

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
LITTLETON, COLORADO

September 27, 2026

10:30 a.m. Sunday



EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

JESUS HAS AUTHORITY TO FORGIVE SINS AND HEAL

AS WE GATHER

From the beginning, God implanted His life-creating power into His creation with the command “Be fruitful and multiply” to animals (Genesis 1:22) and to humans (1:28), with one important difference. You are not an accident or only a product of biology. Every human being is a personal soul. So we confess, “I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them” (Small Catechism, Creed, Explanation of the First Article). Because of our inherited sin, however, “the soul who sins shall die” (Ezekiel 18:4). Nevertheless, God’s design is for life—eternal life. He declares, “I have no pleasure in the death of anyone” (18:32). Because God so loves you, He sent His Son to take away your sin by the shedding of His blood on the cross. Therefore, “we preach Christ crucified, . . . the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Corinthians 1:23–24). Christ died to sin for you. By Holy Baptism, you died with Christ and are raised to new life in Him. The love of God is yours today by faith in the cross of Jesus Christ. The Father’s declaration of Jesus now becomes yours: “My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17).

✂ PREPARATION ✂

Gathering Song

COME, NOW IS THE TIME TO WORSHIP

CHORUS

Come, now is the time to worship
Come, now is the time to give your heart
Come, just as you are to worship
Come, just as you are before your God
Come

One day every tongue will confess You are God
One day every knee will bow
Still the greatest treasure remains
For those who gladly love You now

(CHORUS)

One day every tongue will confess You are God
One day every knee will bow
Still the greatest treasure remains
For those who gladly love You now **(3X)**

(CHORUS)

Come, come

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Pastoral Greeting

Opening Hymn

BUILD MY LIFE

Worthy of every song we could ever sing
Worthy of all the praise we could ever bring
Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe
We live for You

Jesus, the Name above every other name
Jesus, the only One Who could ever save
Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe
We live for You, we live for You

CHORUS

Holy there is no one like You
There is none beside You
Open up my eyes in wonder and
Show me Who You are
And fill me with Your heart
And lead me in Your love to those around me



Jesus, the Name above every other name
Jesus, the only One Who could ever save
Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe
We live for You, we live for You

(CHORUS)

I will build my life upon Your love
It is a firm foundation
I will put my trust in You alone
And I will not be shaken **(2X)**

(CHORUS 2X)

CCLI Song # 7070345 Brett Younker | Karl Martin | Kirby Kaple | Matt Redman | Pat Barrett © 2016 Kaple Music; Capitol CMG Genesis; Housefires Sounds; Said And Done Music; sixsteps Music; Thankyou Music Ltd; Vamos Publishing; worshiptogether.com songs; Martin, Karl Andrew; Bethel Music Publishing CCLI License # 11489815

Invocation

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

People: **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 43:4; 124:8; Isaiah 25:9*

Pastor: I will go to the altar of God,

People: **to God my exceeding joy.**

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the LORD,

People: **who made heaven and earth.**

Pastor: Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, that He might save us.

People: **This is the LORD; we have waited for Him; let us be glad and rejoice in His salvation.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: God invites His whole creation to the great feast of His salvation. That we may boldly enter into His gates of mercy, let us lift up our prayer of repentance and faith.

People: **Lord God, heavenly Father, with thanksgiving for Your great love and promise of new life and hope for living, we confess to You all our sins, our waywardness, our neglect of Your call, as well as our failure to be of help to our neighbor and one another. We humbly pray, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew and cleanse our hearts and minds, and give us true faith in Your promised grace and deliverance.**

Pastor: The feast of God's salvation has already begun for you by your Baptism into Christ. Now receive the Lord's abiding forgiveness, faith, strength, and help to live in the certain hope of eternal life in fellowship with Him: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

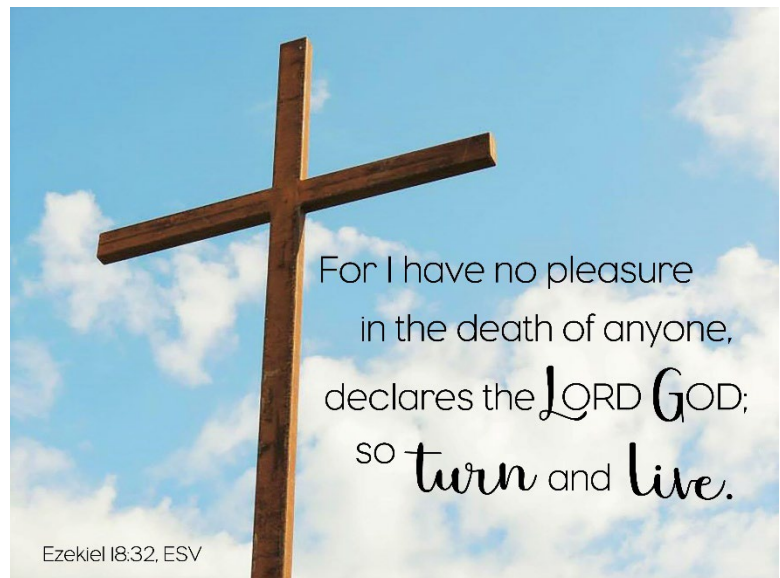
✂ WORD ✂

Old Testament Reading: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

("I have no pleasure in the death of anyone.")

The word of the Lord came to me: "What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'? As I live, declares the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: the soul who sins shall die.

"Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not just.' Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way not just? Is it not your ways that are not just? When a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it; for the injustice that he has done he shall die. Again, when a wicked person turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he shall save his life. Because he considered and turned away from all the transgressions that he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. Yet the house of Israel says, 'The way of the Lord is not just.' O house of Israel, are my ways not just? Is it not your ways that are not just?"



"Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God; so turn, and live."

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Epistle: Philippians 2:1-18

(Christ's example of humility)

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests,

but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

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 twenty-first chapter.

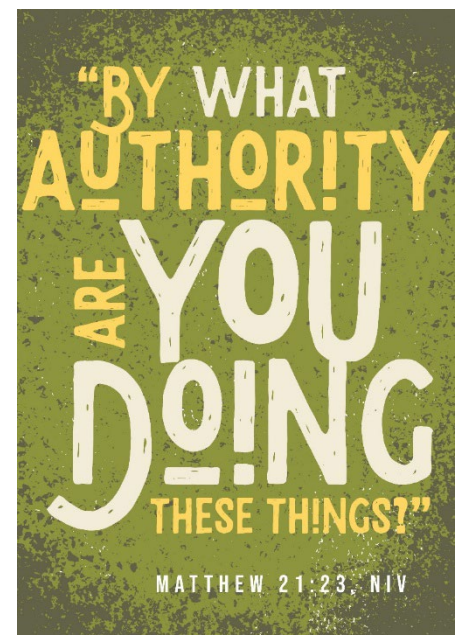
People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

Holy Gospel: Matthew 21:23-32

(The authority of Jesus is challenged.)

And when he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus answered them, "I also will ask you one question, and if you tell me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, from where did it come? From heaven or from man?" And they discussed it among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'From man,' we are afraid of the crowd, for they all hold that John was a prophet."

So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.



What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ And he answered, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he changed his mind and went. And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Christa Kirschner

Song of the Day

WHO YOU SAY I AM

Who am I that the highest King
Would welcome me?
I was lost but He brought me in
Oh His love for me
Oh His love for me

CHORUS 1

**Who the Son sets free
Oh is free indeed
I’m a child of God
Yes I am**

Free at last, He has ransomed me
His grace runs deep
While I was a slave to sin,
Jesus died for me
Yes He died for me

(CHORUS 1)

CHORUS 2

**In my Father's house
There's a place for me
I’m a child of God
Yes I am**

I am chosen, not forsaken
I am who You say I am
You are for me, not against me
I am who You say I am **(2X)**

Oh I am who You say I am



(CHORUS 1)

(CHORUS 2)

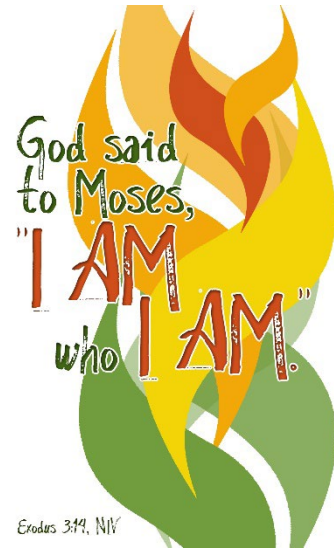
I am chosen, not forsaken
I am who You say I am
You are for me, not against me
I am who You say I am (2X)

Oh I am who You say I am
Oh I am who You say I am

(CHORUS 1)

(CHORUS 2)

I'm a child of God
Yes I am



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Sermon

“Authority”

Pastor John Larson
Text: Matthew 21:23-32

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

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 **HE KNOWS MY NAME**

I have a Maker
He formed my heart
Before even time began
My life was in His hands

CHORUS

**He knows my name
He knows my every thought
He sees each tear that falls
And He hears me when I call**

I have a Father
He calls me His own
He'll never leave me
No matter where I go

(CHORUS 2X)

And He hears me when I call



Song

ALL WHO ARE THIRSTY

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**

Song

BUILD YOUR KINGDOM HERE

Come set Your rule and reign
In our hearts again
Increase in us we pray
Unveil why we're made
Come set our hearts ablaze with hope
Like wildfire in our very souls
Holy Spirit, come invade us now
We are Your church
We need Your pow'r in us

We seek Your kingdom first
We hunger and we thirst
Refuse to waste our lives
For You're our joy and prize
To see the captives' hearts released
The hurt, the sick, the poor at peace
We lay down our lives for Heaven's cause
We are Your church
We pray revive this earth

CHORUS

**Build Your kingdom here
Let the darkness fear
Show Your mighty hand
Heal our streets and land
Set Your church on fire
Win this nation back
Change the atmosphere
Build Your kingdom here, we pray**

Unleash Your kingdom's pow'r
Reaching the near and far
No force of hell can stop
Your beauty changing hearts
You made us for much more than this
Awake the kingdom seed in us
Fill us with the strength and love of Christ
We are Your church
We are the hope on Earth

(CHORUS 2X)



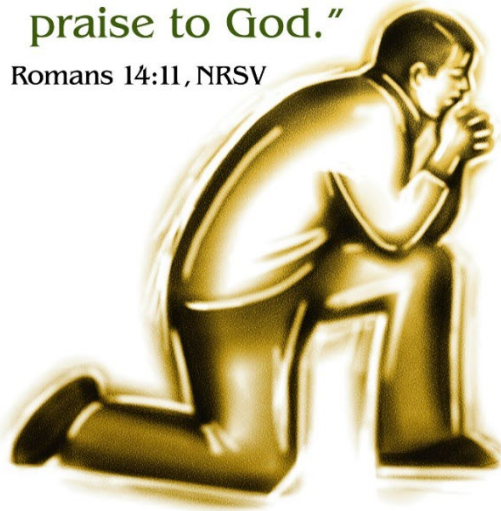
Congregational Concerns

Dismissal

Pastor: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

*"As I live,
says the Lord,
every knee shall bow
to me, and every
tongue shall give
praise to God."*

Romans 14:11, NRSV



SERVING IN WORSHIP

PREACHER / CELEBRANT

MINISTER OF MUSIC AND WORSHIP / ORGANIST

BELL CHOIR DIRECTOR

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP LEADER

ELDERS

ACOLYTES

LECTORS

COMMUNION SERVER

ALTAR GUILD

Pastor John Larson

Rev. Michael Zehnder

Stephanie Roettjer

Cody Knapp

4:00 Jeff Dunker; 8:00 Arvin Michel; 10:30 Michael Lawrenz

8:00 Connor Lujan; 10:30 Tobin Lawrenz

4:00 Curt Engle; 8:00 Tom Munson; 10:30 Lisa O'Neal

4:00 Curt Engle; 10:30 Lisa O'Neal

Shelia Beu, Cathy Utecht, Charmaine Rohde



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Extended Day Preschool

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