

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

September 24, 2023—October 1, 2023

17th SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

9/24/23

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

MONDAY 9/25/23

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

TUESDAY 9/26/23

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

WEDNESDAY 9/27/23

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge
4:00PM Prep/Set-up for Oktoberfest

ALL ARE WELCOME TO HELP

7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

THURSDAY 9/28/23

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

FRIDAY 9/29/23

10:30AM Grace Stitchers

6:00 PM-9:00PM Oktoberfest

7:30PM Alcoholics Anonymous

SATURDAY 9/30/23

No events

18th SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

10/1/23

8:00AM Spoken Worship Service

8:45 AM Adult Forum Group

Directory Pictures

10:15AM Traditional Worship

Directory Pictures

4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

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

September 24, 2023 17th 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.*

GATHERING

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

Introduction

Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

WELCOME

Rev. Althea Albright

PRELUDE

Es Ist Das Heil Anonymous Composer
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.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING

Please stand as you are able.

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

O Zion, Haste

ELW #668

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

POSTLUDE

Es Ist Das Heil

by F. W. Zachau

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: Meg LaSpina

The flowers sponsor this week is: Kathy Wopatek-Nigsch, wishing her mom, Kay Wopatek, a happy heavenly birthday!

The candles, wine and bulletins sponsor is: Bettie Cross, in loving memory of my husband Bob on his 95th birthday with the angels.

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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.**

THE LORD’S PRAYER

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

Come to the banquet of Christ. All are welcome. **Amen.**

COMMUNION HYMN *Lamb of God* *WOV page 25*

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

EVERYONE IS INVITED to come forward at the direction of the ushers. If you are unable to come to the altar, you may remain seated and the pastor will bring you communion after everyone has come forward. Children may come forward to receive a blessing.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Blessed be your name, O God, **for we have feasted on your goodness. You are our hope and joy. Strengthen us by this food, and send us to share with the world your love and welcome others to your house, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN *As Saints of Old* *ELW #695*

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.**

KYRIE *WOV page 12*

HYMN OF PRAISE *WOV page 14*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.**

Please be seated

WORD

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



Encourage all who are in despair or pain of any kind especially those in Morocco with the aftermath of earthquakes, Libya with the aftermath of flooding, *and all those we name aloud or in our hearts...* Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: God who is slow to anger, may we boast about the goodness of Jesus with the confidence of Paul in prison. Inspire us to find abundance in whatever vocation we are called to in the world and in service to our congregation. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: God who abounds in steadfast love, we give thanks for the saints called to your eternal home. United with them in spirit, hold us firm as we labor in this life and look to the life to come. 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

WOF 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

WOF 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

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.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy* by Sally Kidwell
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. *Brief silence.*

A: God who is gracious and merciful, teach your church to invite and welcome all. Lead us to be grateful for the blessing of community. Challenge your church to choose equity and compassion over judgment. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: God who sends the wind and the sun, you know every creature by name. Help us remember that even the humblest parts of creation are precious to you. Show us how best to care for the earth and its creatures. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: God who is ready to relent from punishing, impart your compassionate wisdom to legislators, judges, members of the military, and law enforcement. Give them courage to serve their communities in times of uncertainty, stress, or exhaustion. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

P: God who saves, give faith to your people who are tempted by evil to turn away from your ways. Keep us on paths that are life-giving.

¹I will exalt you, my ¹ God and king,
and bless your name forev- ¹ er and ever.

²**Every day ¹ will I bless you
and praise your name forev- ¹ er and ever.**

³Great is the LORD and greatly ¹ to be praised!
There is no end ¹ to your greatness.

⁴**One generation shall praise your works ¹ to another
and shall de- ¹ clare your power.**

⁵I will speak of the glorious splendor ¹ of your majesty
and all your ¹ marvelous works.

⁶**They shall tell of the might of your ¹ wondrous acts,
and I will re- ¹ count your greatness.**

⁷They shall publish the remembrance of ¹ your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully ¹ of your righteousness.

⁸**The LORD is gracious and full ¹ of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in ¹ 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—

