

HOSPITALITY + WORSHIP + SPIRITUAL GROWTH + JUSTICE + COMMUNITY CARE



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Gathering Sunday

September 12, 2021

10:30 AM Service of Communion

Luther Place Memorial Church

1226 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20005 ♦ (202) 667-1377 ♦ www.lutherplace.org

Our Purpose

God's purpose for our congregation is to grow a Christ-centered inclusive community, led by the Spirit, that proclaims the Gospel's transforming love and grace and challenges injustice.

Our Guiding Principles

1. All of God's creation is sacred.
2. We listen to the Holy Spirit through worship, Scripture, and prayerful reflection.
3. We seek continuous transformation to become radically hospitable.
4. We invite all into the journey with Christ through reconciliation with each other and God.
5. We respond to injustice through loving service and courageous action.
6. We walk together in our celebrations and our struggles.

Our Vision

Luther Place will be a community that looks and feels like God's kin-dom in its beautiful expansiveness, where all are called into relationship with Jesus Christ and one another. In this place we will use our gifts to act in the world and build the beloved community.

Worship attracts and gathers a range of people with various services and styles, engaging the community in a depth of practices and creative endeavors.

Spiritual Growth is how we are formed as disciples of Jesus Christ, embracing scripture and all opportunities to engage the divine, and nurturing us to contemplate, study, and question our faith.

Justice is a public witness to our faith; we will continue our history of openness to what arrives, standing in solidarity and acting with people who are struggling in our community, country, and world.

Hospitality is how we—each of us—extend God's kin-dom to a dynamic and diverse city, growing our community and engaging all of God's children, from the powerless to the powerful.

Community Care is how we sustain a vibrant community, our intentional practice of supporting and nurturing one another in all stages of life, in celebration and sorrow.

Welcome to worship at Luther Place!

Are you a guest? If so, here are some things you might like to know...

Please fill out a card to let us know who you are—we'd love to be in touch with you! The cards can be placed in the offering plate when completed. We are blessed by your presence and hope you will join us again. For questions about the congregation please email Pastor Karen Brau at seniorpastor@lutherplace.org

We'd love to stay connected with you this week. The easiest way to do that is by following us on social media. You're welcome to take out your phones right now and follow us on Facebook and Instagram. We also love hearing from you and this is a great way to keep up the conversation.

Please fill out a contact tracing card to help us keep each other safe. **In the event of a positive COVID diagnosis within 3 days of attending an in-person Luther Place event, please notify Pastor Karen or Justin Fitch as soon as possible. Your personal-identifying information will not be shared beyond Pastor Karen or Justin, but your notification is necessary to activate Luther Place's contact tracing protocol.**

At this time, we are not able to offer parking validation. Additionally, we reserve the parking spots in the circle driveway on Vermont Ave. for use by those with accessibility needs and their drivers. We encourage the use of public transportation; free bike parking is available inside the Vermont entrance to Luther Place.

A children's nursery is available before, during, and after worship. The nursery is located within the chapel by the entrance on N Street. There is a baby changing area in the nursery.

Each service is livestreamed to Facebook at www.facebook.com/lutherplace/live

Everyone is to be masked and remain physically distanced

A digital copy of the bulletin can be found at our website: www.lutherplace.org

Congregational singing is prohibited at this time, based on current recommendations from the CDC and other public health institutions. Dancing, clapping, and other forms of body percussion are encouraged.

We encourage socializing outdoors, where it is much safer to do so

Throughout the service, the bold print is for congregational response.

P= pastor; A= assisting minister; C= congregation.

References to God in some prayers and hymns may be gender specific. As we pray and sing together, you are invited to substitute terms that reflect a more expansive understanding of God. You are also invited to sing hymns or speak parts of the services, such as The Lord's Prayer, in your native tongue.* **In these places in worship, we invite you to take a reverent position. That may be standing or sitting. We hope you will chose a posture that allows you to worship as an individual and as part of the community.**

GATHERING

Prelude

**Liza Johnson, piano
Justin Fitch, organ
Jacob Nordman, trumpet**

***Welcome and Call to Worship:**

P: We gather as God's beloved children –

C: However glad we are, however out of sorts we are.

P: We come together as a people whom Jesus calls into community –

C: So this becomes a place where all are welcome.

P: We have come to give thanks, to pray, to be with each other –

C: Let us worship God.

***Confession:**

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose teaching is life,
whose presence is sure, and whose love is endless.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sins to the one who welcomes us with an open heart.

Silence...

God our comforter,

C: like lost sheep, we have gone astray.

We gaze upon abundance and see scarcity.

We turn our faces away from injustice and oppression.

We exploit the earth with our apathy and greed.

Free us from our sin, gracious God.

Listen when we call out to you for help.

Lead us by your love to love our neighbors as ourselves.

P: Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven,
you are fed and nourished.

By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough.

Through Jesus, † the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy:
you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.

C: Amen.

A LITURGY FOR HEALING AND MOVING FORWARD

P: We have each been affected by this pandemic in different ways. Let us now take an opportunity to name and grieve the emotional, physical and spiritual toll this past year has taken, not for the purpose of moving backward or dwelling on the pain, but instead for the purpose of being honest and authentic with ourselves and one another. I pray that in acknowledging and grieving our losses, we might create room in our hearts for hope, creativity, joy and ingenuity. As we light these candles, may we recognize our companionship in our sadness, find comfort in our solidarity and feel empowered to live into this next chapter with faith and hope.

ELW 528 Come and Fill Our Hearts

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Candle 1 — Physical Losses

Reading from Psalm 69

A: Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in the miry depths, where there is no foothold. I have come into the deep waters; the floods engulf me. I am worn out calling for help; my throat is parched. My eyes fail, looking for my God.

P: We are worn out calling for help after experiencing vast physical losses. Over **653,000** Americans and over **4.55 million** people worldwide have died of COVID-19. Numerous others have survived but are dealing with the lingering side effects. We also recognize the exhaustion of our essential workers, who have spent extra hours and sleepless nights caring and protecting us. In this time of silence, I invite us to name, aloud or silently, the physical losses we have experienced.

Candle 2 — Emotional Losses

Reading from Psalm 6

A: Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am faint; heal me, Lord, for my bones are in agony. My soul is in deep anguish. How long, Lord, how long?

P: How long, O Lord? How long can those with mental health challenges and substance use disorders remain disconnected from the sources of support and recovery? How long can we live under the stress of uncertainty, anxiety and fear?

In this time of silence, I invite us to name, aloud or silently, the losses we have experienced related to our emotional well-being and sense of balance.

Candle 3 — Spiritual Losses

Reading from Psalm 13

A: How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?

P: For some of us, God has felt absent. Away from our community of faith, our Christian sharing groups, our hymn singing and our holiday rituals, we feel adrift and long for spiritual centeredness. In this time of silence, I invite us to name, aloud or silently, the losses we have experienced related to our spiritual centeredness, our connections with our faith community and our relationships with God.

Candle 4 — Financial Losses

Reading from Psalm 130

A: Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord;
Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.

P: We ask for mercy as we see the ongoing impact of this pandemic on small businesses, for those who have been let go from their jobs and those whose hours have been cut. We ask for mercy for those who have not been able to find work. In this time of silence, I invite us to name, aloud or silently, the losses we have experienced related to our financial stability, our professional identity or our professional aspirations.

Candle 5 — Interpersonal Losses

Reading from Psalm 25

A: Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. Relieve the troubles of my heart and free me from my anguish.

P: Family gatherings, graduations, weddings, funerals, visits with friends — we have missed it all. We grieve the disruption to sporting events, family visits, annual

trips or vacations, and even the too long, but wonderful, youth recitals. And for those who experience domestic, physical or emotional abuse or hostility, these months of quarantine have been suffocating and dangerous. In this time of silence, I invite us to name, aloud or silently, the interpersonal and relational losses we have experienced.

Candle 6 — Hidden Blessings

Reading from Psalm 30

A: Lord my God, I called to you for help,
and you healed me. You, Lord, brought me up from the realm of the dead;
you spared me from going down to the pit.

Weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning. You turned
my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.

P: As we light our final candle, I invite us to consider those hidden blessings —
those new discoveries and practices we hope to bring with us post-pandemic, the
ways we have grown and those things we have learned. In this time of silence, I
invite us to name, aloud or silently, the ways in which we have grown or the new
awareness and appreciation we have discovered.

Let us say together: **Amen.**

***Gospel Acclamation: ELW 174 Celtic Alleluia**

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WORD

***HOLY GOSPEL**

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

P: The Holy Gospel according to Mark

C: Glory to you, O Lord

²⁷Jesus went on with the disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the
way Jesus asked the disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” ²⁸And they
answered, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the
prophets.” ²⁹Jesus asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered,
“You are the Messiah.” ³⁰And Jesus sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about
him.

³¹Then Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²Jesus said all this quite openly. And Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at the disciples, Jesus rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

³⁴Jesus called the crowd with the disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of the Creator with the holy angels.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you, O Christ

Noticing

Sermon

Rev. Karen Brau

Hymn of the Day: Give Me Jesus

arr. Molly Ijames

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*Prayers of the People

Whether we meet in assembly or worship from our homes, we join together in prayer for the world. Today, in response to each bid, you are invited to offer your own prayers, silently or aloud, and to conclude each petition with an echo of today’s psalm, “Abide with us.”

We pray for the church of Jesus Christ around the world and for wisdom concerning church traditions...

Hear our prayers, O God; **abide with us.**

We pray for the pastor and staff of our congregation... Hear our prayers, O God; **abide with us.**

We pray for the well-being of the created earth and for a halt to wildfires...
Hear our prayers, O God; **abide with us.**

We pray for peace throughout the world and for nations experiencing adversity of any kind... Hear our prayers, O God; **abide with us.**

We pray for our elected leaders and for an end to prejudices...
Hear our prayers, O God; **abide with us.**

On this 20th anniversary, we remember those who died on 9/11. We ask God to continue to be with us in our grieving, and may God plant peace in our hearts, in our communities, and in our world. Hear our prayers, O God; **abide with us.**

We pray for schools and Sunday schools, the students and teachers...
Hear our prayers, O God; **abide with us.**

We pray for those facing the coronavirus...
Hear our prayers, O God; **abide with us.**

We pray for orphans, widows, and widowers...
Hear our prayers, O God; **abide with us.**

We pray for all who are sick or suffering...
Hear our prayers, O God; **abide with us.**

We pray for those we name here before you...
Hear our prayers, O God; **abide with us.**

We give thanks for all the faithful departed,
and we pray that at the end we join them in your presence forever.
Hear our prayers, O God; **abide with us.**

P: O God, in your mercy receive these prayers,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, master Teacher, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

Exchange of Peace

Announcements

Please subscribe to our eNews at lutherplace.org/calendar-news or [click here](#) to view our full list of announcements.

Offering

You can donate by texting the dollar amount to +12028166673, clicking [this link](#), scanning the QR code, or using the offering plate near the altar.

We are inviting you to give financially, out of your heart and love for God.

Our giving is a spiritual practice as part of our faith and discipleship.



Mission of the Moment: Movement Support

*Offering Prayer

A: God of abundance,
you cause streams to break forth in the desert
and manna to rain from the heavens.

Accept the gifts you have first given us.
Unite them with the offering of our lives
to nourish the world you love so dearly;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

MEAL

*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...

Sanctus:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Thanksgiving at the Table

In the night before Christ died for us,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, Jesus 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.

God of manna, pour out your Holy Spirit on us, and on this meal.
Let these elements be for us the body and blood of Christ
so that we may be for the world the body of Christ,
liberated by Jesus' witness, passion, and life.
Be with us, Holy Spirit, fill us so you can move through us.

C: Amen

***The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Creator in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kin-dom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kin-dom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.
Amen.**

***Agnus Dei: ELW Setting Six**

Distribution

Communion (Eucharist) celebrated at Luther Place is open to all. The ushers will direct you to receive individual packets of the elements from the altar. We offer wine, juice, and gluten-free options. Return to your seat, and then we will all commune together.

Communion:

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Prayer after Communion

Lord of life,

in the gift of your body and blood

you turn the crumbs of our faith into a feast of salvation.

Send us forth into the world with shouts of joy,

bearing witness to the abundance of your love

in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

***Table Blessing**

P: People of God,

you are Christ's body,

bringing new life to a suffering world.

The holy Trinity, ✠ one God,

bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

SENDING

Sending Song: We've Come This Far by Faith

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Dismissal

A This is the day that God has made; **C: we will rejoice and be glad in it.**

A: We will not offer to God **C: offerings that cost us nothing.**

A: Go in peace to love and serve; **C: we will seek peace and pursue it.**

A: In the name of the Trinity of Love, **C: God in community, holy and one.**

Postlude: Toccata on Amazing Grace

J. Christopher Pardini

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Assisting Minister: Jackson Droney