

# **St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church**

Holstein, IA

July 12, 2026

9:00 A.M.

## **Seventh Sunday after Pentecost**

*God's word is like the rain that waters the earth and brings forth vegetation. It is also like the sower who scatters seed indiscriminately. Our lives are like seeds sown in the earth. Even from what appears to be little, dormant, or dead, God promises a harvest. At the Lord's table we are fed with the bread of life, that we may bear fruit in the world.*

### **GATHER**

#### **Prelude**

#### **Welcome and Announcements**

#### **Call to Worship**

We gather today in the midst of busy lives and hectic schedules that mirror the chaotic pace of the world around us.

**We come to set our minds on the guidance of the Spirit.**

We gather as people inundated with constant information, fast-moving news cycles, and ever-present alerts vying for our attention.

**We come to set our minds on the guidance of the Spirit.**

We gather as people seeking to anchor ourselves in the faith as the world around us is blown to and fro by waves of fear, scarcity, and reactivity.

**We come to set our minds on the guidance of the Spirit.**

Beloved, come. Come to find rest, grounding, and guidance in the Spirit who dwells in you.

**We come to set our minds on the Spirit who guides us and draws us together toward life, peace, and flourishing. Amen.**

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, January 2026.

#### **Confession and Forgiveness**

Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart, confessing our sins.

Nurturing God,

**We confess that we are often poor soil for your Word.**

**Our hearts are hardened by pride. We are rocky ground when trials and hardships arise. Distractions and worries leave us unfruitful. Forgive us when our busyness and self-reliance make us shallow ground. Nurture us, Lord, to produce the fruits we were created to yield. Amen.**

Hear the good news!

The Divine Sower does not give up on the field.

God relentlessly scatters the seed of love and mercy, over and over again.

By the grace and mercy of God, through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, your sins are completely forgiven. The Spirit nourishes our faith to bear good fruit for the kingdom.

**Amen.**

**Opening Hymn**

***We Plow the Fields and Scatter***

#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.**

**Prayer of the Day**

**Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**WORD**

**Isaiah 55:10-13**

<sup>10</sup> For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, <sup>11</sup> so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

<sup>12</sup> For you shall go out in joy and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. <sup>13</sup> Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle, and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 65: 1-13**

<sup>1</sup> You are to be praised, O God, in Zion;  
**to you shall vows be fulfilled.**

<sup>2</sup> To you, the one who answers prayer,  
**to you all flesh shall come.**

- <sup>3</sup> Our sins are stronger than we are,  
**but you blot out our transgressions.**
- <sup>4</sup> Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your courts to dwell there!  
**They will be satisfied by the beauty of your house,  
by the holiness of your temple.**
- <sup>5</sup> Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation,  
**O hope of all the ends of the earth and of the oceans far away.**
- <sup>6</sup> You make firm the mountains by your power;  
**you are girded about with might.**
- <sup>7</sup> You still the roaring of the seas,  
**the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of the peoples.**
- <sup>8</sup> Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs;  
**you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy.**
- <sup>9</sup> You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous;  
the river of God is full of water.  
**You prepare the grain, for so you provide for the earth.**
- <sup>10</sup> You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges;  
**with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.**
- <sup>11</sup> You crown the year with your goodness,  
**and your paths overflow with plenty.**
- <sup>12</sup> May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing,  
**and the hills be clothed with joy.**
- <sup>13</sup> May the meadow cover themselves with flocks,  
and the valleys cloak themselves with grain;  
**let them shout for joy and sing.**

### **Romans 8:1-11**

<sup>1</sup> Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. <sup>3</sup> For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. <sup>5</sup> For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

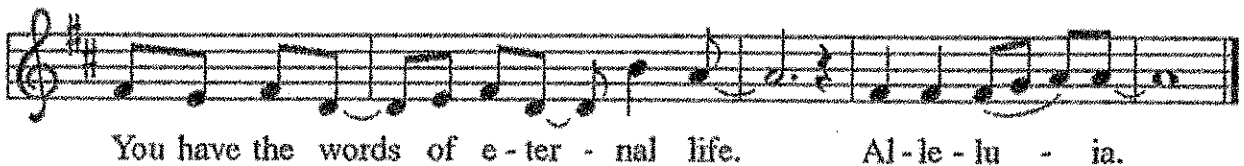
<sup>6</sup>To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. <sup>7</sup>For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed, it cannot, <sup>8</sup>and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. <sup>9</sup>But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. <sup>10</sup>But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup>If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Children's Message

### Gospel Acclamation



### Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

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

<sup>1</sup>That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. <sup>2</sup>Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. <sup>3</sup>And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup>And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up. <sup>5</sup>Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. <sup>6</sup>But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away. <sup>7</sup>Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. <sup>8</sup>Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup>If you have ears, hear!" <sup>18</sup>"Hear, then, the parable of the sower. <sup>19</sup>When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path.

<sup>20</sup> As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, <sup>21</sup> yet such a person has no root but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. <sup>22</sup> As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this age and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. <sup>23</sup> But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

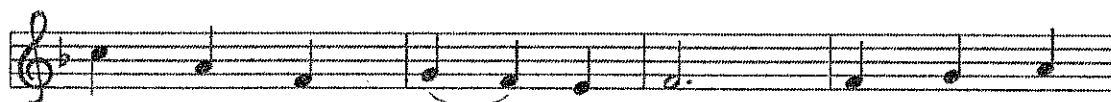
The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

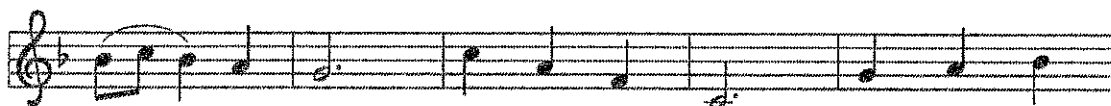
**Message** Vicar Millie Anderson

**Hymn of the Day**

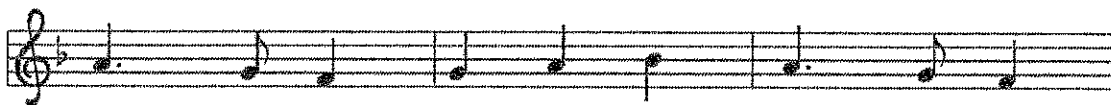
***God of the Fertile Fields***



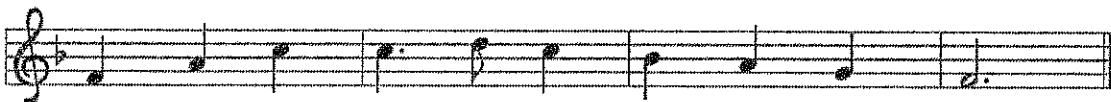
1 God of the fer - tile fields, sha - per of  
 2 We would be stew - ards true, hold - ing in  
 3 As grows the hid - den seed to fruit that  
 4 God of the coun - try - side, dear to the



earth that yields our dai - ly bread: forth from your  
 trust from you all that you give; help us in  
 serves our need, so your reign grows. Let all our  
 Christ who died to make us one: we pledge our



boun - teous hand come gifts your love has planned,  
 love to share, teach us like you to care  
 toil be used, no gift of yours a - bused,  
 lives a - new in faith - ful love to you.



that all in ev - 'ry land be clothed and fed.  
 for peo - ple ev - 'ry - where, that all may live.  
 no hum - ble task re - fused your love be - stows.  
 Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.

Text: Georgia Harkness, 1891-1974, alt.

Music: ITALIAN HYMN, Felice de Giardini, 1716-1796

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**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.**

**Prayers of the People**

**Sharing the Peace**

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**MEAL**

**Children's Offering / Offering**

**Offering Song**

***For the Fruit of All Creation***

**#679**

**Offering Prayer**

Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever.

**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 our thanks and praise.**

**Preface** *It is indeed...join in their unending praise:*



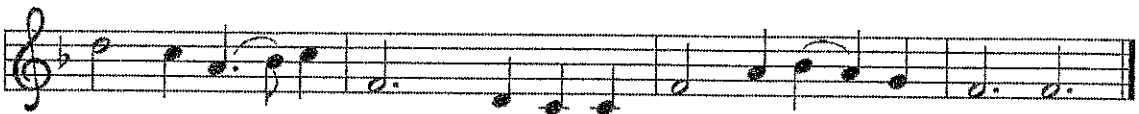
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,



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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

**Words of Institution**

**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**

Heaven has come near. Come, share in the feast!

**Distribution**

***\*Distribution of the Sacrament\****

*All who trust in Christ's word are welcome to the table of this holy supper,  
where our Lord is truly present, offering his gifts of forgiveness and eternal life.  
Please tell the server if you desire grape juice as an alternative to wine,  
or if you require a gluten-free wafer.*

*Please join in singing:*

***All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly*** #461

***Great Is Thy Faithfulness*** #733

**Prayer After Communion**

Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever.

**Amen.**

***SENDING***

**Blessing**

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, † one God,  
bless, heal, and hold you today and always.

**Amen.**

**Closing Song**

***Sent Forth By God's Blessing***

#547

**Dismissal**

Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

**Thanks be to God.**



