

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

September 17, 2023—September 24, 2023

16th SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

9/17/23

8:00AM Spoken Worship
8:45AM Adult Forum Group
10:15AM Traditional Worship
Joyful Noise Offering
Directory Pictures
4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

MONDAY 9/18/23

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

TUESDAY 9/19/23

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
6:30PM Narcotics Anonymous
7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous
7:00PM Church Council Meeting

WEDNESDAY 9/20/23

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge
7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

THURSDAY 9/21/23

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
5:00PM Choir Rehearsal
7:00PM Al-Anon

FRIDAY 9/22/23

10:30AM Grace Stitchers
7:30PM Alcoholics Anonymous

SATURDAY 9/23/23

No events

17th SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

9/24/23

8:00AM Spoken Worship Service
8:45 AM Adult Forum Group
10:15AM Traditional Worship
4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

September 17, 2023 16th Sunday of Pentecost



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

11 East Dawes Avenue, Somers Point, NJ 08244
Church Office: 609-927-3082 **Food Pantry:** 609-927-9982
Website: www.gracelutheranspnj.org
E-mail: office@gracelutheranspnj.comcastbiz.net

Rev. Althea Albright, Pastor ✝ Scott J. Breiner, Music Director
Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant
Alison Toth, Social Media Consultant

We welcome you to worship here at Grace!

*Note that all text written in **bold** is for congregation participation.
Our hymn songs are found in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship
red hymnal found in the pews.*

Memorial gifts for Reverend Dr.
Robert Hughes are requested to
be sent to:

United Lutheran Seminary
7301 Germantown Avenue
Philadelphia, PA. 19119.

SHORE DINER

Present this bulletin on a Sunday
and Shore Diner will donate 20% to Grace
Lutheran Church. Present this on
any other day, and we will donate 10%.

Shore Diner
6710 Tilton Road
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234
609-641-3669

GATHERING

Thank you for joining with us as we worship our Lord together!

Introduction

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

WELCOME

Rev. Althea Albright

PRELUDE

Cantilena by Josef Rheinberger
Please stand as you are able.

GREETING

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 help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Most merciful God, **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. 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. 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.**

SENDING BLESSING

May Almighty God, ☩ Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, watch over you, guide you, and give you faith for the journey now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN *Go, My Children, With My Blessing* WOV #721

*Please be seated. Enjoy the postlude music
and meditate on how God spoke to your heart today.*

POSTLUDE

Awake, O Sleeper by David M. Cherwien

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Be the hands and feet of Christ in the world!
Thanks be to God.

*We are glad for your presence today.
We hope you come again soon!*

We thank all those serving in worship today!

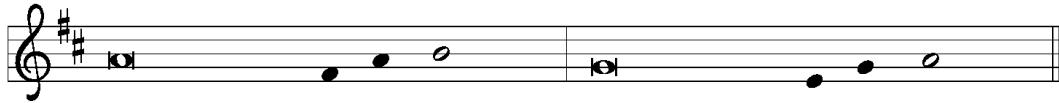
Reader: Mary Ann Gring

The flowers sponsors this week are: Clare Brick and Marleigh Cannizzaro, in memory of Opa Brick.

father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷‘Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.’ Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father.” Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, “We are here as your slaves.” ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.” In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 103:[1-7] 8-13



- ¹Bless 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—
- ³who forgives | all your sins
and heals all | your diseases;
- ⁴**who redeems your life | from the grave**
and crowns you with steadfast | love and mercy;
- ⁵who satisfies your desires | with good things
so that your youth is renewed | like an eagle's.
- ⁶**O LORD, you provide | vindication**
and justice for all who | are oppressed.
- ⁷You made known your | ways to Moses
and your works to the chil- | dren of Israel.
- ⁸**LORD, you are full of compas- | sion and mercy,**
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love;
- ⁹you will not al- | ways accuse us,
nor will you keep your an- | ger forever.
- ¹⁰**You have not dealt with us according | to our sins,**

A: 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.**

P: 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.**

HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

WOV page 22

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

WOV page 22

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God. You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever. **Amen.**

OFFERING

JOYFUL NOISE OFFERING

Our monthly special noisy offering for the month of September is Big Brothers & Big Sisters in Northfield, NJ.

OFFERTORY *Bless the Lord, O My Soul* by Mikhail Ippolotof-Ivanoff
Please stand as you are able.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS *Let the Vineyards* WOV page 21

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. **God of power, God of plenty, all things belong to you. We bring these gifts to the table, that all might be fed. Form us into the body of your beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

Please be seated

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors. *A brief silence.*

A: We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and healing to polluted rivers. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in positions of power to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

P: We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, the disease of addiction, or otherwise afraid or in dangerous situations. Protect all who cry out for mercy *especially all those we name aloud or in our hearts...* Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

nor repaid us according to¹ our iniquities.

¹¹For as the heavens are high a-¹bove the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for¹ those who fear you.

¹²**As far as the east is¹ from the west,
so far have you removed our transgres-¹sions from us.**

¹³As a father has compassion¹ for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear¹ you, O LORD.

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

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.**

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 18th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

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.**

Please be seated.

SERMON

Rev. Althea Albright

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

In All Our Grief

WOV# 739

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.

PEACE The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

GREET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Take a brief moment to share the peace by greeting someone sitting near you. Verbal greetings are appropriate if you are not comfortable shaking hands or touching.