

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

P.O. Box 666 • 216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • Sunday, September 8, 2013

The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost



John Propst
Interim Pastor

Greg Cline
Organist/Choirmaster

WELCOME/GATHERING

PRELUDE: *Love Divine* Hyfrydol

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God: the only Sovereign, who dwells in light;
Christ Jesus, who came to save sinners; the Holy Spirit, who lives within us.

C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P God of overflowing grace,

C we come to you with repentant hearts. Forgive us for shallow thankfulness.
Forgive us for passing by the ones in need. Forgive us for setting our hopes on
fleeting treasures. Forgive us our neglect and thoughtlessness. Bring us home from
the wilderness of sin, and strengthen us to serve you in all that we do and say;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

P There is joy in heaven over every sinner who repents. By the grace of God in + Christ
Jesus, who gave himself up for us all, your sins are forgiven and you are made free.
Rejoice with the angels and with one another! We are home in God's mercy, now and
forever.

C Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *O God Beyond All Praising* All Stand & Sing

1 O God be-yond all prais-ing, we wor-ship you to-day
 2 The flow'r of earth-ly splen-dor in time must sure-ly die,
 3 Then hear, O gra-cious Sav-ior, ac-cept the love we bring,

and sing the love a-maz-ing that songs can-not re-pay;
 its frag-ile bloom sur-ren-der to you, the Lord most high;
 that we who know your fa-vor may serve you as our King;

for we can on-ly won-der at ev-'ry gift you send,
 but hid-den from all na-ture the e-ter-nal seed is sown-
 and wheth-er our to-mor-rows be filled with good or ill,

at bless-ings with-out num-ber and mer-cies with-out end:
 though small in mor-tal stat-ure, to heav-en's gar-den grown:
 we'll tri-umph through our sor-rows and rise to bless you still:

we lift our hearts be-fore you and wait up-on your word,
 for Christ, your gift from heav-en, from death has set us free,
 to mar-vel at your beau-ty and glo-ry in your ways,

we hon-or and a-dore you, our great and might-y Lord.
 and we through him are giv-en the fi-nal vic-to-ry.
 and make a joy-ful du-ty our sac-ri-fice of praise.

Text: Michael Perry, 1942–1996

Music: THAXTED, Gustav Holst, 1874–1934

Text © 1982, 1987 Jubilate Hymns, admin. Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

GREETING

P Sisters and brothers in Christ, beloved children of God: grace, mercy, and peace be with you all.

C And also with you.

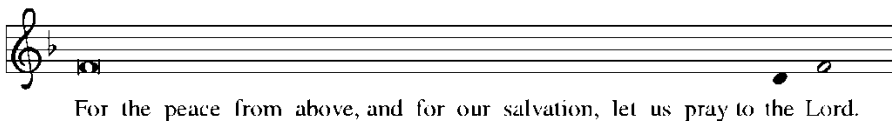
KYRIE

Assistant

Congregation



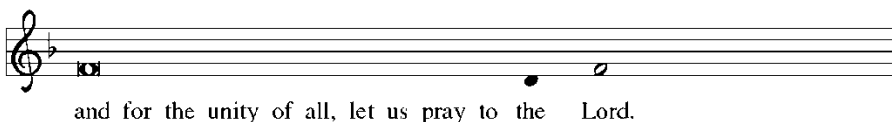
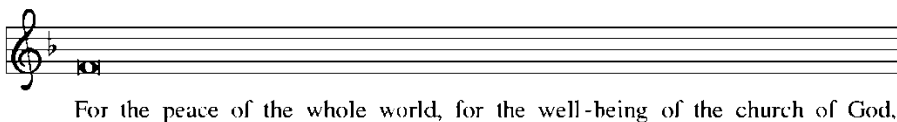
Assistant



Cong.



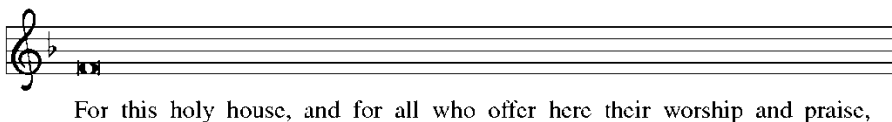
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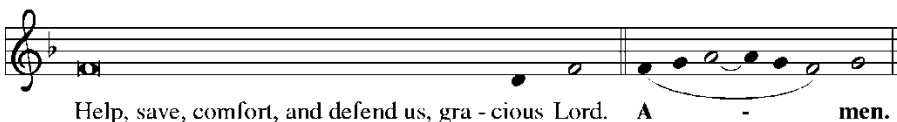
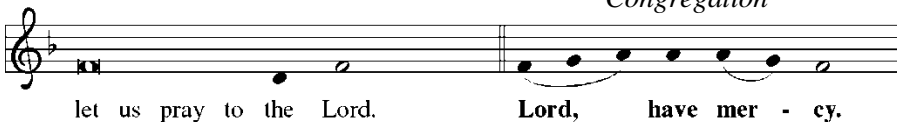
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Assistant



Congregation



GLORY TO GOD

Assisting minister



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Direct us, O Lord God, in all our doings with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

Congregation is Seated

CHILDREN'S TIME

Children ages 4 to 8 years-old are invited to go to the Education building for a 20-minute (or so) time together **immediately after the Children's sermon**. *Children will return to their parents during the hymn of the day.* Children **birth through 3 years-old** are invited to join others their age **in the nursery**.

FIRST READING

Deuteronomy 30:15–20

A reading from the thirtieth chapter of Deuteronomy.

Moses speaks to the Israelites, who are about to enter the land promised to their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In this passage, he lays out the stark choice before them: choose life by loving and obeying the Lord; or choose death by following other gods.

¹⁵See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. ¹⁶If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. ¹⁷But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, ²⁰loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 1 All Read Responsively

¹Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners,
nor sat in the seats of the scornful!

²**Their delight is in the law of the LORD,
and they meditate on God's teaching day and night.**

³They are like trees planted by streams of water,
bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither;
everything they do shall prosper.

⁴**It is not so with the wicked;
they are like chaff which the wind blows away.**

⁵Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes,
nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

⁶**For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked shall be destroyed.**

SECOND READING

Philemon 1:1–21

A reading from the first chapter of Philemon.

While Paul was in prison, he was aided by a runaway slave named Onesimus. The slave's master, Philemon, was a Christian friend of Paul. Paul told Onesimus to return to his master and encouraged Philemon to receive Onesimus back as a Christian brother.

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To Philemon our dear friend and co-worker, ²to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God ⁵because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. ⁶I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ. ⁷I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

⁸For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, ⁹yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love — and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. ¹⁰I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. ¹¹Formerly he was

useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. ¹²I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. ¹³I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; ¹⁴but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. ¹⁵Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever, ¹⁶no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother — especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. ¹⁹I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. ²⁰Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL

Luke 14:25–33

The holy gospel according to St. Luke, the fourteenth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus speaks frankly about the fearsome costs of discipleship. Those who follow him should know from the outset that completing the course of discipleship will finally mean renouncing all other allegiances.

²⁵Now large crowds were traveling with him; and he turned and said to them, ²⁶"Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. ²⁷Whoever does not carry the cross and

follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, ³⁰saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' ³¹Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³²If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. ³³So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.



P The gospel of the Lord.
C Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON: The Miracle of Forgiveness (Notes pages 15-16) Pastor John

HYMN OF THE DAY: *God, Whose Almighty Word* All Stand & Sing

1 God, whose al - might - y word cha - os and dark - ness heard
2 Christ, who once came to bring, on your re - deem - ing wing,
3 Spir - it of truth and love, life - giv - ing, ho - ly dove,
4 Ho - ly and bless - ed three, glo - ri - ous Trin - i - ty,

and took their flight: hear us, we hum - bly pray, and where the
heal - ing and sight; health to the trou - bled mind, sight where il -
speed forth your flight; move on the wa - ter's face bear - ing the
Wis - dom, Love, Might: bound - less as o - cean's tide, roll - ing in

gos - pel day sheds not its glo - rious ray, let there be light.
 lu - sions blind; oh, now to hu - man-kind let there be light.
 lamp of grace, and in earth's dark - est place let there be light.
 full - est pride, through the earth, far and wide, let there be light.

Text: John Marriott, 1780–1825, alt.
 Music: ITALIAN HYMN, Felice de Giardini, 1716–1796

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.**

* catholic with a small “c” refers to the whole Christian church throughout the world.

PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: *The Perfect Wisdom of Our God* Chamber Choir

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: *Create In Me* All Stand & Sing

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

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923
Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

Holy and faithful God, teach your church to walk in ways of trust and obedience. Plant your presence among us, that the life you intend for us may flourish. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Strengthen fruit-bearing trees and plants, as harvests are gathered. Increase yields, and encourage just distribution of food throughout the world. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Grant that all who are imprisoned or enslaved would know the freedom that you alone can give. Sustain them, that they would each one day know a safe and joyful homecoming. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Gather together all people who feel removed from you because of illness, crisis, or fear.

Deliver them to a place of healing, and embrace them with your unfailing mercy. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Bless Sunday school teachers and students, Bible study participants, and all teaching ministries. Let your life-giving word be freely shared among all who hunger for it. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Living God, refresh our hearts through the witness of the saints. Build us up as one community in Christ, and lead us to the good that comes from following you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Into your hands, O Holy One, we entrust all for whom we pray, confident in your abundant and abiding mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

BLESSING

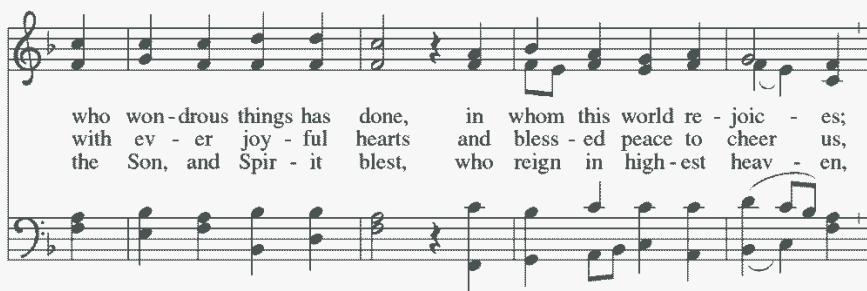
P God Almighty send you light and truth to keep you all the days of your life. The hand of God protect you; the holy angels accompany you; and the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you now and forever.

C Amen.

SENDING SONG: *Now Thank We All Our God* All Stand & Sing



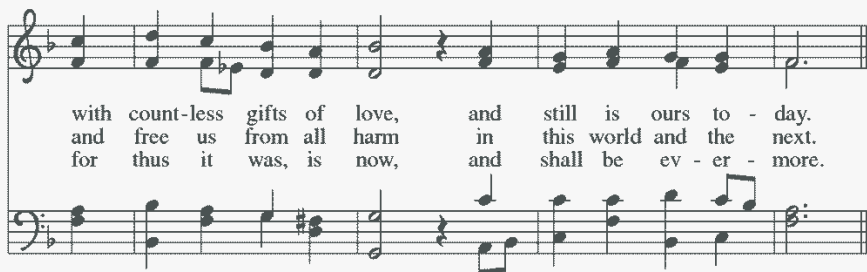
1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,
 2 Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
 3 All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,



who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;
 with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,
 the Son, and Spirit blest, who reign in highest heaven,



who, from our mothers' arms, has blest us on our way
 and keep us all in grace, and guide us when perplexed,
 the one eternal God, whom earth and heav'n adore;



with countless gifts of love, and still is ours to-day.
 and free us from all harm in this world and the next.
 for thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.

Text: Martin Rinkhart, 1586–1649; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878
 Music: NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT, Johann Crüger, 1598–1662

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C Thanks be to God.

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A CORDIAL WELCOME is extended to all of our visitors on this **The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**. We pray that you will find a warm fellowship while you are among us and that you will return home with a renewed sense of dedication to Jesus Christ. Please sign our guest register or a visitor's card so that we can become acquainted with you. If you are without a church home, we invite you to investigate membership in this family of God.

CHILDREN ARE WELCOME IN WORSHIP. Jesus said, "let the children come to me!" Parents are encouraged to utilize the Kids Worship Kits found in the Narthex for older toddlers through early elementary age. A nursery for children (**infants through 3 years old**) is located in the Education building. Let an usher know if you need assistance finding it.



KIDS' WORSHIP CENTER: Pick up kits as you enter for worship! **Please return the tote bag** with the plastic bag of crayons, scratch pads, and pencils to the stand in the narthex. The children may take any papers home with them.

PRAYER REQUESTS: A notebook has been placed in the narthex for your prayer requests during the week. The book will be in the narthex on Sundays and in the church office during the week. **If you wish a name to be added to our prayer board, please fill out a form from the prayer book or fill in the form on line at www.holyc.org.**

THE FLOWERS ON OUR ALTAR TODAY are given to the glory of God by Dianne Lail in honor of Ashleigh Nichols' 3rd birthday; and by Julia Gunter in appreciation of our Call Committee.

Those who have placed flowers on the altar may use the containers to take them home, but please return the containers to the church.

Greg Byrum, Worship & Music

Attendance & Budget Report for Sunday, September 1, 2013:

Attendance: 104

Budget Report

Current Offering Received 9/1/13
 Total Current Offering, Y-T-D (1/1/13-9/1/13)
 Expenses, Year-To-Date

September 1, 2013

\$ 3,648.00
 \$156,108.32
 \$139,502.21

The Current Offering Received for the year through September 1, 2013 is \$16,606.21 more than Holy Comforter's expenses through that date.

2013 Vision/ Building Fund Contributions:

- Vision /Building Fund Jan 1 – August 31, 2013 \$14,299.50
- **Vision/ Building Fund August 31, 2013 Balance** **\$ 27,183.19**

Jack A. Tench, Financial Secretary

ASSISTING MINISTERS:

LECTOR: Billy Joye, Jr. + Julia Gunter

ACOLYTES: Matthew Carr
 Ashton Nault

CRUCIFERS: Madison Carr
 Nick Ashe

GREETERS: The Causbys

ALTAR GUILD: (Team 2)

Louise Day, Co-Captain
 Brenda Daly, Co-Captain
 Nancy Powell Becky Richards

USHERS: Charles Mauney
 + Volunteer/s

THIS WEEK'S MEETINGS:**Today, Sunday, September 8**

9:30 am Sunday School
 10:10 am Church Choir
 10:30 am The Service
 Church Council after
 4:00 pm Children's Ensemble
 5:00 pm Handbell Choir
 6:00 pm Church Choir
HCY meet in fellowship hall
 8:00 pm Nar-Anon

Monday, September 9

11:00 am ***Morning Circle*** meets at
 Monique Estelle's home
 Bring a sandwich

Tuesday, September 10

7:00 pm Chamber Choir
 Nar-Anon

BIRTHDAYS FOR THE WEEK: September 8-14

Today, September 8 Lainey Baakko

September 11 Hannah Carnes
Madison Carr
Maria Carr



September 14 Emily Koehler

Do You Have an “*Inquiring Heart?*” ... about things like ...

- Growing in your faith journey with Jesus (discipleship)
- What it means to be a Lutheran Christian...beliefs about baptism, communion, salvation, the Bible, Luther's Small Catechism, the Trinity, eternity, how to stay awake in Church (just seeing if you're reading this!)...and many, many more beliefs.
- About the ELCA, NC Synod, other denominations and how we are similar and different, about other Lutheran “flavors”
- Maybe you wonder about the Church year (seasons, colors, etc.), the Reformation, what to bring to a Lutheran potluck (still reading??)
- Questions specific to Holy Comforter Church: mission & ministry opportunities, various SS classes, how you can join our WONDERFUL choir, youth program, what membership means AND others.

**Accept this as a special invitation for you to join an “Inquiring Heart Class” at
Holy Comforter!
Sunday Mornings 9:30 am
(Sunday School hour)
September 22 & 29 and October 6, 20, 27**

If you are considering membership, these classes would be great for you! Call the Church office (704-825-2483) or e-mail JohnCPropst@gmail.com .

“The Miracle of Forgiveness”

Luke 14; Book of Philemon

“Great things come in small packages” ... like the NT book of Philemon:

Onesimus was a slave from Colossae who stole from his master, Philemon, and then fled to Rome. He ***just happened*** to meet the Apostle Paul (yeah right – bet this was a God-incident!) who ***just happened*** to be an ‘ole friend of Philemon (another God-incident, I’d say!) Paul introduced Onesimus to Christ; then sent him back to Philemon with this little epistle (letter) tucked under his arm – an epistle that encourages mercy, forgiveness and Christian love.

Lessons on forgiveness ...

- Easy to talk about forgiveness ... much tougher to forgive
- Forgiveness is required act

"forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

(Jesus, The Lord's Prayer)

- Forgiveness is not contingent on the attitude of the offending party (the "other guy" or "other gal")

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

(Ephesians 4:32)

- Forgetting is not the same thing as forgiving

OK, so how do I move towards forgiveness? Applying God's Word ...

- ✓ Focus on God's grace rather than your pain
- ✓ Remind yourself of the kinship you have with the one who hurt you
- ✓ Many times action comes before feeling
- ✓ Realize that forgiveness just makes sense
- ✓ Ask God's Spirit to help you

More application ... fill in the blank with the person you need to forgive:

"Lord God, forgive me for holding a grudge against _____. In the same way You have forgiven me, I want to forgive _____. Help me to learn the beautiful and rare skill of showing mercy. Remind me daily of the promise, "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy."

Holy Comforter Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 666 Belmont, NC 28012 704-825-2483 holycomforter@gmail.com

SUNDAY SCHEDULE: 9:30 am Sunday School, 10:30 am The Service

Church Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:30 am — 3:00 pm

Website: www.holyc.org