

**FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
BRISTOL, CT**

**SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION
July 26, 2026, 9:30 a.m.**

As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!

+GATHERING+

The Holy Spirit calls us together as people of God.

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose compassion endures forever. **Amen.**
Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God, **we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.**

Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now

ELW 527

GREETING

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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

+WORD+

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

First Reading

Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people well.

A reading from 1st Kings, chapter 3.

⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I should give you." ⁶ And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today.

⁷ And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?"

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ God said to him, "Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you."

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

1 Kings 3: 5-12

Psalms 119 (read responsively)

¹²⁹ Your decrees are wonderful; therefore I obey them with all my heart.

¹³⁰ **When your word is opened it gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.**

¹³¹ I open my mouth and pant because I long for your commandments.

¹³² **Turn to me and be gracious to me, as you always do to those who love your name.**

¹³³ Order my footsteps in your word; let no iniquity have dominion over me.

¹³⁴ **Rescue me from those who oppress me, and I will keep your commandments.**

¹³⁵ Let your face shine upon your servant and teach me your statutes.

¹³⁶ **My eyes shed streams of tears, because people do not keep your teaching.**

Second Reading

These words celebrate the depth of God's actions for us. Through Christ's death for us and the activity of the Spirit praying for us, we are fused to God's love poured out in Jesus Christ. Nothing, not even death itself, is able to separate us from such incredible divine love.

A reading from Romans, chapter 8.

²⁶ The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword?

³⁶ As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Romans 8: 26-39

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Gospel

Throughout Matthew's gospel, Jesus and his disciples proclaim the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near!" Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people's lives.

The holy Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 13. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

³¹ Jesus put before the crowds another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches." ³³ He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. ⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. ⁴⁷ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹ "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." ⁵² And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ**

Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

(aimed toward Grades K thru 6th, but those younger are welcomed with an accompanying adult).

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Christ, Be Our Light

ELW 715

L: APOSTLES' CREED

Let us profess our faith using the words of the Apostles' 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.

L: PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

God our wisdom and our song, we pray for bishops, candidacy committees, those preparing for seminary, those awaiting call as deacons or pastors, and all who seek to lead your disciples in any way. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our healer, we continue to pray for those on our prayer list. In addition we lift up to your care these loved ones and concerns that we name aloud or in our hearts before you now...*(time is allowed for additions)*. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Now may we lift up praise and thanksgiving for Restored Health, Life Celebrations and God Sightings for which we are joyful...*(time is allowed for responses)*. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

+MEAL+

God feeds us in the presence of Jesus Christ.

GIFTS ARE RECEIVED - *In gratitude for all God has given, you are invited to share a portion as the offering plates are passed at this time. Thank You!*

Offerings towards our Ministries are also welcomed by scanning this code with your phone camera.



SONG OF GRATITUDE

Create In Me a Clean Heart

ELW 186

L: OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Loving God, **we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. Amen.**

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God ... now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, as we pray:

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

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

*At Faith **all** are welcome to receive Holy Communion. You are invited to come forward by the center aisle to fill in along the rail from the center to the sides. You may either stand or kneel to receive bread (or gluten-free wafers upon request) and wine (or white grape juice) in pre-filled glasses. Empty glasses can be placed in baskets provided as you return by the side aisles to your seat for silent meditation. If you need communion brought to you, please notify the usher.*

(if you are giving a reminder at the end of the service, please move to the pew behind the lectern as the altar is cleared after communion distribution)

COMMUNION HYMN

Lamb of God ELW 195

L: POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

Compassionate God, **through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us.**

We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. Amen.

+SENDING+

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ☩ one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always. **Amen.**

REMINDERS

(If you are giving a reminder, come to the lectern as the altar is cleared).

SENDING HYMN

Go, My Children, with My Blessing

ELW 543

SHARING OF PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

Let us show a sign of peace with one another as we go forth.

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP LEADERS for Sunday, July 26, 2026

Presiding Minister: Pastor Chris Dion

Musician: John Parsons

Assisting Minister: Heather Johnson

Lector: Bob Herold

Tech Team: Abigail Griffin, Ken Griffin, Connor Pratt

Ushers: Don Zurell, Alan Rindfleisch, Denise Martin

Altar Guild: Denise Martin

Communion Assistants: Denise Martin and Jill Little

Greeters: Cookie Capsalors and Bob Cummiskey

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THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

Sunday, July 26, 2026

9:30 a.m. Service of Holy Communion (Sanctuary, You Tube, Facebook)

10:30 a.m. Coffee Time

10:30 a.m. Ice Cream Social

Monday, July 27, 2026

6:30 p.m. Summer Bells

Wednesday, July 29, 2026

6:30 p.m. Summer Bells

Thursday, July 30, 2026

7:00 p.m. AA (Fellowship Hall)

7:00 p.m. Al Anon

Sunday, August 2, 2026

9:30 a.m. Service of Holy Communion (Sanctuary, You Tube, Facebook)

10:30 a.m. Coffee Time

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, BRISTOL, CT

1125 Stafford Ave., Bristol, CT 06010

Church Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 9 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Church Phone: 860.583.5809

Email: churchoffice@FaithBristolCT.org

Pastor Chris Dion, phone: 860.989.3507

Faith In Action...Attendance and Offering for the week of July 19, 2026 Facebook 5...YouTube 8...In Person 79...Total 92 ...Offering \$2817.25 Steeple Restoration Fund Received To Date...\$5518.00
