

***Welcome in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ!***  
**Saint Paul's Lutheran Church of Irvine (LCMS)**

***Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost***  
**Sunday, September 7, 2025 – 9:30 am**

**Divine Service**

**Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Alfonso O. Espinosa, Ph.D.**

**Assistant Pastor: Rev. Dr. Steven P. Mueller, Ph.D.**

**Vicar: Miles Johnson**

**Organist: Gerald Dahlin**

**Choir Director: Mark Howard**

**Administrative Coordinator: Jackie Johnson**

**Office: 10:30 am - 2:30 pm T-F; 949-599-4760**

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**Concordia University Irvine – Spectrum Campus**

**16355 Laguna Canyon Rd**

**Irvine, CA 92618**

**Mission**

*To foster the freedom and love we share in Christ to the community by nurturing faith in Him through tangible expressions of God's grace.*

**Vision**

*To share the Truth and Love of Christ to all ages, cultures, and backgrounds.*

**Service Offerings**

- Sunday Divine Service at 9:30 am
  - Fellowship in Café 10:30 am

**Welcome to Saint Paul's**

We praise and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ as He comes to serve and bless us through His Word and Sacraments. We follow the ancient liturgy which draws from the Word of God to order and guide our worship. Its biblical structure has been used in the Christian Church before any denominations within Christianity existed. Our worship emphasizes order, beauty, and reverence. We also celebrate the Holy Eucharist and receive the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. We are excited about what the Lord is doing at Saint Paul's, and it is our great joy to serve you!

**This is the Saving Gospel/The Good News:**

God sent His Son Jesus Christ to take your sin upon Himself and Jesus gave to you His perfect righteousness and holiness. In Christ, it is a fact, and it is reality that your sins are forgiven, covered by His blood. And because Christ defeated death, you too – as you trust in Him alone – have eternal life. This is the Good News. It is so powerful because the Holy Spirit works through it to create and sustain faith in our hearts to hold to our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. The Gospel costs Jesus everything but costs us nothing. It is yours. It is God's GIFT to you. Hold to it and know that you ARE (present tense) saved from sin, death, and the power of the devil; that you are saved TO (present tense) the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation! That's the Christian, a forgiven sinner who lives for God and loves their neighbor. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

### **The Lord's Supper**

The Holy Sacrament is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but His very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that they may show forth His death until He comes. Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, **any who are not yet instructed**, are in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the Sacrament, **are asked first to speak to one of the pastors.**

### **Prayer Before Divine Service**

O Lord, my creator, redeemer, and comforter, as I come to worship You in spirit and in truth, I humbly pray that You would open my heart to the preaching of Your Word so that I may repent of my sins, believe in Jesus Christ as my only Savior, and grow in grace and holiness. Hear me for the sake of His name. Amen.

+ In the Name of Jesus +

## Greeting

**P** For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,

**C** but the way of the wicked will perish.

- Psalm 1:6

## Confession and Absolution

*Stand*

*The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

**P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**C** But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.*

**P** Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

**C** Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

**P** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## Service of the Word

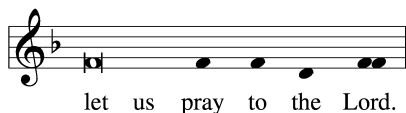
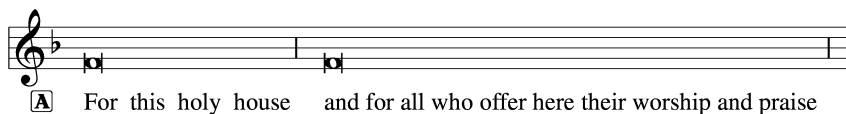
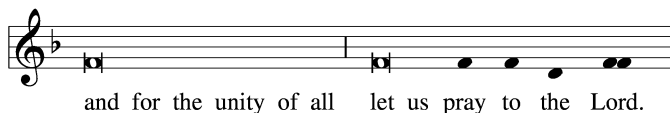
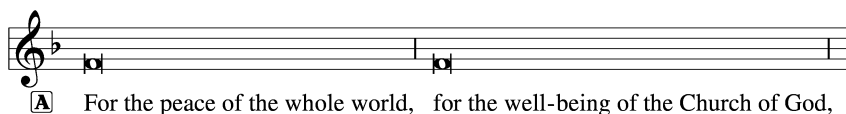
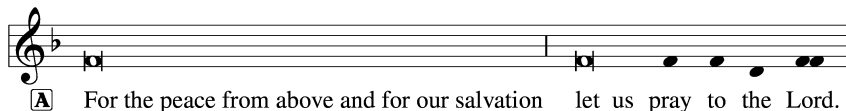
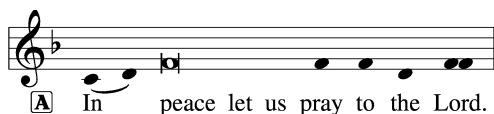
Entrance Hymn:

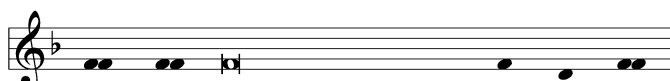
918 Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer

(all stanzas)

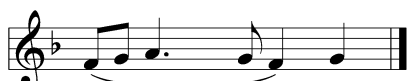
## Kyrie

LSB 152





**A** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



**C** A - men.

## This Is the Feast

LSB 155



**C** This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



1 — Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose  
2 Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and  
3 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and  
4 Bless - ing, hon - or, glo - ry, and might be to  
5 For the Lamb who was slain has be -



blood set us free to be peo - ple of God. *Refrain*  
hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are His. *Refrain*  
join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: *Stanza 4*  
God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men. *Refrain*  
gun His reign. Al - le - lu - ia. *Final Refrain*



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## Salutation and Collect of the Day



**P** The Lord be with you.



**C** And al - so with you.

**P** Let us pray.

O merciful Lord, You did not spare Your only Son but delivered Him up for us all. Grant us courage and strength to take up the cross and follow Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



**C** A - men.

*Sit*

## Old Testament Reading

*Deuteronomy 30:11–20*

<sup>11</sup>"For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. <sup>12</sup>It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' <sup>13</sup>Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' <sup>14</sup>But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

<sup>15</sup>"See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. <sup>16</sup>If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. <sup>17</sup>But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, <sup>18</sup>I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. <sup>19</sup>I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, <sup>20</sup>loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Psalm



**P** for the LORD knows the way of the | righteous,\*  
but the way of the wicked will | perish.

Blessèd is the man

who walks not in the counsel of the | wicked,\*  
nor stands in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the seat of | scoffers;

**C** but his delight is in the law | of the LORD,\*  
and on his law he meditates | day and night.

**P** He is like a tree  
planted by streams of water  
that yields its fruit in its season,  
and its leaf does not | wither.\*  
In all that he does, he | prospers.

**C** The wicked | are not so,\*  
but are like chaff that the wind | drives away.

**P** Therefore the wicked will not stand in the | judgment,\*  
nor sinners in the congregation of the | righteous;

**C** for the LORD knows the way of the | righteous,\*  
but the way of the wicked will | perish.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son,  
and to the Holy | Spirit,  
as it was in the be- | ginning,  
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

**P** for the LORD knows the way of the | righteous,\*  
but the way of the wicked will | perish.

## Epistle

*Philemon 1–21*

<sup>1</sup>Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,  
To Philemon our beloved fellow worker <sup>2</sup>and Apphia our sister and  
Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house:  
<sup>3</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup>I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, <sup>5</sup>because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and all the saints, <sup>6</sup>and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ. <sup>7</sup>For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.

<sup>8</sup>Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required, <sup>9</sup>yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you—I, Paul, an old man and now a prisoner also for Christ Jesus— <sup>10</sup>I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I became in my imprisonment. <sup>11</sup>(Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me.) <sup>12</sup>I am sending him back to you, sending my very heart. <sup>13</sup>I would have been glad to keep him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf during my imprisonment for the gospel, <sup>14</sup>but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your goodness might not be by compulsion but of your own free will. <sup>15</sup>For this perhaps is why he was parted from you for a while, that you might have him back forever, <sup>16</sup>no longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother—especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

<sup>17</sup>So if you consider me your partner, receive him as you would receive me. <sup>18</sup>If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. <sup>19</sup>I, Paul, write this with my own hand: I will repay it—to say nothing of your owing me even your own self. <sup>20</sup>Yes, brother, I want some benefit from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ.

<sup>21</sup>Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

## Alleluia and Verse

LSB 156



**C** Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



## Holy Gospel

Luke 14:25–35

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the fourteenth chapter.



**C** Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

<sup>25</sup>Now great crowds accompanied [Jesus], and he turned and said to them, <sup>26</sup>"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. <sup>27</sup>Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. <sup>28</sup>For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? <sup>29</sup>Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, <sup>30</sup>saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' <sup>31</sup>Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? <sup>32</sup>And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. <sup>33</sup>So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

<sup>34</sup>"Salt is good, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? <sup>35</sup>It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.



**C** Praise to You, O Christ.

*Sit*

## Children's Message

**Hymn of the Day: 848 Lord, Whose Love through Humble Service**  
*(all stanzas)*

## Sermon

Proper 18: Authentic Discipleship  
Rev. Dr. Alfonso Espinosa

### Choose Life

Deuteronomy 30:15-20: **The Choice of Life and Death**

<sup>11</sup>“For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. <sup>12</sup>It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ <sup>13</sup>Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ <sup>14</sup>But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

<sup>15</sup>“See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. <sup>16</sup>If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. <sup>17</sup>But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, <sup>18</sup>I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. <sup>19</sup>I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, <sup>20</sup>loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.”

In the Name of Jesus. Amen! When God creates faith in us, He wants us to know life, feel life, and experience life. He wants us to live. Not just for 70 or 80 years, but with a life that is connected to Him. And how long does God live? He lives forever. Thus, He wants you to live forever too. That’s what happens of course when His life becomes yours. And it has. You are baptized into Christ. Forever life is already yours, so yes, death can take a hike. It has.

All this happens through the gift of faith. But that gift of faith doesn’t just pop into existence out of thin air. It is facilitated by the Word of Christ which was/is contained in the water of your holy baptism. This Word of Christ is what facilitates your receiving faith. In fact, by the Spirit working through it, your faith has been created by God. What does Romans 10:17 say? “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.” Even babies when baptized hear the Word upon them, God’s Name in the water, with the water, under the water, and they are born again so as to have faith. Not a teaching that gets along with human reason, but entirely biblical: “Yet you are he who took me from the womb; you made me trust you at my mother’s breast.” (Ps 22:9) Can babies have faith? God’s Word says so when they are baptized. Never confuse true faith, trust in the heart with mere intellectual formulation.

The Word of Christ is the means, bridge, conduit, connector between God's power and your soul. Through it, He gives you faith. This is not just taught in the New Testament. It is taught throughout Scripture, and Moses who was giving God's Word to Israel proves it here at Deuteronomy chapter 30: The "commandment [which is the Word of Christ]...[God says] is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it." (Deut. 11-14) This is an astounding word!

Last Sunday, I made the statement, "Not only does God save you, but He wants you." And Deuteronomy 30 demonstrates this truth. God does not wait for you to get around to calling Him. Rather, He reaches out to you. You don't have to ascend to heaven to bring His Word to you, nor do you have to go beyond the sea so that the Word might finally be yours. Rather, the Lord says to you Christians, "the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it." (vs. 14)

This is the non-negotiable qualifying introduction to what comes next, because what comes next is God commanding us to choose life, choose God, loving Him and obeying Him. These words if taken in isolation provoke red flags: is this a shift to works-righteousness? Is this a confusion of Law and Gospel? The short answer: "No." With the qualifier: "But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it," the words that follow have nothing to do with denying the grace of God. The Word which is in you Christians -- in your mouth and in your heart -- leads and enables you to do it (that is, He -- the Word -- does it so that united to you, you do it too). This brings out the radical nature of God's love and generosity. Grace quite simply knows no limits in Christ Jesus:

1. He creates us.
2. He showers us with what we need for our body and life.
3. He gives us His Word to create faith in us.
4. He then enables us to do what He commands.
5. He then rewards us in glory for doing what He enabled in us to do.

At what juncture does His overflowing and generous love and mercy end? It never does.

The problem is that we still possess our old man, the sinful nature, the flesh. There is still that part of us that fights against God. Moses led God's people up to the Promised Land. They were being prepared by God to enter it through these very words in Deuteronomy 30. This leads us to appreciate some parallels between the Israelites and ourselves in the Church:

1. God delivered them from slavery in Egypt. He has delivered you from slavery to sin.
2. God baptized Israel as He led them out of bondage in the Red Sea. He has baptized you and has led you out of bondage in the font.
3. God gave Israel Moses to teach them and point them to the coming Messiah. God has given you His Church to teach you and point you to the Messiah/Christ who has come.
4. God gave Joshua to take them into the Promised Land. God has given you the New Joshua/Jesus to lead you into the Promised Land which is the eternal Kingdom of God.
5. God sustained Israel through the atoning blood of the sacrifices. God sustains you through the blood of His Son in and through the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

And in both cases, as we travel with our Savior leading us, we also experience “the land of Cana” while we are still in this world. There are many ways of referring to this land. In the Old Testament, the sin and evil in the land of Cana was reminiscent of the overflowing idolatry and unrighteousness in such kingdoms as Babylon. This imagery of corruption in the world was carried into the New Testament as Rome was treated as the new Babylon. Be it “land of Cana” or “Babylon,” these are alive and well in their 21<sup>st</sup> century versions including the United States here in So Cal, here in our backyards, and in and around us all. We are in Babylon and Cana still.

The realization has caused some Christians throughout history to over-react. If the world is this contaminated with sin, then perhaps the best course is to flee and build a Christian society, perhaps in the desert or some other far away place. God’s Word will not permit this. He calls you and me “salt” and “light” (Matthew 5), He calls us to be witnesses and fishers of men. God directs us through St. Paul not to associate with sexually immoral people, but then he writes at 1 Corinthians 5:10: “not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.” But rather, he is talking about avoiding those in the Church – who pretend to be Christians – but are rather dedicated to the desires of their own flesh. There is a big difference and the bottom line in our current consideration is that God wants us here, in Cana, in Babylon, and he wants us to love the people in this world with the love of Christ.

And this is where the rest of Deuteronomy 30 comes in. God knows then Christians that if you are going to effectively dwell in the world, then you must be equipped to love it, but not love it; you will have to be in it, but not of it; you will have to embrace it but not condone its evil. You and I are supposed to be like Saint Paul in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 9 and become like those

“outside the Law,” be along side those who live as if there is no Law; those who may indeed live as if the only principle is licentiousness. Who will bring Christ to them if not us? Who will shine where there is darkness if not us? Who will bring love where there is hatred? Who will bring forgiveness where there is hard-heartedness? Who will bring medicine for the soul when the soul is sick, if not us, the Christians in this world?

But if we are going to love the world, then we must not love the world. And if we are properly not loving the world, we learn to properly love the world. So how does one enter the mine field without being blown to bits? Deuteronomy 30, that’s how:

<sup>15</sup>“See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. <sup>16</sup>If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. <sup>17</sup>But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, <sup>18</sup>I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. <sup>19</sup>I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, <sup>20</sup>loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days,”

There is only one way to live in Cana and Babylon: we must enter it and love it with Christ’s love, to be as Christ, to be Christ in these places. To know – theologically – his active righteousness: Christ’s active righteousness in and through His people who follow Him. And what will Christ lead us to do as we love this world so that we can love its people? He will lead us to choose life and in so doing we will also honor 1<sup>st</sup> John 2:15 not to love the world. That is, we will love the people in this world for all to know Christ and we will use (as good stewards) the things in this world to facilitate these relationships like St. Paul used the altar dedicated to the unknown god at the Areopagus in Athens.

And for this to happen we will see Christ with us, and to see Him with us is to witness His obedience to the Father. When is it occurring and valid? Always. Where Christ is, the choosing of life and what is good is always happening. It *must*. Where Christ is, His Word – the way of life -- is chosen with new minds, new hearts, and new wills, not to be saved, but because we already are.

Choosing life is much more than a slogan. It is not merely another way of speaking of being “pro-life” for example. Of course, we are pro-life for the

unborn, the newly born, the poor and impoverished, those who are mistreated, the sick, those with disabilities, and the elderly. James chapter 1 is the only place in the New Testament that discusses the word “religion.” What is true religion? According to God, it is the person who bridles their tongue, who visits orphans and widows in their affliction, and keeps oneself unstained from the world.” (vss 26-27) There it is again, these are in the world and very active in the world, thus in this sense embracing the world, and yet they are not loving the world in such a way as to be stained by it. But what is really going on? We are choosing life. Choosing to serve the elderly, the sick, the prisoner. This is authentic discipleship.

And this is where the Gospel comes in, because without the Gospel the pursuit of authentic discipleship will only be a return to the Law, and the prison and failure of the flesh. Christ, however, immerses Himself in all of it. He is the One reaching out and He is the One being reached.

In Matthew 25: It is Christ who is in His people to feed, who gives drink, who welcomes in, who clothes, who visits the sick, who visits the imprisoned. And it is Christ who receives the food, receives the drink, is welcomed, is clothed, is the sick, and is imprisoned. And if Christ is the One doing it, then yes, you and I will do it because we are in His life, His love, His mercy, and His choosing.

Jesus said His disciples, “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.” (John 15:16) That is how we choose life by abiding in Christ, who is the Life, who chooses us. He chooses you, so that you are enabled to choose; He loves you so that you are enabled to love; He forgives you so that you are enabled to forgive; He serves you so that you are enabled to serve; He sacrifices His life for you, so that you may sacrifice for others. You and I deserved none of that which He did for us and still does for us, and so He teaches us that “deserve” has nothing to do with it.

So, we go out into the world to love those in the world, and it has nothing to do with deserve. It is not about who deserves this or who deserves that. In fact, we deserve judgment. We ourselves deserve condemnation for it was our sin that fell on Christ on the cross, but instead He chose not to let it fall on us as well, but only on Him. The price has been paid, so that when you were baptized, God chose you. He said, “You are mine. Forgiven! Washed! Clean! Accepted!” And yes, called, and not just called – because many are called – but also chosen. Few are chosen. *You* are chosen.

The day came when the Father asked the Son, “Here is your cup. What will you choose?” The Son knew what the cup meant. And for that reason,

asked the Father to take it from Him. But the Son also knew that it was His to choose, so He chose good. He chose you.

And now this is not, “God has done His part, so you do yours now,” not at all, it is rather the echo of the King’s eternal and all powerful choosing that has found you as its echo chamber. His choosing is in you, His chosen one and where Christ is, Christ continues to choose. And He chooses life and so living in Him, we follow Him, and we keep His Word and His grace will keep you choosing Him who has chosen you. Choose life Christians. Christ the Life has chosen you.

*Stand*

## **Nicene Creed**

**☩ I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.  
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and  
glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.  
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,**

**I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life ✠ of the world to come. Amen.**

## **Prayer of the Church**

**P** In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

**C Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For the gift of the Holy Spirit, that we may love what is good and obey God's command cheerfully; and as we are kept from an easy faith that costs us nothing, that we would be preserved as the salt of the earth and light in the darkness of a world that does not know God, let us pray to the Lord:

**C Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For this congregation and all the congregations of our Synod; for \_\_\_\_\_, our district president; and for all the servants of the Church, that they would be strengthened to cherish each member of Christ's Body as dearly beloved brothers and sisters, let us pray to the Lord:

**C Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For God's institutions of marriage and family, that husbands and wives, parents and children would be preserved from despising or idolizing one another; and that every relationship in the home would exemplify God's unconditional love for us in Christ, so all might follow Him in their service to one another, let us pray to the Lord:

**C Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For all elected and appointed public officials, especially our president, the Congress of these United States, our governor, the legislature of this state and all who serve us in God's name in government; and for peace among the nations, that God would prosper to the benefit of all people the cause of justice, let us pray to the Lord:

**C Lord, have mercy.**

**P** That peace would be given to those who suffer among us, *[especially \_\_\_\_\_]*, and that they would bear their crosses and follow Christ through the pains of this world to the glories of the world to come, let us pray to the Lord:

**C Lord, have mercy.**

**P** That all who come to the Lord's Supper this day may in faith receive Christ's body and blood and with it the forgiveness of sins, the desire to amend our sinful lives, and the strength to confess the true faith in all that we say and do, let us pray to the Lord:

**C Lord, have mercy.**



**P** Join these, our prayers and praises, with those of Your faithful servants of every time and place, and unite them in the ceaseless petitions of our great High Priest, until He comes again in power and glory as victorious Lord of all. Through Him, with Him and in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is Yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

**G** Amen.

*Sit*

## Offering

What Shall I Render to the Lord -- David Cherwien

*Stand*

## Offertory

LSB 159



**G** What shall I ren-der to the Lord for all His ben-e-fits to  
me? I will of-fer the sac-ri-fice of thanks-giv-ing and will  
call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal-  
va-tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my  
vows to the Lord now in the pres-ence of all His peo-ple, in the  
courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je - ru - sa - lem.

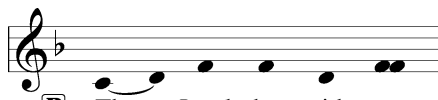
## +Dismissal of Online Participants and Blessing+

*1 Corinthians 11:23-29 instructs pastors since they are stewards of the mysteries (1st Corinthians 4:1) to serve only those who share in a common confession. If you are still learning about our confession and not yet confirmed, you may come forward to receive a blessing. Simply cross your arms over your chest. Pastor would love to meet with you to prepare you to receive the Holy Sacrament.*

# Service of the Sacrament

## Preface

LSB 160



**P** The Lord be with you.



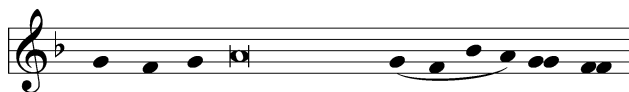
**C** And al - so with you.



**P** Lift up your hearts.



**C** We lift them to the Lord.



**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



**C** It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

**P** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

## Sanctus

LSB 161



**C** Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



## Prayer of Thanksgiving

LSB 161

- P** Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

- C** Amen.

## Lord's Prayer

LSB 162

- P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

- C** **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.**

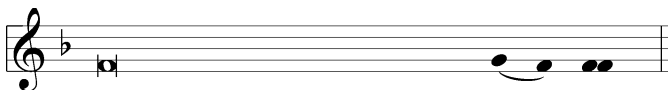
## **The Words of Our Lord**

**P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My  $\text{✠}$  body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My  $\text{✠}$  blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

## **Pax Domini**

*LSB 163*



**P** The peace of the Lord be with you al - ways.



**C** A - men.

## **Agnus Dei**

*LSB 163*



**C** 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.

*Sit*

## Distribution

### Distribution Hymns:

#### 605 Father Welcomes

*(all stanzas)*

#### 683 Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me

*(all stanzas)*

#### 797 Praise the Almighty

*(all stanzas)*

#### 783 Take My Life and Let It Be

*(all stanzas)*

*Stand*

### Thank the Lord

LSB 164



**C** Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev-'ry-one what He has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear His name.



He re - calls His prom - is - es and leads His peo - ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al - le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia.

### Post-Communion Collect

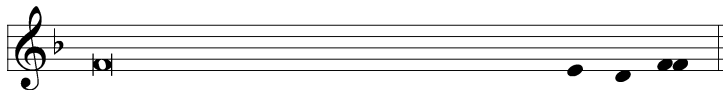
**A** Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



## Benediction

LSB 166



- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you  
and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and  $\text{H}$  give you peace.



## Postlude

Rondeau -- JJ Mouret.

### Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting One from Lutheran Service Book

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## Today:

### Bible Study is Back!

Join us this Sunday at 11:00 AM, following Divine Service and a brief time of fellowship, as Pastor Espinosa leads us back into Bible study. We'll begin with **Chapter 2** of his new book, *Contending for Christ Through the Creed: Apologetics for Loving Answers on the Christian Faith*. This week's focus is on the **"Culture and the Old I"**

Come be encouraged and equipped as we grow together in God's Word!


## This Week:

### ☀️ Join the Journey—Daily Bible Devotionals with Pastor Al! ☀️


It's 2025, and **Pastor Espinosa hasn't missed a single day** of walking through Scripture with us!

Whether you've been following along or just jumping in, you're invited to be part of this powerful, daily connection to God's Word.

### **Need a boost of faith each day?**

 Catch daily devotionals on:

- **Facebook** – @AlfonsoEspinosa
- **TikTok** – @alfonsoespinosa356
- **Instagram** – @alfonsoespinosa88

 Prefer devotionals by email?

Just send a quick note to **office@saintpaulsirvine.com** and we'll get you added to the list!

Let's keep growing—together in Christ—one day, one verse at a time.

## General Announcements



A heartfelt thank you to our Saint Paul's congregation for your generosity and support during last weekend's fellowship potluck. The dishes were absolutely amazing, and your kindness made the day so special.

Celebrating Miles' installation as vicar, alongside the return of Concordia University Irvine students was truly a joy. We were especially blessed to welcome some brand-

new freshman and transfer students into our community!

This is not only a huge thank you to the congregation, but also a deep recognition that the church truly is family. We are so grateful to each of you and look forward to many more years of serving together.

With gratitude and love,  
Miles & Jackie Johnson

### **Memorial Service for Dr. Uwe Siemon-Netto**

With hope in the resurrection, we share that our brother in Christ, **Dr. Uwe Siemon-Netto**, has been called home to heaven.

Services will be held on **Saturday, September 20, 2025:**

- **11:00 am – Graveside Memorial** at *El Toro Memorial Park*

- **12:15 pm – Memorial Service** at *Mission Lutheran Church, Laguna Niguel*  
(Reception to follow at Mission Lutheran)

We give thanks to God for Dr. Siemon-Netto's faithful service to the Kingdom and the lasting impact of his ministry.

### The Bulletin Board

**Life Quote: September 7** "Difficult situations like surprise pregnancy and terminal diagnosis can tempt us to forget our Savior's presence and power. Comfort comes not from making deals with death but from the gifts He wrings and the privileges He brings even in and through hardship. An everlasting, unchanging, and all-sufficient Creator and Keeper not only provides life, He protects it as well!" *Pastor Michael Salemink, Lutherans For Life – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

**Weekly Stewardship Message:** September 7 – Trinity 12

**Romans 10:15a – "And how are they to preach unless they are sent?"**

Each week in the Lord's House, the Word goes out to us. Indeed, every day and all around the world, the Word goes out wherever it is preached and read. This brings us great joy, but even more joy is derived from realizing that God has blessed us with being part of this sending of the Word. From the blessings God gives us, we return a portion to Him in the church for His work. And thus we are doubly blessed. We receive the Word, and we get to send it forth to others.

### Walk for Hope – City of Hope

We're forming a **Saint Paul's team**—come walk with us! Join the **Walk for Hope** on **Sunday, November 2, 2025 at 1000 FivePoint, Irvine, CA 92618, United States, Irvine, CA 92618**. It'll be fun, and it's for a great cause! Walk begins at **7am!**

**Our team tagline:** "*Walking in Christ's Love, Stepping Toward Cancer Cures.*"

City of Hope has been a vital support for many in our congregation who are currently battling or have battled cancer. Walk in person, join virtually, or donate—every step helps!

**Sign up or donate here:** [ourhope.cityofhope.org/team/766721](http://ourhope.cityofhope.org/team/766721)

### Worship Attendance for Members & Guests

Scan the QR code or use the iPads at the Welcome Table to sign in. **Guests**, please sign the guestbook at the entrance.

**Offerings:** Collected during the worship service. All contributions are voluntary.





*“Next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise.  
The gift of language combined with the gift of song was given to  
man that he should proclaim the Word of God through Music.”*

– Martin Luther

### ***Upcoming Special Music at St. Paul's***

**Date:** Sunday, Sept. 28, 2025 – 9:30 am

Featuring: St. Paul's Choir, Directed by Mark Howard  
*Music by John Eggert, Walter Pelz, John Rutter*  
Jerry Dahlin, Organ  
Rachel Okonski, Flute  
Jacob Thornblad, Violin

**Date:** Sunday, Oct. 26, 2025 – 9:30 am (Reformation Sunday)

Featuring: St. Paul's Choir, Directed by Mark Howard  
*Music by Michael Burkhardt, Paul Christiansen,  
Ralph Vaughan Williams*  
Jerry Dahlin, Organ  
Bruce Benne, Handbells

**Date:** Wednesday, Dec. 24 – 7:00 pm (Christmas Eve)

Featuring: St. Paul's Choir, Directed by Mark Howard  
*Music by Jeffrey Van, Alfred Fedak, Gustav Holst,  
John Rutter*  
Jerry Dahlin, Organ  
Rachel Okonski, Flute

***Don't miss these special worship services!***

Interested in singing in the choir?

Contact Mark Howard 714.423.6460

markahoward@sbcglobal.net

### **Circle of Friends**

The most effective way for a church to grow in the Kingdom of God is to be faithful in the Word and Sacrament of Christ and to truly love people. One way to do that is to allow us to pray for those you know who need Christ and/or a church home. Please submit the names of family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and others to us through our ministry called Circle of Friends.

Thank you! Pastor Espinosa.

*For those we care about to come to saving faith and have a church home. Have a friend who needs prayer or would like a meeting with pastor? Use this QR code to let us know!*



### **Requesting Announcements**

To request an announcement for the congregation or community, submit your request via the QR code or this link: <https://forms.office.com/r/Hsgm6zAup>. Choose where you want it published: bulletin, email, website, livestream, etc.

## **Upcoming Choir Schedule**

*- for the rest of 2025*

- **Sunday, Sept. 14:** rehearsal at 8:30am in the cafe area.
- **Sunday, Sept. 21:** rehearsal at 8:30am in the cafe area.
- **Sunday, Sept. 28:** rehearsal at 8:30am, sing for service at 9:30.
- **Sunday, Oct. 12:** rehearsal at 8:30am in the cafe area.
- **Sunday, Oct. 19:** rehearsal at 8:30am in the cafe area.
- **Sunday, Oct. 26:** rehearsal at 8:30am, sing for service at 9:30.
- **Sunday, Dec. 14:** rehearsal at 8:30am in the cafe area.
- **Sunday, Dec. 21:** rehearsal at 8:30am in the cafe area.
- **Wednesday, Dec. 24:** rehearsal at 6:00pm, sing for service at 7:00pm.



The sheet music and rehearsal recordings will be accessible on the church website (*Ministries-Choir*) so you can get familiar with the music.

*Please plan your schedule to make yourself available to rehearse and sing.*

***All are invited to sing in the choir! We need everyone!***

Contact Mark Howard, Choir Director, if you have any questions.  
(714) 423-6460 / [markahoward@sbcglobal.net](mailto:markahoward@sbcglobal.net)

### **Opportunities to Volunteer & Serve**

We're always looking for ways to share our gifts and serve both our congregation and the wider community. Volunteering is a wonderful way to get involved—and for students, it can also be a great way to fulfill required service hours.

If you are interested in volunteering with any of our current

opportunities—or if you have new ideas for how we can serve together—please contact the church office at  
**office@saintpaulsirvine.com.**

**Please Pray for our Missionaries, Council Members & Elders**

**Missionaries Supported by Saint Paul's**

*(Financial gifts given annually to the national synod)*

Missionary	Location
Rev. Daniel & Kathy Conrad <i>Please send mail through the LCMS directly.</i>	Dominican Republic
Erin Mackenzie Email: <a href="mailto:erin.mackenzie@lcms.org">erin.mackenzie@lcms.org</a>	Latin America & Caribbean
Britt Odemba Email: <a href="mailto:britt.odemba@lcms.org">britt.odemba@lcms.org</a>	Kenya
Rev. Dr. Tom Park Email: <a href="mailto:tom.park@lcms.org">tom.park@lcms.org</a>	Taiwan

**Missionary Friends**

*(Non-Financial Support)*

Missionary	Role	Location
Tirzah Krey Email: <a href="mailto:tirzah.krey@lcms.org">tirzah.krey@lcms.org</a>	Regional Human Care Coordinator	Latin America & Caribbean

**If you are interested in mailing a letter or giving a donation directly to our missionaries, please send mail directly to the LCMS with the specific Missionaries name in the attention line:**

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

ATTN: *(enter missionaries name here)*

P.O. Box 66861

St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

**Local Evangelism Support: Rev. Mark Jasa** – Saint Paul's supports our local evangelist.

**Saint Paul's Parish Council Members**

**Debbie Dannemeyer** – President ~ **Matt Bures** – Recording Secretary ~ **Ken Mott** – Treasurer

**Laura Miller** – Financial Secretary ~ **Jon Rutherford** – Trustee Director ~ **Ali Frank** – Stewardship Director

**Mark Kuntz** – Presiding Elder ~ **Renee Mott** – Fellowship Director ~ **Bradley Hustad** – Evangelism Director

**Jacob Thornblad** – Education Director ~ **Miles & Jackie Johnson** – Youth Directors

**Saint Paul's Elders**

**Mark Kuntz** (Presiding Elder) ~ **Bruce Dannemeyer** ~ **Bryan Kilduff** ~

**John Church** ~ **Jon Steele** ~ **Karl Blanke** ~ **Michael Padilla**

**Steve Fischer** ~ **Ricky Cuenca** ~ **Alex Padilla** ~ **Michael Lange**

**SERVICE TEAM SCHEDULE**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Altar Team</b>	<b>Ushers/Greeter</b>	<b>Elders on Duty</b>	<b>Welcome Table</b>	<b>Livestream</b>
<i>Service Team Chairs</i>	<i>Shared Role</i>	<i>Mark Kuntz</i>	<i>Mark Kuntz</i>	<i>Kiu Geisler</i>	<i>Jon Steele</i>
1st Sunday 9/7/2025	Nina Mueller	Barney Wright, Al Ibrahim	Alex Padilla, Bruce Dannemeyer	Kiu Geisler	Jim J.
2nd Sunday 9/14/2025	Elizabeth Brothwell, Mei Kuntz	Don and Elizabeth Brothwell	Mike Padilla, Mark Kuntz	Cindy Kilduff	Jim J.
3rd Sunday 9/21/2025	Ali Frank, Laura Miller	Bill Frank and Ed Miller	Bryan Kilduff	Cindy Kilduff	Jon Steele
4th Sunday 9/28/2025	Jeanette Dahlin, Anne Wright	Paul and Samuel Hines	John Church, Jon Steele	Anne Wright	Jon Steele

**FELLOWSHIP ROTATION**

1st Sunday 9/7/2025	Jackie Johnson, Nancy Howard
2nd Sunday 9/14/2025	Renee Mott, Ann Ashmon
3rd Sunday 9/21/2025	Jeanette Dahlin, Mary Seltzer
4th Sunday 9/28/2025	Hines Family, Daisy Minter