**pentecost 16- connection’s sunday**

**zion, philipsburg**

**GATHERING**

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND WELCOME**

Welcome to worship on this 16th Sunday after Pentecost, September 17, 2023. Today as a part of our 180th Anniversary celebrations we celebrate Connection’s Sunday. A service to say thank you and celebrate the legacy and connections that Zion has provided over the years.

Thank you to all who came out yesterday,, what a wonderful time of sharing and fellowship.

Announcements

Christmas Bazaar preparations have started. Remember to go through your closets for any new or used items you would like to donate. More info to come! While you are looking for items, please also look for any unneeded winter clothing items that are in good shape. We will be donating these to the Erb Street shelter. Winter coats, mitts, hats, jeans, sweatshirts, boots are needed. No summer items and all must be in gently used conditions. New socks and underwear are also accepted.

Oct 1 is our 180th Anniversary Celebration. Bishop Michael Pryse will preach. Please remind family and friends of this important event. Cake and fellowship will happen after.

Have you heard the news…..Zion’s Grand Ole Opry is back. Mark October 28th from 2-4 on your calendar. It is going to a pickin’ and a grinning good time!

Anything else?

**GATHERING SONG*God Is Here!* (ELW 526)**

1 God is here! As we your people  
meet to offer praise and prayer,  
may we find in fuller measure  
what it is in Christ we share.  
Here, as in the world around us,  
all our varied skills and arts  
wait the coming of the Spirit  
into open minds and hearts.  
  
2 Here are symbols to remind us  
of our lifelong need of grace;  
here are table, font, and pulpit;  
here the cross has central place.  
Here in honesty of preaching,  
here in silence, as in speech,  
here, in newness and renewal,  
God the Spirit comes to each.

3 Here our children find a welcome  
in the Shepherd's flock and fold;  
here as bread and wine are taken,  
Christ sustains us as of old.  
Here the servants of the Servant  
seek in worship to explore  
what it means in daily living  
to believe and to adore.  
  
4 Lord of all, of church and kingdom,  
in an age of change and doubt,  
keep us faithful to the gospel;  
help us work your purpose out.  
Here, in this day's dedication,  
all we have to give, receive;

we, who cannot live without you,  
we adore you! We believe!

**GREETING (ELW p. 203)**

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 p. 203)**

**CANTICLE OF PRAISE (ELW p. 204)**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW p. 205)**

*The presiding minister leads the prayer of the day.*

Let us pray.

*A brief silence is kept before the prayer.*

Holy God, you are the creator of the world, the living and loving vine grower producing the vine with its many branches. Generations throughout humankind have loved and served you. May we as your people continue to love as we are loved, so that the branches extend to all of the world in need of your love. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ the living vine in our lives, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Word**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**First Reading:****Genesis 1:26-29b**

A reading from Genesis.

26Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."  
 27So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them;  
   male and female he created them.  
28God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." 29God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm: Psalm 103:** **1-4, 13-18**

1Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.  
 **2Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all God's benefits—** 3who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases;  
 **4who redeems your life from the grave and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;** 13As a father has compassion for his children, so you have compassion for those who fear you, O Lord.  
 **14For you know well how we are formed; you remember that we are but dust.**  
 15As for mortals, their days are like the grass; they flourish like a flower of the field;  
 **16when the wind passes over it, it is gone, and its place shall know it no more.**  
 17But your steadfast love, O Lord, is forever with those who fear you,  
  and your righteousness is for the children's children;  
 **18for those who keep your covenant and remember to do your commandments.**

**Second Reading:****1 John 4:7, 16b-19**

A reading from 1 John.

7Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 16So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. 17Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. 18There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. 19We love because he first loved us.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation (ELW p. 205)**

**Alleluia! Lord and Savior: open now your saving word.**

**Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred.**

**Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.**

**Gospel:****John 15: 4-11**

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

4Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. 5I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. 6Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. 9As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. 10If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON (ELW p. 206)**

*The assembly is seated.*

*Silence for reflection follows the sermon.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY*O Christ the Same* (ELW 760)**

1 O Christ the same, through all our story's pages,  
our loves and hopes, our failures and our fears;  
eternal Lord, the king of all the ages,  
unchanging still amid the passing years:  
O living Word, the source of all creation,  
who spread the skies, and set the stars ablaze,  
O Christ the same, who wrought our whole salvation,  
we bring our thanks for all our yesterdays.  
  
2 O Christ the same, the friend of sinners, sharing  
our inmost thoughts, the secrets none can hide;  
still as of old upon your body bearing  
the marks of love, in triumph glorified:  
O Son of Man, who stooped for us from heaven,  
O Prince of life, in all your saving pow'r,  
O Christ the same, to whom our hearts are given,  
we bring our thanks for this the present hour.  
  
3 O Christ the same, secure within whose keeping  
our lives and loves, our days and years remain,  
our work and rest, our waking and our sleeping,  
our calm and storm, our pleasure and our pain:  
O Lord of love, for all our joys and sorrows,  
for all our hopes, when earth shall fade and flee,  
O Christ the same, beyond our brief tomorrows,  
we bring our thanks for all that is to be.

**CREED (ELW p. 206)**

**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 INTERCESSION**

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors. *A brief silence.*

We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and wildfires and healing to rivers clogged with pollution. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in positions of power to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, the disease of addiction, or otherwise afraid or in harm’s way. Protect all who cry out for mercy *especially* Sarah, Chris, John, Vivian, Edna, Felix, Gary, Erin, Zoli, Donna, John C, Debbie G, Deb S, Beatty, Nick, Elizabeth, Randy, the family of Stuart Little, and our members in Long Term Care, Robert, Evelyn and Rob, and those we name either out loud or in the silence of our hearts. (good pause). Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for this congregation and give thanks for the many connections of love over the years. Open our hearts to continue to practice intentional invitation so that we may continue to be God’s branches in the world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We give thanks for the saints who died in faith, especially Stuart Little. Show us how to live faithfully, creatively, and lovingly in your church and world Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

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.**

**PEACE (ELW p. 206)**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**MEAL**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

**OFFERING*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* ELW 885**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;  
praise God above, ye heav'nly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

**OFFERING PRAYER**

God of power, God of plenty, all things belong to you. We bring your gifts to the table, that all might be fed. Form us into the body of your Beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

**GREAT THANKSGIVING**

**DIALOGUE (ELW p. 206)**

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 (ELW p. 207)**

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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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 (ELW p. 207)**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,** **God of power and might, heav’n and earth are full of your glory.** **Hosanna in the highest.** **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest,** **hosanna in the highest.**

**THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE (ELW p. 207)**

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,

we await his coming in glory. Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,

and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

**LORD’S PRAYER (ELW p. 208)**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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 invites you to this table. Come, eat and live.

**COMMUNION (ELW p. 208)**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

**COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 208)- LAMB OF GOD**

**COMMUNION HYMNS- ELW 359, 661**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word,

Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food,

send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus’ name we pray. **Amen.**

**SENDING**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**BLESSING (ELW p. 209)**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

**SENDING SONG*God Be with You Till We Meet Again* (ELW 536)**

1 God be with you till we meet again;  
by good counsels guide, uphold you,  
with a shepherd's care enfold you;  
God be with you till we meet again.  
  
Refrain  
Till we meet, (till we meet,)  
till we meet, (till we meet again,)  
till we meet at Jesus' feet; (till we meet,)  
till we meet, (till we meet,)  
till we meet, (till we meet again.)  
God be with you till we meet again.  
  
2 God be with you till we meet again;  
holy wings securely hide you,  
daily manna still provide you;  
God be with you till we meet again. Refrain  
  
3 God be with you till we meet again;  
when life's perils thick confound you,  
put unfailing arms around you;  
God be with you till we meet again. Refrain

**DISMISSAL (ELW p. 209)**

Go in love and peace, knowing that Christ is with you.

**Thanks be to God.**

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