

***APOSTLES' LUTHERAN CHURCH***

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

4401 Black Horse Pike (Rt. 42) Turnersville, N.J. 08012

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Church Facebook Page: Apostles Corner

***The community of Apostles Lutheran Church warmly welcomes you to worship today!***

***As Lutheran Christians, we proclaim that there is nothing, no human action that we can undertake, to earn God's love or the gift of God's grace. It is a gift promised and given to us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Word of God made flesh. It is a gift given to everyone regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, or background. This Easter promise, this gift of grace, frees us from the fear of having to earn God's love and it moves us to simply try to love our neighbor as best we can. We have been blessed to be a blessing to others and proclaim that there is a place for you at Christ's table.***

***Welcome, celebrate this good news with us!***

***Pastor Peter Edwardsen***

**APOSTLES' LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**Service of Holy Communion**  
**The 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
**November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

*Our readings during November speak of the end times. Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the Lord will be filled with wrath and distress. Paul says that it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope – word, water, bread, and wine – eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.*

**Order of Confession and Forgiveness**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

P: Blessed be the Holy Trinity, + one God, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved.

**C: Amen.**

P: Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P: Holy One,

*We confess that we are not awake for you. We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering. We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others. We are not faithful in using your gifts. We forget the least of our siblings. We do not see your beautiful image in one another. For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and from our neighbor, forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path; in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.*

P: We are God's beloved children, and Jesus takes up his cross and opens the door for us. Through + the cross of Christ you are forgiven, by Christ you are welcomed, in Christ you are called to rejoice! Let us live in the promises prepared for us from the foundation of the world.

**All: Amen**

**Gloria**

***“Glory be to God in Heaven”***

*(pg. 204 ELW - Verse 1)*

***Glory be to God in heaven; peace, goodwill to all the earth.***

***Mighty God of all creation, Father of surpassing worth:***

***we exalt you, we adore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.***

***Saints and angels bow before you; here on earth our songs we raise.***

**Prayer of the Day**

P: The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray together the prayer for this day, November 19<sup>th</sup>, the 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost. We lift our voices praying:

***Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.***

***Amen.***

**Gathering Hymn: “O God, Our Help in Ages Past” #632 ELW**

***O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:***

***Under the shadow of your throne your saints have dwelt secure; sufficient is your arm alone, and our defense is sure.***

***Before the hills in order stood or earth received its frame, from everlasting you are God, to endless years the same.***

*A thousand ages in your sight are like an evening gone, short as the watch that ends  
the night before the rising sun.*

*Please be seated.*

## **WORD**

### **First Reading: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18.**

**7** Be silent before the Lord GOD, for the day of the LORD is at hand!

The LORD has prepared a sacrifice; he has consecrated his guests.

**12** At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people  
who settle like dregs in wine, those who say in their hearts,  
“The LORD will not do good, nor will he do harm.”

**13** Their wealth shall be plundered and their houses laid waste.

Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them;  
though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them.

**14** The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast;  
the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter; the warrior cries aloud there.

**15** That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish,  
a day of clouds and thick darkness,

**16** a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities  
and against the lofty battlements.

**17** I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind;  
because they have sinned against the LORD, their blood shall be poured out like dust  
and their flesh like dung.

**18** Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the LORD’s  
wrath: in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed, for a full, a terrible  
end, he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

**R:** The word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 90:1-12**

90:1 Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

**90:2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.**

90:3 You turn us back to dust, and say, "Turn back, you mortals."

**90:4 For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, or like a watch in the night.**

90:5 You sweep them away; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning;

**90:6 in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.**

90:7 For we are consumed by your anger; by your wrath we are overwhelmed.

**90:8 You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your countenance.**

90:9 For all our days pass away under your wrath; our years come to an end like a sigh.

**90:10 The days of our life are seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong; even then their span is only toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.**

90:11 Who considers the power of your anger? Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.

**90:12 So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.**

**Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11**

R: The word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

***Anthem: "I See God" / "For the Beauty of the Earth" by Murray Mencher.  
Performed by Apostles Choir and Phyllis Griffiths***

*Please rise, if you are able, for the Gospel reading.*

**Gospel Acclamation**

*Alleluia, alleluia.*

*Alleluia, alleluia.*

**Gospel: Matthew 25:14-30**

*Jesus tells a parable about his second coming, indicating that it is not sufficient to merely to maintain things as they are. Those who await his return should make good use of the gifts that God has provided them.*

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the twenty-fifth chapter.

**All: Glory to you O Lord.**

*After the reading*

P: Holy Wisdom, Holy Word, this is the Gospel of our Lord.

**All: Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon: *The Rev. Peter Edwardsen***

*Please rise if you are able.*

**Hymn of the Day: “Lord of Light” #688 ELW**

*Lord of light, your name outshining all the stars and suns of space,  
use our talents in your kingdom as the servants of your grace;  
use us to fulfill your purpose in the gift of Christ your Son.*

**Refrain: *Father, as in highest heaven, so on earth your will be done.***

*By the toil of faithful workers in some far outlying field,  
by the courage where the radiance of the cross is still revealed,  
by the victories of meekness, through reproach and suffering won: (Refrain)*

*Grant that knowledge, still increasing, at your feet may lowly kneel;  
with your grace our triumphs hallow, with your charity our zeal;*

*lift the nations from the shadows to the gladness of the sun: (Refrain)*

*By the prayers of faithful watchers, never silent day or night;  
by the cross of Jesus, bringing peace to all and healing light;  
by the love that passes knowledge, making all your children one: (Refrain)*

**Prayers and Concerns of the Community**

**“Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying” #752 ELW**

*(sung three times)*

*Lord, listen to your children praying. Lord, send your Spirit in this place;  
Lord, listen to your children praying, send us love, send us pow’r, send us grace.*

D: Let us turn our hearts to God, our breath and life, as we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence*

D: Gracious God, you give talents and gifts to all your people, and you equip the church to serve. Turn us from fear and self-serving ways, that we use our talents to glorify you and encourage our neighbor. Hear us, O God.

**All: Your mercy is great.**

*Deacon or worship assistant continues with the prayers of intercession.*

D: We offer our spoken prayers and those held in our hearts trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord

**All: Amen.**

**Sharing of the Peace of the Lord Jesus Christ**

**Offering**

P: God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your

very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant.  
**All: Amen.**

**Offertory music: “Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful Lord” #184 ELW**

*Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of blessing. Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life. Gather the hopes and dreams of all; unite them with the prayers we offer. Grace our table with your presence, and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.*

**Offertory prayer:**

D: 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.  
**All: Amen**

**The Meal**

**The Great Thanksgiving:**

P: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

*Preface: 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:*

(#193 ELW)

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow’r and might, heaven 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.  
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. Amen, amen, amen.*

**Eucharistic Prayer:**

P: 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 salutary command, his life giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension, and the promise of his coming again, we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty, not as we ought but as we are able; we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants, and these your own gifts of bread and wine, so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace, and receiving the forgiveness of sin, may be formed to life as your holy people and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever. **Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer:**

P: And now let us pray as our Lord Jesus has taught us.

**All: 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.**

**Lamb of God (Agnus Dei)**  
**(#194 ELW)**

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.*

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis.*

*(Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.)*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.*

**Invitation to Communion**

P: There is a place for you at the banquet. Come and feast at the table of Christ.

C: Thanks be to God!

**Communion Hymn: "I Am the Bread of Life" #485 ELW**

*"I am the Bread of life. You who come to me shall not hunger,  
and who believe in me shall not thirst. No one can come to me unless the Father  
beckons."*

*Refrain: "And I will raise you up, and I will raise you up, and I will raise you up on  
the last day."*

*"The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world,  
and if you eat of this bread, you shall live forever, you shall live forever." (Refrain)*

*"Unless you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man  
and drink of his blood, and drink of his blood, you shall not have life within you."  
(Refrain)*

*"I am the resurrection, I am the life.  
If you believe in me, even though you die, you shall live forever." (Refrain)*

*Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ,  
the Son of God, who have come into the world. (Refrain)*

*After all have received communion the community stands and sings three times:*

*Jesus, remember me,  
when you come into your Kingdom.*

### **Table Blessing**

P: May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep in you in his grace, now and forever. **C: Amen.**

### **Canticle: “Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise” 207 ELW**

*Thankful hearts and voices raise; tell ev’ryone what God has done. Let ev’ryone who seeks the Lord rejoice and bear the name of Christ. Send us with your promises and lead your people forth in joy with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia.*

### **Post Communion Prayer**

P: Lord Jesus, in this simple meal you have set for us a banquet. Sustain us on our journey, strengthen us to care for all of your beloved children, and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you along the way. **C: Amen.**

## **THE SENDING**

### **Blessing**

P: May the God of all creation, in whose image we are made, who claims us as beloved children, who strengthens us for service to one another, gives us reason to rejoice and be glad! The blessing of God, + Sovereign, Savior, and Spirit, be with you today and always. **All: Amen.**

### **Sending Hymn: “Lead On, O King Eternal” #805 ELW**

*Lead on, O King eternal! The day of march has come; henceforth in fields of conquest your tents will be our home. Through days of preparation your grace has made us strong; and now, O King eternal, we lift our battle song.*

*Lead on, O King eternal, till sin's fierce war shall cease, and holiness shall whisper the sweet amen of peace; for not with swords loud clashing, nor roll of stirring drums, but deeds of love and mercy the heav'nly kingdom comes.*

*Lead on, O King eternal: we follow, not with fears, for gladness breaks like morning*

*where'er your face appears. Your cross is lifted o'er us; we journey in its light; the crown awaits the conquest; lead on, O God of might!*

**Dismissal**

*P: God's purpose for the church is to witness to God's grace, forgiveness, compassion, and justice. We fulfill this promise by serving and caring for your local and global communities.*

***The flowers on the altar are given by Tammie & Ken Kennedy,***



***in Loving Memory of Mom and Dad.***

**Today's Altar Volunteers:**

***Deacon: David S., Acolyte: Nicole G.,  
Greeter: Barb S., Usher: Carol B.,  
Readers: Laura E., David S.  
Set Up: Carol B., Clean Up: Barb S.***

**November 26<sup>th</sup> Altar Volunteers:**  
G.,

***Deacon: David S., Acolyte: Nicole***

***Greeter: Sylvia D., Usher: Stephanie M.,  
Readers: Eleanor B., David S.,  
Set Up & Clean Up: Tracy D.***

**\*\*\*The Fellowship Dinner is today following the Worship Service.\*\*\***

**November 21<sup>st</sup>:**  
Tuesday, due to the

**Food Closet, 1-3pm. (Please note this is a**

**Thanksgiving holiday.)**

**December 4<sup>th</sup>: Council Meeting, 6pm.**

**December 7<sup>th</sup>: Grief Share, 10:30 am. All are welcome.**

**Don't forget to check your information in the "Directory Draft" that is on the table in the Narthex, and make corrections as needed. Thank you.**

**October 2023 Financial Update**  
**Year to Date Giving: \$104,810.76**

**Year to Date Expenses: \$113,663.60**

**Shortfall: \$8,852.84**

*(For more information, please see Gene Abel or Joan Tartamosa)*

- **If you wish to bring snacks for the Sunday Coffee Fellowship, there is a signup sheet in the Narthex.**
- **The Vanco system for online giving can be found on the Apostles' website. Any questions, please see Frank or Nick. Thank you.**
- **We are collecting the following: Linens--towels, sheets, and blankets. Medical supplies-- Alcohol wipes, infusion set-ups, tubing, syringes, etc. Also, dog food, empty ink cartridges of all types, and pull tabs from aluminum cans for dialysis credits.**

Beloved of God, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

*C: Thanks be to God!*