

Service of Holy Communion

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 27, 2026



INTRODUCTION

Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

GATHERING

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

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

P. Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

P. Let us confess our sin to God.

The congregation sits or kneels. Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God, **we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Hear this good news: We have peace with God through ☩ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Freely receive this healing gift of grace. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

God Is Here!

ELW 526

THE GREETING

P. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C. And also with you.

KYRIE

A. In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

A. For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

A. For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

A. For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

A. Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C. Amen

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise God, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711, alt.

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P. God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings.

Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Congregation is seated

WORD

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

¹ The word of the LORD came to me: ² What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? ³ As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴ Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins who shall die.

²⁵ Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶ When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed, they shall die. ²⁷ Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸ Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰ Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹ Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

A. Word of God, word of life.

C. Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 25:1-9 *(read responsively)*

¹ To you, O LORD,
I lift up my soul.

² **My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

³ Let none who look to you be put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

⁴ **Show me your ways, O LORD,
and teach me your paths.**

⁵ Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted
all the day long.

⁶ **Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.**

⁷ Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the
sake of your goodness, O LORD.

⁸ **You are gracious and upright, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

⁹ You lead the lowly in justice
and teach the lowly your way.

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1-13

¹ If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love,
any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and
sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having
the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing
from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard
others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to
your own interests but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same
mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a human,

⁸ he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of
death—even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly
and gave him the name
that is above every other name,

¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me,
not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work
on your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who
is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his
good pleasure.

A. Word of God, word of life.

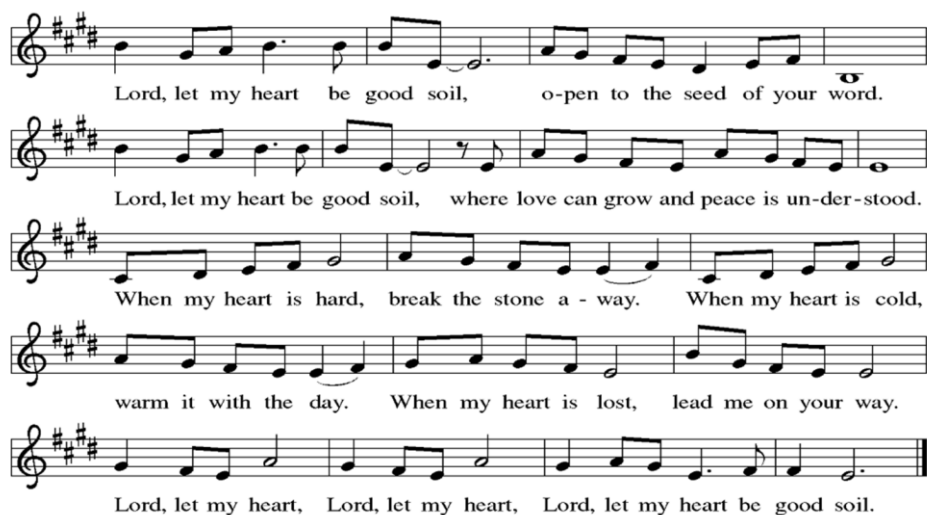
C. Thanks be to God.

A TIME FOR THE CHILD IN US ALL

*Children & Youth are invited forward for a special sermon time
with Pastor Peggy.*

Congregation stands

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,

warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32

P. The holy gospel according to Matthew. **C. Glory to you, O Lord.**

²³ When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴ Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why, then, did you not believe him?' ²⁶ But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸ "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹ He answered, 'I will not,' but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him."

P. The gospel of the Lord. **C. Praise to you, O Christ.**

Congregation is seated

SERMON

Teaching Us

Congregation stands

HYMN OF THE DAY

Take, Oh Take Me as I Am

ELW 814

sing 5x through

APOSTLE'S 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 CHURCH

A. Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

A brief silence.

A. Center your church in humility as we strive to follow in your way. Help us listen to the cries of those who have been unfairly hurt by the church and dare to name difficult truths. Show all your love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A. You call us to care for your creation. Lead us into your promise of a better world through sustainable practices and respect for your handiwork. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A. Inspire all in positions of authority to act honorably. Remind them of their call to use their authority for the sake of the common good. Give them the gift of humility. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A. Comfort those who come before you in fear and trembling. Calm troubled hearts with your forgiveness. Help all those in need, especially... those we name aloud... and those we hold in our hearts... Grant us your salvation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A. Change this congregation's heart when we say no to your call. Open us to courageous learning and service in our community, especially in new or challenging places. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A. Your steadfast love holds all the saints who have finished their work and are at rest. As we grieve, remind us of your mercy so we may also give thanks. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

P. Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P. The Peace of Christ be with you always.

C. And also with you.

P. Let us share with each other a sign of Christ's peace.

Congregation is seated

CHOIR ANTHEM

The Love of God

Lehman, arr Allen

MEAL

OFFERTORY INVITATION

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via Venmo ↓



Offering can be given by putting it in the offering plate when it is passed, online directly via the QR codes for Tithely or Venmo, or by requesting your bank to send a check to the church. Find more details on our website.

Thank you for your generous gifts!

Scan to give
via Tithely ↓



Congregation stands

OFFERTORY SONG

Refrain

As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread; so may all your peo-ple from
all the ends of earth be gath-ered in - to one in you.
1 As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst,
Refrain
may we share the pres - ence of your love.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A. Let us pray...God of creation, you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. **Amen.**

DIALOGUE & PREFACE OF THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

P. The Lord be with you.

C. And also with you.

P. Lift up your hearts.

C. We lift them to the Lord.

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

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

P. It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. 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: *(Sing 2x—English 1st time; Spanish 2nd time)*



San - to, san - to, san - to, mi co - ra - zón te a - do - ra.
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, my heart, my heart a - dores you.



Mi co - ra - zón te sa - be de-cir: San - to e-res Se - ñor.
My heart is glad to say the words: You are ho - ly, God.

Text: Argentine traditional

Music: ARGENTINE SANTO, Argentine traditional

Congregation is seated

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P. Holy God, our Bread of life, our Table, and our Food, you created a world in which all might be satisfied by your abundance.

You dined with Abraham and Sarah, promising them life, and fed your people Israel with manna from heaven. You sent your Son to eat with sinners and to become food for the world.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, 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 life given for us and his rising from the grave, we await his coming again to share with us the everlasting feast.

By your Spirit nurture and sustain us with this meal: strengthen us to serve all in hunger and want, and by this bread and cup make of us the body of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty God, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen.**

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

Believing in the real presence of Christ, we practice Eucharistic hospitality. All baptized persons are welcome to Communion this morning. Please come forward, guided by the Ushers, to receive the bread and wine. Children are invited to the table for a blessing.

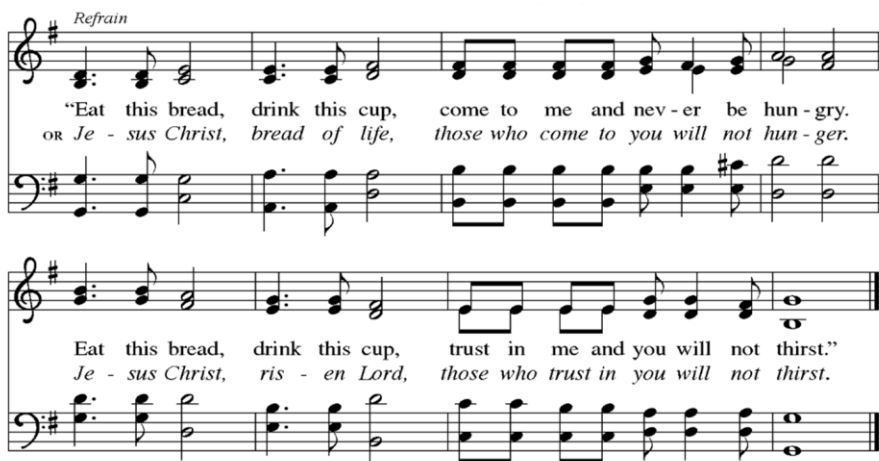
Gluten free and traditional wafers are available, please note this to Pastor Peggy when you come up. The bread is dairy and egg free. Grape juice is available in the second communion plate. As you return to your seat via the side aisles you can place your empty cup in the baskets on either side.

P. Christ invites you to this table.

All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

COMMUNION SONG

Refrain



“Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and nev - er be hun - gry.
or Je - sus Christ, bread of life, those who come to you will not hun - ger.

Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst.”
Je - sus Christ, ris - en Lord, those who trust in you will not thirst.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

After all have received Communion the congregation stands.

TABLE BLESSING

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

SONG AFTER COMMUNION



Thank-ful hearts and voic - es raise; tell ev-'ry-one what God has done.

Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and bear Christ's ho - ly name.

Send us with your prom-is - es and lead your peo-ple forth in joy with

shouts of thanks-giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A. Let us pray...Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

SENDING

BENEDICTION

P. The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind, in the body of Christ Jesus. **Amen.** The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit. **Amen.** The God of grace ☩ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me
ACS 1084 (*printed in back*)

DISMISSAL

A. Go out in joy! Be led forth in peace.
C. Thanks be to God.

Announcements for September 27, 2026

Welcome to Holy Counselor Lutheran Church. May you experience the joy of God’s presence in our worship!

*If today is your **first time** worshipping at Holy Counselor, please be sure to fill out the “Guest Book” on the table in the narthex and **take a welcome bag**. Please ask our ushers any questions you may have regarding worship this morning. **Large print bulletins are available.***

*The **Pray-ground** is a special place to help **support kids and families** in worshipping. We love the sound of kids in worship! God made kids wiggly and curious, and we celebrate that here. **Tips:** explain, participate, and move around together. Need to leave? No problem, but please come back!*

Worship is live streamed** to our church Facebook page, but the camera is pointed away during Communion and is not on the children when they come forward during A Time for the Child in Us All. **Anyone on the altar is on camera.

~~~~~  
***Altar flowers are in honor of Sam Dupont’s birthday,  
from Emilie Dupont***  
~~~~~

Volunteers for Today’s Worship

Lay Asst.	Dawn McCormick
Ushers	Diane Rossi & Jeanne Vonessen
Comm. Asst.	Volunteer needed
Tech	Fred Schoenagel
Tellers	Volunteer needed
Refreshments	Volunteer needed

Volunteers Scheduled for Next Sunday

Lay Asst.	Pam Kucks
Ushers	-----

******* Join us for refreshments after worship*******

THIS WEEK AT HOLY COUNSELOR

Sunday, September 27: Sunday School, 8:45-9:15am

Worship w/Communion, 9:30am

Choir Rehearsal following worship

Monday, September 28: Council Meeting, 6:30pm

Tuesday, September 29: Pastor's Comm. Office Hours, Café Dolci

Franklin, 12:30-2:30pm

Wednesday, September 30: Adult Ed, [Zoom](#), 10:00am

Saturday, October 3: Sisters in Prayer, [Zoom](#), 8:30am

Sunday, October 4: Sunday School, 8:45-9:15am

Worship w/Communion, 9:30am

Choir Rehearsal following worship

Stop the Bleed & AED Training, 11am

Pastor's Community Office Hours: Pastor Peggy will be at Café Dolci in Franklin, **THIS Tuesday, September 29th from 12:30-2:30pm** for Community Office Hours. All are welcome to visit as she is present in the community.

Pampered Chef Fundraiser: Pam has organized a Pampered Chef fundraiser for the church. You are welcome to **order** any products through this link: www.pamperedchef.com/party/pamkucks0914 **by September 27th** and the church will earn the proceeds, plus the Kucks family will be matching any funds. Connect with Pam for more details.

Bring-A-Friend Sunday: Start inviting your friends now to join you for worship **NEXT Sunday, October 4th!** We are excited to add this event to our 2026 calendar. **Everyone who brings a friend** will get a raffle ticket into drawings for gift cards to local spots in town. Let's show others how wonderful Holy Counselor is and how God's love shines. The more the merrier!

Stop The Bleed & AED Training: After worship **NEXT Sunday, October 4th from 11am-12:30pm** we will have an AED training and Stop the Bleed class led by Claire Speroni's husband, Dale. He has been an EMT in Vernon for over 12 years and is graciously volunteering his time to offer this training for us. All are welcome, however **anyone who regularly cooks at church, works with kids, or is an active leader in the**

congregation (ushers, council members, etc.) is highly encouraged to attend. Let's help keep everyone safe and healthy together!

Blessing of the Animals: Our annual Blessing of the Animals will be **Tuesday, October 6th at 6pm on the church front lawn.** Invite anyone with a pet! Please bring your leashed or crated pet, or their picture for a blessing. **All are welcome** to join us for this brief gathering, even if you don't have an animal but want to spread God's love through pets and smiles.

Cluster-wide Mental Health Study: Our cluster-wide study series resumes this fall with 4 sessions called: **Mental Health & Radical Hospitality.** The group will meet on **Zoom from 7-8pm on Thursdays, October 8th-29th.** All are welcome to participate. Reach out to Pastor Peggy with any questions.

New Member Inquiry Class: Pastor Peggy will be offering a New Members Inquiry class **Sunday, October 11th after worship at 11am.** **Anyone interested** in learning more about the church, how we work, and what we do is invited to attend. After attending the class, you can decide if joining as a member is right for you at this time. For those who are interested in being members we will pick a date to welcome all new members in worship on a Sunday. Please **let Pastor Peggy know by 10/4,** if you are interested in the class even if you can't attend (pastorpeggy@hc-lutheranchurch.org).

Church Road Clean-up: As part of the Clean Communities Project, the Vernon Twp DPW will pay HCLC to pick up garbage on Sand Hill and McPeck roads. **Volunteer** to help with the Road Cleanup on **Sunday, October 18th from 11am-2pm** (any time available during those hours is appreciated). Please see Diane Rossi if you are available to help!

Auction of the Gifts & Oktoberfest Dinner: **Do you have a special gift or talent?** Maybe you sew, organize well, or are a talented photographer. Or maybe you love to cook, have a vacation house to lend, or have another idea altogether! It is time to start thinking and share your gift for the Auction of the Gifts & Oktoberfest Dinner Fundraiser on **Saturday, October 24th from 5-8pm.** **Here's how it works:** you donate your gift and then the item is auctioned off to the highest bidder while we all enjoy dinner, community, and laughter. **Come to dinner** and have

a fun evening regardless of if you're bidding or not. Contact Diane Rossi to donate your gifts today!

Trick or Trail: We will be **hosting a church table** at Vernon's Halloween Trick or Trail at Maple Grange on **Friday, October 30th**. Set up is between 2pm-3:30pm and the last group comes through at 7pm, with clean up at 8pm. If you'd like to **help with set up and/or dressing up and handing out popcorn** please email Pastor Peggy. We are also looking for **6 large boxes of microwave popcorn** to be **donated**. Please bring your popcorn donation to church by Sunday, October 18th and place it in the church office.

RaiseRight Gift Cards for Shopping/Gifts/Holidays: As you are preparing gifts for the upcoming holidays, we want to remind you of our ongoing program RaiseRight! You can **purchase gift cards** to be sent to others **as gifts** or you can get gifts cards **for the places you are buying from** during this season. As well as for anytime you shop all year long! There are **2 ways to get cards:** You can do this **via the RaiseRight app** on your phone or via the order forms with a selection of cards that can be ordered through HCLC. The **Raiseright book is in the Narthex**. Share the forms with your family and friends too. **It works by** simply buying gift cards to stores where you already shop, you get the full value, and then the church gets a percentage back. **Download the RaiseRight app** & link to the church with **enrollment code:** 53EB2E84IL3275 – our RaiseRight ID number. Speak with John Heeren for more information.

Food Pantry: Food items to help restock: 4-pack toilet paper, canned tuna, canned chili, canned corn, canned soup, canned green beans, canned fruit, mac & cheese, boxed potatoes, tuna helper, peanut butter, jelly, children's juice boxes or pouches, kid's snacks, toothpaste, shampoo. You can always bring donations of canned goods, paper goods, and hygiene products. All donations can be **placed in the blue bin** by the sanctuary doors. Thank you!

God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me

O Christ, Surround Me



1 God, be the love to search and keep me; God, be the prayer to
2 Bind to my-self the name of Ho - ly, great cloud of wit - ness -
3 Bright-ness of sun and glow of moon-light, flash - ing of light - ning,
4 Walk - ing be-hind to hem my jour - ney, go - ing a - head to
5 Christ in the eyes of all who see me, Christ in the ears that



move my voice; God, be the strength to now up - hold me:
es en - fold; proph - ets, a - pos - tles, an - gels wit - ness:
strength of wind, depth of the sea to soil of plan - et:
light my way, and from be - neath, a - bove, and all ways:
hear my voice, Christ in the hearts of all who know me:



O Christ, sur - round me; O Christ, sur - round me.

Text: Richard Bruxvoort Colligan, b. 1967

Music: GREEN TYLER, Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

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MISSION STATEMENT

As Children of God, we are called to share and serve Christ's love and bring God's word to all.

CHURCH COUNCIL

Pastor Rev. Peggy Ludlow

President Nancy Knecht

Vice President Frank Urbaniak

Treasurer Claire Speroni

Recording Secretary Dawn McCormick

Financial Secretary John Heeren

Outreach Coordinator Francine Vince

Nurture Coordinator Fred Schoenagel

Administration Coordinator Diane Rossi

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Kristina Heeren

Pam Kucks

Matt Moller

Aileen Donovan

Land Acknowledgement: *Holy Counselor is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Munsee people, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.*

