

***Outdoor Worship***  
***Celebrating God's Gifts of Kindness and Grace***  
***Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost***  
***ELW Holy Communion Setting One***  
***Blessing of Grandparents***  
***September 13, 2020 at 10:00 am***

Christ Lutheran Church, Woodcliff Lake, NJ – [www.clc4u.com](http://www.clc4u.com)

The Rev. Marc A. Stutzel, Pastor

**WELCOME TO IN-PERSON WORSHIP!** Today's outdoor experience is new for all of us. Please keep in mind the covenant we are making with each other today:

- Only use your own chair and maintain the six foot distance from other members of the congregation.
- A mask or scarf over nose and mouth is required at all times, except momentarily to receive the sacrament or to lead through an assigned speaking part.
- Materials for worship (bulletin, communion wafer and prayer cards) are in the paper bag in which you found this bulletin. Please pick up one of the small cups of wine/grape juice from the table. You may take everything away with you to recycle at home.
- Pink cards with your prayer requests will be collected by Pastor Marc during the song after the sermon.
- If you have an offering envelope, please place in the offering plate located where you picked up this bulletin.
- Congregational singing is restricted. During the music offered today, we invite you to meditate on the lyrics printed in your bulletin.
- Communion will be done at your seats. Please keep your wafer and drink sealed until Pastor Marc tells you otherwise.
- The building is closed except for one bathroom. Please be mindful of social distancing while waiting for the restroom. Purell is available.
- For health and safety reasons during this pandemic, the closing of the church building also now includes the church office which will remain locked. Doris, our Parish Administrator will be in the office Tuesday through Friday and is available to help you with church business needs by phoning the church office (201.391.4224), or e-mailing ([clc4u2@verizon.net](mailto:clc4u2@verizon.net)).

**“LORD, HEAR OUR PRAYER!”** Our Prayer Chain is available for daily prayer for anyone. Contact the church office with concerns/celebrations.

**CHRIST IN OUR HOME** for October/November/December is now available. You are invited to pick up a copy to take home.

**FEEDING THE COMMUNITY:** During September, we invite you to support the Tri-Boro Food Pantry in Park Ridge. Consider picking up some of these items and bringing them to church: mac and cheese, dish soap, paper towels, bags of black beans, household cleaner, or boxes of cereal. If you would like more information, visit [www.triborofoodpantry.org](http://www.triborofoodpantry.org) for more information.

**PLEASE FEEL FREE TO SHARE, LIKE, CHECK-IN, & TWEET** worship today at Christ, but we ask that all phones be on silent or vibrate during worship.

**DO YOU GET OUR WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER?** Each Thursday we e-mail a newsletter of the week's calendar/announcements and thoughts from faith leaders all over the world. Sign up at [www.clc4u.com](http://www.clc4u.com) or e-mail the church office, [clc4u2@verizon.net](mailto:clc4u2@verizon.net).

**TODAY'S ASSISTING MINISTERS:**

Musicians                      Argine Safari & David Scance

**THIS WEEK:**

Today, Sept. 13	10:00 am	Outdoor worship with Blessing of Grandparents Online worship
Monday, Sept. 14		Parish Administrator vacation day
Tuesday, Sept. 15	12:30 pm	Prayer meeting (Conference call)
Thursday, Sept. 17	12:30 pm	Prayer meeting (Conference call)
Next Sunday, Sept. 20	10:00 am	Outdoor worship and Online worship

[All text in *italics* is spoken by the leader.  
Text in **bold** may be spoken by those assembled.]

## **OPENING & WELCOME**

[Please stand as you are able.]

## **CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS**

*Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, Love from the beginning,  
Word made flesh, Breath of heaven.*

**Amen.**

*I am weak, God,*  
**help me to love.**

*I see weakness in others  
and despise it, for it reminds me  
of weakness within.*

*I am weak, God,*  
**help me to love.**

*I see difference in others  
and reject it, for it unsettles me,  
makes me feel unsure.*

*I am weak, God,*  
**help me to love.**

*I judge others, condemn,  
revile, for I cannot bear to think  
that it is I who may be wrong.*

*I am weak, God,  
**help me to love.***

*I live for myself, and do not live  
at all, for I cannot trust in life  
and death in Jesus the Christ.*

*I am weak, God,  
**help me to love.***

*I kneel before you, God my judge,  
for I have not walked your way  
of love, and I am sorry.*

*I am weak, God,  
**help me to love.***

[A slight pause.]

*As you bow, as you confess,  
God runs forward, arms outstretched.  
You have turned, returned again:  
fall into those wide-flung arms,  
the Divine embrace, for you are loved,  
your sins are forgiven ✠, you shall have life!  
**Amen.***

[You may be seated.]

**GATHERING SONG—“*How Great Is Our God*”** [By Tomlin, Reeves, Cash]

[Played and sung by Argine Safari and David Scance.]

*The splendor of the King,  
clothed in majesty;  
Let all the earth rejoice,  
all the earth rejoice.  
He wraps Himself in light,  
and darkness tries to hide,  
and trembles at His voice,  
and trembles at His voice.*

*How great is our God!  
Sing with me:  
How great is our God!  
And all will see how great,  
How great is our God!*

*And age to age He stands,  
and time is in His hands;  
Beginning and the End,  
Beginning and the End.  
The Godhead, three in one,  
Father, Spirit, Son,  
the Lion and the Lamb,  
the Lion and the Lamb.*

*Name above all names,  
worthy of all praise.  
My heart will sing:  
How great is our God!*

[CCLI Song # 4348399]

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

*Let us pray. 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 Savior and Lord. Amen.*

## **A MESSAGE FOR ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN**

[By Pastor Marc. Children will stay with their parents.]

## **A READING FROM ROMANS 14:1-12**

*<sup>1</sup>Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. <sup>2</sup>Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. <sup>3</sup>Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. <sup>4</sup>Who are you to pass judgment 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.*

*<sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.*

*<sup>7</sup>We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. <sup>8</sup>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. <sup>9</sup>For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.*

*<sup>10</sup>Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. <sup>11</sup>For it is written,*

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

*<sup>12</sup>So then, each of us will be accountable to God.*

[Please stand as you are able.]

**A READING FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO**  
**MATTHEW 18:21-35**

*<sup>21</sup>Peter came and said to Jesus, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?”*

*<sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.*

*<sup>23</sup>“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; <sup>25</sup>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. <sup>26</sup>So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ <sup>27</sup>And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>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.’ <sup>29</sup>Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ <sup>30</sup>But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>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. <sup>32</sup>Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ <sup>34</sup>And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup>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.**

[You may be seated.]

## **A HOMILY**

[By Pastor Marc]

## **MUSICAL OFFERING – “Be the Centre”**

[Played and sung by Argine Safari and David Scance.]

*Jesus, be the centre. Be my source. Be my light, Jesus  
Jesus be the centre. Be my hope, be my song, Jesus.*

*Be the fire in my heart. Be the wind in these sails.  
Be the reason that I live, Jesus Jesus.*

*Jesus be my vision. Be my path, be my guide, Jesus*

*Be the fire in my heart. Be the wind in these sails.  
Be the reason that I live, Jesus*

*Jesus be the centre. Be my source, be my light, Jesus.  
Be my source, Jesus. Jesus.*

## **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 the life everlasting. Amen**

## **OFFERING**

*Gratitude is one of the powerful images scripture uses to show us what a full and abundant life looks like. And yet practicing gratitude can be hard. We tell ourselves that we are achievers: setting goals, working hard, and dreaming big dreams. Yet the gift of life itself – all of creation and the entire universe - is not something we can achieve. In the words of Carolyn Hessel, gratitude . . . "is not a feeling that we have gotten something we deserve or sense of self-satisfaction. It is not about feeling good about ourselves for something we have done. Gratitude emerges as a gift itself, the experience of knowing one is blessed beyond one's control or merit." Gratitude, like a muscle, grows the more we pay attention to what God is doing in the world. And when we learn to say thank you, our generosity grows.*

*Two weeks ago, I invited you to commit yourself to daily prayer and to tell God one thing you're thankful for. Last week, I invited you to thank yourself in your prayers. This week, I'm inviting you to say thank you to someone else while you pray. Maybe someone helped you do something you couldn't do alone. Or maybe they opened your eyes to a different kind of pain and suffering that you didn't really see before. Or maybe they created something that you couldn't create on your own. God brings amazing people into our lives. And one thing we can do is simply say: thank you.*

*Thank you for being generous with your faith community - through your prayers, service, and the relationships you've built with one another. Thank you for your financial gifts - either online, mailed to the church office, or donated in our offering plate before worship today. We will use it to generously offer the word of God to all people and serve our neighbors in need.*

[Please be seated.]

## **RESPONSIVE PRAYERS OF THE DAY**

*Drawn together by the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need, responding to each petition with the words “**receive our prayer.**”*

*God of open arms, make Christians into signs of your gracious welcome, to both members and newcomers, whether meeting physically or digitally. Strengthen faith through Bible studies and Sunday schools, confirmation classes and youth ministries, and nurture new ventures for education and growth. Bless bishops, especially Elizabeth and Tracie, pastors, and deacons for their work in this unprecedented time.*

*O God, you are full of compassion,  
**receive our prayer.***

*God of lands and seas, continue your care for your creation. Where human selfishness has brought ruin and destruction, we ask you to heal and renew your earth. Preserve the lands from fire and storm. Protect the sources of food that your creatures need for life.*

*O God, you are full of compassion,  
**receive our prayer.***

*God of justice, lead the nations away from the ways of violence. Guide the United Nations and other organizations that seek reconciliation across national borders. Show families, neighborhoods, and nations how to welcome diversity while sharing common ground. Give Donald, the President; Philip, NJ's Governor; Gerald, Holly, Robert, our NJ state Senators and Representatives; a willingness to collaborate and seek the common good. We also pray that You preserve our election season from abuse and rancor.*

*O God, you are full of compassion,  
**receive our prayer.***

*God of our homeland, visit the American cities that are addressing local racism. Stand with both protesters and police, that civil society may be preserved and improved. Bring both healing and justice to our land.*  
*O God, you are full of compassion,*  
**receive our prayer.**

*God of the sufferers, visit prisons and care homes with health and hope. Free victims of human trafficking and forced labor. Deliver all who are bound by debt. Feed all who hunger and provide safety to migrants. Protect firefighters and first responders. Heal the sick, especially those we name here. . .*

*Camp Koinonia, Dolores Albert, Bob Albert,  
Ellen Altanasio, Anthony, Sharon Bongard, Elizabeth Danko,  
Joe Donaire, Christopher Drobinske, Jackson Fehr, Mae Hulburt,  
Laura, Debbie Melnyk, Ruben Moreno, Neil, Lorraine Sadlon,  
Alice Sheer, Stephanie, Miriam and Earl Valder*

*O God, you are full of compassion,*  
**receive our prayer.**

*God of goodness, once more we beg for a way through the pandemic. Comfort the afflicted. Support medical workers. Prepare a vaccine.*  
*O God, you are full of compassion,*  
**receive our prayer.**

*Whether we live or whether we die, we are yours. We thank you for those who have led us in the faith. Hold us with them in your everlasting love.*

*O God, you are full of compassion,*  
**receive our prayer.**

*All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.*  
**Amen.**

## **THE PEACE**

*Take a look at those who surround us in this sacred space. Let's send one another a blessing from a distance, wishing that the peace of Christ may be with them.*

*Let us now think about those who cannot join us in-person today or who are participating in worship online or via conference call. In our hearts, let's send them a blessing and wish that the peace of Christ may be with them.*

*Finally, let the blessing we offer each other go out to our families, friends, neighbors, and to the entire world. With God's help, our hearts are big enough to extend peace that far. Let us embody the peace of Christ after we leave this place today.*

**Amen.**

## **HOLY COMMUNION** [Please stand as you are able.]

[You are invited to unwrap/open the communion elements in your worship bag.]

*The Lord be with you.*

**And also 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.**

*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.*

**Amen.**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

*Gathered together by the Holy Spirit - let us pray as Jesus taught us:*

**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.**

*You are here, not because you are perfect, but because, through Christ Jesus, you are welcomed and loved.*

## **DISTRIBUTION**

[You are invited to consume the communion element you received in your worship bag.]

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

**Amen.**

*God of the welcome table, in this meal we have feasted on your goodness and have been united by your presence among us. Empower us to go forth sustained by these gifts so that we may share your neighborly love with all, through Jesus Christ, the giver of abundant life.*

**Amen.**

[You may be seated.]

## **SONG – “God, My Children, with My Blessing”**

[ELW 543, Played and sung by Argine Safari and David Scance.]

*Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone.  
Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own.  
In my love’s baptismal river*

*I have made you mine forever.*

*Go, my children, with my blessing, you are my own.”*

*“Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.  
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.  
Here you heard my dear Son’s story,  
here you touched him, saw his glory.  
Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.”*

*“Go, my children, fed and nourished, closer to me.  
Grow in love and love by serving, joyful and free.  
Here my Spirit’s power filled you,  
here my tender comfort stilled you.  
Go, my children, fed and nourished, joyful and free.”*

## **BLESSING of GRANDPARENTS**

*Grandparents are cherished members of our family. They come in many shapes, sizes and colors. Some are connected to us by biology while others become our grandparents through marriage and friendship. They bring gifts of wisdom, experience and love. We thank God for their faithful example, and so let us bless them on this national observance of Grandparents Day.*

[Based on a prayer by Pastor John Rickert]

*Creator God, who brought into existence the first family in the Garden of Eden and through that family established all the vocations that come with being part of a family, we remember the witness of the grandparents in the Bible, like Abraham and Sarah, who were the grandparents of Jacob and Esau, Obed and his wife, the grandparents of King David, and Adam and Eve, who were the grandparents of Enos, who carried the promise of the seed that would redeem the world. To this day grandparents continue to carry the vocation to love, support, advise and encourage their grandchildren, while also supporting their children who have gained the vocation of being a parent. Strengthen their health. Bless their time together. Where relationships are fractured, bring reconciliation. Where turmoil exists, bring peace. And give them the grace to walk in your ways while demonstrating your love in all their family relationships.*

### **BLESSING**

*And now - know this:*

*Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,  
nor things present, nor things to come,  
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,  
nor anything else in all creation,  
will be able to separate us from the love of God in  
Christ Jesus.*

*God, the creator, ✠ Jesus, the Christ,  
and the Holy Spirit, the comforter,  
bless you and keep you in eternal love.*

**Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL**

*Go in peace. Christ is with you.*

**Thanks be to God.**