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BLESS
THE LORD,
O MY
SOUL
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P S A L M 1 0 3

SEPTEMBER 17, 2023 – 10:30 AM
WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION
16TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
WOODCLIFF LAKE, NEW JERSEY

A SPECIAL WELCOME TODAY, 16TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

[All text in *italics* is spoken by the leader. Please speak the **bolded** words if you desire.]

* * * * *

WE ARE GLAD YOU ARE HERE to enter into the light of the baptized assembly, to hear the word, and to live into the promises of God.

WORSHIP IS LIVESTREAMED ON FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE with cameras showing everything that happens along the altar space. The front pews are sometimes shown online as well.

BREAKING THE SOUND BARRIER! We invite you to try one of our listening devices, which allows you to sit anywhere in the sanctuary. They are available by speaking to an usher, the service coordinator, or other worship leader.

PINK PRAYER CARDS: If you are in the sanctuary, you may write names for prayer on a pink card from the pew rack in and place on altar rail. Prayer requests can also be posted on our Facebook and YouTube Page. To add a name to our printed prayer list write “Prayer List” on the card or on your online comment. Please be sure this prayer request is approved by the person for whom we are praying.

“LORD, HEAR OUR PRAYER!” Christ Lutheran’s Prayer Chain is available daily for prayer for members, friends and family. You may contact church office with your joys or concerns.

NURSERY FACILITIES: There is a self-serve Nursery and Infant Room for young children accompanied by their parents. The Infant Room contains a bathroom with a changing table. These rooms are located along the hallway from the side door of the sanctuary.

NEED AN OFFERING ENVELOPE? We have envelopes in the pews for you. Please include your contact information or envelope number. Offerings may also be paid online at www.clc4u.com/give or mailed to the church office. You can scan the QR code with your phone and be directed to our online giving page (will open a webpage from eservicepayments.com).



PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS [The congregation stands as able.]

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*Blessed be God, the one who forms us, † Jesus who bears the cross,
the Spirit who makes our joy complete.*

Amen.

Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

[A moment of silence.]

Steadfast and faithful God,

***you have revealed the ways of justice,
yet we fail to follow you.***

We are overwhelmed

by the world's violence and suffering.

We are afraid to risk what we have

for the sake of others.

For the harm we have caused,

known and unknown,

forgive us.

For the unjust demands

we place on others and your creation,

forgive us.

For the ways we turn away

from you and our neighbor,

forgive us.

Lead us back to you

and set us on the right path;

in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

Beloved in Christ, God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.

*God's compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way
for us. In † Christ, you are already and always forgiven.*

Amen.

[The congregation remains standing as able.]

OPENING SONG – “Gather Us In” [ELW 532, all verses.]



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing, now is the dark - ness
2 We are the young, our lives are a mys - t'ry, we are the old who
3 Here we will take the wine and the wa - ter, here we will take the
4 Not in the dark of build-ings con - fin - ing, not in some heav - en,



van - ished a - way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
yearn for your face; we have been sung through - out all of his - t'ry,
bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daugh - ters,
light years a - way— here in this place the new light is shin - ing,



brought here to you in the light of this day.
called to be light to the whole hu - man race.
call us a - new to be salt for the earth.
now is the king - dom, and now is the day.



Gath - er us in, the lost and for - sak - en, gath - er us in, the
Gath - er us in, the rich and the haugh - ty, gath - er us in, the
Give us to drink the wine of com - pas - sion, give us to eat the
Gath - er us in and hold us for - ev - er, gath - er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en,
proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low - ly,
bread that is you; nour - ish us well, and teach us to fash - ion
make us your own; gath - er us in, all peo - ples to - geth - er,



we shall a - rise at the sound of our name.
give us the cour - age to en - ter the song.
lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are true.
fire . . of love in our flesh and our bone.

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

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.

[The congregation may sit.]

CHILDREN'S SERMON [Kids of any age are invited to come sit with Pastor Marc on the steps of the altar.]

THE FIRST READING – **PSALM 103:1-2, 8-13**

[The psalm will be spoken responsively.]

¹*Bless the Lord, O my soul,*

and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

²**Bless the Lord, O my soul,**

and forget not all God's benefits.

⁸*Lord, you are full of compassion and mercy,*

slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;

⁹**you will not always accuse us,**

nor will you keep your anger forever.

¹⁰*You have not dealt with us according to our sins,*

nor repaid us according to our iniquities.

¹¹**For as the heavens are high above the earth,**

so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

¹²*As far as the east is from the west,*

so far have you removed our transgressions from us.

¹³**As a father has compassion for his children,**

so you have compassion for those who fear you, O Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE SECOND READING – ROMANS 14:1-12

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those 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. ⁴Who 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.

⁵Some 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. ⁶Those 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.

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

¹⁰Why 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. ¹¹For it is written,

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

¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 18:21-35 [Please stand as you are able.]

Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹Peter 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?” ²²Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

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

[The congregation may sit.]

THE SERMON – “Who (you) are” Marc A. Stutzel, Pastor

[Please stand as you are able.]

SONG AFTER THE SERMON – “Where Charity and Love Prevail” [ELW 359, verses 1-3, 5.]



1 Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail, there God is ev - er found;
2 With grate-ful joy and ho - ly fear, God's char - i - ty we learn;
3 Let us re - call that in our midst dwells Christ, God's ho - ly Son;
4 Let strife a - mong us be un - known; let all con - ten - tions cease.
5 Let us for - give each oth - er's faults as we our own con - fess,



brought here to - geth - er by Christ's love, by love we thus are bound.
let us with heart and mind and soul now love God in re - turn.
as mem - bers of each bod - y joined, in him we are made one.
Be God's the glo - ry that we seek; be his our on - ly peace.
that we may love each oth - er well in Chris - tian gen - tle - ness.

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THE APOSTLES' CREED

Let us confess our faith in the words of The 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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION [The congregation may sit.]

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

[A brief silence.]

We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of our denomination, our bishops Elizabeth and Tracie, and every congregation so that the good news of salvation can be understood and experienced by all. Merciful God, receive our prayer.

We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought, dry air to those who are flooded, and healing to rivers clogged with pollution. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger. Merciful God, receive our prayer.

We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in positions of power, such as Joseph the President, Philip, NJ's governor, Carlos, the mayor of Woodcliff Lake, and Jennifer, Jacqueline, Josephine, Nicole, Benjamin, Richard, the councilpersons of Woodcliff Lake, to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle. Merciful God, receive our prayer.

We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, disease of addiction, or otherwise afraid or in harm's way. Protect all who cry out for mercy especially for . . .

Jon Acito, Dolores Albert, Steve Albert, Cynthia Cooke, Dyan Calder, Deb Caspere, Jim Christensen, Gordon Comstock, David Crouse, Jenn Elek, Mark Esposito, Jackson Fehr, Judi Flickinger, Carol Gehshan, Harry, Mary Jo Hild, Jake, Jason, Marion Oldhoffer, Jim Sallo, Faye Rekosik, Lata Sharma, Alice Sheer, Oliver Smith, Miriam Valder, Pat Walsh, and Gert and John Wintersteiger

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 judgment. Move us to care for those in our community seeking refuge and safety. Merciful God, receive our prayer.

We give thanks for the saints who died in faith. Show us how to live faithfully, creatively, and lovingly in your church and world.

*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.

Amen.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God of power, God of plenty, all things belong to you. We bring your gifts to the table so all maybe fed. Bless the gifts we donated online, mailed to the church, placed in the offering plate, as well as the acts of service which show who we know you to be. Form us into the body of your Beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

THE PEACE

I invite you to take a look at everyone who surrounds you in your sacred space. Send a blessing, wishing that the peace of Christ may be with them.

Let us now think about all who are worshipping in the sanctuary, online, via conference call, or at a different time than right now. In our hearts, let's send to your entire faith community 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 worship today.

HOLY COMMUNION [With congregation response. Please stand as you are able.]

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.

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, present here and connecting across space and time itself – 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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

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

[The congregation may sit.]

HOLY COMMUNION

[All are invited to the Table where Christ is bodily present in the bread and drink.

When space is available at the rail, please come forward to kneel or stand.

Please space yourselves generously along the rail.

Bread will be distributed first (gluten free wafers are available),

followed by wine and grape juice in individual cups.

Children and all who have not received First Communion can request a blessing.

For those joining at home or in your seats, we invite you to commune yourself

when Pastor Marc is served at the end.]

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

COMMUNION SONG – “Before the Waters Nourished Earth” [ACS 1049, all verses.]



1 Be - fore the wa - ters nour - ished earth or night im -
2 This Love re - mained as time re - vealed the loss of
3 De - spair, so deep it bears no name, or sor - rows
4 The Love that called cre - a - tion good all good - ness



ag - ined morn - ing, a Love con - ceived the
E - den's glo - ry and, griev - ing, holds in
par - a - lyz - ing can - not re - voke Love's
still is bring - ing. This Love turns death a -



u - ni - verse and rev - eled in its form - ing.
mem - o - ry each trag - ic hu - man sto - ry.
faith - ful claim to dwell with - in our dy - ing.
gain to life and si - lence in - to sing - ing.

[Text—Augsburg Fortress; License OneLicense and Augsburg Fortress.]

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. 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.

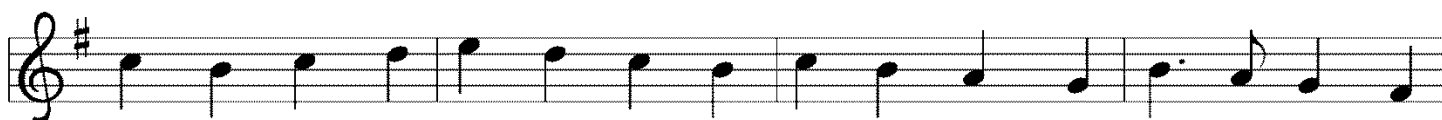
SENDING SONG — “Go, My Children, with My Blessing” [ELW 543, all verses.]



1 “Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, nev - er a - lone.
2 “Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure.
3 “Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, clos - er to me.



Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you, you are my own.
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.
Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free.



In my love's bap - tis - mal riv - er I have made you mine for - ev - er.
Here you heard my dear Son's sto - ry, here you touched him, saw his glo - ry.
Here my Spir - it's pow - er filled you, here my ten - der com - fort stilled you.



Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, you are my own.”
Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure.”
Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, joy - ful and free.”

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BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

The God of glory, † Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A SPECIAL HELLO TO EVERYONE ATTENDING CLC TODAY FOR THE FIRST TIME. We are blessed by your presence and pray you will be blessed in this space. If you wish, fill out the orange card ("We're glad you're here!") in the back of the pew in front of you. You may also reach out to Pastor Marc any time. His business card with contact information is available where you picked up this bulletin or you may speak to him after worship.

NURSERY FACILITIES: There is a self-serve Nursery and Infant Room for young children accompanied by their parents. The Infant Room contains a bathroom with a changing table. These rooms are located along the hallway from the side door of the sanctuary.

AED: If a medical emergency occurs and an AED is needed, one is located in the red bag on top of the church mailboxes next to the church office and choir room.

OUR NEXT BIBLE STUDY CONTINUES ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 11:00 AM: We will be reading and discussing Revelation, chapters 7 to 10. Please read before you attend and bring your Bible!

ENRICH YOUR WORK WEEK AND ENHANCE YOUR PRAYERS by reading these appointed selections this week in preparation for next Sunday, Sept. 24: Jonah 3:10--4:11; Psalm 145:1-8; Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16.

ALTAR FLOWERS: Altar flowers today are given by Carla and Bill Hoenigmann in memory of Frank and Mary Hoenigmann.

On the narthex flower chart you may sponsor flowers (\$60 per Sun.) in honor or memory of loved ones. Sign your name and Doris, Parish Administrator will contact you. It's tradition to allow sponsors to take one bouquet and have one (or both) delivered to people for whom we care.

GENESIS GARDEN SEASON IS HERE: Since 1986, we have raised hundreds of pounds of fresh produce on our property to support local food pantries. Our garden grows in-between the church offices and our fellowship (Opsal) Hall behind the white fence. We deliver vegetables to Tri-Boro Food Pantry which spends hundreds every week on produce. **We've raised over 400 lbs. so far!** To do this work, we need you. **Join us this week on Wednesday evening at 5:30 pm to help with harvesting and maintenance.** To learn more, speak to Pastor Marc or Tom Kearns.

OFFERINGS FOR TODAY may be left in offering plate at sanctuary entrance, paid online at www.clc4u.com/give, or mailed to the church office. You can also scan the QR code with your phone and be directed to our online giving page (will open a webpage from eservicepayments.com).



CLCW SCHOOL KITS: IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL TIME! PLEASE HELP CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD HAVE A GREAT START WITH SCHOOL SUPPLIES:

Christ Lutheran Church Women are continuing our faithful tradition of partnering with Church World Service in order to give school kits to children in impoverished schools, refugee camps or other difficult settings some of the basic tools for learning.

Last year we were able to provide 50 school kits, and are hoping to do the same again this year! We are seeking the specific supplies listed below. Please spread the word for donations so that we can complete these school kits and help transform communities around the world.

Updated list of supplies needed to reach our goal:

- 12" rulers- 26 needed
- Hand-held pencil sharpeners - 15 needed
- Blunt scissors – 13 needed

Donations can be placed in the Narthex in the basket labeled "School Kits". If you prefer to make a monetary donation please leave it in the collection basket at church in an envelope marked CLCW-School kits. Thank you for your generosity with this project and for sharing your blessings with others!

THRIVENT GOLDEN STRATEGIES SEMINAR: Our friends at Thrivent are hosting an online webinar later this month on September 26 and September 28. Are you near retirement? Are you in retirement? Are you making plans for the future? Topics covered include generating retirement income, what happens if you live too long, estate planning, IRA distribution laws, tax-deferred options, and more. The content for these workshops are all the same - simply sign up for the one that works in your schedule. You can register by visiting <https://bit.ly/44lpSoz> or clicking the link in our weekly e-letter.

ASSISTING MINISTERS:

9:00 AM TODAY:

Musician—David Scance

10:30 AM TODAY:

Musician—Argine Safari

Service Coordinator: (need someone)

Holy Communion Assistant: (need someone)

Reader: Lois Hainsselin

Altar Guild: Mary Zeigler

Altar Flower Delivery: Meredith Drobinske

THIS WEEK:

Genesis Garden Delivery: Debbie Louis

WORSHIP SCHEDULE TODAY:

9:00 am Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion and Music

10:30 am Traditional Worship with Holy Communion and Music

THIS WEEK:

Wednesday, Bible Study, 11:00 am

Wednesday, Genesis Garden, 5:30 pm

Thursday, Church Council meets, 7:30 pm

WORSHIP SCHEDULE NEXT SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

9:00 am Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion and Music

10:30 am Traditional Worship with Holy Communion and Music

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Pastor: Rev. Marc A. Stutzel

Director of Music: Argine Safari

Contemporary Music: David Scance

Administrative Assistant: Doris Crouse

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Worship on Sundays:

10:00am during the summer