL

### PRAYER OF PREPARATION

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 Saviour. **Amen.**

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

### EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy God, mighty and merciful, your people praise you saying:

Your mercy endures forever.

**Your mercy endures forever.**

By your promise you bound yourself to earth and all its creatures, granting them life and calling them to flourish, setting the sign of your bow in the clouds, the colours of your love and faithfulness.

Your mercy endures forever.

**Your mercy endures forever.**

By your promise you bound yourself to your people of old, blessing them with family outnumbering the stars and calling them to be a blessing to others, showing them steadfast love in every generation and calling them to be a light to the nations.

Your mercy endures forever.



## **Your mercy endures forever.**

By your promise you joined us to Jesus, your Beloved,  
grafting us into the living Vine,  
and calling us to bear fruit of your self-giving love.

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.

With this bread and cup we remember his life laid down and lifted up  
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Send your Holy Spirit upon us and these gifts of bread and wine.

Bless us to be a blessing.

Make us a sign of your faithfulness.

Send us to tend and cherish the earth  
and to serve the world with mercy and love.

Renew the world with your mercy, your healing,  
your justice, and your peace.

With all the saints in light, with the earth and all its creatures,  
with sun and moon and stars,

we praise you, O God, through Christ Jesus,  
in your Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.....

## **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.**

**Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.**

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

**Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Jesus invites you to this table. Come, eat and live. **Thanks be to God.**

## HOLY COMMUNION

*Please come forward to the communion rail, receive the bread in your hand from the pastor and the wine in an individual glass from the assisting minister.  
Place your communion cup in the basket provided.*

## TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus the Christ strengthen us and keep us always in his grace. **Amen.**

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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. **Amen.**

## SENDING

### BLESSING

May you never feel alone in the struggle for justice and peace.  
May you know the support of family, friends  
and people who feel as passionately about the world as you do.  
May you feel a part of the great cloud of witnesses who,  
through the ages,  
did God's work and prayed for the coming of the Kingdom.  
May you never feel alone.  
And if you do, may you carry in your heart  
The words of Jesus, who told his friends:  
"I am with you always."

## HYMN ELW # 544 PRAISE THE LORD RISE UP REJOICING

**Praise the Lord, rise up rejoicing,  
Worship, thanks, devotion voicing: Glory be to God on high!  
Christ, your cross and passion sharing,  
By this Eucharist declaring Yours the final victory.**

**Scattered flock, one shepherd sharing,  
Lost and lonely, one voice hearing, Ears attentive to the word;  
By the blood new life receiving,  
In the body, firm believing, We are yours, and you the Lord.**

**Sins forgiven, wrongs forgiving,  
We go forth alert and living In your Spirit, strong and free.  
Partners in your new creation,  
Seeking peace in ev'ry nation, May we faithful foll'wers be.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

**Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE