

*Welcome to St. Paul's
The Lord Bless You as You Worship!*



***Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 6, 2026***

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
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Rev. Lori Nickoloff, Pastor

Enter to Listen, Exit to Serve

WORSHIP NOTES

Thank you for worshipping with us this morning. We're glad you're here! May you experience God's love through the words you hear and sing, the meal you eat, and the fellowship of God's people.

Prayer Requests If you have a prayer request, please give a note to the ushers or send an email to Pastor Lori.

Face Masks Just a friendly reminder...please wear a mask in the building if you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19/experiencing any kind of respiratory or flu-like symptoms. Masks are available on the table in the narthex in case you forget yours at home. Thank you!

Holy Communion All are welcome to share in Christ's meal of forgiveness and grace. Children who do not yet commune are welcome to come forward for a blessing. (If you feel your child is ready to receive or have additional questions, please speak with Pastor Lori.) Please come forward at the direction of the ushers. Wine is in the outer rings of the tray. Grape juice is in the center of the tray. Gluten-free bread is available; please indicate your need to the pastor.

Pew Cushions Are available on the pew in the back of the sanctuary.

Hearing Assistance Individual hearing devices are available at the back of the sanctuary. Please return the device at the end of worship so they can be sanitized.

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We Worship God

Welcome

Prelude

"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"

Phillip Keveren

*The prelude is a time for people to become quiet, to meditate and pray, and to prepare their hearts and minds to worship God. You are invited to pray this prayer to help you transition from the cares and activities of daily life to worshipping the Living God: **God of grace, you have given us minds to know you, hearts to love you, and voices to sing your praise. Fill us with your Spirit, that we may celebrate your glory and worship you in spirit and truth, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.***

Please rise in body or spirit

Call to Worship

P: Happy are those whose transgression is forgotten.

All: **Forgive one another, as you have been forgiven.**

P: Happy are those in whose spirit there is no deceit.

All: **Forgive one another, as you have been forgiven.**

P: Whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

All: **Forgive one another, as you have been forgiven.**

Confession and Forgiveness

P: We confess our sins before God and one another.

Pause for silence and reflection.

P: Patient God,

All: **you have taught us all we need to be your faithful people. And yet we persist in going our own way, doing our own thing, and minding our own business when we ought to be about the business of your kingdom. Forgive our selfish neglect of others and bring us back into wholeness with our brothers and sisters. Amen.**

P: God is merciful, patient, kind and forgiving. We have been pardoned for all that we have done, and all that we have overlooked. May we give now as we have received: generously and extravagantly, in the way of our loving teacher, savior and friend.

All: **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn:

Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun

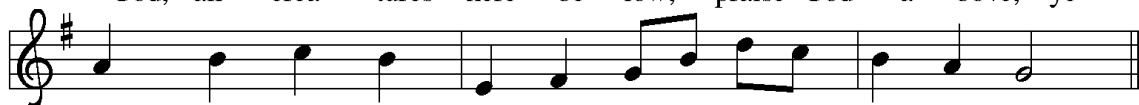
#557



1 A - wake, my soul, and with the sun thy
2 All praise to thee, who safe hast kept and
3 Lord, I my vows to thee re - new. Dis -
4 Di - rect, con - trol, sug - gest, this day, all
5 Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise



dai - ly stage of du - ty run; shake off dull sloth, and
hast re - freshed me while I slept. Grant, Lord, when I from
perse my sins as morn - ing dew; guard my first springs of
I de - sign or do or say, that all my pow'rs, with
God, all crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye



joy - ful rise to pay thy morn - ing sac - ri - fice.
death shall wake, I may of end - less light par - take.
thought and will; and with thy - self my spir - it fill.
all their might, in thy sole glo - ry may u - nite.
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711, alt.

Music: MORNING HYMN, François H. Barthélémon, 1741–1808

Greeting

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

All: **And also with you.**

Hymn of Praise:

Praise the Lord! O Heavens

#823

1 Praise the Lord! O heav'ns, a - dore him; praise him, an - gels, in the height;
2 Praise the Lord, for he is gra - cious; nev - er shall his prom - ise fail.

sun and moon, re - joice be - fore him; praise him, gleam - ing stars and light.
God has made his saints vic - to - rious; sin and death shall not pre - vail.

Praise the Lord, for he has spo - ken; worlds his might - y voice o - beyed;
Praise the God of our sal - va - tion; hosts on high, his pow'r pro - claim;

laws which nev - er shall be bro - ken for their guid - ance he has made.
heav'n and earth, and all cre - a - tion, laud and mag - ni - fy his name!

The musical score is written for two voices (Soprano and Bass) and piano accompaniment. It features a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The melody is primarily composed of quarter and eighth notes, with some rests. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and single notes, providing a harmonic foundation for the vocal lines. The lyrics are printed below the vocal staves, with line numbers 1 and 2 indicating different parts of the hymn.

Prayer of the Day

P: Merciful God,

All: you have forgiven us a world of transgressions. Make us likewise gracious to those who are in debt to us, showing them the mercy which you offer to all. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Please be seated

We Hear God's Word

Prayer for Illumination

A: Let us pray.

All: Prepare our hearts, O God, to accept you Word. Silence in us any voices but your own, so that we may hear your Word and also do it; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Psalm 119:33-40

A: Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes, and I will observe it to the end.

All: Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart.

A: Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it.

All: Turn my heart to your decrees and not to selfish gain.

A: Turn my eyes from looking at vanities; be gracious to me according to your word.

All: Confirm to your servant your promise, which is for those who fear you.

A: Turn away the disgrace that I dread, for your ordinances are good.

All: See, I have longed for your precepts; in your righteousness be gracious to me.

Romans 13:8-14

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are

summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

A: Word of God, Word of life.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

Please rise in body or spirit

Gospel Acclamation

God's Word is Our Great Heritage

#509

The musical score is written for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in a four-part setting. It is in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. The melody is primarily in the Soprano and Tenor parts, with the Alto and Bass parts providing harmonic support. The lyrics are: "God's word is our great her - i - tage and shall be ours for - ev - er; to spread its light from age to age shall be our chief en - deav - or." The score consists of four staves, each with a vocal line and a corresponding lyric line. The first staff is for the Soprano, the second for the Alto, the third for the Tenor, and the fourth for the Bass. The lyrics are: "God's word is our great her - i - tage and shall be ours for - ev - er; to spread its light from age to age shall be our chief en - deav - or."

God's word is our great her - i - tage and shall be ours for - ev - er;

to spread its light from age to age shall be our chief en - deav - or.

Through life it guides our way; in death it is our stay. Lord, grant while

time shall last your church may hold it fast through-out all gen-er-a-tions.

Text: Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783–1872; tr. Ole G. Belsheim, 1861–1925, alt.

Music: EIN FESTE BURG, Martin Luther, 1483–1546

The Gospel

P: The Gospel according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

Matthew 18:15-20

“If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.
All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated

Sermon

Rev. Lori Nickoloff

Following the sermon, there is a time of silence for reflection and quiet meditation. Our liturgy is made up not only of words, gestures, and music, but also moments of silence.

As the hymn begins, the assembly stands to sing.

Hymn of the Day:

God, When Human Bonds are Broken

#603

1 God, when hu - man bonds are bro - ken and we lack the love or skill
2 Through that still-ness, with your Spir - it come in - to our world of stress,
3 You in us are bruised and bro - ken: hear us as we seek re - lease
4 Send us, God of new be - gin - nings, hum - bly hope - ful in - to life.
5 Give us faith to be more faith - ful, give us hope to be more true,

to re - store the hope of heal - ing, give us grace and make us still.
for the sake of Christ for - giv - ing all the fail - ures we con - fess.
from the pain of ear - lier liv - ing; set us free and grant us peace.
Use us as a means of bless - ing: make us stron - ger, give us faith.
give us love to go on learn - ing: God, en - cour - age and re - new!

Text: Fred Kaan, b. 1929

Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823–1889

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Apostle's Creed

A: Let us confess our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed.

All: **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 Intercession

A: We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

A: How easily we keep a record of wrongs against us and hold them long after most others have forgotten. Turn us back to the wonder of your amazing grace and fill us with a desire to move forward in faith, freedom, and forgiveness. Merciful God,

All: **hear our prayer.**

A: The earth renews itself and creation is forgiving of the ills perpetrated upon it. Hold us accountable to the charge of caring responsibly for all that you have made and keep us mindful of the consequences of our actions. Merciful God,

All: **hear our prayer.**

A: Despite our constant changing and circling, you remain constant, and hold all things in your hands. Give us a glimpse of eternity in your Spirit's unfailing presence with us and tune our hearts to your song of grace which spans the ages. Merciful God,

All: hear our prayer.

A: There is healing in letting go, O God. May we discover the power there is in forgiveness: restoring relationships with you, ourselves, and others. We lift up in prayer today (*especially...*) and those we name silently in our hearts. Merciful God,

All: hear our prayer.

Here other petitions may be offered.

A: Blessed are all your faithful servants of every time and place. May we see the contemporary saints among us today, quietly doing your work and bringing about your kingdom. Count us also among them, as we strive to faithfully serve you all our days. Merciful God,

All: hear our prayer.

P: Receive our prayers of thanksgiving, our requests for pardon, and our longing for healing, O God. Hold us together in your wide embrace. For the sake of Jesus.

All: Amen.

Sharing of Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

All: And also with you.

Please turn to the people near you to offer a gesture of peace and the greeting, "God's peace be with you!" You are also encouraged to turn to the back of the sanctuary and greet the worshippers on Zoom with a wave or gesture of peace.

Please be seated

Offering

*This month our Local Hunger Offering will be given to **Milly's Pantry**.*

Offertory Music

"I Will Arise and Go to Jesus"

Mark Hayes

Please rise in body or spirit

Offertory Hymn:

verse 3 of Praise and Thanksgiving

#689

Father providing food for your children, by Wisdom's guiding teach us to share one with another, so that, rejoicing with us all others may know your care

Offertory Prayer

A: Our debts are many, O God. Yet we bring these gifts as a symbol of all we owe to you, and to a world in need.

All: **Receive them with grace and use them to benefit those less fortunate than ourselves, that all might come to know your abundance. Amen.**

We Share God's Meal

The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

Al: **We lift them to the Lord.**

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

All: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san-na in the high-est.



Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -



san-na in the high-est, ho-san-na in the high-est.

P: Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

All: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

All: 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.

Invitation to Communion

P: Rejoice, for you have been forgiven! God pardons and releases you from the burden of guilt and shame. Come now to the table of mercy, where you will be fed on the bread and wine that strengthens and fortifies you to serve another day. The meal has been prepared—come now and eat!

All: Amen.

Lamb of God



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;

2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;

3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.

you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.

e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

Hymns During Communion:

Blest be the Tie That Binds

#656

Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus

#802

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

#588

Blest Be the Tie That Binds

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. It is in the key of B-flat major (two flats) and 4/4 time. The score consists of two systems. The first system contains the first four lines of the hymn, and the second system contains the final four lines. The piano accompaniment is written in the right and left hands, featuring a steady bass line and chords that support the vocal parts. The lyrics are printed below the vocal staves, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across measures.

1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Chris - tian love;
2 Be - fore our Fa - ther's throne we pour our ar - dent prayers;
3 We share our mu - tual woes, our mu - tual bur - dens bear,
4 From sor - row, toil, and pain, and sin we shall be free;

the u - ni - ty of heart and mind is like to that a - bove.
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our com - forts and our cares.
and of - ten for each oth - er flows the sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.
and per - fect love and friend - ship reign through all e - ter - ni - ty.

Text: John Fawcett, 1740–1817, alt.

Music: DENNIS, Johann G. Nägeli, 1773–1836, adapt.

Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus

1 Let us ev - er walk with Je - sus, fol - low his ex - am - ple pure,
 2 Let us suf - fer here with Je - sus, and with pa - tience bear our cross.
 3 Let us glad - ly die with Je - sus. Since by death he con - quered death,
 4 Let us al - so live with Je - sus. He has ris - en from the dead

through a world that would de - ceive us and to sin our spir - its lure.
 Joy will fol - low all our sad - ness; where he is there is no loss.
 he will free us from de - struc - tion, give to us im - mor - tal breath.
 that to life we may a - wak - en. Je - sus, you are now our head,

On - ward in his foot - steps tread - ing, trav - 'lers here, our home a - bove,
 Though to - day we sow no laugh - ter, we shall reap ce - les - tial joy;
 Let us mor - ti - fy all pas - sion that would lead us in - to sin;
 we are your own liv - ing mem - bers; where you live, there we shall be

full of faith and hope and love, let us do our Sav - ior's bid - ding,
 all dis - com - forts that an - noy shall give way to mirth here - af - ter.
 and the grave that shuts us in shall but prove the gate of heav - en.
 in your pres - ence con - stant - ly, liv - ing there with you for - ev - er.

Faith - ful Lord, with me a - bide; I shall fol - low where you guide.
 Je - sus, here I share your woe; help me there your joy to know.
 Je - sus, here with you I die, there to live with you on high.
 Je - sus, let me faith - ful be; life e - ter - nal grant to me.

Text: Siegmund von Birken, 1626–1681; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*, alt.
 Music: LASSET UNS MIT JESU ZIEHEN, Georg G. Boltze, 18th cent.
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There's a Wideness in God's Mercy



1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy, like the wide-ness of the sea;
2 There is wel - come for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;
3 For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;
4 'Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice which is more than lib - er - ty.
there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing in his blood.
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.
great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in heav'n.
There is grace e - nough for thou - sands of new worlds as great as this;
But we make this love too nar - row by false lim - its of our own;
Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,



There is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
there is room for fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.
and we mag - ni - fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.
and our lives will be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, alt.

Music: LORD, REVIVE US, North American, 19th cent.

Table Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

All: Amen

Prayer After Communion

A: We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life.

All: **In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

We Leave to Serve

Announcements

Benediction

P: As you go from here, may God, the source of all hope, infuse your lives with an abundance of joy and peace, so that, no matter what comes your way in the days ahead, your lives will overflow with confident hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Litany

L: God calls us into community with one another.

All: **But we do not always get along.**

L: We are used to doing things our way,

All: **and we see it as the “right” way.**

L: We can be hurtful, even if we don’t mean it.

All: **We need help seeing our own part.**

L: Jesus offers practical advice for living together.

All: **Then offers something more profound.**

L: He reminds us that whenever we are together,

All: **He is there in our midst.**

L: We can agree whole-heartedly on that.

All: Our faith in Jesus unites us.

L: Let us focus on what we have in common,

All: and commit ourselves to one another's well-being,

L: knowing that Jesus is truly here among us,

All: and wants us to live in mutual love.

Having heard to word and shared the eucharist, we are sent to live our baptism through word and deeds, making known the love of Christ, and working for justice and peace in our families, communities and world.

Please turn to follow the flame as it exists the sanctuary.

Sending Hymn:

Faith Begins by Letting Go

ACS#1004

1 Faith be - gins by let - ting go, giv - ing up what had seemed sure,
2 Faith en - dures by hold - ing on, keep - ing mem - 'ry's roots a - live
3 Faith ma - tures by reach - ing out, stretch - ing minds, en - larg - ing hearts,

tak - ing risks and press - ing on, though the way feels less se - cure:
so that hope may bear its fruit; prom - ise - fed, our souls will thrive,
shar - ing strug - gles, liv - ing prayer, bind - ing up the bro - ken parts;

pil - grim - age both right and odd, trust - ing all our life to God.
not through mer - it we pos - sess but by God's great faith - ful - ness.
till we find the com - mon - place ripe with wit - ness to God's grace.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a treble and bass staff for the voice, and a grand staff (treble and bass) for the piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are arranged in three systems, each corresponding to a line of music. The first system includes three numbered lines of lyrics. The second system has two lines of lyrics. The third system has two lines of lyrics. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and single notes, providing a harmonic support for the vocal melody.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: RATISBON, J. G. Werner, *Choralbuch*, 1815

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Sending

A: Go in peace. Live in the way of Jesus Christ.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

Postlude “When the Roll is Called up Yonder”

James Black, Mark Hayes