

*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 18      OCTOBER 1, 2023**

WELCOME

*Water is poured*

The mighty river of peace and justice flows into and through our lives and calls us into life and hope.

This is a life-giving invitation.

In the midst of a world where people hunger and thirst . . .

**come worship a God who feeds the hungry.**

In the midst of a world where people are abused and oppressed . . .

**come worship a God who calls for compassion and justice.**

In the midst of a world filled with wars and rumor of war . . .

**come worship a God who desires nothing less than peace for the world.**

In the midst of a world of spiritual emptiness . . .

**come worship a God who gives life meaning.**

**Come worship a God whose grace and love know no end.**

## **HYMN ELW 526 GOD IS HERE!**

God is here! As we your people Meet to offer praise and prayer,  
May we find in fuller measure What it is in Christ we share.  
Here, as in the world around us, All our varied skills and arts  
Wait the coming of the Spirit Into open minds and hearts.

Here are symbols to remind us Of our lifelong need of grace;  
Here are table, font and pulpit; Here the cross has central place.  
Here in honesty of preaching, Here in silence, as in speech,  
here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each.

Here our children find a welcome In the Shepherd's flock and fold;  
Here as bread and wine are taken, Christ sustains us as of old.  
Here the servants of the Servant Seek in worship to explore  
What it means in daily living To believe and to adore.

Lord of all, of church and kingdom, In an age of change and doubt,  
Keep us faithful to the Gospel; help us work your purpose out.  
Here, in this day's dedication, All we have to give, receive;  
We, who cannot live without you, We adore you! We believe!

## **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**

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace  
to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the  
way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**

## **EXODUS 17:1-7**

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed  
by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was  
no water for the people to drink. The people quarreled with Moses, and said,  
“Give us water to drink.” Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me?  
Why do you test the Lord?” But the people thirsted there for water; and the  
people complained against Moses and said, “Why did you bring us out of  
Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?” So Moses cried  
out to the Lord, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to  
stone me.” The Lord said to Moses, “Go on ahead of the people, and take

some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.” Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, “Is the Lord among us or not?”

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

PSALM 25

To you, O Lord,

**I lift up my soul.**

My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame;

**nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

Let none who look you be put to shame;

**rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.**

Show me your ways, O Lord;

**and teach me your paths.**

Lead me in your truth, and teach me,

**for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.**

Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love,

**for they are from everlasting.**

Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;

**remember me according to your steadfast love,**

**for the your sake of your goodness', O Lord!**

You are gracious and upright, O Lord;

**therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

You lead the lowly in justice

**and teaches the lowly your way.**

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-13

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form,

he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

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 21:23-32

When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.” So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

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

## SERMON

### **HYMN ELW 835 ALL CREATURES WORSHIP GOD MOST HIGH! verses 1-3**

**All creatures worship God most high,  
Sound every voice in earth and sky,  
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Sing brother sun, in splendour bright;  
Sing, sister moon and stars of night;  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**Sing, brother wind; with clouds and rain  
You grow the gifts of fruit and grain  
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Dear sister water, useful, clear  
make music for your Lord to hear,  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**Sing, brother fire, so mirthful, strong  
Drive far the shadows, join the throng:  
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Dear mother earth, so rich in care,  
Praise God in colours bright and rare:  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

## 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 put our trust in you as we pray for the church. Give bishops, pastors, deacons, and teachers the gifts of wisdom and discernment. Be with them in bold truth and faithful witness.

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

Lead us in your truth as we pray for creation. Empower us to look to the interests of others as we make choices that impact the environment.

Summon us to be advocates for healthy waterways, habitats, and air.

May those in the midst of fire, flood, and hurricane dwell in a place of care and compassion as they recover and rebuild their lives.

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

Lead us in justice as we pray for those in government and all in authority.

Give them humble and willing hearts, looking to the needs of others.

May peace prevail on earth as we lift up Ukraine, Russia, Korea, Pakistan, Nagorno-Karabakh, Armenia, India, Palestine, Israel and wherever your reconciling spirit will make a way for peace.

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

We give thanks to the Creator for the rich diversity of Indigenous governments, economies, legal systems, spiritualities, languages, cultures and traditions that have been practiced by hundreds of nations and millions of people for thousands of years. We honour the deep relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the lands they've cared for since time immemorial. As that care continues, guide us and our governments to affirm Indigenous Peoples' rights to land. We honour the significance that the land holds for Indigenous cultural and spiritual practices and for the families and communities who continue to hold these sacred connections.

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

Trusting in your goodness, we pray for all caregivers and people who are sick or suffering in any way. For all in our thoughts this day.....

*pause*

Give them encouragement and consolation in your presence.

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

Teach us your paths as we pray for our community. Be at work in us. Give us courage and open hearts and minds to unite us in love as we serve together for the sake of the gospel.

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.**

#### 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.

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 for the breaking in of God's kingdom in our world today.

Lord God, because Jesus has taught us to trust you in all things, we hold  
to his word and share his plea:

**Your kingdom come, your will be done.**



Where nations budget for war while Christ says, "Put away your sword":  
**Your kingdom come, your will be done.**

Where countries waste food and covet fashion while Christ says,  
"I was hungry . . . I was thirsty . . .":

**Your kingdom come, your will be done.**

Where powerful governments claim their policies are heaven blessed  
while Scripture states that God helps the powerless:

**Your kingdom come, your will be done.**

Where Christians seek the kingdom in the shape of their own church as  
if Christ came to build and not to break barriers:

**Your kingdom come, your will be done.**

Where our prayers falter, our faith weakens, our light grows dim:

**Your kingdom come, your will be done.**

Where Jesus Christ calls us:

**Your kingdom come, your will be done.**

Lord God, you have declared that your kingdom is among us. Open our  
ears to hear it, our hands to serve it, our hearts to hold it. This we pray  
in Jesus' name.

**Amen.**

A Wee Worship Book, pp. 16-17

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## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Jesus invites you to this table. Come, eat, and live.

**Thanks be to God.**

## HOLY COMMUNION

### 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 835 ALL CREATURES WORSHIP GOD MOST HIGH! verse 6**

**O sisters, brothers, take your part,  
And worship God with humble heart:  
Alleluia! alleluia!  
All creatures, bless the Father, Son,  
And Holy Spirit, Three in One  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. God is at work in you.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### POSTLUDE