

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
LITTLETON, COLORADO

September 13, 2026

10:30 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 ✂

Gathering Song

MY SAVIOR MY GOD

Aaron Shust

I am not skilled to understand
What God has willed, what God has planned
I only know at His right hand
Stands One who is my Savior

I take Him at His word and deed
Christ died to save me, this I read
And in my heart I find a need
Of Him to be my Savior

That He would leave His place on high
And come for sinful man to die
You count it strange so once did I
Before I knew my Savior

CHORUS

My Savior loves my Savior lives
My Savior's always there for me
My God, He was, my God, He is
My God is always gonna be (x2)

Yes, living, dying let me bring
My strength, my solace from this spring
That He who lives to be my King
Once died to be my Savior

That He would leave His place on high
And come for sinful man to die
You count it strange so once did I
Before I knew my Savior

(CHORUS)

(CHORUS)

My Savior lives, my Savior loves
My Savior lives, my Savior loves, my Savior

CCLI Song # 4592255 Aaron Shust | Dorothy Greenwell © 2005 Bridge Building Music, Inc. CCLI License # 11489815

Pastoral Greeting



Opening Song

MIGHTY TO SAVE

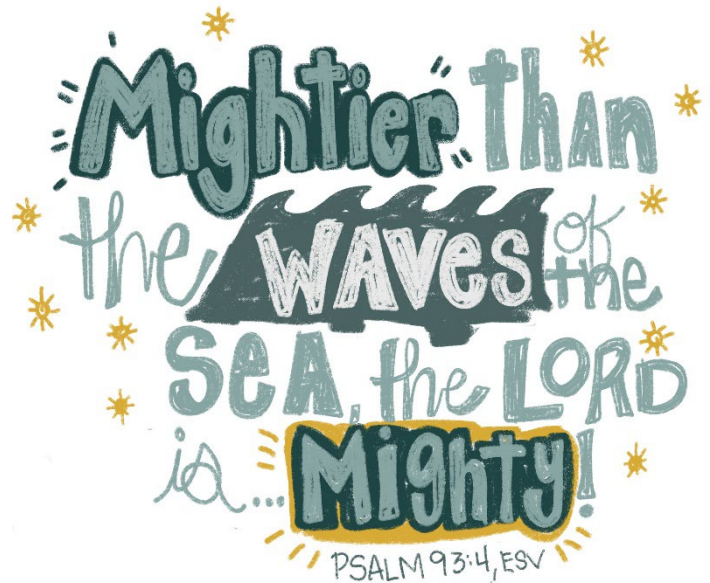
Morgan/Fielding

Everyone needs compassion
A love that's never failing
Let mercy fall on me
Everyone needs forgiveness
The kindness of a Saviour
The hope of nations

CHORUS

Saviour, He can move the mountains
My God is mighty to save
He is mighty to save
Forever, Author of salvation
He rose and conquered the grave
Jesus conquered the grave

So take me as You find me
All my fears and failures
And fill my life again
I give my life to follow
Everything I believe in
Now I surrender, I surrender



(CHORUS)

Shine your light and let the whole world see
We're singing for the glory of the risen King
Jesus, Shine your light and let the whole world see
We're singing for the glory of the risen King

(CHORUS x2)

Shine your light and let the whole world see
We're singing for the glory of the risen King
Jesus, Shine your light and let the whole world see
We're singing for the glory of the risen King

CCLI Song # 4591782 Ben Fielding | Reuben Morgan © 2006 Hillsong Music Publishing Australia CCLI License # 11489815

Invocation

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

People: Amen.

CONFESSION 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.**

☩ 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 Holy Gospel.

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.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

Children's Message

Pastor Larson

Song of the Day GOD I'M JUST GRATEFUL

Elevation Worship

There was no way until You made one
Grace upon grace hallelujah
Even though I don't deserve it
You did it
Even though I couldn't earn it
You give it

Who am I that You keep me on Your mind
God I'm just grateful for You
God I'm just grateful for You
All my life You've been right here by my side
God I'm just grateful for You
God I'm just grateful for You

Holy holy there's only one
I give You glory for all that You've done
Even though I don't deserve it
You did it
Even though I couldn't earn it
You give it

Who am I that You keep me on Your mind
God I'm just grateful for You
God I'm just grateful for You
All my life You've been right here by my side
God I'm just grateful for You
God I'm just grateful for You **(repeat section)**

I'm lifting both of my hands
You gave me chance after chance after chance
I'm giving all that I am
You gave me chance after chance after chance **(repeat section)**

Who am I that You keep me on Your mind
God I'm just grateful for You
God I'm just grateful for You
All my life You've been right here by my side



God I'm just grateful for You
God I'm just grateful for You **(repeat section)**

I survived and I'm here to testify
God I'm just grateful for You
God I'm just grateful for You
I'm alright if they say I'm outta my mind
God I'm just grateful for You
God I'm just grateful for You

Abubakar Baker Shariff-Farr, Chandler Moore, Joshua Emanuel Coleman, Pat Barrett, Steven Furtick CCLI Song #7270317 © 2025 Capitol CMG Genesis; Housefires Sounds; Music by Elevation Worship Publishing; For Humans Publishing; Maverick City Publishing; Remaining portion is unaffiliated For use solely with the SongSelectA® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com CCLI License #1903595*



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 *(collected in back)*

✠ 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)

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

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

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

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.**



DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

Song

O COME TO THE ALTAR

Chris Brown

Are you hurting and broken within Overwhelmed by the weight of your sin
Jesus is calling
Have you come to the end of yourself Do you thirst for a drink from the well
Jesus is calling

**CHORUS: O come to the altar The Father's arms are open wide
Forgiveness was bought with The precious blood of Jesus Christ**

Leave behind your regrets and mistakes Come today there's no reason to wait
Jesus is calling
Bring your sorrows and trade them for joy From the ashes a new life is born
Jesus is calling **CHORUS**

Oh what a Savior Isn't he wonderful Sing alleluia Christ is risen
Bow down before him For he is Lord of all Sing alleluia Christ is risen
Oh what a Savior Isn't he wonderful Sing alleluia Christ is risen
Bow down before him For he is Lord of all Sing alleluia Christ is risen **CHORUS X2**

Bear your cross as you wait for the crown
Tell the world of the treasure you've found

Song

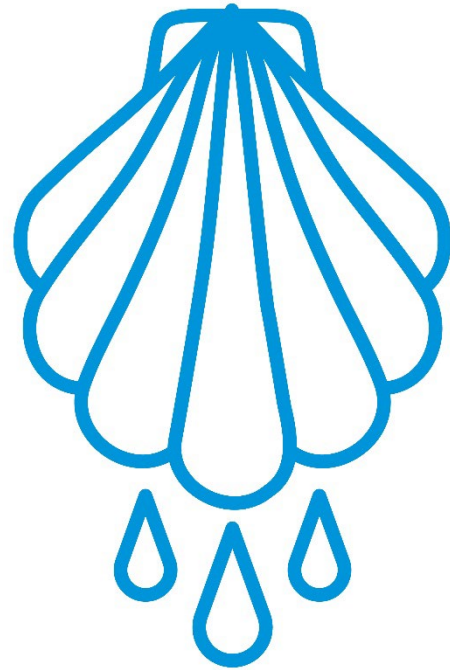
All Who Are Thirsty

Brown | Robertson

All who are thirsty
All who are weak
Come to the fountain
Dip your heart in the stream of life
Let the pain and the sorrow
Be washed away
In the waves of His mercy
As deep cries out to deep, we sing
Come, Lord Jesus, come (x4)

All who are thirsty
All who are weak
Come to the fountain
Dip your heart in the stream of life
Let the pain and the sorrow
Be washed away
In the waves of His mercy
As deep cries out to deep, we sing
Holy Spirit, come (x4)

As deep cries out to deep
As deep cries out to deep
As deep cries out to deep, we sing
Come, Lord Jesus, come (x5)



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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 Song Your Grace Is Enough

Maher

Great is Your faithfulness, O God;
You wrestle with the sinner's restless heart.
You lead us by still waters into mercy
And nothing can keep us apart.

CHORUS: So, remember Your people, Remember Your children,
Remember Your promise O God.
Your grace is enough, Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough, for me.

Great is Your love and justice, God of Jacob;
You use the weak to lead the strong.
You lead us in the song of Your salvation,
And all Your people sing along. **CHORUS (x2)**

**CHORUS: So, remember Your people, Remember Your children,
Remember Your promise O God.
Your grace is enough, Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough, for me.**

Yeah, Your grace is enough; Heaven reaches out to us.
Your grace is enough for me.
God, I sing: Your grace is enough; I'm covered in Your love.
Your grace is enough for me, for me.

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Congregational Concerns

Dismissal

Pastor: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**





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; 10:30 Sherry Hitztaler

ALTAR GUILD

Shelia Beu, Cathy Utecht, Charmaine Rohde



Ascension Lutheran Church

1701 West Caley Avenue, Littleton, Colorado 80120

www.alutheran.org

(303) 794-4636 office@alutheran.org

Extended Day Preschool

303-730-2514 director@alcpreschool.com