

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

July 23, 2023—July 30, 2023

8th SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

7/23/23

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

MONDAY 7/24/23

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

TUESDAY 7/25/23

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
10:30AM Worship & Music Meeting
3:00PM Dream Team Meeting
6:30PM Narcotics Anonymous
7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

WEDNESDAY 7/26/23

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

THURSDAY 7/27/23

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

FRIDAY 7/28/23

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

SATURDAY 7/29/23

No events

9th SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

7/30/23

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

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MON-WED 10:00AM-3:00PM
FRI 10:00AM-2:00PM

PASTOR OFFICE HOURS

MON-THURS 10:00AM-12:30PM

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

July 23, 2023

8th 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

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

It is an age-old question: why is there evil in the world? In the parable of the wheat and the weeds Jesus suggests that both grow together until the harvest. With Paul, we long for the day that all creation will be set free from bondage and suffering. Having both weeds and wheat within us, we humbly place our hope in the promises of God, and from the Lord's table we go forth to bear the fruit of justice and mercy.

Amen.

WELCOME

Rev. Althea Albright

PRELUDE

Hyfrydol

by: T. Frederick H. Candlyn

Please stand as you are able.

GREETING

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Gracious God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us,

*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 sponsor this week is: The LaSpina and Friedrich Families, “Happy 68th birthday to Pam LaSpina, our mom, wife and mommom!”

The candles and bulletins sponsor is: Carol Gallagher.

The wine sponsor is: Dale Rader

Pictures for the Church Directory

If you need to have your picture taken for the church directory, please sign up for a date and time that works for you. Sign-up sheets are on the table in the narthex. If you are signing up a family (more than a couple), please sign up for 2 back-to-back time slots, to allow more time for photographing. If you already have a nice family photo you would like to submit and use for the directory, you may send that photo to the following email: gracelutheranmedia24@gmail.com

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

Gracious God, in you we live and move and have our being. With your word and this meal of grace, you have nourished our life together. Strengthen us to show your love and serve the world in Jesus' name. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING

Please stand as you are able.

SENDING BLESSING

Beloved children of God, as we are sent from this place, know that God loves you. Christ's presence is with you wherever you go. Finally, know that the Spirit is with you whenever you call on the Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* ELW #631
 VERSE 1 & 4 ALL, VERSE 2 WOMEN, VERSE 3 MEN

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

POSTLUDE Toccata and Variation on “Hyfrydol” by: Gordon Young

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Share the love of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

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 *We Plow the Fields and Scatter* ELW #681

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 *white booklet page 2*

NOW THE FEAST *white booklet page 3-4*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Please be seated

WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 44: 6-8

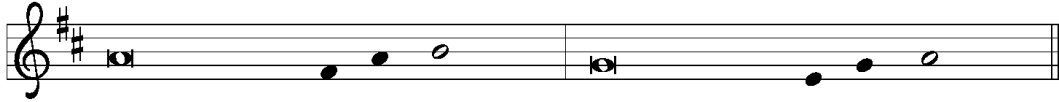
There are no other gods besides God: the word of the LORD does not fail to come to pass. We can trust in God, through whom Israel—and we—are redeemed.

⁶Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel,
and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:
I am the first and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.

⁷Who is like me? Let them proclaim it,
let them declare and set it forth before me.
Who has announced from of old the things to come?
Let them tell us what is yet to be.

⁸Do not fear, or be afraid;
 have I not told you from of old and declared it?
 You are my witnesses!
 Is there any god besides me?
 There is no other rock; I know not one.
 The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 86:11-17



¹¹Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk [|] in your truth;
 give me an undivided heart to re- [|] vere your name.
¹²**I will thank you, O Lord my God, with [|] all my heart,
 and glorify your name for- [|] evermore.**
¹³For great is your [|] love toward me;
 you have delivered me from the [|] pit of death.
¹⁴**The arrogant rise up against me, O God, and a band of violent
 people [|] seeks my life;
 they have not set you be- [|] fore their eyes.**
¹⁵But you, O Lord, are gracious and full [|] of compassion,
 slow to anger, and full of kind- [|] ness and truth.
¹⁶**Turn to me and have mer- [|] cy on me;
 give your strength to your servant, and save the child [|] of your
 handmaid.**
¹⁷**Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it
 and be [|] put to shame;
 because you, LORD, have helped me and com- [|] forted me.**

SECOND READING: Romans 8:12-25

For Paul, true spirituality means that we experience the reality of the Spirit, which enables us to pray as God's children, keeps us in solidarity with creation, and gives us unseen hope that God will liberate us and creation from bondage to death and decay.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

white booklet page 5

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

white booklet page 6

Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

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.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. All praise and glory are yours, Almighty God, 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 table for all are welcome. **Amen.**

COMMUNION HYMN

Lamb of God

white booklet page 7

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: Confident that God receives our joys and concerns, let us offer our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of creation. *Brief silence.*

A: O God, you call your church to announce the gospel of reconciliation and truth both near and far. Guide your church as it seeks your wisdom and shares it, trusting your Spirit bearing witness among us. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: You brought forth all creation and called it good. Direct policymakers to protect lands and seas. Bring rain to sun-parched fields and protect areas impacted by natural disasters especially areas experiencing recent forest fires and floods. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: You desire peace among nations and peoples. Guard our neighborhoods from hatred, watch over police officers, firefighters, and all first responders. Teach us to advocate for those who live in fear of violence and hatred. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

P: You are gracious and merciful, comforting those who suffer any affliction *especially all those we name aloud or in our hearts...* Sustain people living with HIV/ AIDS, provide shelter for all who are homeless, and release any who are unjustly imprisoned. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: You name each of us as your children. Guide our hospitality ministry to welcome all, our education ministry to equip us for faithful living, and our social ministry to enact the gospel in our community. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

P: Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, in the name of the one who reconciled all creation to himself, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen**

HOLY COMMUNION

¹²So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—¹³for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

¹⁸I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; ²³and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

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

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

white booklet page 4

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 13th chapter. **Glorify to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Jesus tells a parable about the coexistence of good and evil in this world. God's judgment will remove all evildoers and causes of sin, but not until the end of human history.

²⁴[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds

among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ ²⁸He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ ²⁹But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ ”

³⁶Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” ³⁷He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

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 *Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast* *ELW# 516*

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 that peace by greeting someone sitting near you. Verbal greetings are appropriate if you are not comfortable shaking hands or touching.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY *Come, Ye Thankful People, Come* arr. by: Paul Sjolund & Fred Bock

ELW #693

VERESE 1 ALL, VERSE 2 CHOIR, VERSE 3 ALL, VERSE 4 CHOIR

Please stand as you are able.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS *As The Grains Of Wheat* *white booklet pg.5*

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. **We praise you, God, Creator of the universe. We thank you for all of the blessings in our lives and in the lives of those around us. Take these gifts and use them for your holy work. Grant us opportunities to serve those in need. Send your Spirit to watch over us and guide us in all that we do through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Please be seated