

**First English Lutheran Church
Butler, Pennsylvania**

**Service of Holy Communion
17th Sunday of Pentecost
September 24, 2023
10:00 a.m.**

GATHERING

PRELUDE

“O Christ, Our Hope, Our Heart’s Desire”
“Andante con Moto”

- Flor Peeters
- A.-P.-F. Boëly

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who looks upon us in
compassion, forgives our sin, and heals our lives.

Amen.

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

The congregation may kneel or sit.

**Have mercy, O God, against you, you alone, we have sinned. In your
compassion, cleanse us from our sin and take away our guilt. Create in
us a new heart and give us a steadfast spirit. Do not cast us away, but
fill us with your Holy Spirit and restore your joy within us.**

Amen.

As tender as parent to child, so deep is God’s compassion for you. As
high as heaven is above earth, so vast is God’s love for you. As far as east
is from west, so far God removes your sin from you, renewing your life
through Jesus Christ. Blessed be God who crowns us with mercy and
love.

Blessed be God forever. Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

“Gracious Spirit, Heed Our Pleading”

Red Book #401

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.

GLORIA

page 195 in the front of the red book

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

The congregation may sit.

THE WORD

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FIRST READING **Jonah 3:10--4:11**

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?

¹⁰When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

^{4:1}But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ²He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. ³And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a

booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

⁹But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." ¹⁰Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 145:1-8

read responsively

¹I will exalt you, my God and king,
and bless your name forever and ever.

²**Every day will I bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.**

³Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised!
There is no end to your greatness.

⁴**One generation shall praise your works to another
and shall declare your power.**

⁵I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty
and all your marvelous works.

⁶**They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts,
and I will recount your greatness.**

⁷They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.

⁸**The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

SECOND READING **Philippians 1:21-30**

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

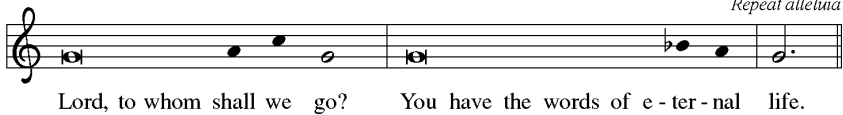
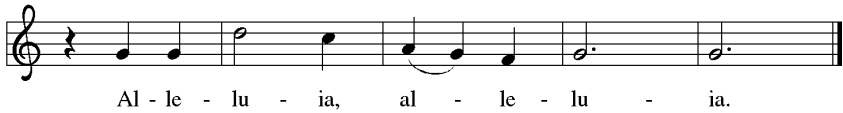
²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The congregation may stand.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL Matthew 20:1-16

The holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew, the twentieth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹"The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, 'These last

worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

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

The congregation may sit.

SERMON

The congregation may stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Will You Let Me Be Your Servant"

Red Book #659

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

God has reconciled us to himself and to one another through Jesus Christ. Trusting in his reconciling presence, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

Startle us with your endless grace, O God of love and light, that we may look to you alone for hope. Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Grateful that your creation feeds us, we ask you to protect those who work in fields, vineyards, and food processing plants. Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Show your mercy on those who suffer loss in the wake of disaster, especially the people of Libya, Morocco, Hawaii, and those in our own community who have lost homes to fire. Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Show your face to those who seek you in times of trouble, especially (names).... Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Help those whose spirits are bent inward by jealousy, resentment, or lasting grudges to find refuge and healing in your unconditional grace. Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Let your Spirit speak as this congregation's Christian education focus groups meet today, that we may discern how you will lead one generation to proclaim your love to another. Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Help us trust that our days and years are in your hands. While we live, let us to serve you for Christ's sake; when we die, let us be where he is. Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your love through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The congregation may stand.

THE MEAL

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The congregation may sit.

CHOIR ANTHEM

“Lord of All Hopefulness”

- Healey Willan / Irish Melody

The congregation may stand.

OFFERTORY HYMN

“Now the Silence”

Red Book #460

OFFERING PRAYER *led by the assisting minister*

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so 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.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy....we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and
 might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy God, mighty and merciful, your people praise you, saying, your mercy endures forever. (*The presiding minister continues giving thanks*).... 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....

The prayers conclude:

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.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one 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.**

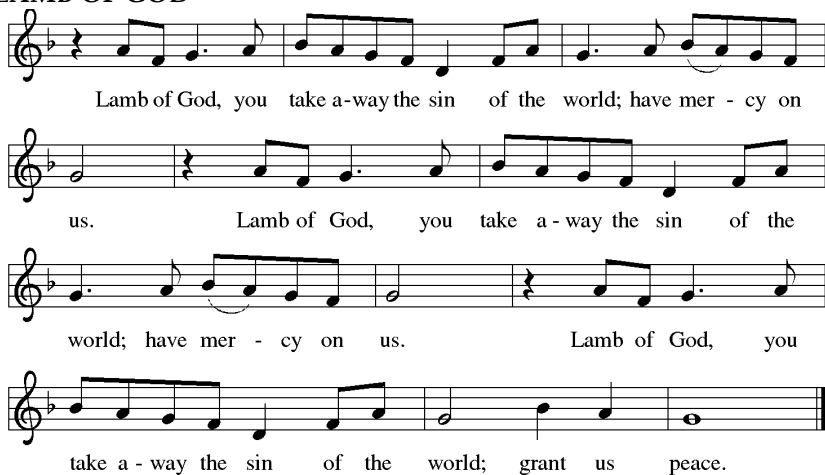
Give us this day our daily bread;

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you
take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

The congregation may sit.

SHARING OF THE SACRAMENT

All are welcome to Holy Communion today. Lutherans believe that Christ is truly present in the bread and wine. The ushers will invite you forward to receive. Gluten free wafers are available; please let the pastor know if you wish to receive them. If you are able to receive either bread or wine (but not both), please know that you still receive the full communion.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

“O, Bread of Life”

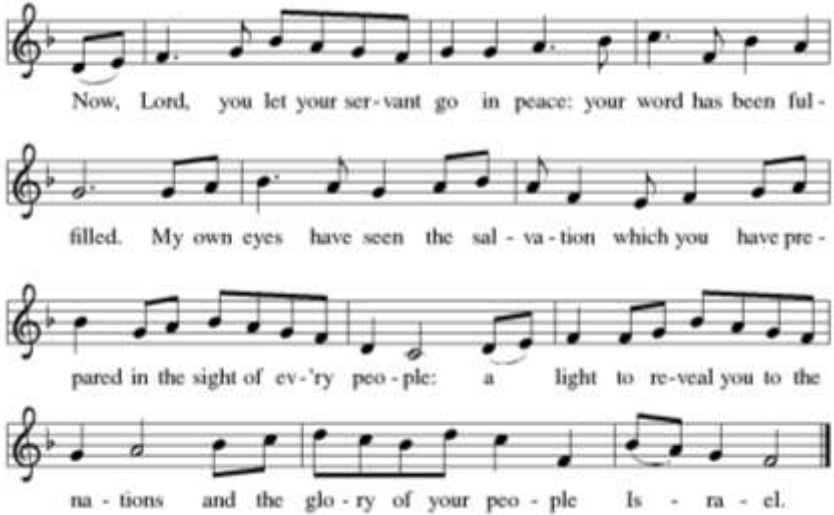
- Margrethe Hokanson

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

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

Amen.

CANTICLE AFTER COMMUNION



Now, Lord, you let your ser-vant go in peace: your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have prepared in the sight of ev-'ry peo - ple: a light to re-veal you to the na - tions and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION *led by the assisting minister*

THE SENDING

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

"O Zion, Haste"

Red Book #668

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“On What Has Now Been Sewn – Postlude”

- Charles Callahan

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

The Rev. Kimberly van Driel	Presiding Minister
Sandy Lefebvre	Assisting Minister
Lois Trimbur	Communion Assistant
Amy Beiler	Reader
Christiaan van Driel	Crucifer
Claudia van Driel	Acolyte
Signe Mitchell	Organist
Harry Cunningham	Sr. Choir Director
Jim Cunningham	AV Assisting Minister
Melody Kamerer	PowerPoint Minister
Judy and Bill Vilcheck	Ushers
Amy and Jack Beiler	Counters
Roxanne Glagola	Altar Guild

Altar flowers are given by Larry Hamil to the glory of God and in memory of his beloved mother, Mildred Kathryn Montgomery Hamil.

All are welcome to join us for social hour following the worship service.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST ENGLISH

Mon., 9/25	5:00 PM	Community Dinner
	8:00 PM	NA Meeting (Social Hall)
Wed., 9/27	3:30-9:00 PM	Strengthening Families (Social Hall)
Thurs., 9/28	10:30 AM	Bible Study (Downstairs)
	7:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal
	7:30 PM	NA Meeting (Downstairs)
Sat., 9/30		Butler Fall Festival (Main St.)
	12:00 PM	NA Meeting (Downstairs)
Sun., 10/1	9:00 AM	Bible Study (Pastor's Office)
	10:00 AM	Worship
	12:30 PM	Youth Gathering Informational Pizza Lunch at Trinity Lutheran
	5:30 PM	AA Meeting (Downstairs)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This Sunday, we continue learning (or re-learning) setting 9. This setting can be found in the front of the red hymnal, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, on pages. 193-202. Today, we will learn the Holy, Holy Holy. As the following weeks unfold, we will learn new parts of the service.

Following worship today, members of church council will be hosting 2 separate focus groups to discuss First English's Christian education and faith formation program. 1 group for families/parents/grandparents currently raising young children and 1 for those who are interested in Christian education but do not have a child at home.

After worship on October 22nd, we will be hosting a focus group for families with older children.

Attention students grades 8-12 and family members! All youth of this age group are eligible to attend the ELCA's 2024 Youth Gathering July 16-20, 2024, in New Orleans. Curious about how you can take advantage of this life-impacting opportunity? An informational pizza lunch will take place on Sunday, October 1 at 12:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church. Hope to see you there!

Support First English's ministry: In thanksgiving to God, financial contributions to the congregation can be placed in the offering plate at the rear of the worship space or made online at www.firstenglishbutler.org/giving.

PRAYERS

Linda Mathias; Gus Keiser; Zema Schaney; Cory; Will; Carol Chamberlain; Carol Johnson; Mason Martin; family of Janet Warner; Eileen Herbeck; family of Linda Hibbeler; Marj Rogner; Tony Sequite; Thelma Hassler; continued healing for Graham Cannon; Aryl Bashline; Holly Schubert; Tad Sellers; Pam Patterson; Tom Olson



NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

The fairness of God's way

Psalm 25:1-9

Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love. (Ps. 25:6)

Philippians 2:1-13

Christ humbled to the point of death on a cross

Matthew 21:23-32

A parable of doing God's will

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