



**Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost**

**September 15, 2024 + 9am**

**Zion-Public WiFi password: Zion54484**  
**Congregational responses are in BOLD.**

All are welcome to receive Jesus' unconditional gift of God's grace through the sacrament of Holy Communion. Regardless of your church membership or affiliation, all are encouraged to participate in communion or to come forward for a blessing.

*\*The communion bread is homemade by congregation members and contains gluten and honey. An alternative will be provided upon request for those with allergies or sensitivities. \**

Children of all ages are encouraged to worship with the whole community in Christ. Children's worship bags are available in the back of the sanctuary.

Page numbers that are listed are found in the front of the cranberry-colored hymnal at the bottom of the page. Hymn numbers are listed in bold, large print on the top of the page.

If you would like home communion, a hospital visit, or a conversation with the pastor, please contact the church office at 715.687.4110 or [office@zionstratford.org](mailto:office@zionstratford.org) or Pastor Amy Heinz at 608.498.5772 or [pastoramy@zionstratford.org](mailto:pastoramy@zionstratford.org).

**Ministers:** All the People of God through the love of Jesus and the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit

**Pastor:** Rev. Amy Heinz

**Administrative Assistant:** Kathy Busche

**Organists:** Judy Polege, Marge Redetzke, Ryan Huther

**Custodian:**

**Missionaries:** Steven & Bethany Friberg, Tanzania

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## PRELUDE

## CENTERING AND BELLS' CALL TO WORSHIP

## WELCOME / ANNOUNCEMENTS / MISSION MOMENT

### We Gather in Grace

## OPENING LITANY

Almighty God, we pray for your blessing on the church in this place.

Here may the faithful find salvation  
**and the careless be awakened.**

Here may the doubting find faith,  
**and the anxious be encouraged.**

Here may the tempted find help,  
**and the sorrowful find comfort.**

Here may the weary find rest,  
**and the strong be renewed.**

Here may the aged find consolation,  
**and the young be inspired.**

We pray in Jesus' name.

**Amen\*\***

**HYMN**

*"Many and Great, O God"*

**ELW 837**

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

We begin in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the aid of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that, attentive to your word, we may confess our sins, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.  
Gracious God,

**have mercy on us. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone. Uphold us by your Spirit so that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

**Amen.\***

## **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 Promise,**

**You promised Abraham descendants as numerous as the stars, and you have promised us that we might live under those stars as your people, faithful and loved. Show us how to follow your way of love for all people, and make us a blessing for others. In Jesus' name we pray.**

**Amen.**

## We Hear the Word of God

### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

#### COMPLEMENTARY READING

**Luke 3:7-14**

<sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?" <sup>8</sup> Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>9</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

<sup>10</sup> And the crowds asked him, "What, then, should we do?" <sup>11</sup> In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise." <sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" <sup>13</sup> He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." <sup>14</sup> Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

#### READING

**Genesis 15:1-6**

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." <sup>2</sup> But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" <sup>3</sup> And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." <sup>4</sup> But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir."

<sup>5</sup> He brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” <sup>6</sup> And he believed the LORD, and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON**

**A Reckoning**

Rev. Amy Heinz

**HYMN**

*“Drawn to the Light”*

**ELW 593**

**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 THE PEOPLE**

Almighty God, in the presence of your bounty keep us humble, and in the presence of all people's needs make us compassionate and caring.

*A brief silence.*

We pray for all unhappy lives, those who are bitter and resentful, those who are sensitive to criticism and quick to take offense, those who desire their own way, whatever the inconvenience or cost to others.

May your judgment and mercy be for their healing.

**Hear our fervent prayer.**

We pray for those who are lonely, who are shy and self-conscious, who find it hard to make friends, who ever feel themselves strangers in a world they can scarcely understand.

May your presence inspire confidence and ensure companionship.

**Hear our fervent prayer.**

We pray for those who live with bitter regrets, for loving relationships brought to ruin, for opportunities freely given and woefully abused, for the bitterness of defeat or betrayal at another's hand, or for failure in personal integrity.

May your grace give new hope to find victory at the very scene of failure.

**Hear our fervent prayer.**

We pray for all in illness and pain, weary of the day and fearful of the night. Grant strength to those who suffer and to those who provide care. We pause now to speak their names either aloud or silently in our hearts.

*A brief silence.*

May your touch, embodied in our care, bring healing and wholeness.

**Hear our fervent prayer.**

Bless the company of Christ's body, the church in every land.  
Make her eager in worship, fearless in the proclamation of the  
gospel, and passionate for caring.  
May your Holy Spirit pour out on all people a living faith in you.  
**Hear our fervent prayer.**

Bless our country with compassion for others. Bless our leaders  
with wisdom and patience. Bless our children with passion for  
service.  
May your loving example bring an end to unhappy divisions and  
inspire us to live for others.  
**Hear our fervent prayer.**

Bless each of us in the communion of the saints, and keep us ever  
mindful of the great cloud of witnesses who have gone before us  
and who will come after us. Make our imperfect faith perfect so  
that we may, at the last, receive the fulfillment promised to your  
people.  
We pray in the great name of Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.\*\***

### **SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

### **We Share the Meal**

#### **OFFERING**

#### **OFFERTORY**

*"We Are an Offering"*

**ELW 692**

#### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**



**Ever-present God,  
with this offering we present also ourselves:  
all that we have been,  
all that we are,  
all that we shall become,  
and our resolve to walk in your way.**

**Accept us and our offering, and nourish us at your table for  
service in Jesus' name.**

**Amen.\*\***

## **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

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.**

Almighty and everlasting God, we bless you for your continual love and care for every creature. We praise you for forming us in your image and calling us to be your people. We thank you that you have not abandoned us in our rebellion against your love, but sent prophets and teachers to lead us into the way of salvation. Above all, we thank you for sending Jesus, your Son, to deliver us from the way of sin and death by the obedience of his life, by his suffering upon the cross, and by his resurrection from the dead. We thank you for the Holy Spirit, who leads us into truth, defends us in adversity, and out of every people unites us into one holy church.

Therefore with the whole company of saints in heaven and on earth we worship and glorify you, God most holy, and we sing with joy:\*\*

**SANCTUS**

*“Holy, Holy, Holy”*

**ELW 191**

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**DISTRIBUTION SONGS**

*“Lamb of God”*

**ELW p. 146**

*“Amazing Grace”*

**ELW 779**

*“Be Thou My Vision”*

**ELW 793**

**BLESSING AND PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**We Serve the World in God's Name**

**BENEDICTION**

May the grace of Christ, which daily renews us, and the love of God, which enables us to love all, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, which unites us in one body, make us eager to obey the will of God until we meet again, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

**CLOSING SONG** *“Go, My Children, With My Blessing”* **ELW 543**

**DISMISSAL**

We go in peace to love and serve our neighbors,  
**with open doors, open hearts, and open hands.**  
**Thanks be to God!**

**POSTLUDE**

# Notes, Prayers, and Thoughts

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## **Zion Lutheran Church**

***Open Doors, Open Hearts, Open Hands***

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