

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
LITTLETON, COLORADO

September 12-13, 2026

4:00 pm Saturday and 8:00 a.m. Sunday



SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FORGIVEN FORGIVERS

AS WE GATHER

It often irritates us when a kindness extended to others is not returned. When we fail to forgive others as we have been forgiven, something greater is at stake. In the parable of the unforgiving servant, Jesus ties together the forgiveness we receive from God and the forgiveness we offer to others in His name. That connection becomes prayer in the words of the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Part of this is the reminder of the great debt of sin of which we have been forgiven and of the petty things we cling to and refuse to forgive of our brothers. While this might seem to lay a burden upon the Christian, it is instead the call to live out what is the ground and center of our relationship with God in our daily lives with others. This treasure of forgiveness only grows in us as we apply it and give it away to others.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

Prelude

“Lord of Glory”

Benjamin Culli

Pastoral Greeting

Opening Hymn

“Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us”

LSB 851

Invocation

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

CONFESSIO AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Since we are here assembled to hear God’s Word, to call upon Him in prayer, and to receive the body and blood of Christ, let us first think of our unworthiness; confess before God our sins of thought, word, and deed; and acknowledge also that we, by our own strength, cannot free ourselves from our sinful nature or the sins we have committed. Therefore, let us take refuge in the infinite mercy and grace of our heavenly Father, seeking and imploring Him to behold us through Jesus Christ, saying:

People: **God have mercy on me, a poor, sinful being, forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and grant to me the Holy Spirit that I may amend my sinful ways; through Jesus Christ, my Lord, I pray. Amen.**

Pastor: God, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to life everlasting. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: He who began this good work within you will bring it to completion on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

People: **Amen.**

KYRIE

Pastor: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

People: Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE

"In Thee in Gladness"

LSB 818



1 In Thee is glad - ness A - mid all sad - ness, Je - sus, sun - shine of my
2 If He is ours, We fear no pow - ers, Not of earth or sin or
heart. By Thee are giv - en The gifts of heav - en, Thou the true Re - deem - er
death. He sees and bles - ses In worst dis - tres - ses; He can change them with a
art. Our souls Thou wak - est; Our bonds Thou break - est. Who trusts Thee sure - ly Has built se -
breath. Where - fore the sto - ry Tell of His glo - ry With heart and voic - es; All heav'n re -
cure - ly And stands for - e - ver: Al - le - lu - ia! Our hearts are pin - ing To see Thy
joic - es In Him for - e - ver: Al - le - lu - ia! We shout for glad - ness, Tri - umph o'er
shin - ing, Dy - ing or liv - ing, To Thee are cleav - ing; Naught us can se - ver: Al - le - lu - ia!
sad - ness, Love Him and praise Him And still shall raise Him Glad hymns for - e - ver: Al - le - lu - ia!

✠ WORD ✠

Old Testament Reading: Genesis 50:15-21

("Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin.")

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died: 'Say to Joseph, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you."' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.



Epistle: Romans 14:1-12

(Each of us must give an account before the Lord our God.)

As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written,

**“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall confess to God.”**

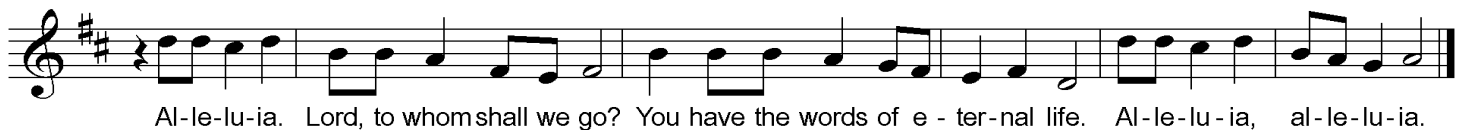
So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Please rise for the Verse and the Holy Gospel.

VERSE *John 6:68*



Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eighteenth chapter.

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

Holy Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

("Forgive your brother from your heart.")

Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

"Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When

he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."



*"how often should
I forgive?
"Not SEVEN times,
but, I tell you,
SEVENTY-
SEVEN
times."*

Matthew 18:21-22, NRSV

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

Hymn of the Day "Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive"

LSB 843

Sermon "The Point of the Story"

Pastor John Larson

Text: Matthew 18:21-35

Apostles' Creed

(found in the back of the hymnal)

Prayer of the Church

Pastor: Lord, in your mercy...

People: **Hear our prayer.**

Sharing of the Peace

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

People: **And also with you.**

You may now greet one another in the name of the Lord using...Peace be with you!

Offering (4:00 pm and 10:30 am - collected in back; 8:00 am – collected in the pews)

Offering Music (8:00) "In Thee is Gladness (Op. 21)" Paul Manz

✠ HOLY COMMUNION AT ASCENSION ✠

The Lord, our Host, invites to his Supper those who are baptized into the Christian faith, confess him as Savior, have been instructed and have examined themselves, truly repent of sins, believe the Risen Lord is present in the sacrament with his true body and blood, and resolve to live faithfully and obediently. For those with an intolerance to alcohol, the center ring of the tray contains grape juice. Gluten free wafers are available to those with wheat allergies. Children who have not been instructed, yet desire a blessing, are invited to come forward with arms crossed. When receiving the bread and wine, the communicant may respond with "Amen!", a word of affirmation and belief.

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

Preface (Divine Service, Setting One)

LSB 160

Proper Preface

Pastor: It is good and right, in all places and at all times, to give You praise and thanksgiving, O Lord, holy Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Knowing the riches of Your mercy and rejoicing in Your faithfulness throughout all generations, we laud You for the gift of Your Son, born of the virgin by the Spirit, and for the abundance of His grace upon us unworthy and undeserving sinners. With the saints of every generation and with those who await His coming in glory now, we join in the unending song of the angels and the heavenly voices of angels, archangels, and the mighty host of all the faithful departed, evermore singing Your mercy and saying:

Sanctus

LSB 161

Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer *Matthew 6:9-13*

People: **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.

Agnus Dei

LSB 163

DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

Special Music

“Lord of Glory (Op. 5, No. 4)”

Paul Manz

Hymn

“I Lay My Sins on Jesus”

LSB 606

Hymn

“Chief of Sinners Though I Be”

LSB 611

General Communion Blessing

Benediction (Divine Service, Setting One)

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

People: Amen

Closing Hymn

“At the Name of Jesus”

LSB 512
Verses 1-4, 7

Congregational Concerns

Dismissal

Pastor: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

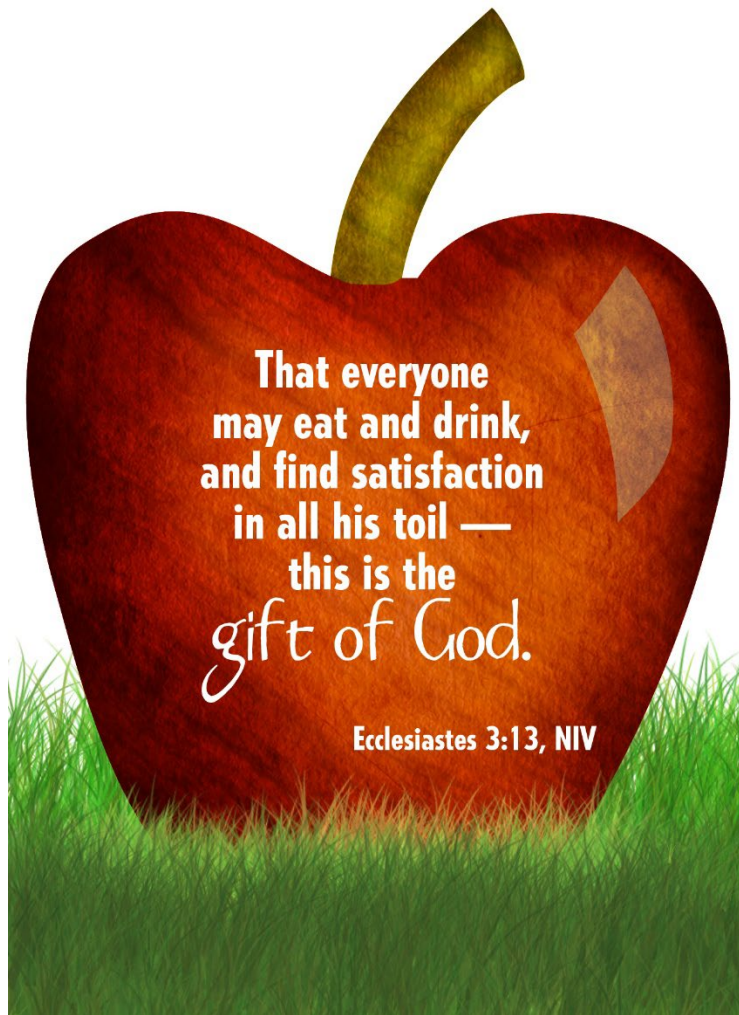
People: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“At the Name of Jesus”

Michael Burkhardt





SERVING IN WORSHIP

PREACHER / CELEBRANT

Pastor John Larson

MINISTER OF MUSIC AND WORSHIP / ORGANIST

Rev. Michael Zehnder

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP LEADER

Cody Knapp

ELDERS

4:00 Jeff Dunker; 8:00 Benjamin Dallet; 10:30 David Pearman

ACOLYTES

8:00 Benjamin Dallet; 10:30 Maria Olson

LECTORS

4:00 Dick Castleman; 8:00 Dawn Munson; 10:30 Sherry Hitztaler

COMMUNION SERVER

4:00 Dick Castleman; 8:00 Sherry Hitztaler

ALTAR GUILD

Shelia Beu, Cathy Utecht, Charmaine Rohde



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