

**REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**Serving Absecon - Galloway Township**  
**Rev. Heidi Link – Pastor**  
**Brian Conover - Music Director**

**Sunday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025**

**THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST / 8:30 & 10:00 AM**

**\* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, our maker, our helper, and our keeper. **Amen.**

Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Merciful and loving God,

**we are your stiff-necked people. We trample on the needy. We grumble about your grace to others. We turn away from the poor. Have mercy on us and forgive our sins. Rejoice over us as ones who were lost and have been found. Amen.**

Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. You who were lost have been found. In the name of ✝ Jesus, your sins are forgiven! **Amen.**

**\* OPENING SONG**

**Son of God, Eternal Savior**



- 1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,
- 2 As you, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, so may we for oth - ers live.
- 3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and Prince of peace;



Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race,  
Free - ly have your gifts been grant-ed; free - ly may your ser - vants give.  
hush the storm of strife and pas - sion, bid its cru - el dis - cords cease.

*... song continues ...*

\* - Congregation Stands (If for any reason you are unable to stand during the service, please remain seated.)



you our head, who, throned in glo - ry, for your own will ev - er plead:  
Yours the gold and yours the sil - ver, yours the wealth of land and sea;  
By your pa - tient years of toil - ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,



fill us with your love and pit - y, heal our wrong, and help our need.  
we but stew - ards of your boun - ty held in sol - emn trust will be.  
quench our fe - vered thirst of plea - sure, stem our self - ish greed of gain.

Text: Somerset C. Lowry, 1855–1932

Music: IN BABILONE, *Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlities en Contradansen*, 1710

### \* GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.**

Let us pray: God among us, we gather in the name of your Son to learn love for one another. Keep our feet from evil paths. Turn our minds to your wisdom and our hearts to the grace revealed in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

### FIRST READING: Amos 8:4-7

4 Hear this, you who trample on the needy,  
and bring to ruin the poor of the land,

5 saying, “When will the new moon be over  
so that we may sell grain,

and the Sabbath,

so that we may offer wheat for sale?

We will make the ephah smaller and the shekel heavier  
and practice deceit with false balances,

6 buying the poor for silver

and the needy for a pair of sandals

and selling the sweepings of the wheat.”

7 The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:

Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

### RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 113

<sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! Give praise, you servants of the LORD;  
praise the name of the LORD.

<sup>2</sup> **Let the name of the LORD be blessed,  
from this time forth forevermore.**

<sup>3</sup> From the rising of the sun to its going down  
let the name of the LORD be praised.

<sup>4</sup> **The LORD is high above all nations;  
God’s glory above the heavens.**

- <sup>5</sup> Who is like the LORD our God,  
 who sits enthroned on high,  
<sup>6</sup> **but stoops to behold**  
**the heavens and the earth?**  
<sup>7</sup> The LORD takes up the weak out of the dust  
 and lifts up the poor from the ashes,  
<sup>8</sup> **enthroning them with the rulers,**  
**with the rulers of the people.**  
<sup>9</sup> The LORD makes the woman of a childless house  
 to be a joyful mother of children. Hallelujah!

## SECOND READING: 1 Timothy 2:1-7

<sup>2</sup> First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, <sup>2</sup> for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. <sup>3</sup> This is right and acceptable before God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup> For there is one God;  
 there is also one mediator between God and humankind,  
 Christ Jesus, himself human,  
<sup>6</sup> who gave himself a ransom for all  
 —this was attested at the right time. <sup>7</sup> For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth; I am not lying), a teacher of the gentiles in faith and truth.

## \* HYMN OF PRAISE

### I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me



1 I'm so glad I'm so glad  
 2 Sa - tan had me bound, Je-sus lift-ed me. Sa - tan had me bound,  
 3 When I was in trou - ble, When I was in trou - ble,



Je-sus lift-ed me. I'm so glad  
 Sa - tan had me bound, Je-sus lift-ed me,  
 When I was in trou - ble,



sing-ing glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! Je - sus lift - ed me.

**\* THE WORD OF GOD: Luke 16:1-13**

A reading from the Gospel of St. Luke:

**16** Then Jesus said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. <sup>2</sup> So he summoned him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.’ <sup>3</sup> Then the manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. <sup>4</sup> I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.’ <sup>5</sup> So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ <sup>6</sup> He answered, ‘A hundred jugs of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’ <sup>7</sup> Then he asked another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He replied, ‘A hundred containers of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and make it eighty.’ <sup>8</sup> And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. <sup>9</sup> And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

<sup>10</sup> “Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. <sup>11</sup> If, then, you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? <sup>12</sup> And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? <sup>13</sup> No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

Word of God, Word of Life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON**

## CONGREGATIONAL SONG

### There's a Wideness in God's Mercy



1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy, like the wide-ness of the sea;  
2 There is wel - come for the sin - ner, and a prom-ised grace made good;  
3 For the love of God is broad-er than the mea - sures of our mind;  
4 'Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some-thing more than all:



there's a kind-ness in God's jus - tice which is more than lib - er - ty.  
there is mer-cy with the Sav-ior; there is heal-ing in his blood.  
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.  
great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer-cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in heav'n.  
There is grace e - nough for thou-sands of new worlds as great as this;  
But we make this love too nar - row by false lim - its of our own;  
Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,



There is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg-ment giv'n.  
there is room for fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.  
and we mag - ni - fy its strict-ness with a zeal God will not own.  
and our lives will be thanks-giv - ing for the good-ness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, alt.

Music: LORD, REVIVE US, North American, 19th cent.

## \* APOSTLE'S CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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**

Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

O God, teach your church to act in solidarity with the poor, frustrating the efforts of those who trample on the needy and practicing justice in our own life and community. God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

Almighty Creator, we pray for an end to the misuse of the earth and its resources, that all people may benefit from your abundant gifts and that our stewardship of creation would be marked by justice and sustainability. God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

Holy One, embolden elected leaders to pursue policies of economic justice for the benefit of all, especially those who are most vulnerable and marginalized. Persuade them by your example of generosity and compassion. God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

Compassionate God, we pray for all facing illness, those near death, or those grieving the loss of loved ones (*especially*). May they find comfort and strength in your love. Prepare us to surround them with your healing care. God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

God of love, motivate our congregation to enact economic justice through tangible action, prioritizing the needs of our community and sharing resources generously through our outreach and justice ministries. God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Gracious God, we give thanks for the saints (*especially Matthew and all*) who now join the heavenly chorus in praising your name. Lift us up from the dust of grief and remind us of your promise of new life. God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend.

**Amen.**

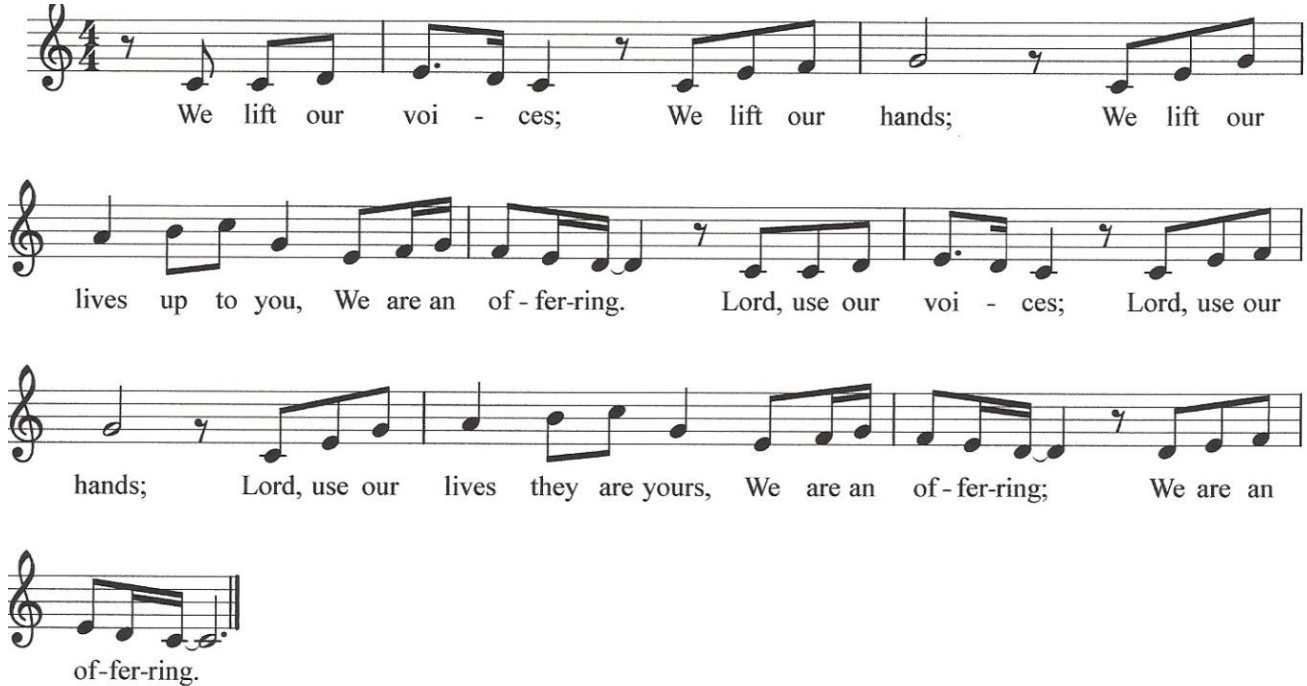
## **\* SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

## **OFFERING / SPECIAL MUSIC**

## \* OFFERING SONG



We lift our voi - ces; We lift our hands; We lift our  
lives up to you, We are an of - fer-ring. Lord, use our voi - ces; Lord, use our  
hands; Lord, use our lives they are yours, We are an of - fer-ring; We are an  
of-fer-ring.

## \* OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray: Lord of the harvest, we return to you a portion of what you have given to us. Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches, but on you, who richly provides for us. Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are suffering and in need, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## \* THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

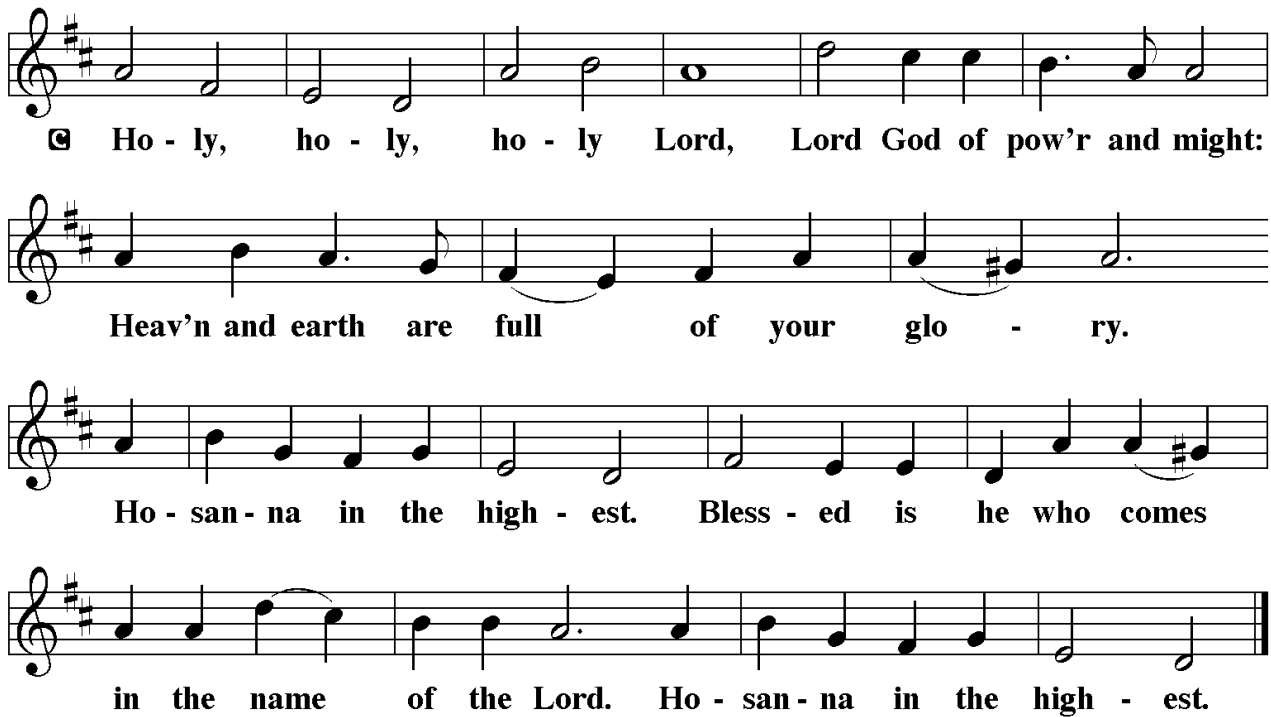
Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right and salutary...*(Here the minister continues with the preface appropriate to the day or season, concluding:)* we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:  
Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
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.

#### \* WORDS OF INSTITUTION

With Thanksgiving, we remember that in the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the disciples saying: "Take and eat; this is my body given for you. Do this in 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 in remembrance of me."

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim:

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

Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. Come to this meal of mercy.

**We come.**

#### DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

*(BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS who believe that the risen Christ is present in the Eucharist to forgive sin and renew life are invited to either come to the altar area for communion as directed or share at your pew. If you come forward, you will receive the elements. If you choose to receive at your seat, please remain there, kneel as you are able, and receive the elements using the communion packets available from the ushers. If there are other special needs, please speak to an usher.)*



**\* POST COMMUNION BLESSING**

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

**\* POST COMMUNION SONG**

**Go, My Children, with My Blessing**

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp). The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are: "Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour-ished, clos - er to me." The second staff continues the melody with the lyrics: "Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free." The third staff features a different melodic line, mostly quarter notes, with the lyrics: "Here my Spir - it's pow - er filled you, here his ten - der com-fort stilled you." The fourth staff returns to the first melody with the lyrics: "Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour-ished, joy - ful and free." The piece concludes with a double bar line.

3 "Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour-ished, clos - er to me.

Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free.

Here my Spir - it's pow - er filled you, here his ten - der com-fort stilled you.

Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour-ished, joy - ful and free."

**\* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray: O God, through this meal you have strengthened us and appointed us to be your servants. Send us to do good and to share our possessions with all in need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

**\* BLESSING**

And now a blessing: The God of righteousness, who gives justice to the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry, who sets the prisoners free, ✝ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

**\* CELEBRATIONS!!!**

**\* CLOSING SONG**

## Rise Up, O Saints of God!



- 1 Rise up, O saints of God! From vain am - bi - tions turn;  
2 Speak out, O saints of God! De - spair en - gulf's earth's frame;  
3 Rise up, O saints of God! The king - dom's task em - brace;  
4 Give heed, O saints of God! Cre - a - tion cries in pain;  
5 Com - mit your hearts to seek the paths which Christ has trod;



Christ rose tri - um - phant that your hearts with no - bler zeal might burn.  
as heirs of God's bap - tis - mal grace, the word of hope pro - claim.  
re - dress sin's cru - el con - se - quence; give jus - tice larg - er place.  
stretch forth your hand of heal - ing now, with love the weak sus - tain.  
and, quick - ened by the Spir - it's pow'r, rise up, O saints of God!

Text: Norman O. Forness, b. 1936

Music: FESTAL SONG, William H. Walter, 1825–1893

Text © Norman O. Forness, admin. Augsburg Fortress

**\* SENDING**

Go in peace. Do not lose heart.

**Thanks be to God.**

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