

St. Paul's Lutheran Church – Crossroads (ELCA)

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**Sunday, June 24, 2018
Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
Holy Communion**

Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation! Now we are in the storm, the boat almost swamped; but Jesus is here now, and when we call him he will calm the storm. Even the wind and waves listen to him as they would to their creator. We also listen to him and are called to believe in the power of God's word in him, a power greater than all that we fear.



LET YOUR GUARD DOWN,
LET GOD IN,
BE AMONG FRIENDS

WELCOME . . .

We are privileged to have you as our guest in the Lord's house this morning. We pray that the time you share with us will be meaningful for you and that God will bless you through it. If you have a question that is not answered here, please don't hesitate to ask someone around you.

Registry: Please take time to complete the registry/attendance sheet found in the pew in the black folder at the center aisle. It is important to us that we know who is worshipping with us today. Thank you.

Worship: This booklet is our order of worship for today. Hymns are found in the "Evangelical Lutheran Worship" hymnals located in the racks on the back of the pew in front of you. Everything else is printed in this booklet.

Our worship includes **Holy Communion**. As Christians in the Lutheran heritage, we believe that our Lord Jesus is physically present "in, with, and under" the bread and wine we receive. However, if you believe that Jesus' body and blood were given and shed for you for the forgiveness of your sins, you are welcome to commune with us, regardless of your faith background. A white grape juice is available at the center of the tray for those who do not wish to receive wine.

If you desire to receive communion but are unable to come forward to the communion rail, inform the usher of such and communion will be brought to you.

. . . WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

Ministers:	The people of St. Paul's Lutheran Church - Crossroads
Pastor:	Pastor Creighton
Greeters:	Curt and Michelle Wehr
Accompanist:	Kathy Westerfeld
Acolytes:	Luke Meyer and Macy Young
Assisting Minister:	Debbie Mack
Communion Assistant:	Quinn Rasnick
Sound System:	Jordan Meyer
Offering Counters:	Gary Westerfeld and Dennis Westerfeld
Altar Committee:	Ethel Ollier

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, full of compassion and mercy, abounding in steadfast love.

Amen.

Trusting God's promise of forgiveness,
let us confess our sin against God and one another.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Eternal God our creator,
in you we live and move and have our being. Look upon us, your children, the work of your hands. Forgive us all our offenses, and cleanse us from proud thoughts and empty desires. By your grace draw us near to you, our refuge and our strength; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us. In the mercy of almighty God, Christ died for us while we still were sinners; and for his sake, God ☩ forgives you all your sins.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN: *Eternal Father, Strong to Save*

ELW 756

GREETING

The presiding minister and assembly greet one another.

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.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Lead by the assisting minister

Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the rock of our salvation!

Let us come before him with thanksgiving, and extol him with music and song!

For the Lord is a great God, and a great king above all gods.

In his hand are the depths of the earth; and the mountain peaks belong to him.

The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.

Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our maker!

For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the flock under his care.

Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the rock of our salvation!

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

ELW p. 139

A canticle of praise may be sung by all.

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

♪ Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

The presiding minister leads the prayer of the day.

Let us pray.

O God of creation, eternal majesty, you preside over land and sea, sunshine and storm. By your strength pilot us, by your power preserve us, by your wisdom instruct us, and by your hand protect us, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

YOUTH GATHERING SENDING

FIRST READING: Job 38:1-11

A reading from the thirty-eighth chapter of Job.

¹The LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind:

²“Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?

³Gird up your loins like a man,

I will question you, and you shall declare to me.

⁴“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell me, if you have understanding.

⁵Who determined its measurements—surely you know!

Or who stretched the line upon it?

⁶On what were its bases sunk,

or who laid its cornerstone

⁷when the morning stars sang together

and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?

⁸“Or who shut in the sea with doors

when it burst out from the womb?—

⁹when I made the clouds its garment,

and thick darkness its swaddling band,

¹⁰and prescribed bounds for it,

and set bars and doors,

¹¹and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther,

and here shall your proud waves be stopped?’”

PSALM: Psalm 107:1-3, 23-32

The psalm is read responsively by verse.

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good,

for God’s mercy endures forever.

²**Let the redeemed of the LORD proclaim**

that God redeemed them from the hand of the foe,

³gathering them in from the lands;
from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

²³**Some went down to the sea in ships,
plying their trade in deep waters.**

²⁴They beheld the works of the LORD,
God's wonderful works in the deep.

²⁵**Then God spoke, and a stormy wind arose,
which tossed high the waves of the sea.**

²⁶They mounted up to the heavens and descended to the depths;
their souls melted away in their peril.

²⁷They staggered and reeled like drunkards,
and all their skill was of no avail.

²⁸Then in their trouble they cried to the LORD,
and you delivered them from their distress.

²⁹**You stilled the storm to a whisper
and silenced the waves of the sea.**

³⁰Then were they glad when it grew calm,
when you guided them to the harbor they desired.

³¹**Let them give thanks to you, LORD, for your steadfast love
and your wonderful works for all people.**

³²Let them exalt you in the assembly of the people;
in the council of the elders, let them sing hallelujah!

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

Paul and his fellow workers experience great hardships and even rejection while carrying out their missionary work. Nevertheless, Paul continuously proclaims that God has not rejected us but is graciously working for our salvation.

A reading from the sixth chapter of 2 Corinthians.

¹As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ²For he says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! ³We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, ⁷truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

¹¹We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. ¹²There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. ¹³In return—I speak as to children—open wide your hearts also.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands to acclaim the gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW p. 142

♪Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Mark 4:35-41

Jesus' calming of the storm on the sea reveals his power over evil, since the sea represents evil and chaos. The boat on the sea is a symbol of the church and invites us to trust God amid life's turbulence.

The holy gospel according to St. Mark, the fourth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

³⁵When evening had come, Jesus said to the disciples, "Let us go across to the other side." ³⁶And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. ³⁷A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. ³⁸But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" ³⁹He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. ⁴⁰He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" ⁴¹And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song.

HYMN OF THE DAY:

Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters

ELW 445 verses 1 - 2

Candidates for baptism, sponsors, and parents gather with the ministers at the font. The assembly is seated.

PRESENTATION AND PROMISES FOR HOLY BAPTISM

The presiding minister may address the assembly in these or similar words:

God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.

The presiding minister addresses parents:

Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have your children baptized into Christ?

Parents: I do.

As you bring your children to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:

to live with them among God's faithful people,
bring them to the word of God and the holy supper,
teach them the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments,
place in their hands the holy scriptures,
and nurture them in faith and prayer,
so that your children may learn to trust God,
proclaim Christ through word and deed,
care for others and the world God made,
and work for justice and peace.

Do you promise to help your children grow in the Christian faith and life?

Parents: I do.

The presiding minister addresses sponsors:

Sponsors, do you promise to nurture these persons in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, and to help him live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

Sponsors: I do.

The presiding minister addresses the assembly:

People of God, do you promise to support *Allan/Ian* and pray for them in their new life in Christ?

We do.

The assembly stands.

PROFESSION OF FAITH (congregation joins in the profession)

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

P. Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

C. I renounce them.

P. Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

C. I renounce them.

P. Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

C. I renounce them.

(The Congregation joins in the creed)

P. Do you believe in God the Father?

C. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

P. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

C. 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 into hell. 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.

P. Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

C. 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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE FONT

P. The Lord be with you.

C. **And also with you.**

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

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

P. We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that those who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C. **Amen.**

The assembly is seated

BAPTISM

P. *Allan/Ian*, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C. **Amen.**

P. Blessed be God, the source of all life, the word of salvation, the spirit of mercy.

C. **You belong to Christ, in whom you have been baptized. Alleluia.**

P. Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your daughters and sons new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life.

Sustain *Allan/Ian* with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

C. **Amen.**

P. *Allan/Ian*, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.

C. **Amen.**

WELCOME

P. Jesus said, I am the light of the world.

Whoever follows me will have the light of life.

Allan/Ian, let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

The assembly stands

P. Let us welcome the newly baptized.

C. **We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.**

INTRODUCTION

“Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters”

Verse 3

ELW 445

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The assisting minister leads the assembly in prayer.

Growing in faith and discipleship, we give thanks for God's merciful compassion as we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Empowering God, you call your church to boldly proclaim your day of salvation. Bring unity to the faithful and provide opportunities for collaboration as we bring your good news to the world. Let the youth of our churches hear your love for them as they gather in Houston this coming week. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Creating God, you call forth life from the swirling waters of chaos, and you pour out water that nourishes the earth. Send forth ample rain for crops to flourish. Speak peace wherever homes, towns, businesses, and lands are damaged by hurricanes, floods, and tropical storms. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Powerful God, come to the aid of all nations and leaders who fear storms of conflict, violence, or injustice. Raise up advocates and peacemakers to speak truth and hope into the world. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Saving God, grant endurance and comfort to all who suffer affliction, hardship, hunger, violence, or sleepless nights of pain or anxiety. Give your promise of healing to all who long for salvation, especially those listed in the bulletin and prayer book, and those we name aloud or in our hearts at this time. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Covenant God, you call us by name and claim us as your own. We pray for those who prepare for baptism, those who have recently been baptized, and

all who are called by baptism into lives of proclamation and service. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Eternal God, we give thanks for all the saints who have commended themselves to you in every way and who have endured in faith, especially John the Baptist. Bring us at last to the acceptable time of salvation for all creation. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray and all for whom we have forgotten or neglected to pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

PEACE

The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ.

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.

The assembly is seated.

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. After the offering is gathered, the assembly stands as the gifts are brought forward.

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right
spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take
not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-store to me the joy of
your sal - va - tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir - it.

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one flat) and 7/8 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics placed below the notes. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second staff continues the melody. The third staff has a repeat sign at the beginning of the second measure. The fourth staff ends with a double bar line.

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923
Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

OFFERING PRAYER

After the table is set, the assisting minister leads a prayer.

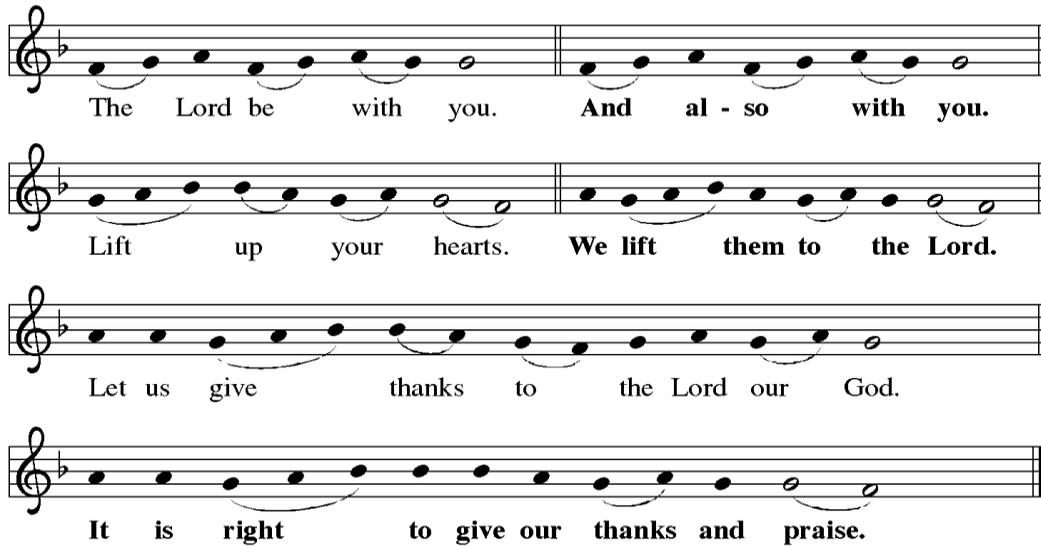
Let us pray together.

Merciful God,
you open wide your hand and satisfy the need of every living thing. You have set this feast before us. Open our hands to receive it. Open our hearts to embrace it. Open our lives to live it. We pray this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

DIALOGUE

ELW p. 144

The presiding minister greets the assembly and invites all present to give thanks.



The Lord be with you. And al - so 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 right, our duty and our joy, ...
... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW p. 144

♪ Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

The presiding minister continues.

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God,
You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory.

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.

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

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

The presiding minister addresses the assembly in invitation.

The assembly is seated.

All are welcome at Christ's table! If you are a visitor and receive communion at your home church, you are invited to do so here. Everyone is invited to receive communion or a blessing.

COMMUNION SONG

ELW p. 146

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

COMMUNION

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and each person may respond

Amen.

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

After Holy Communion has been distributed, the assembly stands and the presiding minister may say:

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:

The assisting minister leads the assembly in prayer after communion.

Let us pray.

Jesus Christ, host of this meal, you have given us not only this bread and cup, but your very self, that we may feast on your great love. Filled again by these signs of your grace, may we hunger for your reign of justice, may we thirst for your way of peace, for you are Lord forevermore. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING SONG: *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*

ELW 632

DISMISSAL

The assisting minister may address the assembly.

Go in peace. The Spirit sends us forth to serve.

**We are a family of believers who meet to:
enjoy life together
worship and learn about God
make a difference in the world.**

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

+++++

We remember in Prayer:

Carol Bergman	Daniel Narwold	Cole Nuhring
Angela Siebert	Mikayla Siebert	Todd Siebert
Sarajane Wilson	Art and Karen Salvitti	Marlin and Julia Siebert

Mike Trenkamp (Tim Mack’s brother-in-law)
 Travis Wenning (son of former BHS Ag teacher)
 Ruth Booster (wife of former pastor)
 Melody Briner (Marilyn Gausman’s daughter)
 Zach Briner (Marilyn Gausman’s relative)
 Lois Bastien Brown (Tim Salvitti’s grandmother-in-law)
 Marie Dierckman (Ginny Low’s mother)
 Louise Eads (Michelle Wehr’s grandmother)
 Bonnie Haughn (Sabrina Salvitti Haughn’s mother-in-law)
 Leonard (husband of Lisa Gausman’s friend)
 George Lerosé (Art Salvitti's brother-in-law)
 Tessa Mayer (wife of Wanda Siebert’s principal)
 Bekah Netherton (daughter of Debbie Mack’s friend)
 Ronnie Nicholson (Darrell's brother)
 Barry Norman (Lisa Gausman’s former principal)
 Carol Rayve and Ron Price (Karen Salvitti's mother and friend)
 Ted Rayve (Karen Salvitti’s brother)
 Beverly Richardson (Laura Nicholson’s mother)
 Kristina Salvitti (Art’s daughter)
 Gary Schopmeyer (friend of Anita and Bob Krieger)
 Charlie Seibert (friend of Anita and Bob Krieger)
 John Ward (Eunice Sisson’s brother-in-law)
 Jasmine Westerfeld (Sharon Brown’s great-granddaughter)
 Melinda Wilson (wife of Ben Wilson)

anyone affected by natural disasters, warfare and violence
 all who serve in the military

Honored Members:

Paul Gausman Allen and Mary Lou Narwold Bill Westerfeld

Our members at St. Andrew's: Julia Siebert Ruth Thackery

Our Partner Churches: United Theological College of West Indies, Jamaica and St. Thomas Lutheran Church, Brookville

Today:

On this beautiful summer day, we turn our eyes to Jesus and bow our hearts before him. **Welcome to worship!**

This morning we welcome into our church family Allan and Ian Westerfeld-Rosales through the Rite of **Baptism**. They are the children of Steven and Maria Westerfeld-Rosales. Allan's sponsors are Zach and Amanda Westerfeld, and Ian's are Juan and Jose Rosales. Jeff and Darla Westerfeld are the proud grandparents and Gene and Jenny Westerfeld are the great-grandparents.

Please stay for **fellowship** in the Fellowship Room after worship this morning. Spend some time catching up with the events in each other's lives.

There are **new devotionals** in the narthex. There are regular and large print, as well as youth/family ones.

The **July newsletter** is available in the narthex today. Please take yours – and any for your family – as you leave this morning.

Pastor Creighton will be attending the Youth Gathering in Houston from Tuesday thru next Sunday. If you are in need of pastoral care, please contact Ginny Lows at 812-934-5024.

This Week:

Office Hours – Monday	10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Thursday	1:00 – 4:00 PM
Pr. Creighton’s office hours –	
Monday–Thursday	8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Tuesday –

SEIC Clergy meeting	10:00 AM
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Sunday -

Sunday Worship	9:00 AM
Fellowship	10:00 AM

Upcoming Events / Announcements:

Please **check the bulletin board** for a variety of programs being offered to our youth and the adults serving youth in our community.

Handbags for Hope Auction and Luncheon to benefit Safe Passage will be August 11th. They are looking for gently used or new handbags. We will collect those until July 29. If you would like to make a monetary donation to this event, make checks payable to Safe Passage. See the bulletin board for more information on how you can support this community ministry.

The Southeast IN Conference is sponsoring a **fellowship outing** on August 26th: A Night of Worship following the Florence Freedom baseball team’s game. There is more information on the bulletin board concerning times and cost. Registration is due by August 8th.

Art Salvitti is working to keep our **church’s website** updated with current worship information and events. To help this stay current, Art would like pictures and information about our happenings. Please see the newsletter for more information, and how to submit materials. Thanks for your assistance with this project.

Who, Then, Is This? Our Only Help.

As the disciples set out together in the boat with the sleeping Jesus, a great windstorm arose so that the boat became swamped. As we set out in mission together in the ship of Christ's church, how many storms arise! The elements of chaos still seem to wreak havoc in our lives, communities, and in the church—and we become terrified. Though Christ is present the disciples and we ourselves begin to doubt his care and power: “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” His presence seems far too weak to help us, though it is exactly in this vulnerable weakness that Christ shows his almighty power. Jesus wakes at the disciples' cries and rebukes the wind and waves—they are no match for his command. The terrifying calm that follows demonstrates his divine power over all the chaos that continually threatens us. And we find ourselves awe-struck before the living God who has met us in our weakness and yet overcome it. The Christ who sleeps in the boat is the same Christ who hangs on the cross, seemingly helpless. Yet the helpless one is none other than the all-powerful Lord God. “Who then is this?” but the Lord of all! The God who in the beginning brought order to the chaotic face of the deep now in Christ brings peace as we face the storm. So why are we afraid? Have we still no faith in this helpless Lord who is our only help?

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