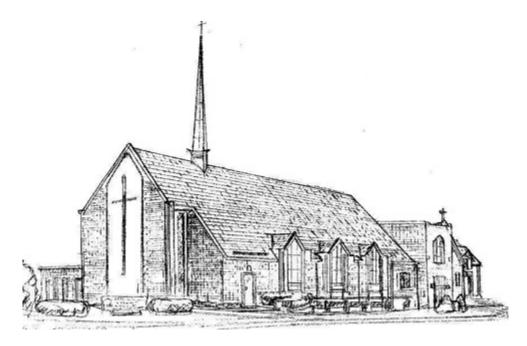
BETHLEHEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



Serving, accepting, and loving all.

Bulletin July 27, 2025

Daniel P. Smail & Ellen S. Lundie, Pastors Laura M. Henri, Organist and Director of Choirs

1719 Mt. Royal Boulevard – Glenshaw, PA 15116 Phone: 412-486-0550 E-Mail: office@belc.org

Web Page: www.belc.org

Sunday, July 27, 2025 Lectionary 17, Year C

Introduction

Persistence in prayer is encouraged by Jesus and wins the attention of God when Abraham intercedes for Sodom. The life of the baptized—to be rooted and built up in Christ Jesus—is to be nurtured with prayer. God hears and answers prayer and so strengthens God's own. "When I called, you answered me; you increased my strength within me."

GATHERING WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PRELUDE

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: In the name of the Father,

and of the + Son,

and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

A: Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

A: Merciful God,

you free us to love others,

but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way.

You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace,

but we turn away from the abundant life you offer.

You surround us with patience, kindness, and generosity,

but we grow weary in doing what is right.

In your mercy, forgive us.

Do not give up on us.

Heal us, break our bonds,

and show us the path of life.

Amen.

P: You belong to Christ Jesus and you are God's children through faith.

In the cross of + Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven.

Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation.

C: Amen.

GATHERING SONG NO. 763 My Life Flows On in Endless Song

1 My life flows on in endless song;

above earth's lamentation,

I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn

that hails a new creation.

Refrain

No storm can shake my inmost calm

while to that Rock I'm clinging.

Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,

how can I keep from singing?

2 Through all the tumult and the strife,

I hear that music ringing.

It finds an echo in my soul.

How can I keep from singing? Refrain

3 What though my joys and comforts die?

The Lord my Savior liveth.

What though the darkness gather round?

Songs in the night he giveth. Refrain

4 The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,

a fountain ever springing!

All things are mine since I am his!

How can I keep from singing? Refrain

GREETING

P: The grace of our 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





PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, you are always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and you gladly give more than we either desire or deserve. Pour upon us your abundant mercy. Forgive us those things that weigh on our conscience, and give us those good things that come only through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord..

C: Amen

WORD

FIRST READING: Genesis 18:20-32

In today's reading, Abraham undertakes the role of a mediator between God and sinful humanity. Appealing to God's justice, Abraham boldly asks for mercy for the city of Sodom for the sake of the few righteous people there, including Abraham's nephew, Lot.

A reading from Genesis.

²⁰ Then the LORD said, "How great is the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin! ²¹ I must go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me, and if not, I will know."

²² So the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the LORD. ²³ Then Abraham came near and said, "Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? ²⁴ Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you then sweep away the place and not forgive it for the fifty righteous who are in it? ²⁵ Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" ²⁶ And the LORD said, "If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place for their sake." ²⁷ Abraham answered, "Let me take it upon myself to speak to my lord, I who am but dust and ashes. ²⁸ Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?" And he said, "I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there." ²⁹ Again he spoke to him, "Suppose forty are found there." He answered, "For the sake of forty I will not do it." 30 Then he said, "Oh, do not let my lord be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there." He answered, "I will not do it, if I find thirty there." ³¹ He said, "Let me take it upon myself to speak to my lord. Suppose twenty are found there." He answered, "For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it." ³² Then he said, "Oh, do not let my lord be

angry if I speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there." He answered, "For the sake of ten I will not destroy it."

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 138

- ¹ I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with | my whole heart; before the gods I will | sing your praise.
- ² I will bow down toward your holy temple and | praise your name, because of your | love and faithfulness;
- ³ for you have glori- | fied your name and your word a- | bove all things.
- ⁴ When I called, you | answered me; you increased my | strength within me.
- ⁵ All the kings of the earth will praise | you, O LORD, when they have heard the words | of your mouth.
- ⁶ They will sing of the ways | of the LORD, that great is the glory | of the LORD.
- ⁷ Though the LORD be high, he cares | for the lowly; he perceives the haughty | from afar.
- ⁸ Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you | keep me safe; you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right | hand shall save me.
- ⁹ The LORD will make good his pur- | pose for me; O LORD, your love endures forever; do not abandon the works | of your hands.

SECOND READING: Colossians 2:6-15 [16-19]

The writer of this letter warns the congregation in Colossae about "the empty lure" of philosophies and traditions that compromise faith. Through the gift of faith, the church is mystically connected with Christ in his death and resurrection which is enacted in baptism. A reading from Colossians.

⁶ As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

⁸ Watch out that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental principles of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹ For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ¹⁰ and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority. ¹¹ In him also you were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision, by the removal of the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ; ¹² when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it.

[16 Therefore, do not let anyone condemn you in matters of food or drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or Sabbaths. 17 These are only a shadow of what is to come, but the body belongs to Christ. 18 Do not let anyone disqualify you, insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, initiatory visions, puffed up without cause by a human way of thinking, 19 and not holding fast to the head, from whom the whole body, nourished and held together by its ligaments and tendons, grows with a growth that is from God.]

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: Luke 11:1-13

In teaching his disciples this prayer, Jesus also reminds them to focus on God's coming reign, God's mercy, and the strengthening of the community. Jesus encourages his disciples to childlike trust and persistence in prayer.

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord

¹ [Jesus] was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." So he said to them, "When you pray, say:

Father, may your name be revered as holy.

May your kingdom come.

- ³ Give us each day our daily bread.
- ⁴ And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial."

⁵ And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, ⁶ for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.' ⁷ And he answers from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' ⁸ I tell you, even though he will not get up and

give him anything out of friendship, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

⁹ "So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹ Is there anyone among you who, if your child asked for a fish, would give a snake instead of a fish? ¹² Or if the child asked for an egg, would give a scorpion? ¹³ If you, then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON – The Rev. Ellen S. Lundie

HYMN OF THE DAY NO. 742 What A Friend We Have in Jesus

1 What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry ev'rything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit; oh, what needless pain we bearall because we do not carry ev'rything to God in prayer!

2 Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged-take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness-take it to the Lord in prayer.

3 Are we weak and heavy-laden, cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge-take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake you?
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a solace there.

Text: Joseph Scriven, 1820-1886

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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In solidarity with all creation, we join our voice to the voice of the whole church and pray for the needs of the world.

A brief silence.

Loving God, create in your church a desire for union with you in prayer. Raise up leaders to teach Christ's devotion to prayer and model Christ's way of prayer, until all people experience prayerful intimacy with you. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Reveal to humanity the sacredness of all creation. With the breath of your Spirit, realign the balances of nature. Grant persistence in prayer and action for the sake of the earth, our common home. God of grace, hear our prayer.

Teach rulers of the earth to sing of your ways, caring for the lowly and having no preference for the powerful. Direct the heart of every person to seek your will on earth as in heaven. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

To all whose prayers are cries for help, give your good gifts, and satisfy their deepest needs. Gather them to your constant, loving presence, that they may rest in the confidence of life with you. God of grace, hear our prayer.

Center the ministries of this assembly on prayer and service. Guide our relationships in the wider community, being ready to assist those who seek help. Strengthen feeding, clothing, and housing ministries and community partnerships. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for all who have gone before us. May we trust your steadfast love and continue in hope until we are united with all your saints. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Trusting in your lovingkindness, we place our prayer and hope in you, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

MEAL

OFFERING - Offering boxes are located in the narthex and in back of the sanctuary.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

C: Creator God.

in your wisdom you bring forth all that is good and the harvest is plentiful.

Strengthen us at your table with these gifts of the earth and our labor,

that we may work for the good of all; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Amen.

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.

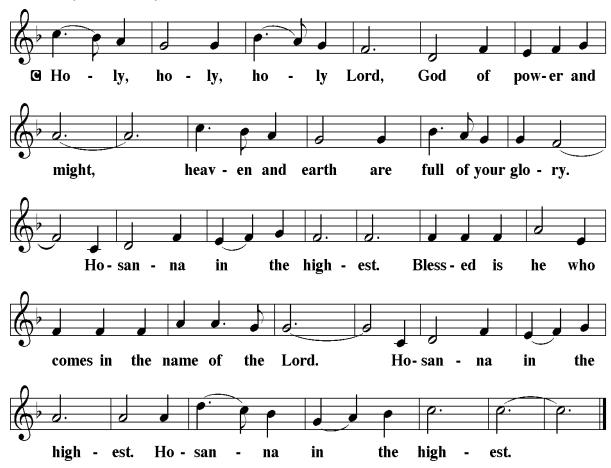
P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God,

our Maker, Redeemer, and Healer, in the harmonious world of your creation, the plants and animals, the seas and stars were whole and well in your praise. When sin had scarred the world, you sent your Son to heal our ills and to form us again into one.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and 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 for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,

his acts of healing,

his body given up,

and his victory over death,

we await that day when all the peoples of the earth

will come to the river to enjoy the tree of life.

Send your Spirit upon us and this meal:

as grains scattered on the hillside become one bread, so let your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth, that all may be fed with the Bread of life, your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,

Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church,

both now and forever.

Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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,

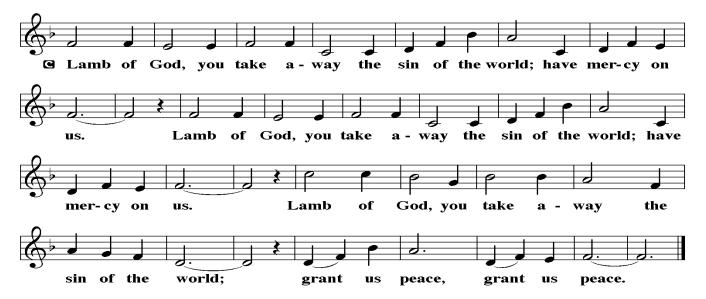
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Christ has set the table with more than enough for all. Come!

COMMUNION Gluten free wafers and grape juice available. Please ask the pastors or communion assistant.

COMMUNION SONG



COMMUNION HYMN NO. 745 Lord, Teach Us How to Pray Aright

1 Lord, teach us how to pray aright, with rev'rence and with fear.

Though dust and ashes in your sight, we may, we must draw near.

2 We perish if we cease from prayer; oh, grant us pow'r to pray.

And when to meet you we prepare, Lord, meet us on our way.

- 3 Give deep humility; the sense of godly sorrow give; a strong desire, with confidence, to hear your voice and live;
- 4 Faith in the only sacrifice that can for sin atone; to cast our hopes, to fix our eyes on Christ, on Christ alone.
- 5 Give these, and then your will be done; thus strengthened with all might, we, through your Spirit and your Son, shall pray, and pray aright.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

O God, we give you thanks that you have set before us this feast, the body and blood of your Son. By your Spirit strengthen us to serve all in need and to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **C: Amen.**

SENDING SONG NO. 543 Go, My Children, with My Blessing

1 "Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone.

Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own.

In my love's baptismal river

I have made you mine forever.

Go, my children, with my blessing, you are my own."

2 "Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.

Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.

Here you heard my dear Son's story,

here you touched him, saw his glory.

Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure."

3 "Go, my children, fed and nourished, closer to me.

Grow in love and love by serving, joyful and free.

Here my Spirit's power filled you,

here my tender comfort stilled you.

Go, my children, fed and nourished, joyful and free."

Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, b. 1919, alt.
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DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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Children's Space

We encourage children to worship in the sanctuary as much as possible. However, we know that some days, a break may be needed. Please stop in the lounge for shorter breaks where there are coloring activities and snacks provided. All children must be accompanied by an adult. The nursery is also available downstairs in Fellowship Hall with the ability to hear the service.

Monthly Special Offering for JULY is: United Lutheran Seminary

The Week at Bethlehem

Sunday, July 27th 8:00 am Worship & Communion

*9:30am Worship & Communion

* Live streaming of worship service

Monday, July 28th 9:00a-2:30p PACC (Fellowship Hall 11a-2p Passage to Recovery (Library)

Tuesday, July 29th 10:30-11:30a AA (Schmid Hall) 6:00-8:30pm NA (Fellowship Hall)

Wednesday, July 30th 10:30a & 7:00p Bible Study (Schmid Hall) 7-8:30p Boy Scouts Mtg. (Fellowship Hall)

Saturday, August 2nd 6:00pm Worship/Comm.



On the evening of September 23rd at 6:30 the Bethlehem Book Club will gather to discuss Robert Dugoni's, "Hold Strong." "Hold Strong," has been described as a "one of a kind novel," so join us for a meaningful conversation and let's discover the uplifting ways in which the things we are reading have the power to inform our lives of faith in meaningful ways.

Thanks in advance for your participation!



Outdoor Food Cupboard

Here are some of the most desired foods:

Single serve meals Spaghetti sauce & Pasta Hash Pop tarts/granola Bars

Cereals (small size boxes) Condiments- pickles Peanut butter/Jelly Ritz crackers

Ensure

individual: fruit cups, or cups of rice

Juices small individual size

Tuna (flip top lids)

small pks. Nuts or chips

Please remember not all people who come to our box have access to a can opener or a place to store what they take... so please think small sizes and individual servings with flip top lids...especially if you are thinking of kids they grab & go eat whatever and toss wrappers

wrapped single rolls of toilet paper Toothbrushes & Tooth Paste small deodorants

NO MEDICATIONS OF ANY KIND



BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS will take place at all service on the weekend of August 17th. Children of all ages are welcome and encouraged to come forward for a special blessing as you prepare for the start of a new school year.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Sunday School Registration 2025-2026

(Sunday School begins on Rally Day, Sept. 8th @ 9:15am)

Name:		
Address:		
Grade Entering:	Nickname:	
Date of Birth:	Date of Baptism:	
Emergency Contact during Sunday School:		
Name:	Phone:	
Email:		
Relationship:	OR In the Building:	
Food Allergies:		
Helpful hints to help your child learn:		
Special Needs:		

Thank you,

Bethlehem Sunday School Staff

Please return the completed form to the church office!!



Summer Fellowship Event!

Acrospire Brewing Company Wed, August 13 6:00-9:00 pm

Please join us for a fun evening of fellowship at our favorite local brewing company, **Acrospire**!

They will have beer for tasting and sale, and the Fellowship Committee will provide non-alcoholic beverages and light snacks. Please feel free to bring an appetizer to share if you'd like.



1702 MT. ROYAL BOULEVARD, GLENSHAW, PA 15116 www.acrospirebrewingco.com

Look for the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board to sign up.

Hope to see you there!



God's Work, Our Hands -- T-shirt ordering opportunity

Have you heard of (or seen) any God's Work, Our Hands t-shirts in and around BELC? Hint: There's a display in the Narthex now. It's been several years since we last ordered them -- and we thought perhaps folks are looking to update their wardrobe to include a great message! And, BELC's info will be displayed on the backs of the shirts. What a wonderful way to show the world what we are up to at BELC! Orders will be taken through Sunday, August 3rd. This way, we should have our order delivered to us in time to wear for the Rally Day celebration and Church Picnic on September 8th!

God's Work, Our Hands T-shirt Order Form

All shirts are 100% pre-shrunk cotton Short sleeve t-shirts: \$15.00 each Long sleeve t-shirts: \$20.00 each

Adult sizing: Small - 5XL Youth sizing: Small - Large

Please make checks payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Order forms may be placed in offering box, along with payment



Your generosity makes **ALL** the difference!

Glade Run serves thousands of youth in our schools and communities. Many families lack the resources to provide these basic items that will enable their children to be successful in school. If you can help by providing any of these items, please contact Glade Run Foundation.

Help the kids at Glade Run get ready for school by providing any of the following items:

School Supplies Needed:

- ✓ Journals/Composition Books
- Color Pencils
- Pocket Folders
- Calculators
- Crayons
- Washable Markers
- → Highlighters
- ✓ Pencil Boxes
- ✓ Construction Paper (all colors) ✓ Pens & No. 2 Pencils
- Backpacks
- Notebooks

- Glue Sticks
- ✓ Elmer's Glue
- ✓ Small White Boards w/markers
- Dry Erase Markers & Erasers
- Paints (finger, tempera & poster)
- Paint Brushes & Paint Cups
- Poster Board (all colors)
- ✓ Erasers
- Wall Calendars / Planners

Personal Items Needed:

- Stress Balls / Fidget Spinners / Pop Its
- Water Bottles
- Noise Cancelling Headphones
- Nerf Footballs / Sports Balls
- ✓ Kleenex / Clorox Wipes
- Hand Sanitizer
- → Hygiene Items (Toothbrush & paste, Deodorant, Shampoo, Body Wash, Comb & Brush)
- Dollar General, Giant Eagle, Aldi)

Please bring donated items by Friday, August 1 between 8am and 4pm to: Glade Run Lutheran Services, Administration Building Lobby

30 Glade Run Drive, Zelienople, PA 16063

For more information, contact Cheryl Martin at 724-452-4453 x1277 or by email at cmartin@gladerun.org.

About Glade Run: Glade Run is a non-profit organization that provides educational, mental health and autism services in both educational and community settings. Program offerings include treatment for children with emotional health issues, private education for students with behavioral health issues and autism, community-based mental health and autism services, and innovative therapeutic programs. Glade Run serves over 7,000 individuals annually through offices in Butler, Beaver Falls, Greensburg, New Castle, Pittsburgh, Rochester, West View, Wexford, Utica and Zelienople.





www.gladerun.org

Altar Guild Help

The Robes that the Acolytes wear each Sunday are in need of laundering. They can be washed on a normal cycle in cold water and hung to dry. Anyone who has a desire to help can pick up just a couple of the robes after church on Sunday from int the office area or anytime during the week when Marianne is in the office. If your child has been an acolyte perhaps they can even help with a little guidance from mom or dad. Thank you for your willingness to lend a helping hand.

A little look into August for L.I.F.T.

L.I.F.T. boat outing Saturday August 16, rain date August 17. 2:00 pm Please sign up in the Narthex if you plan to attend. The boat is docked on the Ohio River under the I79 bridge across from Neville Island. Please wear rubber soled shoes. There is a ramp to navigate from the shore to the docks along with a long walk on the docks to get to the boat. Main dish dinner will be provided. Sign up to bring snacks or side dish.



WORSHIP AND MUSIC NOTES

With another Hymn Sing service planned for the fall, members are requested over the rest of the summer to take a moment to submit your favorite hymn to be included. Perhaps use the quiet time before the worship service begins to leaf through the sections of the hymnal to help recall those hymns that have a special meaning. And if you have more than one favorite, be sure to submit the form below.

HYMN SING REQUEST FORM	
My favorite hymn Is:	No:
Name:	