

Stewardship 2026 Join the Journey

*"Trust in God from the bottom of your heart;
don't try to figure out everything on your own.
Listen for God's voice in everything you do,
everywhere you go." Proverbs 3:4-6*



WELCOME TO WORSHIP Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost September 6, 2026 9:00 AM Traditional Worship

Pastor: Paula Geister-Jones **Lay Ministry Administrator:** Jenny Hoffman
Organist/Pianist: Linda Kunz
Lector: Mike Warwick
Acolyte: Ben & Anna Foltz
Ushers: Todd Skavlen, Mark Wilbert, Eric Smedal, Roger Nitzche
Technical Support: Thomas Lehr, Roger Slack

Conflict is a part of relationships and life in community. Jesus' words in today's gospel are often used in situations having to do with church discipline. The prophet Ezekiel tells of warning the wicked to turn from their ways. We gather in the name of Christ, assured that he is present among us with gifts of peace and reconciliation.

CALL TO WORSHIP: "God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending" Parry/Biery

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth.

C: Amen.

P: Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.
Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Compassionate God,

C: We confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.

P: Hear this good news: We have peace with God through ✠ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

C: Amen.

Stand

HYMN: “Earth and All Stars” #731 ELW vss. 1, 3 & 4

Vs. 1: Earth and all stars! Loud rushing planets!

Sing to the Lord a new song!

Hail, wind, and rain! Loud blowing snowstorm!

Sing to the Lord a new song!

Refrain: God has done marvelous things.

I too sing praises with a new song!

Vs. 3: Engines and steel! Loud pounding hammers!

Sing to the Lord a new song!

Limestone and beams! Loud building workers!

Sing to the Lord a new song! *Refrain...*

Vs. 4: Classrooms and labs! Loud boiling test tubes!

Sing to the Lord a new song!

Athlete and band! Loud cheering people!

Sing to the Lord a new song! *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.

LITANY

P: You are the treasured people of the Lord,

C: a people holy to the Lord our God.

P: Keep the words of the Lord in your heart; teach them to your children.

C: Talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.

P: One does not live by bread alone,

C: but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

HYMN OF PRAISE: “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty” #858 ELW vss. 1 & 4

Vs. 1: Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!

O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!

**Let all who hear now to his temple draw near,
joining in glad adoration!**

Vs. 4: Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me adore him!

All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him!

Let the amen sound from his people again.

Gladly forever adore him!

SALUTATION

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

C: O Lord God, enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy. Without your help, we mortals will fail; remove far from us everything that is harmful, and lead us toward all that gives life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Sit

ANTHEM: “Just a Closer Walk with Thee” Peterson Family

READING: Ezekiel 33:7-11

¹⁷⁻¹⁹ “You, son of man, are the watchman. I’ve made you a watchman for Israel. The minute you hear a message from me, warn them. If I say to the

wicked, ‘Wicked man, wicked woman, you’re on the fast track to death!’ and you don’t speak up and warn the wicked to change their ways, the wicked will die unwarned in their sins and I’ll hold you responsible for their bloodshed. But if you warn the wicked to change their ways and they don’t do it, they’ll die in their sins well-warned and at least you will have saved your own life. ¹⁰ “Son of man, speak to Israel. Tell them, ‘You’ve said, “Our rebellions and sins are weighing us down. We’re wasting away. How can we go on living?”’ ¹¹ “Tell them, ‘As sure as I am the living God, I take no pleasure from the death of the wicked. I want the wicked to change their ways and live. Turn your life around! Reverse your evil ways! Why *die*, Israel?’

P: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: “Halle, Halle, Hallelujah” #172 ELW

Halle, halle, hallelujah.

Halle, halle, hallelujah.

Halle, halle, hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

The Gospel is announced...

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 18th Chapter

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Sit

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:15-20

¹⁵⁻¹⁷ “If a fellow believer hurts you, go and tell him—work it out between the two of you. If he listens, you’ve made a friend. If he won’t listen, take one or two others along so that the presence of witnesses will keep things honest, and try again. If he still won’t listen, tell the church. If he won’t listen to the church, you’ll have to start over from scratch, confront him with the need for repentance, and offer again God’s forgiving love. ¹⁸⁻²⁰ “Take this most seriously: A yes on earth is yes in heaven; a no on earth is no in heaven. What you say to one another is eternal. I mean this. When two of you get together on anything at all on earth and make a prayer of it, my Father in heaven goes into action. And when two or three of you are together because of me, you can be sure that I’ll be there.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Stand

HYMN: “Although I Speak with Angels Tongue” #644 ELW

**Vs. 1: Although I speak with angel's tongue,
my faith, my knowledge all surpass,
but have no love, my gifts are vain
as clanging gong or blaring brass.**

**Vs. 2: For love is patient, love is kind,
and never vain with boasting pride;
love bears all things, all things endures.
All things must end; love will abide.**

**Vs. 3: For now we peer at darkened glass;
our visions end; our tongues all cease.
In part we know, in part now see:
then we will see love face to face.**

**Vs.4: The gifts are many, the Body one,
and into one are all baptized.
Beloved, share one heart, one mind,
one hope, one faith, one love in Christ.**

APOSTLE’S 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

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

A brief silence

P: Proclaiming God, empower your church throughout the world to announce
the words you give us. Open us to receive your word in unexpected ways.
Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Forming God, renew the cycles of your creation that provide for the needs
of all. Protect grasslands, marshes, swamps, and all places of transition.
Heal communities crying out after disaster. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Governing God, turn all who create, enforce, or interpret legislation away
from selfish gain and toward your promise of good for all, especially the
good of all who labor. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Attending God, wake us up to any around us who are in need. Restore
broken relationships, failing health, frayed emotions, and the hurts we
carry with us. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Gathering God, resolve conflicts in this community through your
righteousness and grace. Reconcile us to each other, making your good
news known even through our imperfections. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Loving God, all who die in faith have life with you. We give you thanks for

the nearness of your salvation for all who have gone before us. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: 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 SHARING OF THE PEACE

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

C: And also with you.

Sit

OFFERTORY: "Where Charity and Love are Shown" Madurga/Loomis

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: God of creation,

C: 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. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE 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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come! The body of Christ given for you. The blood of Christ shed for you.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Music is played as those who wish to come forward for communion come forward and kneel at the communion rail. Others are invited to commune in your pew.

COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace till life everlasting.

C: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: Sustaining God,

C: 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 liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stand

BLESSING

P: The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit.

C: Amen.

DISMISSAL

P: Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

C: Thanks be to God.

SENDING HYMN: "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" #631 ELW vss. 1-3

Vs. 1: Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of heav'n, to earth come down!

Fix in us thy humble dwelling, all thy faithful mercies crown.

Jesus, thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art;

visit us with thy salvation, enter ev'ry trembling heart.

**Vs. 2: Breathe, oh, breathe thy loving Spirit into ev'ry troubled breast;
let us all in thee inherit; let us find thy promised rest.
Take away the love of sinning; Alpha and Omega be;
end of faith, as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.**

**Vs. 3: Come, Almighty, to deliver; let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never, nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.**

POSTLUDE: "Praise, My Soul" Goss/Biery