



# Mount Calvary Connected **September 16, 2021**

*Mount Calvary Connected is a weekly newsletter that will be sent out each Wednesday while the church is pressing "pause" on in-person gatherings. Our goal is to keep you connected to your faith and your church with messages from our pastors, health information, and ways to share Christ's love during our current national crisis.*

**Pastor Scott Klimke**

Cell-Phone: 570-367-3421

Email: [sklimke6@gmail.com](mailto:sklimke6@gmail.com)

**Pastor Jonathan Adams**

Cell-Phone: 412-817-6704

Email: [revjonoadams@gmail.com](mailto:revjonoadams@gmail.com)

## **LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP SERVICE INFORMATION**

Mt. Calvary hosts live broadcasts of the liturgy at 8:45 AM Sunday mornings. The broadcast can be heard by tuning your radio to 88.3 FM if you are near the church. We can also stream the service live over the internet. By clicking the following link, you can gain access to the live stream audio.

<https://streams.radiomast.io/96172026-6cba-407b-9090-e150b471ae0e>

Weekly worship bulletins can be found at: [www.rebrand.ly/MtCalvaryWorship](http://www.rebrand.ly/MtCalvaryWorship)

---

### **A Message from Pastor Scott**

On March 17th of last year, our congregational council discontinued all services and programs for an unknown period of time due to the rapidly encroaching virus which has now mutated more than once. I still remember how frightened and disoriented we all were when this decision had to be made. We had no idea what the future held. We had no idea whether the church would be able to sustain itself through a prolonged shutdown. Thankfully, Mount Calvary has more than kept afloat during the long pandemic. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! But as we've kept the doors open and the lights on, not knowing when our worship life might ever return to something like normal has been difficult and draining. It's why this past weekend was so refreshing. For the first time in eighteen long months, in-person worship felt more like it had prior to the pandemic. Thanks to all who made this happen and may it only be a small foretaste of what is to come.

As we continue our journey through the wilderness created by the pandemic, we have had to manage some staffing changes. Prior to its August meeting, Sue Cade, our long-term executive secretary, submitted her resignation. Sue's last day on Mount Calvary's payroll was yesterday. We wish her well!

Even before Sue's resignation, we had determined her position was overtaxed with far too many details and issues to manage. Sue once did all of our bookkeeping. For a while now, our appointed treasurer Bev Coughenour has been attending to these tasks on Wednesday mornings. Having worked with numbers, accounting systems, and reports all of her life, this has been a natural fit for Bev and the Stewardship and Administration has expressed pleasure with her work.

Having successfully found a new home for tasks related to bookkeeping, we will now do something similar with the PowerPoint presentations and email newsletters Sue had been preparing since the pandemic necessitated the need for a different approach to so much. Erin Powell, a member of our congregation and a paralegal by day, has been hired to take over these functions. As a paralegal, Erin is used to preparing

documents and attending to all the details each document brings with it. We anticipate Erin will work no more than ten hours a week. As of October 1st, all announcements for worship and for the newsletter should be sent to Erin at [erin.powell03@gmail.com](mailto:erin.powell03@gmail.com). Prior to October 1st, those announcements should be sent to Pastor Jonathan at [revjonoadams@gmail.com](mailto:revjonoadams@gmail.com).

As of today, Sue's office presence and related clerical duties will now be handled by Terrie Crisi. Terrie is a resident of Windber and has been in our area for decades. She brings a wealth of customer service and office experience to our ministry. When not at work, Terrie enjoys spending time with her husband, children, and grandchildren. Terrie will be in the office on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9 until 1. I will join Terrie in the office on Wednesdays and Thursdays, with Pastor Jonathan joining her on Mondays. On Fridays I myself will be present to attend to the rare office need that may arise. Should it be determined that Terrie's hours need to increase going forward, she is open to that possibility. But for now, the combination of Erin's anticipated hours and Terrie's scheduled hours is nearly identical to the hours Sue was working prior to her departure.

In closing, I would also like to remind you that our building has now been equipped with a new security system. The doors of our facility will be locked unless we have programmed them to be open on particular days and at particular times. Should you arrive when the doors are locked, there's a button you can press at the front door. When you push that button, it will trigger a monitor at Terrie's desk, my desk, and the place where ushers sit during worship services. Provided you have arrived during office hours or at the time of a scheduled worship service, you will be rung in and then can go about your business. As for worship, this should only be necessary if you arrive quite late. Though once unthinkable, these changes to our security protocols have become necessary and were very much encouraged by the Richland Township Police Department, the recent experience of other congregations across the country, and our recent experience as Mount Calvary Lutheran Church. As we live through a period of adjustment with both our new staff and our new security system, I thank you for your patience and cooperation in advance. There will be bugs and a learning curve, but this too shall pass. If the past eighteen months have taught us anything, it's that we're capable of an awful lot; having more change and adaptation in us than we had ever previously imagined. It's what happens when you worship the Holy Trinity for whom all things shall be possible (Luke 1:37).

Fondly and Appreciatively,  
Pastor Scott

---

### **Adult Sunday School**

The Adult Sunday School class resumes this coming Sunday, September 19th after worship as they study and discuss the topic, "The Sovereignty of God." There's no time like now to get back into the rhythm of learning about our faith. Join us!

---

### **Weekly Wednesday, Drive in Services**

Wednesday evening drive-in services are at 6:30 pm. Download a bulletin from: <https://www.mtcalvarylutheran.org/bulletins/>, bring your own bread for communion, and tune your radio to 88.3FM and you are set! See you there!



**Sunday School has begun for Pre-K through 8th grade.** "Mount Calvary Kid's Crew" is our program for Pre-K and up that gathers at 8:30am in Sander Hall with Pastor Jonathan. Students focus on a bible story and have an activity or craft before rejoining their parents during the worship service.

---

**Childcare is now available during Sunday morning worship.** Hannah Salamon is a Richland Learning Center staff member who will be joining us each Sunday along with Pastor Jonathan and other volunteers to provide childcare for infants through age 5. For the time being, drop-off for this service will take place in Sander Hall. Speak with Pastor Jonathan for more information.

---

**A Youth & Family Cookout** is scheduled for Sunday, September 26th at 6pm at the church. Join us for dinner, fun, and fellowship! Contact Pastor Jonathan to RSVP.

---

Pastor Jonathan LOVES to get out and see our Mount Calvary youth in action doing the things they enjoy! Be sure to share your schedules for sports, concerts, recitals, etc. You never know where he might show up!

Pastor Jonathan's office hours at Mount Calvary are Mondays & Wednesdays, 10am-3pm. And he is available outside of those hours via email ([RevJonoAdams@gmail.com](mailto:RevJonoAdams@gmail.com)), cellphone (412-817-6704), or Facebook.

---

### **Clothing Sale UPDATE**

The Social Ministry Team has made the decision to push back the clothing sale by one week to Saturday, October 9 from 10-2.

We are still in need of donations to make this year's sale a success. This year we are asking that you please separate and label your clothes by size/gender when you are packing them. This will make the setting up and sorting process much easier for the volunteers working the event. If you have any questions, please contact Mike Kozak at 244-6880. Thank you!

### **Hurricane Ida Relief**

The impact of Ida is yet to be fully assessed, but with a hurricane of this scale, rebuilding will be costly and take years. With extensive experience in accompanying communities throughout the relief and long-term recovery phases, Lutheran Disaster Response is working with local ELCA synods and Lutheran social service organizations to coordinate a response to Hurricane Ida. Immediate needs will include food, basic necessities and temporary housing. Long after the headlines change, Lutheran Disaster Response will continue to accompany communities on the journey of rebuilding their homes and lives.

If you would like to donate to help the survivors, please make check payable to Mount Calvary and mark in the memo line "Hurricane Ida Relief".

### **Haiti Earthquake Relief**

A devastating 7.2 magnitude earthquake struck southwest Haiti on Saturday morning. Over 1,400 people were killed, probably more. Over 6,900 people were injured, and roads are closed to hospitals that need supplies delivered. There is also now flooding from Tropical Storm Grace.

If you would like to donate to help the survivors, please make check payable to Mount Calvary and mark in the memo line "Haiti Earthquake".

### **Wildfire Relief**

A prolonged drought and extreme heat waves are causing wildfires to spread rapidly, which makes them difficult to contain. California is currently the hardest-hit state. There are more than 100 wildfires now burning throughout 15 states.

If you would like to donate to help the survivors, please make check payable to Mount Calvary and mark in the memo line "Wildfire Relief".

### **Mt. Calvary Press Release**

You now have an opportunity to sponsor the Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church notice in the Saturday issue of the Johnstown Tribune-Democrat newspaper! We are asking if any of our members are interested in sponsoring this ad for 1 week. The cost is \$11.00. We are also giving you the opportunity to place this as an Honorarium or Memorial, if you wish.

Sponsored by \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor/Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ How Many Weeks \_\_\_\_\_

### **Worship Help Needed**

There are sign up sheets, in the Narthex, for Greeters/Ushers, and Communion Assistants. please sign up for the dates that would suit you best. We appreciate you volunteering. If you have questions about these roles, please contact Christine Koshute at 814-421-4921 or Chris Oleksa at 814-244-9851.

### **Backyard Cookie Collection**

Due to the current surge in the COVID-19 Delta Variant, Backyard Ministries has made some changes to their cookie collection. Moving forward, only pre-packaged items will be accepted. These can be any type of snack, not just cookies (fruit snacks, bags of chips, etc.). Please no longer donate any homemade cookies, or large packs of cookies that must be divided into individual bags.

Thank you for your continued support! October 7<sup>th</sup> will be the next collection date.

## Memorials

**Dot McQuaide** – Janet Newmar

**Patti Sliko** – Old and Regular Volleyball Players

**Pat Conklin** – Linda McMullen, Carlene Motter, Darlene Rassiga & Family, Steven Pearlman & Terri Coltin

---

### Installation of Allegheny Synod Bishop Paula Schmitt

**Sunday, September 19, 2021**

Because of the uncertainty of the spread of Covid-19 and its variants, in-person capacity at the church is limited to invited guests only. The event will be livestreamed on the Allegheny Synod Facebook page (Allegheny Synod 8C) beginning at 2:40pm.

You are warmly invited to attend one of the smaller receptions with the new bishop listed below.

**--Monday, September 20th 6:00 pm--**

Grace Lutheran Church, State College, Narthex and Upper Commons

**--Tuesday, September 21st, 6:00 pm--**

Evangelical Lutheran Church, Duncansville. Social Hall

**--Wednesday, September 22nd 6:00 pm--**

Friedens Lutheran Church, Friedens. Friendship Hall.

**--Thursday, September 23rd 6:00 pm--**

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Lanse. Narthex.

---

#### About Our Members & The Community We Serve:

Pastor Scott & Mt. Calvary Church Family,

Thank you all for the cards, prayers, calls, visits, and words of encouragement. I really appreciate all of you and know you were all key in helping me get through such a stressful time and you are the best support team ever!

Thank You,  
Deb Finnegan

#### Birthdays and Anniversaries for the Week: September 12 – September 19, 2021.

**Sept. 12** – Ethel Warshel

**Sept. 13** – Daniel Carbaugh, Jan Mertz, Lisa Shew

**Sept. 14** – Nancy Conjelko, James Haynal, Mari Grace Lingenfelter, Charlie Wyant

**Sept. 15** – Parker Daily, Brandi Kennedy, Dianne Lesser, Cara Lonsinger,  
Stephanie Popp, Dawn Poydence, William Smith

**Sept. 16** – Debra Dutko, Matthew Popovnak, Lori Zerby

**Sept. 17** – Nicholas Glessner, Jr, Abigail Mattern, Alexandria Popovnak, James Ross, Kacie Smith

**Sept. 18** – Levi Allison

**Sept. 12** – James & Lisa Popovnak (34 years)

**Sept. 16** – Matthew & Diana Karnes (21 years)

---

**Remember those that prayer has been requested:**

---

Joe Miller & Family, Jennifer & Ryan, Linda & Dick, Dolly & Chis Palm, Claudia Plows, Maddie Pierce, Gladys Haupt, Joe & Judith Lopez, Maria, Tom, Lt. Hunter Bergman, and Lt. Dylan Merchant, Harold, Rick, Midge, Shirley, Jennifer, Debbie Finnegan, Jill McEntee, David, Karen, Lauren, Billy, Barb, Jamie, Sara Solarczyk, Lauf Family, Jackie Janak, Jack, and Joan.

**September Financial Update**

Through the end of August, Mt. Calvary remains in the black. We are slightly ahead of where we thought we would be at this time of year. Thank you! If this is to continue, the congregational council and Stewardship and Administration Committee will need to continue to manage expenses in the fashion that best pairs faithfulness and frugality. With this in mind, it is reassuring that some of the facility management expenses which were once over budget have now been steadily coming back to expectation. As for revenues, we are a member supported enterprise. As the congregational council and Stewardship and Administration Committee do their best to maximize the value of our assets, it will be important for each of us to do our part financially; increasing our giving when possible and doing our best to maintain prior levels of giving when an increase is not possible. With just a third of the current year left, things should continue to go well if we all just continue to carry our share of the load; generously sharing of our time, talent, and treasure. Thanks again for doing this very thing through the end of August!

**CONDENSED WORSHIP FOR THE WEEKEND OF SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2021.****Prayer of the Day**

O God, through suffering and rejection you bring forth our salvation, and by the glory of the cross you transform our lives. Grant that for the sake of the gospel we may turn from the lure of evil, take up our cross, and follow your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen

**Semicontinuous First Reading: Proverbs 1:20-33**

In these verses Wisdom is personified as a woman who invites all who will listen to follow her. Though Wisdom offers her hand to those who scoff at her, they spurn all such counsel. That they come to ruin is predictable. Those who find Wisdom, however, find life.

20Wisdom cries out in the street;

in the squares she raises her voice.

21At the busiest corner she cries out;

at the entrance of the city gates she speaks:

22“How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple?

How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing

and fools hate knowledge?

23Give heed to my reproof;

I will pour out my thoughts to you;

I will make my words known to you.

24Because I have called and you refused,

have stretched out my hand and no one heeded,

25and because you have ignored all my counsel

and would have none of my reproof,  
 26I also will laugh at your calamity;  
 I will mock when panic strikes you,  
 27when panic strikes you like a storm,  
 and your calamity comes like a whirlwind,  
 when distress and anguish come upon you.  
 28Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer;  
 they will seek me diligently, but will not find me.  
 29Because they hated knowledge  
 and did not choose the fear of the Lord,  
 30would have none of my counsel,  
 and despised all my reproof,  
 31therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way  
 and be sated with their own devices.  
 32For waywardness kills the simple,  
 and the complacency of fools destroys them;  
 33but those who listen to me will be secure  
 and will live at ease, without dread of disaster.”

### **Semicontinuous Psalm: Psalm 19**

The teaching of the Lord is perfect and revives the soul. (Ps. 19:7)

1The heavens declare the glo- | ry of God,  
 and the sky proclaims its | maker’s handiwork.  
 2One day tells its tale | to another,  
 and one night imparts knowledge | to another.  
 3Although they have no | words or language,  
 and their voices | are not heard,  
 4their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends | of the world,  
 where God has pitched a tent | for the sun.  
 5It comes forth like a bridegroom out | of his chamber;  
 it rejoices like a champion to | run its course.  
 6It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of | it again;  
 nothing is hidden from its | burning heat. R  
 7The teaching of the Lord is perfect and re- | vives the soul;  
 the testimony of the Lord is sure and gives wisdom to | the simple.  
 8The statutes of the Lord are just and re- | joice the heart;  
 the commandment of the Lord is clear and gives light | to the eyes.  
 9The fear of the Lord is clean and en- | dures forever;  
 the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous | altogether.  
 10More to be desired are they than gold, more than | much fine gold,  
 sweeter far than honey, than honey | in the comb. R  
 11By them also is your ser- | vant enlightened,  
 and in keeping them there is | great reward.

12Who can detect one's | own offenses?

Cleanse me from my | secret faults.

13Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion | over me;  
then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a | great offense.

14Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable | in your sight,  
O Lord, my strength and | my redeemer. R

### **Second Reading: James 3:1-12**

This text uses various images to illustrate how damaging and hurtful the way we speak to and about others can be. Not only are we to control our speech, but what we say and how we say it are to reflect our faith.

1Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. 2For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. 3If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. 4Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. 5So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits.

How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! 6And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. 7For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, 8but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. 9With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. 10From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. 11Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? 12Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

### **Gospel: Mark 8:27-38**

This story provides the turning point in Mark's gospel. Peter is the first human being in the narrative to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, but he cannot accept that as the Messiah Jesus will have to suffer. Moreover, Jesus issues a strong challenge to all by connecting discipleship and the cross.

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

31Then he 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. 32He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

34He called the crowd with his 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 his Father with the holy angels.”

### **Sermon by Pastor Scott**

While in New York a couple of weeks ago, Julia and I spent an afternoon at the American Museum of Natural History. A massive complex, the museum is located about half way up the west side of Central Park. Julia and I have been there before. There's a lot to see, with the permanent collection quite large. There are also special, seasonal exhibits. During our recent visit, there was a seasonal exhibit on color. In the past, we've visited a seasonal exhibit devoted to butterflies. Along with these seasonal exhibits and the permanent collection, there's also a planetarium with a movie theatre built into it. The featured film varies so as to attract return visitors. Julia always wants to visit the globe-shaped theatre so we might watch the latest film; with the images projected above us and around us on the upper half of the globe. I myself like to visit the wings related to dinosaurs.

During our recent visit to the American Museum of Natural History, I was able to do something I'd never done before. I was able to visit all the wings dedicated to dinosaurs and other ancient, extinct creatures. Ever since I saw the remains of a dinosaur in St. Paul when I was a little boy, I've been fascinated by them. Julia does not necessarily share in this fascination, which is why I had never been able to view the entire exhibit until now. Having now done so, I can tell you everything was once much, much bigger than it is today. Even rabbits and rodents and other small mammals were once monstrously large. Given that there's no mention of this in the Bible, what's a person of faith to do with the sight of such things.

One option would be to reject the scientific record altogether. This would be to prioritize biblical history over the history documented and uncovered by science. It would be to make the Bible not just a bearer of ultimate, here's how it's all going to end truth, but also a collection of inerrant historical records. The strength of this approach would be the recognition that human wisdom and divine wisdom can come into tension with one another; with divine wisdom being the more trustworthy of the two. It's the fork in the road where both Jesus and Peter find themselves in our reading from Mark.

In this reading, there's a tension, a disconnect, between the priority we customarily place upon self-preservation and the priority God places upon self-emptying and self-sacrifice for the sake of the common good. In response to this tension, Jesus puts his mind to divine things. For his part, Peter puts his mind to human things. With Jesus eventually resurrected from the dead and sin, death, and the devil defeated in the process, it's clear that setting the mind to divine things was the better way to go. But does this tension between faith and wisdom always exist? Is it possible for faith and wisdom to be integrated in some cases, with wisdom even having its own domain and sphere of operation?

In speaking of those who would choose biblical history over scientific history, I've just indicated there would be some who would answer such questions in the negative; saying that faith has to triumph over wisdom every time. On the other side of the fence would be those who say wisdom has to triumph over faith every time. Their interactions with dinosaurs and planetariums would lead them to conclude that the Bible and a life of faith are a farce and that wisdom should be the only road map for our lives down here under the sun. Dug-in, polarized, it's where many of our neighbors find themselves these days. It's all faith or all wisdom. But is this really how it has to be? Can there be no integration? Can wisdom have no room for faith and faith no room for wisdom?

Let's start with what I said last week. Last week I identified faith as God's terms, as God's expectation, for here and now living. This clearly gives faith the upper hand over wisdom, but it doesn't necessarily box wisdom out of a life of faith. Today's reading from Proverbs clearly says wisdom is present and available in our world and we should make ample use of it. In fact, our reading from Proverbs says that wisdom has the power to deliver us from calamity. Later on in Proverbs we learn this is the case because wisdom is God's first creation; the master builder God turns to again

and again. This lends itself nicely to something we Lutherans have always said. Starting out at a time when priests were thought to be a rung or two higher than everybody else, we've always said that traditional notions of priestly service are too limiting. We've said there are an awful lot of priests in the world and in the Church who don't answer to "pastor" or "reverend."

For us, the contractor and the real estate agent can be priests. For us, the pharmacist, the doctor, the RN, the LPN, and the nurse's aide can all be priests. For us, the teacher, the daycare worker, and the stay-at-home parent can all be priests. There really are very few limits to what can qualify as priestly service for us. If you're using God's gifts of wisdom and experience to keep people safe and healthy, to build stronger communities, to help the Church do its work, you're a priest and our reading from Proverbs tells us there should be plenty of room for all kinds of priestly service in the life of the Church. Provided its serving what we might call godly ends, there's plenty of room for wisdom in a life of faith. It's a reality we've been embracing more and more here at Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church.

By way of example, the Richland Police Department has used its wisdom and experience to tell us our church and our day care center are not secure. As your pastor, I can tell you this is true. Earlier this year, I had to spend some time with a Richland police officer working through a security concern for which there was no easy fix. Should this wisdom and experience be ignored here at Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church? With the experience of other people telling us that schools and sanctuaries are no longer safe and sacred, should we really go it by faith alone here at 1000 Scalp Avenue? Not! To hearken back to our reading from Proverbs, this would be to invite the calamity that a failure to employ God's gift of wisdom can invite. And so, we've just gotten done upgrading our security systems and protocols in response to the edicts of wisdom and experience. But getting back to what I was saying about Jesus and Peter earlier, there will be times when faith and wisdom come into conflict and faith is the better way, the wiser way, the safer way forward. When will these times for faith alone present themselves?

When we are in danger of rebelling against God's wisdom and replacing it with a wisdom of our own. Our reading from Proverbs gets at this when it speaks of those who are having a hard time because they hated knowledge and did not practice the fear of the Lord. As is usually the case with Hebrew poetry, these statements are two sides of the same coin. Couplet A, the one about knowledge, and couplet B, the one about the fear of the Lord, complement one another; amplifying and expanding what each couplet says without the other. In our case, this means knowledge and the fear of the Lord can and do go together, but not if knowledge departs from the fear of the Lord or if the fear of the Lord has no room for knowledge.

When will we need to be people of faith alone? When we replace God's wisdom with a wisdom of our own. It's why in more than one place the book of Proverbs says those who fear the Lord either hate evil or refrain from evil. Wisdom that departs from God's way, wisdom that serves evil, is not wisdom. It's to be avoided at all costs, being replaced by faith every time. And what is evil? I'll have more to say about that question next week. For now, let's just say wisdom and the fear of the Lord have been severed when wisdom finds us departing from the teaching and example of Jesus Christ. If no such departure from Jesus is involved, wisdom is just fine and we should use it robustly to ward off calamity. Amen!

### **Prayers of Intercession**

*The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate. Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.*

*A brief silence.*

Revealing God, you have made yourself known through bread and wine, water and word. Continue to nurture your church, that it is a place where your presence is experienced and shared. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Creating God, you brought life into being and called it good. Bring new creation to lands devastated by tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, fires, and other disasters (*recent destructive events may be named here*). Restore forests and curb overflowing waters. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Protecting God, you desire all people to live in peace and safety. Provide for all who are in danger. Strengthen first responders to help meet to the complex needs of others. Provide care and compassion as they face trauma themselves. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Transforming God, you announce release to the captives and freedom to the oppressed. Break chains of discrimination and injustice. Amplify voices that go unheard and inspire us to advocate for the those who are overlooked. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Forming God, you gather this community together. Shape our communal life, that in our prayer, praise, and worship, we honor you and encourage one another. Keep our disagreements civil and increase our joy in working together. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Redeeming God, you accompany your people through every stage of life. We give you thanks for the saints who now rest in your embrace (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### **Blessing**

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.

**Amen.**