

# *St. Paul's Lutheran Church*

*Rally Sunday*

*Christian Education from the Cradle to the Grave*

*September 17, 2017*



*Rev. Arden Dorn, Transitional Minister*

*Rita Jordan, Organist*

*Shelley Gibbens, Lay Reader*

*408 S. Davidson Street | Karnes City, TX 78118*  
*Office (830) 780-2251    Pastor Dorn (602) 565-9793*  
*[www.StPaulsLutheranKC.org](http://www.StPaulsLutheranKC.org)*  
*[www.facebook.com/StPaulsLutheranKarnesCity](http://www.facebook.com/StPaulsLutheranKarnesCity)*

# Gathering

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

*In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.*

## PRELUDE      *Celebration*

*The assembly stands.*

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Let us worship God as children...**with wonder and awe.**  
Let us worship God as youth...**with questions and eager hearts.**  
Let us worship God as adults...**with gratitude and praise.**  
Let us worship God as elders...**with wisdom and hope.**  
**Let the Body of Christ sing praises to God, from whom all blessings flow.**

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the ✝ holy Trinity, the one who fashions us, the one who heals us, the one who reforms us again and again. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin, calling for God's transforming power.

*The assembly shall kneel as they are able.*

Source of all life,

**we confess that we have not allowed your grace to set us free. We fear that we are not good enough. We hear your word of love freely given to us, yet we expect others to earn it. We turn the church inward, rather than moving it outward. Forgive us. Stir us. Reform us to be a church powered by love, willing to speak for what is right, act for what is just, and seek the healing of your whole creation. Amen.**

God hears our cry and sends the Spirit to change us and to empower our lives in the world. Our sins are forgiven, ✝ God's love is unconditional, and we are raised up as God's people who will always be made new, in the name of Jesus Christ.

**Amen**

*The assembly stands.*

**GATHERING SONG      (ELW p. 661)      *I Love to Tell the Story***

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**O God, you have created us as human beings who mature from infancy, through childhood and adolescence into adulthood. Today we celebrate that growth. We lift up all who move this day into new classes for learning and spiritual growth. We pray for all who teach. We pray for all of our congregation's classes and groups in which we mature in faith. Keep each child and youth in your care. And keep us ever mindful of the promise we make each time we baptize another in faith: That we will assist them to grow in knowledge, in spiritual practices, and in living as disciples of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**Oh Dios, nos has creado como seres humanos que maduran desde la infancia, pasando por la niñez y la adolescencia hasta la adultez. Hoy celebramos ese crecimiento. Levantamos a todos los que se mueven este día a nuevas clases para el aprendizaje y el crecimiento espiritual. Oramos por todos los que enseñan nuestras clases. Oramos por todas las clases y grupos de nuestra congregación en los que maduramos en la fe. Mantenga a cada individuo a su cuidado. Y mantenernos siempre atentos a la promesa que hacemos cada vez que bautizamos a otro en la fe: que les ayudaremos a crecer en el conocimiento, en las prácticas espirituales, y en vivir como discípulos de Jesucristo. Amen.**

## A BLESSING FOR LEARNERS

Gracious God: **As we gather today, we remember our role as learners and seekers of the faith. We give thanks for all those — present or away — who support the teaching and learning that takes place through our congregation. Be with all — children, youth, and adults — who will be participating this year in our church school and Christian formation groups. Bless our times of study so that we may grow in faith. Bless our times of fellowship so that we may truly live as brothers and sisters in Christ. Bless our times of prayer and worship so that we may be enriched in our spirits. Amen.**

## Word

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

### FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21

*After Jacob's death, the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.*

**15** Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" **16** So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, **17** 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. **18** Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." **19** But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? **20** Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. **21** So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Word of God, word of Life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12**

*This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.*

**1** Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. **2** Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. **3** Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. **4** Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. **5** Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. **6** Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. **7** We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. **8** If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. **9** For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. **10** Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. **11** For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." **12** So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Word of God, word of Life.

**Thanks be to God.**

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lu-jah". It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Hal-le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah." The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

## THE HOLY GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel as found in: Matthew 18:21-35

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.*

**21** Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" **22** Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. **23** "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. **24** As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. **25** Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. **26** "At this the servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' **27** The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. **28** "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. **29** "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.' **30** "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. **31** When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. **32** "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. **33** Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' **34** In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. **35** "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ!**

*The assembly is seated.*

**SERMON**

**Rev. Arden Dorn**

*The assembly stands.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

**(ELW p. 677)**

***This Little Light of Mine***

## 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 INTERCESSION**

Open to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all of God's creation. Good and gracious God, we pray for the church. Bless the ministries of congregations in Karnes County, in Texas, in the United States and throughout the world. Unite us in the proclamation of your life-giving gospel. Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Creator God, you spoke light into being, you separated the waters, you formed the dry land. Protect and enliven the creation you so love, and make us willing partners in its care. Continue to guide leaders, volunteers and crews as they toil endlessly to remove debris, and restore and care for the areas of your land that were damaged during the recent natural disasters throughout our world. Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

God of the nations, you love all tribes, peoples, and languages. We pray for all who govern. Give them wise and generous hearts for those they serve. Work your Holy Spirit within all people in all countries that hearts may be filled with acceptance and compassion for one another. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Divine Healer, calm the anxiety of those who are wrongly accused, who suffer under crushing debt, or who are in prison, those that have lost loved ones, livelihood, homes and possessions during recent hurricanes, fires, mudslides or earthquakes. Reassure those who are lonely, impatient, brokenhearted, homebound, hospitalized, or ill especially Pauline, Shane, Linda, Norma, Ann, Lorene, Steve, Francis, Carol, Ella, Emil, Charles, Eli, Merlene, Beth, Steve, Hope, Tom, Jackie, Lawrence, Mary Ruth, Kyle, Cody, and Norma: meet their need by your bountiful compassion and our community's action. Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for this assembly; for our guests and visitors, for newcomers to this community, for those who are certain and those who doubt, and for all who seek you in this place. Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

God of humble service, strengthen the educational programs of our congregation, synod, and church wide ministries. Bless us as we use them to teach and care for ourselves and others in your name. In your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

God of life, we give thanks for the faithful of all the ages whose witness inspires us with your message of good news for all the world. In your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting the power of Christ and the gifts of the Spirit. **Amen.**

## SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*Peace is shared among the assembly, and then the assembly is seated.*

## Meal

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**OFFERING** An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

*The assembly stands.*

**OFFERING HYMN**

**(ELW p. 674)**

***Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ***

## OFFERING PRAYER

God of life, you give us these gifts of the earth,  
these resources of our life and our labor.  
Take them, offered in great thanksgiving,  
and use them to set a table that will heal the whole  
creation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Light.  
**Amen.**

Gott des Lebens, du gibst uns diese Gaben der  
Erde, diese Ressourcen unseres Lebens und  
unserer Arbeit. Nehmen Sie sie, angeboten in  
großer Danksagung, und benutze sie, um einen  
Tisch zu setzen, der die ganze Schöpfung heilen  
wird; durch Jesus Christus, unseren Erlöser und  
Licht. **Amen.**

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FROM CRADLE TO GRAVE

“What is Holy Communion, the Lord’s Supper, the Eucharist, the Mass?”

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

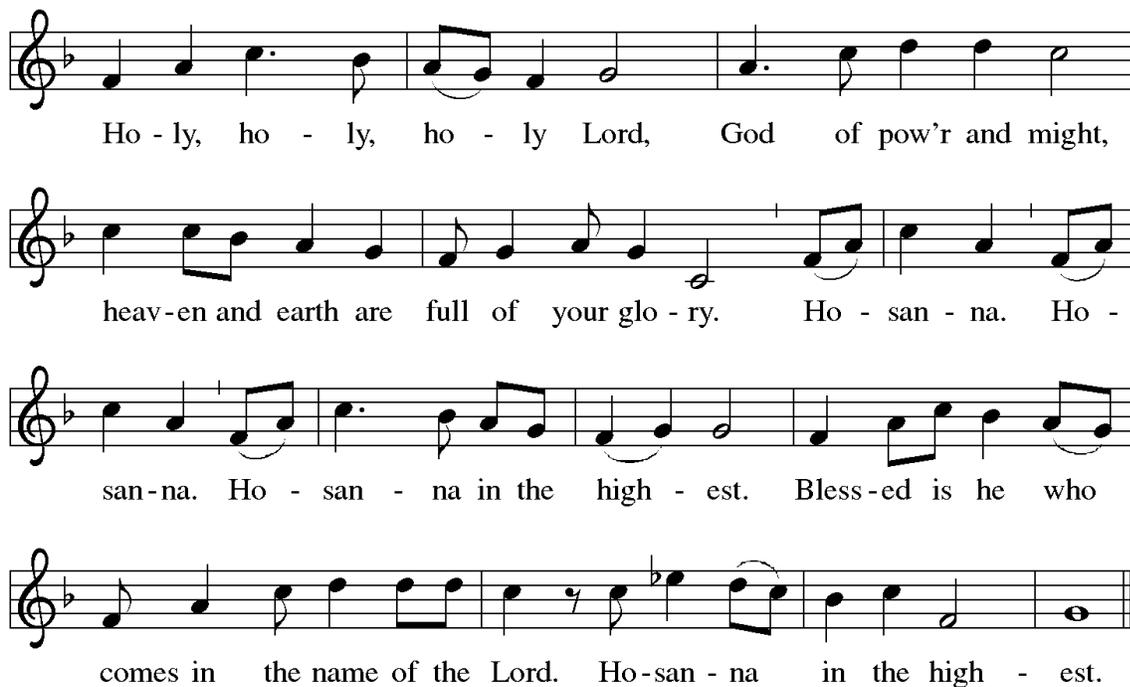
Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

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: our Good Samaritan, who tends the wounds of body and spirit with the oil of consolation and the wine of hope; the Sun of righteousness, who raises us to life on his healing wings. 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:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -  
san-na. 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.

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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.

## LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us: *(The assembly joins hands to pray)*

**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, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Speak to us, O Lord, in the breaking of the bread,  
and make us one with you.

*The assembly is seated.*

## DISTRIBUTION – All are WELCOME at the table of the Lord.

*This meal gives you strength for your journey of faith & life. Go forward as the body of Christ in your family, community and the world. Children or anyone choosing not to commune, but wishing to be blessed, may indicate this by folding their arms across their chest. Anyone who is unable to come forward may indicate to an usher that you wish to receive communion where you are seated.*

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the  
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

*Following Communion, the assembly stands.*

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy and compassionate God, in bread and wine you give us gifts that form us to be humble and courageous. May your words come to life in our serving and in our witness, that we might speak a living voice of healing and justice to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our rock and our redeemer. **Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

# Sending

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

*The assembly stands.*

## BLESSING

God, creator of all things, speaking reformation into being;  
Jesus Christ, savior of the world, raising the dead;  
Holy Spirit, living voice, calling and enlightening the church:  
Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,  
bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN (ELW p. 732) *Borning Cry*

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Sound the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

## DOXOLOGY (ELW p. 884) *Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow*

# Welcome!

We have all come to St. Paul's by different paths, and from various walks of life. Through worship, study, prayer and fellowship we each seek to deepen our faith, comfort and encourage one another and dedicate our lives more fully to sharing Christ in our homes, our community and the world. All are welcome at St. Paul's. We are eager to know you, and we invite you to get to know us.

**A Nursery** is located at the rear of the sanctuary in the overflow area.

**If you are unable to hear, require a bulletin, or need any other assistance**, please signal an usher.

# For Prayerful Consideration

### ***Ill or Injured***

Pauline Davidson, Shane Edens, Linda Franke, Norma Foreman, Ann Gary, Lorene Janek, Steve Kelly, Francis Kempe, Carol May Liberty, Ella Manka, Emil Manka, Charles Pierce, Eli Rios, Merlene Rippstein, Beth Schultz, Steve Scotten, Hope Segura, Tom Shockome, Jackie Tiemann, Lawrence Waltersdorf, Mary Ruth Witte, Kyle Worthy, Cody Zaiontz, and Norma Zamzow.

### ***For those in the military***

Nick Adams, Allen Bowles, Justin Chandler, Justin Elkins, Rodney Foreman, Jamaica Goodhue, Taylor Griffin, Jacob Jones, Felipe Leal, Jr., Garrett Peterson, Michael Rosales, James Skinner, Kassie Thompson, John Vasquez, and Delmiro Villanueva.

### ***Birthdays***

Robert Busselman (Sept. 18), Buddy Kerlick (Sept. 19), Rebecca Robinson (Sept. 23)

## LAY READERS FOR SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

Sept. 24: Sandra Dickens

Oct. 1: Dale Tessman

**FULL SIZE SHEETS AND ASSORTED FABRIC ARE NEEDED TO CONTINUE THE WORK OF THE QUILTING MINISTRY.** Contributions may be left in the Quilting Supply Room.

### Continued Help and Prayers for Hurricane Survivors

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Please continue to pray for those who lost much in the hurricanes. For those of you who created disaster kits, you can bring them to the synod office.

Don't forget you can text to give for our synod's relief at: text SWTXT to 73256 and follow the prompts. Checks can be mailed to the Synod Office with Hurricane Harvey in the memo field.



**ORGAN & PIANO DEDICATION, RECITAL AND RECEPTION: OCTOBER 22, 3:00 P.M.** Members are asked to bring cookies for the reception. They may be left in the church kitchen on the morning of the event.

### Youth Event at TLU Oct 21-22

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The Bulldog Youth Event 2017 at TLU is coming up Oct 21-22. High school and middle school youth are invited to join TLU's Campus Ministries' Team for an overnight experience of growing in discipleship: creative worship, explore meaningful small group Bible study, and build lasting friendships around our campfire. The weekend includes a Bulldog football game. All inclusive cost is \$35. Adults are welcome to stay or drop off their youth and pick them up the next day.

### Middle School Gathering at TLU Oct 20-22 at Chrysalis

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Attention middle schoolers: come to the gathering at Camp Chrysalis Oct 20-22.

Registration fees:

August 1 - October 6: Reg Fee is \$150

October 7-12: Reg Fee is \$180

Find out more information VISIT THE SYNOD WEBSITE: [www.SWTSynod.org](http://www.SWTSynod.org)

Contact Person: Chris St. Clair  
Gathering Coordinator  
[youth@triumphantlutheran.org](mailto:youth@triumphantlutheran.org)

