



So the LAST
will be
FIRST
and the FIRST
LAST.

Matthew 20:1-16

First Lutheran Church

September 20, 2026

Pentecost 17

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

LAUDES DOMINI

Edward G. Mead

When Morning Gilds the Skies

GATHERING

The assembly stands.

INTRODUCTION

AM: Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

PM: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, whose compassion endures forever.

C: Amen.

PM: Let us confess our sin to God.

The assembly kneels.

PM: Compassionate God,

C: we confess to you all our sins.

Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves.

In your mercy, call us back to you.

Your yoke is easy and your burden is light.

Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray,

Amen.

PM: Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

In the name of God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,
your sins are forgiven.

Rest in God's love.

C: Amen.

The assembly stands.

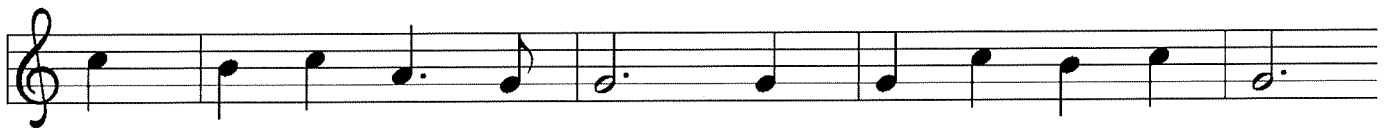
GATHERING SONG

WHEN MORNING GILDS THE SKIES

ELW # 853



1 When morn - ing gilds the skies, my heart a - wak - ing cries:
2 When mirth for mu - sic longs, this is my song of songs:
3 No love - lier an - ti - phon in all high heav'n is known
4 Let all of hu - man - kind in this their con - cord find:
5 Sing, sun and stars of space, sing, all who see his face,



may Je - sus Christ be praised! When eve - ning shad - ows fall,
may Je - sus Christ be praised! God's ho - ly house of prayer
than "Je - sus Christ be praised!" There to the e - ter - nal Word
may Je - sus Christ be praised! Let all the earth a - round
sing, "Je - sus Christ be praised!" God's whole cre - a - tion o'er,

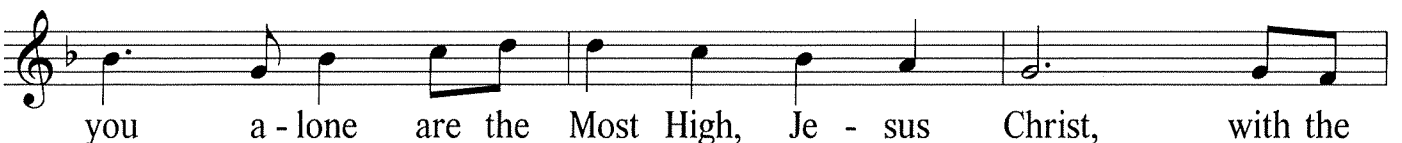
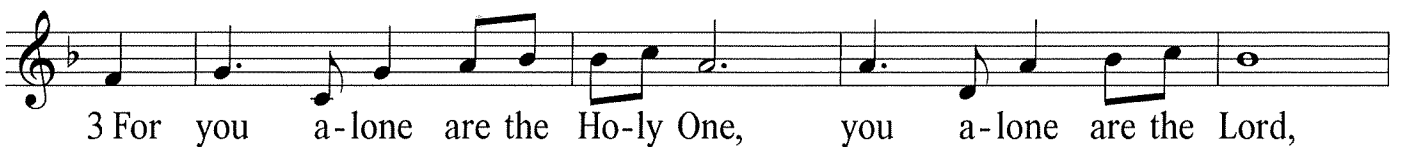
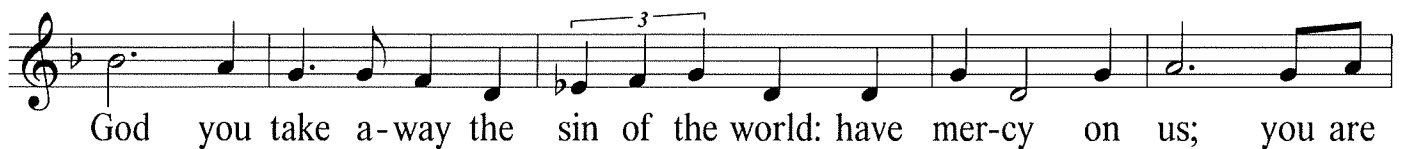
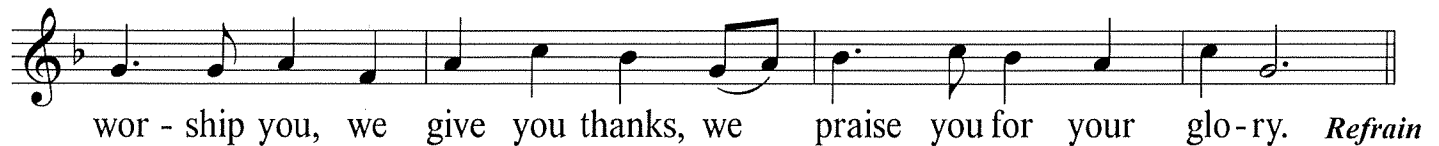


this rings my cur - few call: may Je - sus Christ be praised!
has none that can com - pare with "Je - sus Christ be praised!"
the e - ter - nal psalm is heard: oh, Je - sus Christ be praised!
ring joy - ous with the sound: may Je - sus Christ be praised!
to - day and ev - er - more shall Je - sus Christ be praised!

GREETING

PM: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ the love of God
and the communion of the Holy Spirt be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Refrain

PRAYER OF THE DAY

PM: Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness
to us your servants.

Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment,
and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ,
our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

The assembly is seated.

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

WORD

FIRST READING

JONAH 3:10,4-11

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?

AM: A reading from Jonah, the third chapter

¹⁰ When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it. ^{4:1} But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. ³ And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴ And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵ Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. ⁶ The LORD God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live." ⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die."

¹⁰ Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night.

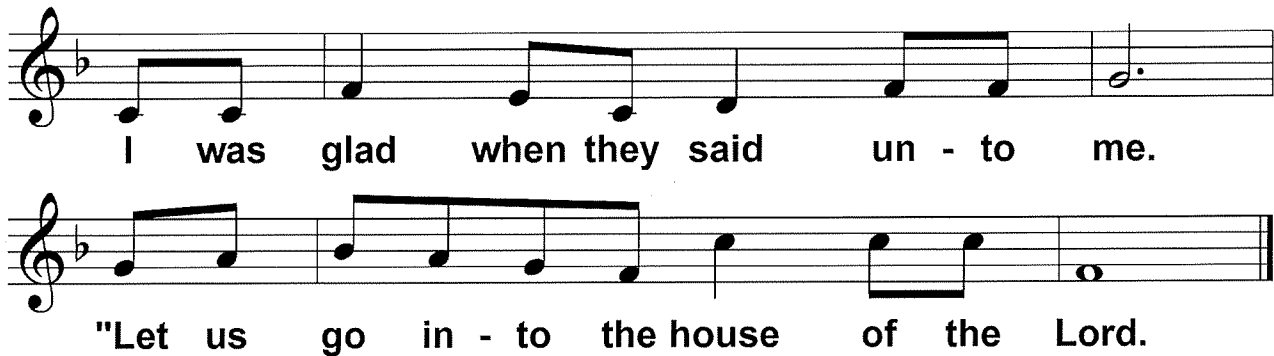
¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?"

AM: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM

PSALM 122:1-9



The Cantor will sing the verses:

¹ I was glad when they | said unto me, "Let us go into the house | of the Lord."

² Now our | feet are standing within your gates, | O Jerusalem. ³ Jerusalem is built | as a city that is at unity | with itself; ⁴ to which the tribes go up, the tribes | of the Lord, the assembly of Israel, to praise the name | of the Lord. **Refrain**

⁵ For there are the | thrones of judgment, the thrones of the | house of David.

⁶ Pray for the peace | of Jerusalem: "May they pros- | per who love you. **Refrain**

⁷ Peace be with- | in your walls and quietness with- | in your towers.

⁸ For the sake of my kindred | and companions, I pray for | your prosperity.

⁹ Because of the house of the | Lord our God, I will seek to | do you good." **Refrain**

SECOND READING

PHILIPPIANS 1:21-30

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

AM: A reading from Philippians, the first chapter.

²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, ²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.

²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ and in no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹ For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

AM: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



The Cantor will sing the verse:

Open our ¹ hearts, O Lord, * to give heed to what is said ¹ by your Son.

GOSPEL

MATTHEW 20:1-16

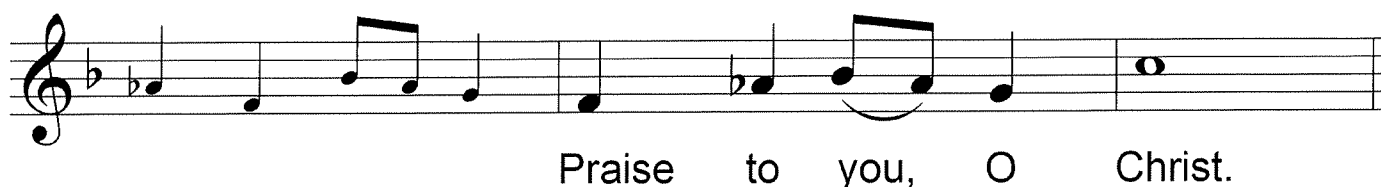
Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

PM: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.



[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹ "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷ They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹ When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³ But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

PM: The Gospel of the Lord.



The assembly is seated.

SERMON**PASTOR MARK SCHURING**

The assembly stands.



1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy, like the wide-ness of the sea;
 2 There is wel - come for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;
 3 For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;
 4 'Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice which is more than lib - er - ty.
 there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing in his blood.
 and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.
 great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in heav'n.
 There is grace e - nough for thou - sands of new worlds as great as this;
 But we make this love too nar - row by false lim - its of our own;
 Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,



There is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
 there is room for fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.
 and we mag - ni - fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.
 and our lives will be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

NICENE CREED

PM: In trust and hope we profess our faith in the words of the Nicene Creed.

C: We believe in one God,
 the Father, the Almighty,
 maker of heaven and earth,
 of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
 the only Son of God,

eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The assembly kneels.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

PM: Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love,
we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

A brief silence.

AM: Hold your church responsible for our unwillingness to share your good news.
Nourish us by your grace to be witnesses to your love.

Each petition concludes:

PM: Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

PM: Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask,
and whatever else you see that we need.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

C: Amen.

The assembly stands.

PEACE

PM: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The assembly is seated.

MEAL

OFFERING AND ORGAN MEDITATION

Richard Peek

Aria

The assembly stands.

OFFERING PRAYER

AM: God of creation,
you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly.
All blessings are from you;
make us generous with what we have.
Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts
in service to you and in love to our neighbors,
today and always.

C: Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

PM: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

PM: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

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

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

PREFACE

PM: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,
almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ;
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 all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho - san - na in the
high - est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

PM: 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.

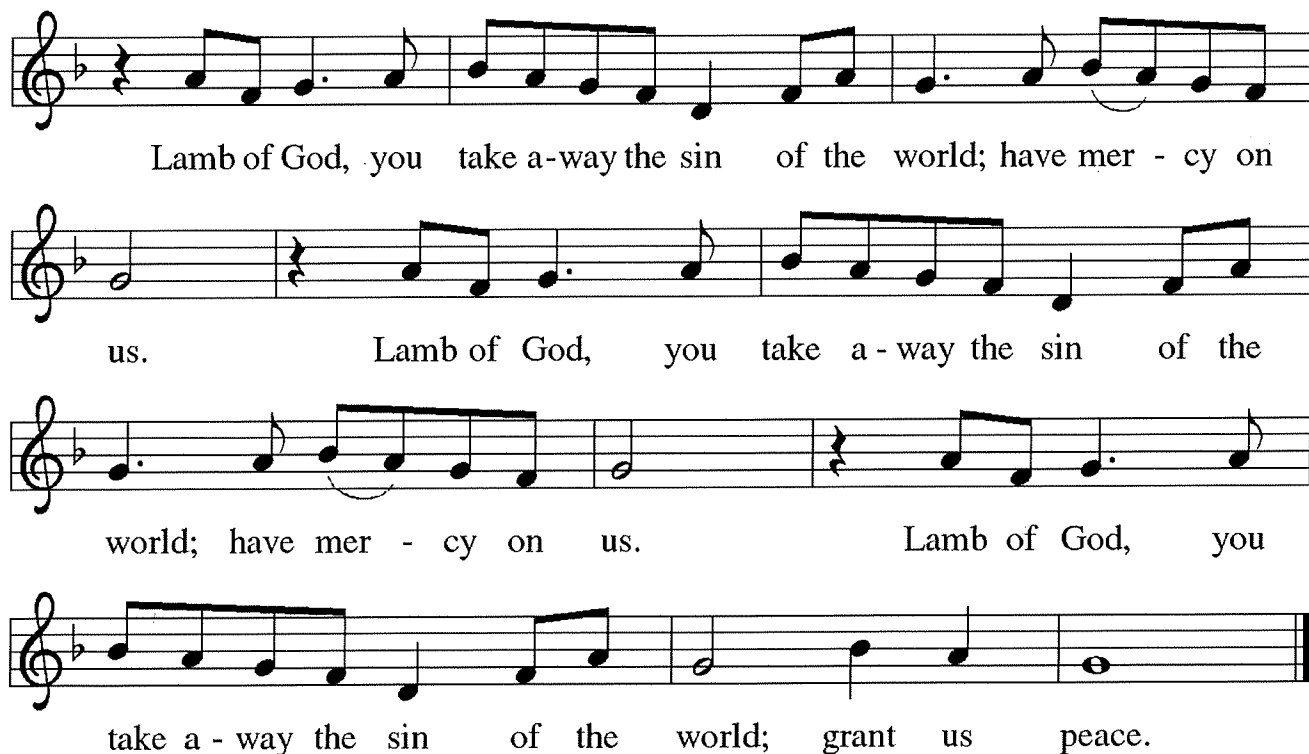
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

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.

The assembly is seated.

COMMUNION

Communion is distributed in two manners

† *You may commune in your pews.*

Individual communion kits are available at the Narthex doors.

*The presiding minister will share a blessing,
all communing in-place will commune together.*

† *You may come to the Table, to receive the Body and Blood of Christ.*

A basket is available for disposal of your individual communion cups.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

PM: Christ invites you to this table.

All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

COMMUNION SONG

WILL YOU LET ME BE YOUR SERVANT

ELW # 659



1 Will you let me be your ser - vant, let me be as
2 We are pil - grims on a jour - ney, we are trav - 'lers
3 I will hold the Christ - light for you in the night - time
4 I will weep when you are weep - ing; when you laugh I'll
5 Will you let me be your ser - vant, let me be as



Christ to you? Pray that I may have the grace to
on the road; we are here to help each oth - er
of your fear; I will hold my hand out to you,
laugh with you. I will share your joy and sor - row
Christ to you? Pray that I may have the grace to



let you be my ser - vant, too.
walk the mile and bear the load.
speak the peace you long to hear.
till we've seen this jour - ney through.
let you be my ser - vant, too.

The assembly stands.

TABLE BLESSING

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

C: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

AM: Sustaining God,
with this bread and cup,
you nourish us with mercy and abundant life.

By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world.

Make us living signs of your healing, and love,
following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.

C: Amen.

SENDING

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

PM: We pray together:

C: Oh, God, your everlasting love for us is always trustworthy and sure.

**We are grateful for your goodness and we ask now for confidence
to go forward into the future.**

**Bless our community of faith, bless the changes that are before us,
bless our pastoral leaders who will shepherd us
through this time of transition.**

We thank you for the wisdom you show us.

Help us to keep looking to you to define our ministry and our future.

**Receive our prayer, O God, through Jesus Christ,
our strength and salvation. Amen.**

BLESSING

PM: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, + one God,
bless, heal, and hold you today and always.



SENDING SONG

AS SAINTS OF OLD

ELW # 695



- 1 As saints of old their first-fruits brought of or - chard, flock, and field
- 2 A world in need now sum-mons us to la - bor, love, and give;
- 3 In grat - i - tude and hum-ble trust we bring our best to - day



to God, the giv - er of all good, the source of boun-teous yield,
to make our life an of - fer - ing to God, that all may live.
to serve your cause and share your love with all a - long life's way.



so we to - day first - fruits would bring, the wealth of this good land,
The church of Christ is call - ing us to make the dream come true:
O God, who gave your - self to us in Je - sus Christ your Son,



of farm and mar - ket, shop and home, of mind and heart and hand.
a world re-deemed by Christ-like love; all life in Christ made new.
teach us to give our - selves each day un - til life's work is done.

DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE

AM: Go out in joy.

PM: Be led forth in peace.

C: Thanks be to God.

Wayne L. Wold

Jubilation in C

Events in Review

Sunday **Sept 20**

10:00 AM Pentecost 17

Monday **Sept 21**

10:00AM Bible Study at Willows

1:30 PM Bookworms

5:15 PM Bells of Praise Practice

Tuesday **Sept 22**

Wednesday **Sept 23**

Thursday **Sept 24**

1:00 PM WOFB

Friday **Sept 25**

Saturday **Sept 26**



If you have a prayer request for today, please raise your hand during announcements and a host will give you a green card to fill out.

Next Week

Sunday **Sept 27**

10:00 AM Pentecost 18

Monday **Sept 28**

10:00 AM Bible Study at Willows

5:15 PM Bells of Praise Practice

Tuesday **Sept 29**

Wednesday **Sept 30**

Thursday **Oct. 1**

Friday **Oct 2**

Saturday **Oct 3**

****Reminder****

Emergency contact information is always on the back page of your weekly bulletin & Monthly Scroll.

It is also listed on every entrance door.

Address for Sympathy Cards for Jim Ruess

*The Ruess Family
1466 Smith Road,
Ashland, Ohio 44805*

The results of the Congregational Survey is available on the table in the hallway.



Sharing Kitchen

October 12th & 15th

Sign up sheet

located on Information

Board

The Word in Season & Portal of Prayer for October, November & December and September's Monthly Scroll are now available on the hallway table

Contact Us



First Lutheran Church

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Our Worship Leaders

Altar Guild Mike & Bonnie Oberlander
Cantor: Elijah Shiley
Facebook Camera The Rosses
Host Judy Kimmel
Reader: Shelley Ross
Worship Assistant Shelley Ross
Director of Music: Curtis L. King
Minister: Pastor Mark Schuring
Assisting Minister:

Interim Pastor

Pastor Mark Schuring

(740) 360-2306

theskipster55@gmail.com

Emergency Contacts

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CURTIS L. KING	419 937-7142
GLORIA STACY	419 934-3023
RICK SHOLL	419 939-3436

Our Mission Statement

“God is among us!”

**“We are called to go out, care for all, share the gospel,
forgive, reconcile and trust God for all that we need.”**