

October 18, 2026

Pentecost 21



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

Email: office@gracelutheranspnj.org

Reverend ✝ Elizabeth Frey, Pastor, Scott J. Breiner, Music Director
Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant

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

S=service music in the front part of the hymnal.

GATHERING

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

In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

WELCOME

Rev. Elizabeth Frey

PRELUDE

An Autumn Sketch

by John Hyatt Brewer

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin to God. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Compassionate God, **we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others.**

Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hear this good news: We have peace with God through + Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN

You Servants of God

ELW #825

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

ELW S138

HYMN OF PRAISE*This is the Feast*

ELW S140

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

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

GREET YOUR NEIGHBOR*Please be seated.***CHILDREN'S SERMON****CHILDREN ARE DISMISSED FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL****WORD****FIRST READING: Isaiah 45:1-7**

The prophet announces that Cyrus the Persian emperor is the one the LORD has anointed to end Israel's exile. The LORD makes this choice so that the whole world will recognize this LORD as the only God. Persia had a god of light and a god of darkness; the LORD claims sovereignty over both light and darkness.

¹ Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus,

whose right hand I have grasped
to subdue nations before him
and to strip kings of their robes,
to open doors before him—

and the gates shall not be closed:

² I will go before you

and level the mountains;

¹ Sing to the LORD | a new song;
sing to the LORD, | all the earth.

² **Sing to the LORD, bless the name | of the LORD;
proclaim God's salvation from | day to day.**

³ Declare God's glory a- | mong the nations
and God's wonders a- | mong all peoples.

⁴ **For great is the LORD and greatly | to be praised,
more to be feared | than all gods.**

⁵ As for all the gods of the nations, they | are but idols;
but you, O LORD, have | made the heavens.

⁶ **Majesty and magnificence are | in your presence;
power and splendor are in your | sanctuary.**

⁷ Ascribe to the LORD, you families | of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD hon- | or and power.

⁸ **Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the | holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts | of the LORD.**

⁹ Worship the LORD in the beau- | ty of holiness;
tremble before the LORD, | all the earth.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

¹ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

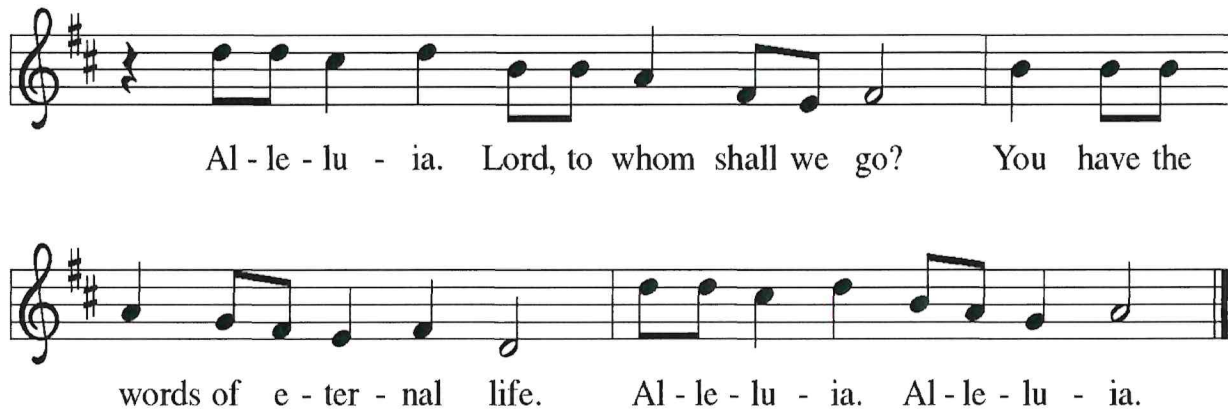
² We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³ remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶ And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy from the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸ For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia but in every place your

faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹ For they report about us what kind of welcome we had among you and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

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

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 22nd chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

¹⁵ The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶ So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one, for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" ¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you

putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰ Then he said to them, “Whose head is this and whose title?” ²¹ They answered, “Caesar’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s.” ²² When they heard this, they were amazed, and they left him and went away.

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

Please be seated.

SERMON

Rev. Elizabeth Frey

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY *Take My Life, that I May Be* **ELW #685**

Verses 1, 3, 6 ALL, Verse 2 WOMEN, Verse 4 CHOIR, Verse 5 MEN

THE APOSTLE’S 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.

Please be seated.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY *O Sing unto the Lord* by Hans Leo Hassler

Please stand as you are able.

OFFERTORY RESPONSE *Create in Me a Clean Heart O God* **WOV #732**

OFFERING PRAYER

God of creation, you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. Amen.

Please be seated.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

When the pastor or worship assistant says, “Hear us O God”, please respond with, “**Your mercy is great.**”

P: Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

ELW S144

PREFACE

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW S144

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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

Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

EVERYONE IS INVITED to receive Holy Communion. The ushers will invite worshippers forward to receive communion in front of the altar steps. Once you have received the wafer and the red wine/white grape juice, place your empty cup in the tray and return to your pew via the side aisles. If you do not wish to receive communion, or are worshipping with children who have not had First Communion, we welcome you to come forward for a blessing and cross your arms over your chest to show your preference to the pastor.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

BLESSING

The God of grace + bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN *How Clear is our Vocation, Lord* **ELW #580**

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

POSTLUDE *March in D Major* by G. F. Handel, arr. by George Blake

DISMISSAL Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

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:

Worship Assistant: Kevin Thomas

The flowers sponsor this week is: Roberta Blumenthal, thanking God for another year of blessings!

The candles sponsor this week is: Kathy Ruffenach, in loving memory of Wayne Rumble, from the Ruffenach, Rumble, and Kellenberger Families.

The bulletins sponsor this week is: Sara Blumenthal, in honor of her mother, Roberta's Birthday!
Love, Sara & John, Laura, Doug, Andrew & Rebecca

The music sponsor this week is: Carol Gallagher, giving thanks for our wonderful choir and awesome Scott!

Please mark your calendars!

TRUNK OR TREAT

Our Somers Point PD Trunk or Treat is held Sunday, October 25th from 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM at the Shore Medical Center Parking Lot, the corner of Harbor and Bay Avenue. Please plan to arrive at 3:00 PM for set up, as we begin promptly at 4:00 PM. You will be given an assigned space, any helpers can park their vehicles in the parking lot section of the event. We will need a car, 4 volunteers, and lots of treat donations!!! Please sign up to volunteer in the narthex.

FEED THE NORTHEAST: October 1-31

We are excited to once again participate in Feed the Northeast Food Drive to help combat food insecurity for local families with Thrivent Member Network-Northeast Region! If we are one of the first 100 to collect 500 items for our Grace Place Food Pantry, Thrivent will give a \$500 check to our food pantry in addition to the items collected. This is a great way to help them keep their shelves stocked for those in need, especially through the holiday season!

Seaman's Institute-Christmas at Sea

The Grace Stitchers are working hard to make essential items for the men & women working at sea during Christmas. This Christmas at Sea Donation Drive will take place during the month of October, and your donations are very much needed and appreciated! Please place your items in the labeled bin in the narthex.

CAPE SHORE CHORALE ANNUAL FUNDRAISER AT GRACE

Back by popular demand, Charlie Zahm, Celtic Entertainer!
www.charliezahm.com

Saturday, November 14 from 6:00-9:00 PM

Before and after the concert, there will be beverages, appetizers, and desserts that are included in the \$50 ticket price.

*for more information and to reserve,
 contact Claire Theis @ (609) 214-5323
 or clairetheis@hotmail.com*

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

October 18, 2026-October 25, 2026

21st Sunday of Pentecost 10/18/26

8:00AM Spoken Worship
10:15AM Traditional Worship

MONDAY 10/19/26

9:00AM-11:30 AM Food Pantry
6:30PM Grief Support Group
7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

TUESDAY 10/20/26

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

WEDNESDAY 10/21/26

9:00AM-11:30 AM Food Pantry
11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge
6:00PM AA Book Study
7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

THURSDAY 10/22/26

9:00AM-11:30 AM Food Pantry
9:30AM Bible Study
12:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous
5:00PM Choir Rehearsal
5:30PM AA 12-Step
7:00PM Al-Anon

FRIDAY 10/23/26

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

SATURDAY 10/24/26

7:30AM & 8:30AM Weight Watchers

Reformation Sunday 10/25/26

8:00AM Spoken Worship
10:15AM Traditional Worship
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM Trunk-Or-Treat: Shore Medical Center

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

Office Hours This Week:

Mon-Tues 10:00-3:00

Thurs-Fri 10:00-3:00