



Sunday, October 18, 2026

21st 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

You Servants of God ELW 825

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: Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Scripture:

Isaiah 45:1-7 (ELW Page 142) **Matthew 22:15-22**

Sermon

Hymn of the Day:

We Give Thee but Thine Own ELW 686

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 Seeking the Spirit of God who makes all things new, we pray for the church and the world. *A brief silence.* Living and true God, you inspire us to share the message of the gospel. **Give your spirit of love to seminarians and those beginning their lives in ordained ministry.**

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

We give you thanks for the majesty of our oceans. **Protect the abundant life within them and sustain all those who work to preserve them.** Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We seek your wisdom in all things. **Direct all who hold positions of authority around the world, that they act with compassion, seeking the good of all.** Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for all people who work in dangerous or degrading environments. Grant them safety and courage, and heal all those who are injured, sick, or suffering, especially Jack, Alecia, Inge, Dave & Pam, Judy, Scott, Nancy, Ted & Jacqui, Dan & Mary, Beth, Janet, Todd, Mary, Doris, Bud, Donna, Jill, Amelia, Jareth and all those we hold in our hearts. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We ask your blessing on those who do the quiet, unseen work of the church. **Encourage them in their work of faith and labor of love.** Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We thank you for our ancestors who have been called home to you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

Special Music

Ancient Words St. Stephen Choir

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:

God of Grace and God of Glory ELW 705

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