

**The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 17, 2023**

in the 170^h Year of the Parish

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701

stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org

Office (570-323-4619) Fax (570-323-2452)

Rev. Brian D. Vasey, Pastor

bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org

Welcome to Saint Mark's!

This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

Our Mission: "To know Christ and to make Christ known."



Please be aware:

Hand sanitizer is available for your use.

Face masks are optional.

Offerings may be received by way of baskets as you enter or leave.

A guide to hymnal use: LBW, Green Book; WOV, Blue Book

**Please stand as you are able.*

C = Congregation P = Pastor

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S WORSHIP

In our Gospel today we are reminded of two things: We sin against one another, and when we do so we are to forgive offenders “seventy-seven times”. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of God's boundless mercy in the world.

PRELUDE *Voluntary in G* John Stanley

WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY/ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

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

C **Amen.**

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

P If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Please kneel as able.

P Most merciful God,

C **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † , Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

***HYMN**

Awake, O Sleeper

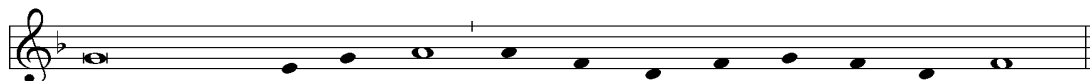
WOV, "Blue", 745

***THE GREETING**

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

C And also with you.

***HYMN OF PRAISE**



A Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.



B Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father:



We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.



Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.



You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.



For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,



you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,



in the glory of God the Father. Amen

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray. O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

THE FIRST READING.....Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph’s brothers said, “What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?” ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, “Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷‘Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.’ Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father.” Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, “We are here as your slaves.” ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.” In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 103:8-13

⁸LORD, you are full of compas- | sion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love;

⁹**you will not al- | ways accuse us,**
nor will you keep your an- | ger forever.

¹⁰You have not dealt with us according | to our sins,
nor repaid us according to | our iniquities.

¹¹**For as the heavens are high a- | bove the earth,**

so great is your steadfast love for | those who fear you.

12As far as the east is | from the west,

so far have you removed our transgres- | sions from us.

13As a father has compassion | for his children,

so you have compassion for those who fear | you, O LORD.

THE SECOND READING.....Romans 14:1-12

1Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. 2Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. 3Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. 4Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

5Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. 6Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

7We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. 8If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. 9For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

10Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. 11For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

12So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

***THE HOLY GOSPEL.....Matthew 18:21-28**

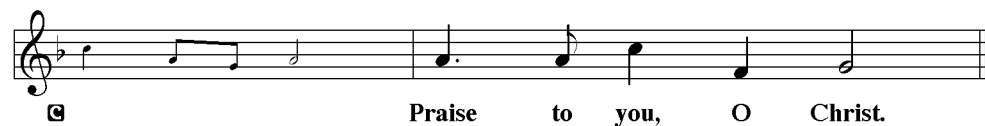
P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 18th chapter



21Peter came and said to [Jesus], “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” 22Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

23“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. 24When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; 25and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. 26So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ 27And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. 28But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ 29Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ 30But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. 31When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. 32Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 33Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ 34And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. 35So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The Gospel of the Lord.



THE SERMON

***HYMN**

Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive

LBW, “Green”, 307

***THE APOSTLES' CREED**

P Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith:

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again 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 INTERCESSION**

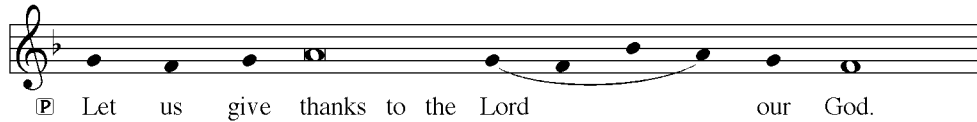
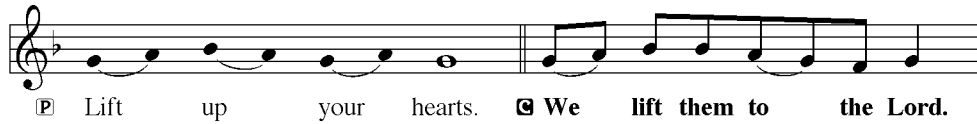
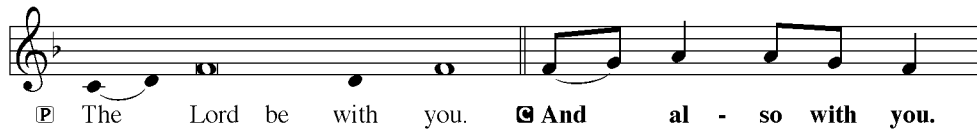
After each petition, "Merciful God/Receive our prayer."

***THE PEACE**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.** *The ministers and congregation greet each other.*

*GREAT THANKSGIVING



It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Blessed are you Lord of heaven and earth.
 In mercy for our fallen world
 you gave your only Son,
 that all those who believe in him
 should not perish

but have eternal life.

We give thanks to you for the salvation
you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ.
Send now your Holy Spirit,
into our hearts and on these gifts,
that we may receive our Lord with a living faith
as he comes to us in this his holy supper.

C Amen. Come Lord Jesus.

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 all people
for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

***OUR LORD'S PRAYER**

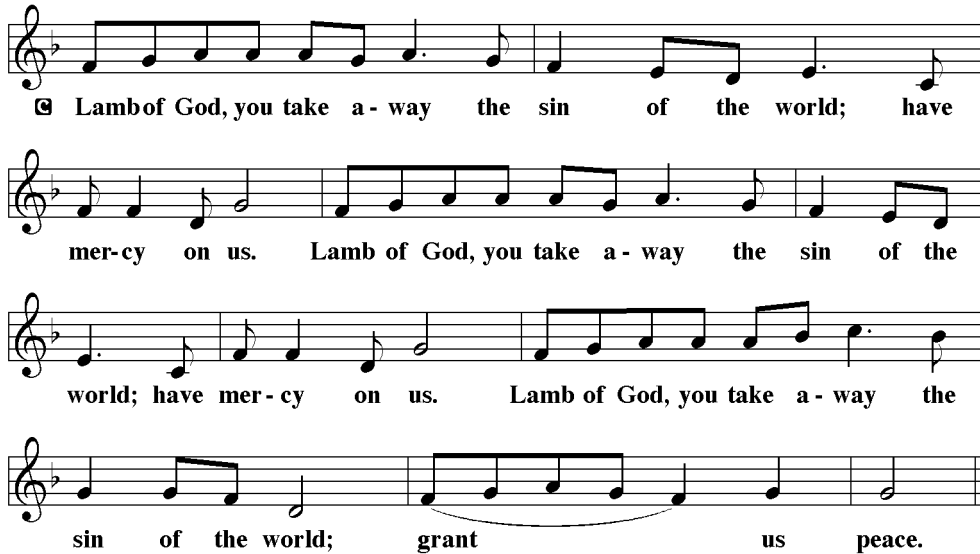
P Lord as you have taught us, so now we pray,

**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.**

*LAMB OF GOD



♩ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION *All Are Welcome to Receive.*

Persons may come forward to the chancel to receive Holy Communion. This format will be more “continuous” noting the following procedure:

- *Communicants as directed by ushers are asked to come forward by way of the center aisle, take a cup from the tray provided and receive the bread.*
- *Once receiving the bread, communicants will proceed to one of two stations (left or right) to receive wine from the pouring chalice.*
- *After receiving wine, communicants will place the empty cup in the designated tray and return to their pew by way of the side aisles.*

P Jesus invites you to his table. Come, eat and live.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THE COMMUNION

*AFTER COMMUNION

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

C **Amen.**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Let us pray. Blessed be your name, O God,
for we have feasted on your Word,
Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts.
Strengthened by this food,
send us to gather the world to your banquet,
where none are left out and all are satisfied.
In Jesus' name we pray.

C Amen.

***THE BLESSING**

P Almighty God, Father, †, Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

***HYMN Praise the Lord, Rise Up Rejoicing LBW, "Green", 196**

***DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace, the Lord is with you.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE Trumpet Voluntary in C John Stanley

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Prayer List: Victims of COVID-19 and their families, Liz Ruesskamp, Grace Arner, Diane Damaska, Vanessa Morgan, Gary Clark, Charles Miller, Jerry Miller, Patricia Alexander, Richard Ritter, Ashton Ott, Lucille Sider, April Clark, Lenny Sherlinski, Ruth Sherlinski, Gary Cable, Elsie Sechler, Virginia Pulaskie, Susan Kalabacas, Bunny Ditchfield, Judy Fortin, Ezra Buckman, Sheila Brassard, Kevin Rosini, Kathy Eshelman, Micah, Steve Beiber, Deb Buckman, Linda Rosini, Mary Ann Stiller, Mike Ford.

WORSHIP LEADERS

September 17, 2023



Lector	8:00 AM	Candy Dewar
	10:30 AM	Phil Thomas
Communion	8:00 AM	Nikki Jackson
Assistants	10:30 AM	Ralph and Lou Ann Zeigler
Organist		Sam Robinson
Ushers	8:00 AM	Richard Miller and Herb Poff
	10:30 AM	Gary Weber, captain Shelby Weber and Dick Reitz



READ ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY? Faith Formation has temporarily “moved some books” from our church library to the Front Lounge in order to make them more accessible. Stop by the Front Lounge and take a look!



ALTAR FLOWERS today are given to the glory of God:
+In Loving Memory of Luella Bair’s birthday by her children
+In Loving Memory of George Bjornstad on his birthday, by his wife, Sally Bjornstad



OUR STEWARDSHIP September 10, 2023

Regular Offering	\$2,529.00
Miscellaneous	25.00
World Hunger	50.00
Food Pantry	50.00
Global Mission	50.00
Parish Life	75.00
Family Promise Hosting	100.00
Flower Memorials / Tributes	90.00
Church Bazaar	25.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$2,994.00



Two Workshop Opportunities

Sponsored by United Churches and Thrivent

Wednesday, October 4, 10-11 am: This workshop is intended for Thrivent members, but anyone is invited. Learn about Thrivent benefits which are

available which would greatly enhance the mission of United Churches, St. Mark's, or another community organization you are passionate about. This will be a brain storming session intended to arm you with easy but very profitable ways to use your member benefits to help others. No charge.

Thursday, October 5, 10-11am: "A Lifetime Gift", open to everyone, walking you through a living document that reflects a checklist, important documents, final wishes, and personal instructions. It's a gift for you and your loved ones in the event of major health changes or end of life situations. Each participant will walk away with tools and resources to help their family celebrate their life and understand what steps can be taken now, to avoid stress later. There is a \$10.00 registration fee which will be donated back to United Churches.

Refreshments will be served both days. Please RSVP by October 2 to brianna.randazzo@thrivent.com, or 813-443-5088, or United Churches at dlite4hymucl@gmail.com. Questions, contact Pam Hansen at pam.hanses@thrivent.com, or the 813 phone number.



Hi friends,

We hope you can join our St. Mark's Lutheran Church Lions team for the CROP Hunger Walk on Sunday, October 8, 2023. We're raising money and awareness to help other people near and far. Of the money we raise, 25% goes to our community and 75% is distributed by Church World Service nationally and internationally to help people

who are hungry.

I'm doing my part to help get us one step closer to ending hunger for good. Will you consider joining our team? You'll find a link to join at the bottom of this email! Thank You, Brenda Gair.

To register enter the URL

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2023/accept?challenger=brenda-simmons-gair&team=st-marks-lutheran-church-lions> in your browser's address window.

Learn more about 2023 CROP Hunger Walk at

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2023?challenger=brenda-simmons-gair&team=st-marks-lutheran-church-lions>.

Check out my page at <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2023/brenda-simmons-gair>



Update on Cereal Sunday

During September we collected 80 boxes of assorted cereals for the United Churches Food Pantry. **Our grand total for the summer is 291 boxes of cereal to help stem food insecurity in our community.** The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee cannot thank the congregation enough for their support. Look for this program to return next summer.

Redeemer's Community Dinner



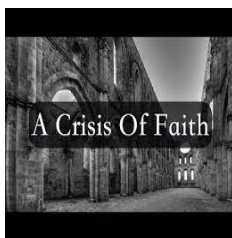
For Redeemer's dinner on Thursday, September 14, the Evangelism and Fellowship Committee requested the congregation's help in donating boxes of TastyKake cupcakes. We needed 20 boxes to be able to provide 120 individual packets to

folks receiving a meal. **More than twenty boxes of cupcakes were donated.** The extra TastyKakes were donated to New Covenant's Blessing Boxes. Again, this committee is humbled by the congregation's support of our outreach.

HARVEST HOME SUNDAY OCTOBER 15, 2023



Our congregation will be celebrating a "Day of Thanksgiving" by bringing nonperishable food items for the local United Churches Food Pantry. Items should be brought to the church Sunday October 8th or 15th. Bags will be available October 1. We pray you and your family will be part of this annual celebration as we thank God for what He has given us.



When you or a family member are ill, have a crisis of faith, or have a personal concern of which you wish to make the pastor aware, please contact him directly by church office telephone (570-323-4619) or email (bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org). Do not assume the pastor will know of your need any other way.



When you or a loved one has a change of address, telephone number or email, please contact the church office at 570-323-4619 or stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org. Please direct your intentions whether or not to share this information with our church family.



Sojourner Truth Ministries

STM continues to serve up to 600 meals per week! These meals are a combination of eat in or take a bagged lunch to go. It has been daunting to keep up with this need. We can help support STM's efforts to feed low income and homeless individuals and families. During September the Evangelism and Fellowship Committee is seeking donations of brown paper lunch bags, rolls of plastic wrap and jars of sweet or dill relish. Donations may be placed on the tables in the Narthex closet. Thank you for any help you can provide.

TIME TO PART THE WATERS



The bus trip to see Moses at the Sight and sound Theater in Lancaster is this Wednesday, September 20. The bus is pulling out at 6:00AM, SHARP. Leaving from Beiter's Parking lot (540 Montgomery Pike), please park your car in the West End Parking Lot of Beiter's. Don't forget your bus snacks and entertainment for the trip.





What a beautiful piece of St. Mark's History

We received this beautiful Baptismal certificate from a dear person who had found it in their home and decided to share it with us.

It is for Bernadine Emily Winter

Father was Ralph D Winter

Mother was Eda C. Winter

Born on November 9th, 1905

Baptized on April 15, 1906



Koree, Molly and Buddy are looking forward to seeing all their fur buddies (and non-fur buddies) on Sunday September 24, 2023 for the Blessing of Pets at 2:00 PM in the parking lot of Saint Mark's. All pets are welcome and we hope to see you and your pets there.



A Few Early October dates to Plan for.

Sunday, October 1 – Blanket Sunday

Tuesday, October 3 - City Ministerium at Saint Mark's 1PM
Property Committee Meeting 6PM

Wednesday, October 4 - Finance Committee 5:30PM

GRATITUDE



It only requires looking around the church (both inside and out) to know that keeping such a large property in good repair and looking nice requires a lot of time and effort on the part of many. St. Mark's has a long history of capable volunteers who give generously of themselves. Our current members are every bit as committed to keeping the grounds beautiful and much of the building's equipment functioning.

It would be very difficult to begin to list all of those who volunteer so ably day after day, week after week. So, on behalf of Church Council, THANK YOU TO EVERYONE who continues to help to make our buildings and grounds look so beautiful and function so well. May you know that others do notice and appreciate your gifts of time and talent. Blessings to each of you!



Monday, September 18, -
Sunday, September 24, 2023

Monday, September 18	Nominating Committee 5:15PM
	WCC Board Meeting 6PM
	Council Meeting 6PM
	WCC Rehearsal 7PM
Tuesday, September 19	
Wednesday, September 20	Executive Meeting Noon
	Property Committee 6PM
Thursday, September 21	
Friday, September 22	
Saturday, September 23	
Sunday, September 24	Holy Communion 8:00 AM
	Holy Communion 10:00 AM

BIRTHDAYS

Audrey Bower	September 19	Ronald Arner	September 22
Brittany Dewar	September 22		

ANNIVERSARIES

None This Week

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Monday, September 18	Nominating Committee 5:15PM
	Council Meeting 6PM
Wednesday September 20	Executive Meeting Noon
	Property Committee 6PM

Please remember to let the administrative assistant know when committee meetings are scheduled, or changed, so it can be included in the bulletin.

If there is anything you would like to include in the “This Week at Our Church” please let the administrative assistant, Joe Baur, know at jbaur@stmarkswilliamsport.org

COMMEMORATIONS



Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, died 1179

Sunday, September 17, 2023

A mystic who was widely influential within the church, Hildegard advised and reproved kings and popes, wrote poems and hymns, and produced treatises in medicine, theology, and natural history. She was also a musician and artist.



Dag Hammarskjöld, renewer of society, died 1961

Monday, September 18, 2023

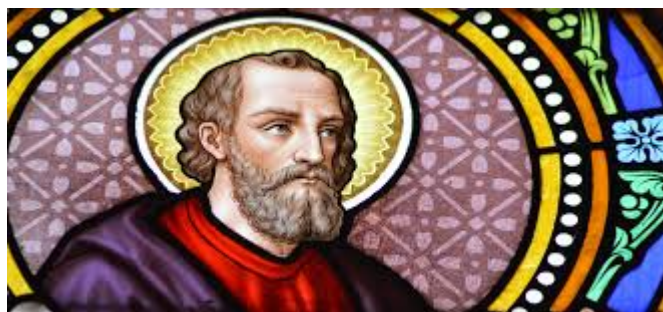
A Swedish diplomat, Hammarskjöld served as the second Secretary General of the United Nations until his death in a plane crash while trying to negotiate peace in present-day Zambia. His journal, published as *Markings*, revealed the depth of his Christian faith.



Nelson Wesley Trout, bishop, died 1996

Wednesday, September 20, 2023

A native of Ohio, Trout served parishes in several parts of the United States before being elected bishop of the South Pacific District of our former American Lutheran Church, the first African American Lutheran to serve in such a capacity.



Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist

Thursday, September 21, 2023

Matthew (or Levi) was a tax collector in Capernaum for the Roman government. Tax collectors were frequently despised for dishonesty and for assisting the occupiers. Jesus nevertheless showed love for them, and chose Matthew to be a disciple.