

St. John Lutheran Church

Lord, how often should I forgive?

MATTHEW 18:21



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ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Rev. Tammy P. Harmer

Deacon Betsey Eley & Deacon Ken Weaver

16TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST • SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

Reverent Reflection

Prelude

Welcome

Church Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

- P. Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.
- C. **Amen.**
- P. O God, powerful and compassionate, you shepherd your people, faithfully feeding and protecting us. Heal each of us, and make us a whole people, that we may embody the justice and peace of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- C. **Amen.**
- P. Most merciful God,
- C. **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.**
- Amen.**
- P. In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us and for his sake God forgives us all our sin. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- C. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn: I Come With Joy (#482)

Apostolic Greeting

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

Kyrie p. 147

- P. In peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- C. **Lord, have mercy.**
- P. For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
- C. **Lord, have mercy.**

- P. For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.
- C. **Lord, have mercy.**
- P. For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.
- C. **Lord, have mercy.**
- P. Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
- C. **Amen.**

Canticle p. 149

- P. This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.
- C. **Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God. Power and riches and wisdom and strength, and honor and blessing and glory are his. This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.**
Sing with all the people of God and join in the hymn of all creation:
Blessing and honor and glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.
This is the feast of victory for our God, for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia. Alleluia.
- P. The Lord be with you.
- C. **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray:

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

Word

First Reading: Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵ Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13

Response: "Lord, you are full of compassion and mercy."

[¹ Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

² **Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all God's benefits—**

³ who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases;

⁴ **who redeems your life from the grave and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy; R**

⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

⁶ **O Lord, you provide vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.**

⁷ You made known your ways to Moses and your works to the children of Israel.]

⁸ **Lord, you are full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love; R**

⁹ you will not always accuse us, nor will you keep your anger forever.

¹⁰ **You have not dealt with us according to our sins, nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**

¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

¹² **As far as the east is from the west, so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**

¹³ As a father has compassion for his children, so you have compassion for those who fear you, O Lord. **R**

Second Reading: Romans 14:1-12

¹ Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷ For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ 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. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹² So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation p. 151

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹ Peter came and said to [Jesus,] "Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²² Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³ "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him,

²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience

with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed

him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they

were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.

³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Children's Sermon

Anthem

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 Intercession

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

A brief silence.

Move your church throughout the world away from judging and despising others. Lead us to embody the forgiveness you have given us in Jesus.

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

The endless beauty of your creation reminds us of your mercy. Protect those who care for farms and ranches. Guide those who lead us to wonder at your creation.

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

Raise up leaders (like John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, whom we remember today) to hold all in authority accountable for any misuse of the power entrusted to them.

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

Calm the fears of all in need with your promises. Compassionately free the lives of any who feel bound by their failures. Remember your children in need (especially).

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

Ground this congregation in the welcome you show us in forgiving our sin. Inspire each of us to welcome others for your honor and glory.

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

We pray for peace throughout the world: in our nation, Ukraine, Israel, Gaza, Lebanon, Sudan, and all war-torn areas. We pray for our military and their families.

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

With you is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember (name/s, and) all those who have gone before us.

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

Offering

Great Thanksgiving p. 152

P. The Lord be with you.

C. **And also with you.**

P. Lift up your hearts.

C. **We lift them to the Lord.**

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

C. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Preface p. 153

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Words of Institution

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. p. 153

Lord's Prayer

Let us pray:

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

Communion p. 154

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: grant us peace, grant us peace.

Distribution of Holy Communion

Communion Hymns: Be Thou My Vision (#793)
Come, Let Us Eat (#491)
Let Us Break Bread Together (#471)

Prayer after Communion

Blessing

Sending Hymn: What a Fellowship (#774)

Dismissal

Postlude

ALTAR FLOWERS DEDICATION FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13th

Dedicated by Cathy Valente in memory of Mildred Toll.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday	9:30 am	Sunday Morning Worship Service
	After Worship Service	Coffee Hour
	10:45 am	Sunday School/CIA)
	After Worship Service	Band Rehearsal
Wednesday	7:00 pm	Band Rehearsal
Thursday	7:00 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
Ongoing		Shelf Stable Milk Collection
		Diaper Collection for Pantry, Holy Communion, Berlin
Thursday, September 10th	7:00 pm	Choir rehearsal resumes
Friday, September 11th	6:00 pm	Putting with the Pastor at Big Swing (<i>rain date 9/25</i>)
Saturday, September 12th	11:30 am	Community Luncheon in the Ed. Building
Sunday, September 13th	9:30 am	Regular Sunday Worship Service begins
Sunday, September 13th	10:45 am	Sunday School Rally Day
Sunday, September 13th	12:00 pm	Visit to Edelman Planetarium at Rowan University
Saturday, September 19th	1:00 pm	St. John's 25th Annual Golf Outing
Sunday, September 20th	After Worship	God's Work, Our Hands
Monday, September 21st	7:00 pm	Council Meeting in the Parish House
Wednesday, September 23rd	7:00 pm	Grief Gathering in the Parish House Tea Room

Please note: All activities, dates and times are subject to change.

PRAYER LIST

Please keep the following in your prayers for healing:

Jen Bailey	Frank Donovan	Valerie Hoffmann	Melanie Miles	Meilani Showell
Krystal Booras	Marie Lentine Douglas	Makenzie Jack	Sue Murphy	Frank Siderio III
Michael Botti	Tracey Drew	Quincy Jones	Bill Murray	Bill Steel
Brian Byrnes	Indie Fisher	Ed Kagen	Renate Murray	Carol Taylor
Meadow Cantoral	Kayla Friant	Tracey Kelly	Erica Polito	Henry Tesone
Randy Cantoral	Stephanie Friant	Carl Knopp	Samantha Reed	George Vaneman, Sr.
Debbie Capasso	Rhea Fryor	Deb Kuhn	Ashley Rosser	George Van Wagner
Janet Cappuccio	Ashley Fuhrman	Donna Leek	Dorcas Schellhas	Beverly Warming
Joe Condoli	Angela Guedes	Doug Levandowski	Jean Schlotz	Mary White
Sandra DeRitis	Stan Harmer	Tim McCarthy	Finn Schureman	
Helen Dominic	Michelle Walk Hewitt	Joanne McVelli	Gladys Sheppard	

Please notify the office if you want to add or remove a person from this list.

ALTAR FLOWER DEDICATION

Altar Flowers are available for dedication for \$30. Please fill out the envelope located in the pew rack at least one week before you wish to dedicate the flowers. The card may be placed in the offering plate or left in the office. Please be sure to note the date on the white board in the Narthex. Please leave payment in the Church Office.



GOOD NEWS!

COFFEE HOUR

Sunday after the Worship Service
(*unless otherwise announced*)

Join us for food, beverages and fellowship!



ST. JOHN'S 25TH ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

Saturday, September 19th • White Oaks Country Club

Proceeds to Benefit John's Monthly Community Outreach Luncheons

For more information, please contact Joe Antonelli at
609-579-4207 or email to 33miracle@comcast.net

GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS.

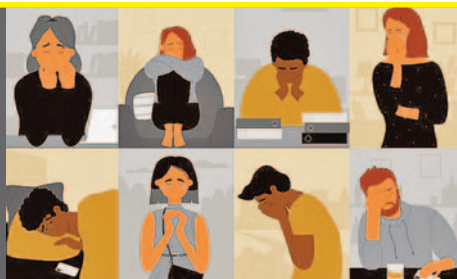
September 20, 2026



church council
MEETING

**Monday, September 21st
7:00 pm in the Parish House**

**GRIEF
GATHERING**



**Wednesday,
September 23rd**

**7:00 pm
Parish House Tea Room
*All Are Welcome!***

Holy Communion Lutheran Church of Berlin Baby Pantry need:



BABY DIAPERS
(especially larger sizes)
Collection is in the Narthex.



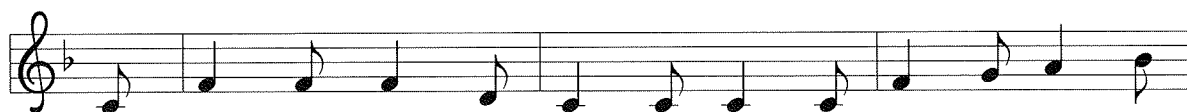
Please help us . . .

**Donate Shelf Stable Milk for
Our Lady of Peace Food Bank.**

Donations in the form of cash or check will also be welcome.

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I Come with Joy



1 I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and
 2 I come with Chris - tians far and near to find, as all are
 3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud di - vi - sion
 4 The Spir - it of the ris - en Christ, un - seen, but ev - er
 5 To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound by all that God has



free, the life of Je - sus to re - call in
 fed, the new com - mu - ni - ty of love in
 ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and
 near, is in such friend - ship bet - ter known, a -
 done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the



love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.
 Christ's com - mu - nion bread, in Christ's com - mu - nion bread.
 strang - ers now are friends, and strang - ers now are friends.
 live a - mong us here, a - live a - mong us here.
 love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936
 Music: W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835
 Text © 1971, rev. 1995 Hope Publishing Company

DOVE OF PEACE
 8 6 8 6 6



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,



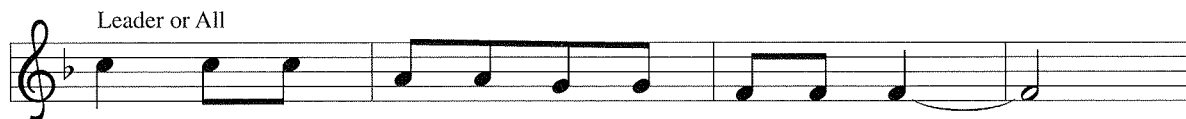
naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!



thou my best thought both by day and by night,
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,
 thou and thou on - ly, the first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.



- 1 Come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread,
 2 Come, let us drink, for now the wine is poured,
 3 In Je - sus' pres - ence now we meet and rest,
 4 Rise, then, to spread a - broad God's might - y word,



come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread.
 come, let us drink, for now the wine is poured.
 in Je - sus' pres - ence now we meet and rest.
 rise, then, to spread a - broad God's might - y word.



Our Lord's bod - y let us take to - geth - er,
 Je - sus' blood poured let us drink to - geth - er,
 In the pres - ence of our Lord we gath - er,
 Je - sus ris - en will bring in the king - dom,



our Lord's bod - y let us take to - geth - er.
 Je - sus' blood poured let us drink to - geth - er.
 in the pres - ence of our Lord we gath - er.
 Je - sus ris - en will bring in the king - dom.

Let Us Break Bread Together

471

1 Let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees;
 2 Let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees;
 3 Let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees;

let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees.
 let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees.
 let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees.

Refrain

When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing

sun, O Lord, have mer - cy on me.

What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine

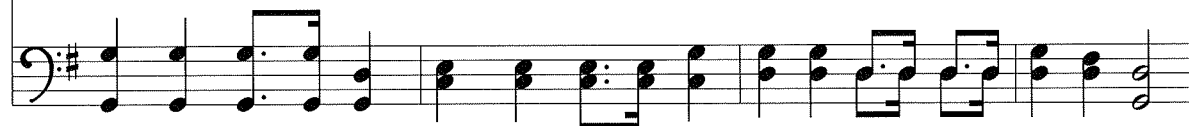
Leaning on the Everlasting Arms



- 1 What a fel - low-ship, what a joy di - vine, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms;
- 2 Oh, how sweet to walk in this pil-grim way, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms;
- 3 What have I to dread, what have I to fear, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms?



what a bless-ed-ness, what a peace is mine, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
oh, how bright the path grows from day to day, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
I have bless-ed peace with my Lord so near, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.



Refrain



Lean - ing, lean - ing, safe and se-cure from all a - larms;



Lean - ing on Je - sus, lean - ing on Je - sus,



lean - ing, lean - ing, lean-ing on the ev - er - last-ing arms.



lean - ing on Je - sus, lean - ing on Je - sus,

SAVE TIME . . . no need for checks or envelopes

ELCA-Endorsed Tithe.ly giving platform enables you to tithe online or using the app.

- From your checking account or using your debit/credit card
- One-time donation or set up for recurring giving
- Designate specific ministry for your donation
- Scan the QR code to get started
- For assistance or questions, contact Tom Schofield or Henry Fickenscher



CHOIR REHEARSAL

THURSDAY EVENING

AT 7:00 PM!

All are welcome to join!

ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

1002 S. Main Street Williamstown, NJ 08094

Pastor: The Rev. Tammy Harmer

Phone Number: 1-856-875-8742 • Email: stjohnslutheran1002@yahoo.com

Website: www.stjohnselc1002.org

ST. JOHN'S STAFF

Deacons: Betsey Eley/Ken Weaver

Treasurer: Henry Fickenscher

Music Director/Choirmaster: Janice Smith

Instrumental Music Director: Ken Weaver

Head Usher: Ted Adams

Sexton: Betsey Eley

Webmaster: Tom Schofield

Publications Director: Marie Fickenscher