

“Is there a God
besides Me?
Indeed there is
no other Rock;
I know not one.”

Isaiah 44:8



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As We Gather

In our fast-paced lives, it's easy to feel adrift, as if we are caught in the middle of a story with no clear beginning and an uncertain end. We often search for something solid to hold onto—a sense of purpose or a guarantee that everything will be alright. Where do we turn when the middle of our story feels chaotic or incomplete? Today, we are invited to lift our eyes to the One who is both our origin and our destination. We find comfort not in our own fleeting understanding, but in the enduring nature of the One who holds it all. As we prepare our hearts for worship, we reflect on the certainty found in "The God of the Bookends (And Everything in Between)."

✠ Preparation for Worship ✠

Hymn

26 (1-2, 4, 6) – Praise the Almighty, My Soul, Adore Him

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Opening Sentences

Isaiah 44:6, Psalm 90:1-2, Revelation 1:8

P Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:

C "I am the First and I am the Last; besides Me there is no God."

P Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.

C Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

P "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord,

C "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Confession and Absolution

P Beloved in the Lord! Our God is the God of the beginning and the end. Though He established the earth's foundations and holds our eternal future, we confess that we often forget He is also the God of everything in between. Amidst present trials and uncertainties, we doubt His care. We act as if there is another rock to build upon, relying on ourselves or the world instead of trusting solely in Him. Let us therefore draw near to our God, confessing our sins and seeking His forgiveness in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- C** O Almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess to You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. I have forgotten Your steadfast love. I have let the anxieties of this present time overshadow the hope of the glory You have promised. I have sought security in things that fade, rather than in You, the everlasting Rock. For these and all my sins, I am truly sorry and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.
- P** Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office as a called servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you, and in the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

✠ The Service of the Word ✠

Glory be to the Father

Gloria Patri

- P** In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.



Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son

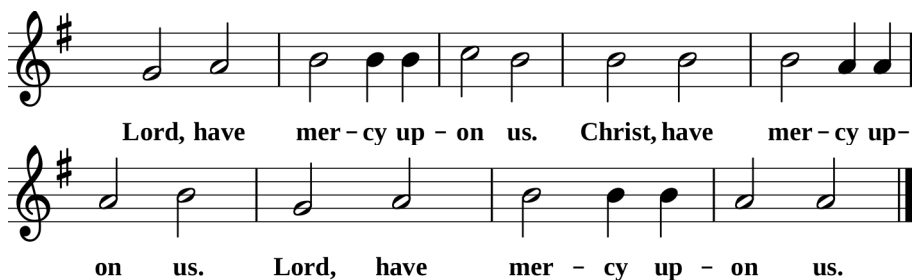
and to the Ho - ly Ghost; As it was in the be-ginning,

is now, and ev-er shall be for - ev-er more. A - men.



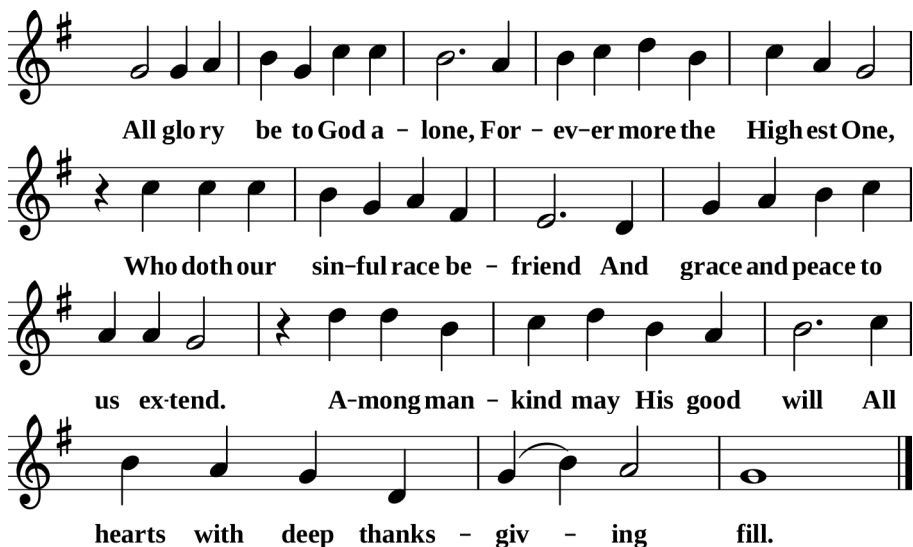
Lord, Have Mercy

Kyrie



Glory to God in the Highest

Gloria in Excelsis – 238 (1)



Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray...

... who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Epistle Reading

Romans 8:18-27

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; ²¹ because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³ Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. ²⁴ For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. ²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷ Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 119:57-64

- P** You are my portion, O LORD;
- C** I have said that I would keep Your words.
- P** I entreated Your favor with my whole heart;
- C** Be merciful to me according to Your word.
- P** I thought about my ways,
- C** And turned my feet to Your testimonies.
- P** I made haste, and did not delay
- C** To keep Your commandments.
- P** The cords of the wicked have bound me,
- C** But I have not forgotten Your law.
- P** At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You,
- C** Because of Your righteous judgments.
- P** I am a companion of all who fear You,
- C** And of those who keep Your precepts.
- P** The earth, O LORD, is full of Your mercy;
- C** Teach me Your statutes.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

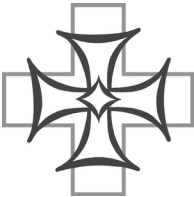
²⁴ Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. ²⁶ But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. ²⁷ So the servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ ²⁸ He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said to him, ‘Do you want us then to go and gather them up?’ ²⁹ But he said, ‘No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, “First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.” ’ ’ ’ ³⁶ Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.” ³⁷ He answered and said to them: “He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. ³⁹ The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. ⁴⁰ Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, ⁴² and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Alleluia

P Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it.



Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia!



Confession of Faith

Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, His 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. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn

518 (1-3, 7) – If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee

Sermon Text

Isaiah 44:6-8

⁶ “Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God. ⁷ And who can proclaim as I do? Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me, Since I appointed the ancient people. And the things that are coming and shall come, Let them show these to them. ⁸ Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.’ ”

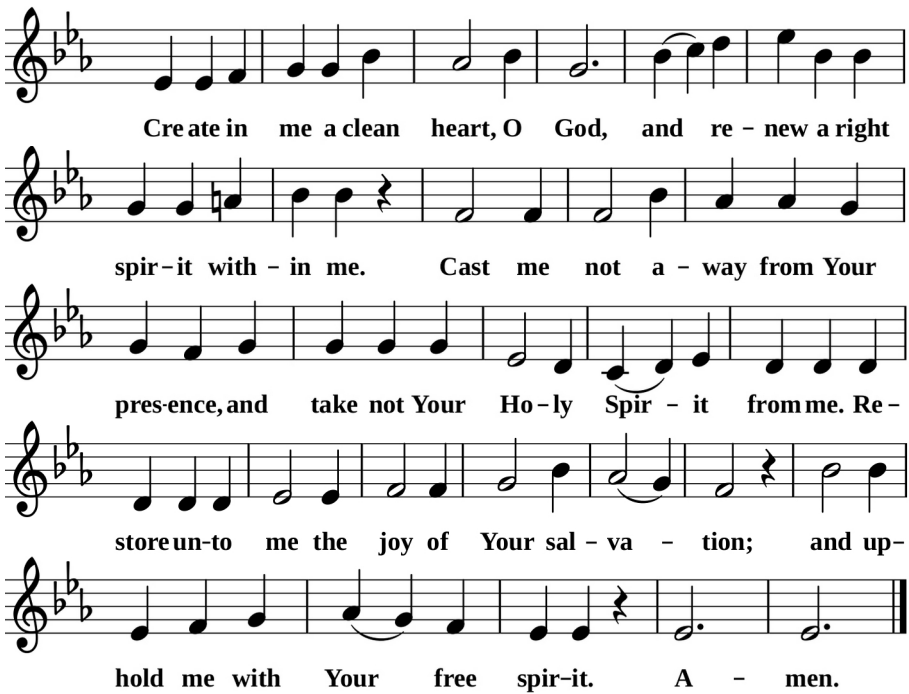


Sermon

The God of the Bookends (And Everything in Between)



Offertory

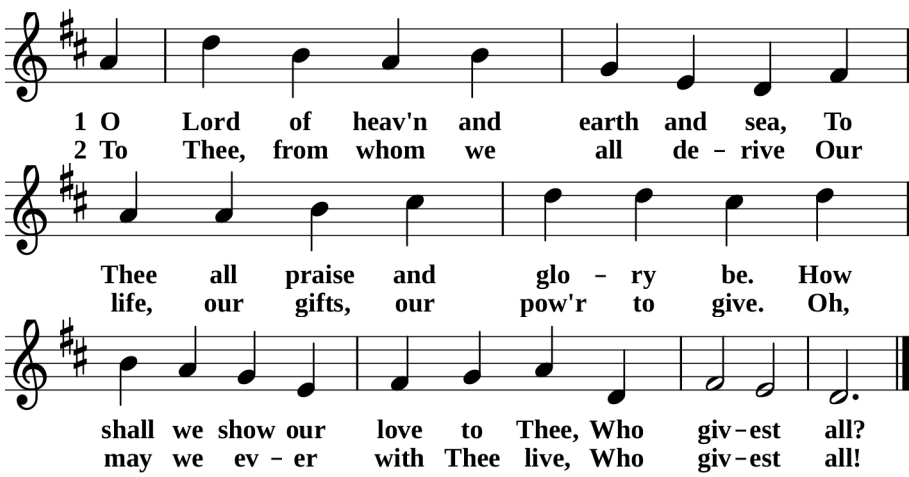


Create in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir-it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from Your
pres-ence, and take not Your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -
store un-to me the joy of Your sal - va - tion; and up -
hold me with Your free spir-it. A - men.

Hymn 29 – Through All the Changing Scenes of Life

Offering

Offering Hymn 443 (1, 8)



1 O Lord of heav'n and earth and sea, To
2 To Thee, from whom we all de - rive Our
Thee all praise and glo - ry be. How
life, our gifts, our pow'r to give. Oh,
shall we show our love to Thee, Who giv-est all?
may we ev - er with Thee live, Who giv-est all!

General Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

C 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.

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.
C Amen.

Hymn 427 (1-4, 7) – How Firm a Foundation, Ye Saints of the Lord

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✝ Announcements ✝

Upcoming Schedule – winterhavenlutheran.com/church-calendar

July 19	9:15 am	Bible Class
	10:15 am	Worship Service
July 20-24	9:00 am	Vacation Bible School
July 26	8:00 am	Worship Service (Orlando)
	10:15 am	Worship Service (Winter Haven)
August 2	9:15 am	Bible Class
	10:15 am	Worship Service w/ Holy Communion
	11:30 am	Church Council/Education/Elders

Upcoming Meetings: Here is a schedule of our upcoming meetings:

- **August 2** – Church Council/Education/Elders
- **September 6** – Trustees
- **October 4** – Church Council

In Our Prayers: Please keep our shut-in members in your prayers: Don Beymer, Bob & Joan Doriot, Johanna Jaehnigen, Elsie Kleinschmidt, Shirley Rosenberry, and Mike Sheffield.

Looking Forward to Next Sunday: Do you ever feel defeated by the trials of this world? Are you overwhelmed by anxiety, illness, or the relentless attacks of the devil? Often, we feel like anything but conquerors. Our daily experience seems to suggest the very opposite of victory. Yet, God's Word assures us that in Christ, we are overwhelmingly victorious! Next Sunday, we will dig deeply into the comforting promise of Romans 8:28-39. We will explore the truth that "all things work together for good to those who love God." Our sermon theme will remind us that despite our earthly struggles, we are indeed "More Than Conquerors" through Him who loved us. Come and be strengthened by the certainty of God's unshakeable love in Christ Jesus!

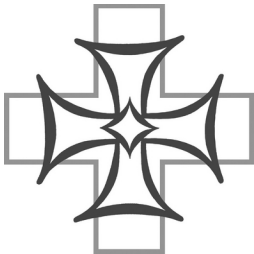
Vacation Bible School Takes Flight Tomorrow: Our "Soaring High!" Vacation Bible School kicks off this week, July 20–24, from 9:00 am to 11:30 am each day! Over the next five days, children ages 4–12 will hop in the hot air balloon basket as they explore new destinations and learn that Jesus is our best treasure and the only way to heaven.

Please keep our dedicated volunteers, and all the attending children in your prayers this week. Pray that their mornings will be blessed with engaging Christ-centered Bible lessons, creative crafts, active games, and joyful singing!

2026 CLC Mission Helpers to Africa: Eleven Mission Helpers, along with Missionary Bruce and Paula Naumann, are currently proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ to an estimated 6,000 children in Kenya, Tanzania, and Zambia. You can follow along through the trip blog at www.2026clcmissionhelpertripeastafrica.blogspot.com. Your prayers are requested and much appreciated.

CLC Call News: Pastor Joe Naumann of Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church, Mankato, MN has returned the call to Holy Cross Ev. Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ <> Pastor Johnathan Schnose of Bethel Ev. Lutheran Church, Morris, MN, has returned the call to St. Luke’s Ev. Lutheran Church, Lemmon, SD. <> Pastor Johnathan Schnose has also returned the call to Gift of God Lutheran Church, Mapleton, ND, and St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Ponsford, MN.

Fruits of Faith		July 12, 2026	Attendance: WH – 28 ORL – 13	
<u>Immanuel Lutheran Church</u>			<u>Church of the Lutheran Confession</u>	
<i>General Budget</i>			<i>General Budget</i>	
\$2,907.00	General Budget		\$25.00	CLC General Budget
\$1,362.00	Weekly Need		\$67.31	Weekly Need
+\$1,545.00	-Under / +Over		-\$42.31	-Under / +Over
\$37,639.97	Year to Date Offerings		\$1,265.00	Year to Date Offerings
\$38,136.00	Year to Date Need		\$1,951.99	Year to Date Need
-\$496.03	Year to Date (+/-)		-\$686.99	Year to Date (+/-)
<i>Non-Budgetary</i>			<i>Non-Budgetary</i>	
\$45.00	Benevolence		\$50.00	Kinship
\$50.00	Building Fund		\$10.00	ILC Student Aid Fund
\$30.00	Property Improvement			



✠ Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions ✠

July 20–25, 2026

Monday - *Psalm 62:1-8*

Amidst worldly instability, David reminds us where true security lies. He declares, "He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved" (v. 2). When overwhelmed by daily struggles, we are invited to pour out our hearts, trusting that "God is a refuge for us" (v. 8).

Tuesday - *Revelation 22:12-17*

Jesus comforts His Church with the promise of His eternal reign, proclaiming, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last" (v. 13). Because our Savior encompasses all time, we find peace in His sovereign care as He invites the thirsty to "take the water of life freely" (v. 17).

Wednesday - *2 Corinthians 4:13-18*

Paul acknowledges that our physical lives are perishing, yet points to a glorious, unseen reality. We do not lose heart, for "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (v. 17). Instead of temporary earthly troubles, we fix our eyes on God's eternal promises.

Thursday - *Lamentations 3:21-26*

Even amidst deep sorrow, Jeremiah finds profound hope in God's enduring faithfulness: "Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning" (v. 22-23). Rather than despairing, we learn that "it is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD" (v. 26).

Friday - *2 Peter 3:8-14*

When questioning God's timing, Peter reminds us that His timeline differs vastly from ours: "With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (v. 8). His apparent delay is profound mercy, as He is "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (v. 9).

Saturday - *Psalm 31:14-19, 24*

Amidst uncertainty, David trusts the Lord's sovereign care: "But as for me, I trust in You, O LORD; I say, 'You are my God.' My times are in Your hand" (v. 14-15). Since our Father holds our days, we can "be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all you who hope in the LORD" (v. 24).

