



Sunday, September 27, 2026

18th Sunday after Pentecost

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Rooted in our Tradition, Open to Yours
Prelude

Confession and Forgiveness

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

Amen. Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God, **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.**

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. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn

God Is Here! ELW 526 vs 1,3,4

Greeting: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Glory:

ELW (red book) page 139

Prayer of the Day: God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Scripture:

Psalms 25:1-9 (ELW Page 142) **Matthew 21:23-32**

Sermon

Hymn of the Day:

O Master, Let Me Walk with You ELW 818

Apostles' 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 the People

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us. *A brief silence.* Center your church in humility as we strive to follow in your way. Help us listen to the cries of those who have been unfairly hurt by the church. **Show all your love.**

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You call us to care for your creation. **Lead us into your promise of a better world through sustainable practices.** Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Inspire all in positions of authority to act honorably. Remind them of their call to use their authority for the sake of the common good. **Give them the gift of humility.** Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.** Comfort those who come before you in fear and trembling. Calm troubled hearts with your forgiveness. Help all those in need, especially Inge, Dave & Pam, Judy, Scott, Nancy, Ted & Jacqui, Dan & Mary, Beth, Janet, Todd, Mary, Doris, Bud, Donna, Jill, Arianna, Amelia, Jareth and all those we hold in our hearts. Grant us your salvation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.** Change this congregation's heart when we say no to your call. **Open us to courageous learning and service in our community.** Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your steadfast love holds all the saints who have finished their work and are at rest. **As we grieve, remind us of your mercy so we may also give thanks.**

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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. **Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

Great Thanksgiving: The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Preface

ELW page 144

The Words of Institution

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

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.**

Communion

ELW page 146

Post-Communion Prayer: 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 liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn:

What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine ELW 774

Blessing & Dismissal **Thanks be to God.**