A Mission Congregation of the ELCA Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pitsburg, Ohio 45358



Revelation 13 August 29, 2021



Scan with your Smartphone and link to our web page, our Facebook page, and our YouTube Channel.



"Arky, Arky; If I Were A Butterfly; Into My Heart"

Roxanne Groff

- Office of the Acolyte and Ringing of the Bell
- **Pastor Mel Musser** Welcome

* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

P: We confess our sins before God and one another.

Pause for silence and reflection.

P: Eternal Lord,

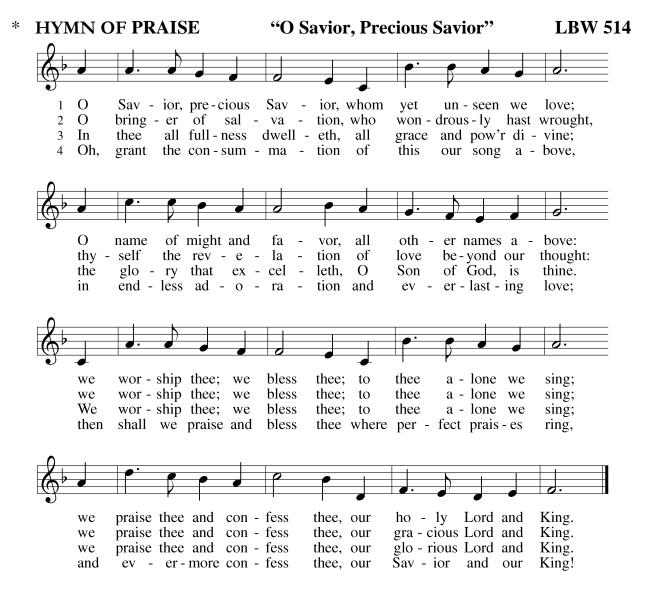
• Prelude

- C: We live in a world of anguish, and our sin only multiplies our suffering. Our despair discourages others. Our hopelessness paralyzes us from carrying out your work in the world. We pray for mercy, for strength, and for our faith to be restored, knowing that all good things come from you. Amen.
- L: God will indeed make all things new. Our Creator knows, hears, and answers the cries of our hearts. Despair no more, for the One who comes in power also comes in love, and death has no dominion in the world to come. Receive our Lord's promise of pardon, renewal, and peace which knows no end.

C: Amen.

August 29, 2021 * Please stand if able Page 2 of 19

Please be seated



* APOSTOLIC 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.

* PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray... Although we tremble at the beasts and evil that walk among us, we have courage because you are more powerful than they,

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

August 29, 2021

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Theme: Beasts and Monsters **Scripture**: Revelation 13:1-18

Items Needed: Stuffed Animal Monster

Who's afraid of ghosts and monsters? Who's not afraid of them? I have a pretty scary monster here. Anyone afraid of this monster? I hope not. We have these alpaca monsters all over our house, but I'm not afraid of them...

Today we're focusing on the part of the Book of Revelation that a lot of people think is really scary. They think it's so scary they won't read it. That makes me sad because in the Book of Revelation God reveals things about himself that God wants us all to know.

Today's bible story describes two really scary monsters who are both being controlled by a huge dragon. The dragon who always tries to scare us with terrible monsters is none other than the Devil.

Here's your good news for today. Jesus destroyed the devil when he was resurrected from the dead. He showed that mean ol' Devil that no matter how big and scary the monsters are, we know Jesus is bigger and stronger. Jesus' faithfulness is strong enough to take care of your monsters too.

How many of you have either started school already or are going to start this week? I'll bet you're excited. I'll also bet you're at least a little nervous and maybe a little scared. Nervousness and its big brother anxiety can become a terrible monster. So can big school projects that seem so big you'll never be able to get them done. If you worry about these things too much, they take your joy and make them bigger and scarier. Pretty soon you're terrified and can't learn as well as you could if you just gave all those worries and nervousness to Jesus. That doesn't mean you don't have to do the work! You still have to do all your homework and finish all your projects, but when you're not distracted by nervousness or anxiety you'll have a much easier time doing your best.

God doesn't remove all our beasts or monsters, but God guarantees our victory and our place with Jesus in the end.

Let's Pray... Dear Jesus, thank you for slaying the dragon and defeating the Devil. Help us and give us strength when we face monsters in our lives. Remind us that we are protected by the seal of the Holy Spirit and marked with your cross. In Jesus' Name, amen.

* Please stand if able August 29, 2021

• Please be seated Page 4 of 19

• SCRIPTURE READING: Revelation 13:1-18

P: Our scripture reading is from the Book of Revelation, Chapter 13. C: Glory to you O Lord.

And I saw a beast rising out of the sea having ten horns and seven heads; and on its horns were ten diadems, and on its heads were blasphemous names. ²And the beast that I saw was like a leopard, its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And the dragon gave it his power and his throne and great authority. ³One of its heads seemed to have received a death-blow, but its mortal wound had been healed. In amazement the whole earth followed the beast. ⁴They worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?" ⁵The beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. ⁶It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. ⁷Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. It was given authority over every tribe and people and language and nation, ⁸ and all the inhabitants of the earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slaughtered. ⁹Let anyone who has an ear listen: ¹⁰If you are to be taken captive, into captivity you go; if you kill with the sword, with the sword you must be killed. Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

and it spoke like a dragon. ¹²It exercises all the authority of the first beast on its behalf, and it makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound had been healed. ¹³It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in the sight of all; ¹⁴and by the signs that it is allowed to perform on behalf of the beast, it deceives the inhabitants of earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that had been wounded by the sword and yet lived; ¹⁵and it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast could even speak and cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. ¹⁶Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, ¹⁷so that no one can buy or sell who does not have the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. ¹⁸This calls for wisdom: let anyone with understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a person. Its number is six hundred sixty-six.

* Please stand if able August 29, 2021

• Please be seated Page 5 of 19

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ (Spoken)

• SERMON Pastor Mel Musser

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the one in charge of all things and who has authority over all things, Jesus Christ our Lord, amen.

My friends, I have no earthly idea when Jesus plans on returning. I don't know when judgment day will finally arrive. The reality is, no one knows the day nor the hour. Jesus said the great and awesome day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. Only God, our Father knows. We do have signs and wonders. Great earthquakes, and famines; pestilence and pandemic, unending wars, but are these signs of the end times or are they just a Tuesday in our world?

Lots of people have made millions of dollars in the End Times business.

Some churches literally have been founded on these Eschatological doctrines.

Why would so many flock to such unbiblical doctrines such as the Rapture or being left behind? These concepts only arose in the 1830s when a man named John Nelson Darby imagined this scenario in the clouds. The idea was popularized by Cyrus I. Scofield, an American minister who published a famous reference Bible in 1908. Scofield, like Darby, read the Book of Revelation as a vision of the future, not a fiery dream of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. I find it incredulous that a man named John, sitting on an island in the

^{*} Please stand if able August 29, 2021

[•] Please be seated Page 6 of 19

Mediterranean would write a Book foreseeing the future thousands of years in the future. It's much more believable that he was writing to his Brothers and Sisters in Christ about the current persecutions by the Roman Government and trying to offer them encouragement to remain faithful even under dire circumstances. So, as we proceed through this sermon and next week as we finish up our series in Revelation, I ask you to suspend your belief in the Rapture and everything you might have heard or read about being left behind and simply take the book of Revelation of Jesus Christ for what is is.

Today we heard John's description of the two beasts. One Beast comes from the sea and the other from the land. In Biblical terminology, the sea is sometimes a metaphor for the Gentiles or the Gentile territory. If that's so, then the Beast from the sea represents the Roman Empire. While the Sea represents the Gentiles, the land stands for the Jewish Religion, Pagan Religion, or religion in general. In John's Day the Christian Church faced persecution from both the Romans and from the Jewish leaders who were still trying to root out the followers of Jesus. Both of these Beasts were fueled by the dragon from Chapter 12, which we skipped over... The dragon is the metaphor for the devil. Last week I went through a litany of those from the early Church to today who have faced

^{*} Please stand if able August 29, 2021

[•] Please be seated Page 7 of 19

persecution and death at the hands of both the Jewish leaders and from the Roman Empire. Those facts are not in dispute.

So, what about these weird and scary beasts? Why does the sea beast have one head that's been mortally wounded, but somehow seems to have survived? Most scholars believe this crushed head represents the emperor Nero, the 5th Roman emperor. He came to power at the ripe old age of 13. Remember Nero was the emperor who fiddled while the Christians burned. Historians tell us Nero instigated a huge fire in the Christian section of Rome in order to clear the land for one of his building projects. He was responsible for some of the worst early persecutions of the Church. On 9 June in AD 68, Nero committed suicide, becoming the first Roman Emperor to do so. After his death there was a period of civil war in Rome. Nero was the Emperor who began the crushing defeat and destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish temple. He sent his General, Vespasian in AD 67 to destroy Jerusalem. It took Vespasian 3 years, but in AD 70 Jerusalem fell and the Temple was utterly destroyed. Although this happened 2 years after his death, Nero was the Emperor responsible for ordering the massacre of both Jews and Christians living in Jerusalem. With Nero dead one head of the Roman beast was mortally wounded. In the year following Nero's death, Rome had four rulers. Historians say the Roman Empire and every territory it held was teetering

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August 29, 2021

on collapse. What happened to save Rome? It was General Vespasian, who after defeating Jerusalem returned and become the one who consolidated power and returned the Empire to stability. Thus the Beast had been mortally wounded, but was healed and survived.

The Roman historian Tacitus gives us some detail on how the Beast made war with the saints. Before he committed suicide, Nero inflicted the most exquisite tortures on Christians. After Jesus, who was called the Christ was put to death under Pontus Pilate, His movement was thought to be put in check. When the Christian movement broke out again not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their center and become popular. Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, of the crime of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired. Nero offered his gardens for the spectacle, and was exhibiting a show in the circus, while he mingled with the people in the dress of a charioteer. As Nero's cruelty toward the Christians increased it became so hideous the public sentiment turned toward those

* Please stand if able

August 29, 2021 • Please be seated Page 9 of 19

being so severely persecuted. Once the public turned on Nero he fled Rome and eventually took his own life.

John writes that the Beast was allowed to do his bidding and wage war and to conquer the saints. I have to wonder why God would allow such horrific deaths to those God calls saints and children. Apparently, God values our freedom enough to allow even the worst of horrors to be inflicted upon the human race, by other humans. As we debate our freedom to choose to get vaccinated or not this issue is clearly still relevant today... The end result of the persecutions were that the blood of the martyrs watered the fields of Christianity. The more people who were killed, the more who were drawn to the faith. Christianity has never grown so fast as when it was under persecution and oppression. It hasn't really changed too much today. If you look around the world the places where the Christian faith is dying, we also have the most religious freedom and little or no persecution. On the other hand, where it's growing and converting more and more people are the places where people are oppressed and where persecution still exists. So, does God allow the Beast to wage war on the Church in order to make it grow and spread? My answer to that question is always a resounding No Way! God never causes our pain and suffering, but God isn't above using our self-inflicted suffering

* Please stand if able August 29, 2021

[•] Please be seated Page 10 of 19

or the suffering caused by Satan or one of his beasts to make good come out of the horrors we inflict upon one another.

Today, we face many Beasts. With our modern, sophisticated reasoning and rationale, we don't always attribute our troubles as directly to Satan as people did in John's day, but I still believe Satan or the Devil is behind many, if not the vast majority of the problems we face as a congregation and that our Country faces today. Carl Marx famously said that religion is the opiate of the people.

Unfortunately, far too many people have succumbed to Marx's opiates. I believe Christianity is far from an opiate. Rather it's a call to remain faithful to following Jesus Our Lord and Savior. It's a call to continue the race until we also receive our crown and our seat at the Banquet of the Lamb.

May we never tire of the fight to put Satan down no matter what hideous form his beasts may take in our lives. May we look to the lives of the martyrs who went before us for inspiration to keep fighting our own monsters weather they come from the sea or from the land. May we remember who wins the battle and indeed the whole war. Revelation is pretty scary if all you read is chapters 6 through 20. But hold on because next week we get to see the pay off for those who hold fast to the savior. May we have strength for our own personal fights with the devil until we get to experience the great victory for ourselves. Amen.

^{*} Please stand if able

August 29, 2021

SPECIAL MUSIC

"He's Got the Whole World"

He's got the whole wide world in His hands.

He's got the big round world in His hands, He's got the whole wide world in His hands,

He's got the whole world in His hands.

He's got the wind and the rain in His hands

He's got the sun and the moon in His hands.

He's got the wind and the rain in His hands,

He's got the whole world in His hands.

He's got the tiny little baby in His hands, He's got that helpless little baby in His hands.

He's got the tiny little baby in His hands, He's got the whole world in His hands.

He's got you and me, brother, in His hands,

He's got you and me, sister, in His hands, He's got you and me, brother, in His hands.

He's got the whole world in His hands. He's got ev'rybody in His hands, He's got ev'rybody in His hands, He's got ev'rybody in His hands, He's got the whole world in His hands.

"I Have the Joy, Joy, Joy"

I have the joy, joy, joy, joy, Down in my heart. Down in my heart. Down in my heart. I have the joy, joy, joy, joy, Down in my heart. Down in my heart to stay.

I have the peace that passes understanding, Down in my heart. Down in my heart. Down in my heart. I have the peace that passes understanding, Down in my heart. Down in my heart to stay.

I have the love of Jesus, love of Jesus, Down in my heart. Down in my heart. Down in my heart. I have the love of Jesus, love of Jesus, Down in my heart. Down in my heart. Down in my heart.

* Please stand if able August 29, 2021 Page 12 of 19

* APOSTLES' CREED

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.

> Or, He descended to the dead.

BLESSING FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

Pr Mel

- P: As we prepare for the beginning of a new school year, I ask all teachers and students to stand if able. I also ask all parents and grandparents of students to stand as well. I ask all people who are associated with our education system in any way to stand. This includes school board members, bus drivers cafeteria workers, volunteers, PTA members, anyone who has anything to do with our schools, our Sunday Schools, our Confirmation program, and our Adult Sunday School program. If you think you don't play a part in any educational system, but if you are willing to commit to praying for our schools over this coming year, then please stand as well. I think that covers just about everyone... Thank you for all you do to help educate children and adults alike! Please be seated...
- P: A reading from First Corinthians: Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Cor. 12:4-7)
- P: Let us pray... O God, we ask your blessing upon for all who are beginning a new school year. We lift up both students and teachers in their academic endeavors. Almighty God, you give wisdom and knowledge. Grant teachers the gift of joy and insight, and students the gift of diligence and openness, that all may grow in what is good and honest and true. Support all who teach and all who learn, and all who support in any way the institutions of Education. Bless all who use their gifts in administration, meal preparation, transportation, custodial care, as well as those who are directly involved in the

* Please stand if able August 29, 2021

• Please be seated Page 13 of 19

learning process, teachers and their students. Make all of us role models and mentors for those people in our lives who look up to us so that by the way we live and by our actions we may demonstrate our love for you. In all we do, may we know and follow your ways; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

BLESSING OF BACKPACKS

P: At this time will all the children who have brought their backpacks and anyone else who brought in the tools of your trade please come forward and gather around the Baptismal Font.

As they gather read:

- P: A reading from Mark 10:13–16. ¹³People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. ¹⁴But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. ¹⁵Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." ¹⁶And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.
- P: Let us pray for our children and the backpacks they will carry this school year... Dear God, as we begin another year in school, we ask your blessing on these backpacks, and especially on these children who will use them. As they do the very important work of being students, bless them with: eagerness to learn, that their world may grow large; respect for teachers and other students, that they may form healthy relationships; love for nature, that they may become caretakers of your creation; happiness when learning is easy and persistence when it is hard; faith in Jesus as their best teacher and closest friend.
- P: We ask that you would protect these, your own children. Watch over them and keep them safe as they travel to and from school. As they learn, help them also to discover the different gifts that you have given each one of them to be used in your work in the world. As they hear the many voices that will fill their days, help them to listen most carefully for your voice, the one that tells them you will love them always, no matter what. We ask this in Jesus' name.

C: Amen.

P: As the Children return to their seats with their backpacks, we continue our Worship Service with the Prayers of Intercession.

* Please stand if able August 29, 2021

• Please be seated Page 14 of 19

* PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

L: We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

L: Lord God, you show us that despite the evil in the world, we follow one who is far more powerful. Teach us to follow the ways of justice, peace, goodness, and love. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: As the summer nears its end, walk with students who are beginning a new school year. Bless teachers, administrators, and all who work in our educational systems as they educate, nurture, and love our kids. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: As our weather turns, help us to heal the planet so that it can continue to sustain life. Show us how to care for the earth, and the plants, animals, and people who live on it. Help us not to destroy, but to heal. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Spread your healing wings over all who are in need of your love and care. Lessen pain, lower fear, and heal bodies, minds, and souls, especially for... Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: To those who see your face, and who bear your name on their foreheads, we give thanks and long for our final and perfect communion within your holy family, in our forever home. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other petitions may be offered.

P: Hear our prayers, holy God, as we uplift all who need your healing and comforting presence. For the sake of Jesus Christ, we pray.

C: Amen.

* SHARING OF THE PEACE

(The Sharing of the Peace that began when the congregation arrived is now shared with the Pastor at this time...)

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

* OFFERING PRAYER

While the congregation is still standing say:

P: Instead of passing the offering plate, we ask you to please place your offering in the Offering Plates conveniently located on your way out of worship. For those worshipping with us from their vehicles, there is an offering basket located near

* Please stand if able August 29, 2021

• Please be seated Page 15 of 19

- the back door of the church and for those worshipping online if you go to www.pitsburgtlc.org you can make your offering online.
- P: So, let's pray for the offerings we receive this day. Holy and mighty Lord, we bring these gifts before you in the hopes you will use what we offer to bring light and goodness into the world. Receive what we offer out of gratitude and awe at your majesty.

C: Amen.

* THE LORD'S PRAYER

- P: Jesus is the "tie that Binds us together", let us pray as Jesus taught...
- 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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

* SENDING BLESSING

P: The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, + be upon you now and forever.

C: Amen.

* SENDING HYMN "Praise Him, Praise Him"

- Praise Him, praise Him, all ye little children; God is love, God is love. Praise Him, praise Him, all ye little children; God is love, God is love.
- 2. Love Him, love Him, all ye little children; God is love, God is love. Love Him, love Him, all ye little children; God is love. God is love.

- 3. Thank Him, thank Him, all ye little children; God is love, God is love. Thank Him, thank Him, all ye little children; God is love, God is love.
- 4. Serve Him, serve Him, all ye little children; God is love, God is love. Serve Him, serve Him, all ye little children; God is love. God is love.

* Please stand if able August 29, 2021

Please be seated

- * DISMISSAL
- P: Until the next time we gather together as God's people to offer our worship and praise, depart in Christ's Love.
- C: Seeking, welcoming, and serving all. Amen!

* POSTLUDE

"I Have the Joy"

Roxanne Groff

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Scripture readings for next Sunday, September 5th Revelation 21:1-6; 22:1-5

Health Tips for the Week

BODY: Limit your alcohol intake

MIND: Talk with someone from a different generation **SPIRIT:** Ask what you can do to help at church

Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

The state of the s	· •
Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Lector	Peggy Didier
Acolyte	
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Facebook Live Recorder	PJ Musser
Altar Flowers	



Trinity is on the Air at FM 88.3

If you are near the Church on Sunday morning, you can tune in to FM 88.3 at 10:30 AM and hear the sermon from your car.



PLEASE PICK UP YOUR SEPTEMBER TRINITY TRUMPET from the table outside the church office.

This Week @ Trinity - August 29 thru September 5, 2021

Sun, August 29

10:30 am Worship Service – Rally Day

Hot dogs & Ice Cream after Worship

Tues, August 31

10:00 am Prayers & Squares Quilting

Thurs, September 2

6:30 pm WELCA Meeting

Fri, September 3

3:30 pm FISH Choice Food Pantry

Sun, September 5

10:30 am Worship Service

SAVE THE DATE!

Trinity Fall Festival: October 24th from 4:00 to 6:30 pm

AROUND THE PARISH

Holy Communion Delivery Available to ALL:

If you or anyone you know would like to have Holy Communion delivered to a home or place of business, please call Pastor Mel at 937-626-7100. He will bring a prefilled communion chalice including both sanctified wine and a morsel of bread all prepackaged from the Concordia True Vine company. This is a safe way to stay connected to your brothers and sisters in Christ.

* Please stand if able August 29, 2021

• Please be seated Page 18 of 19

Trinity Contact Info

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* Please stand if able August 29, 2021