

Christ Lutheran Church & The Bridge Campus Ministry

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost - September 13, 2026

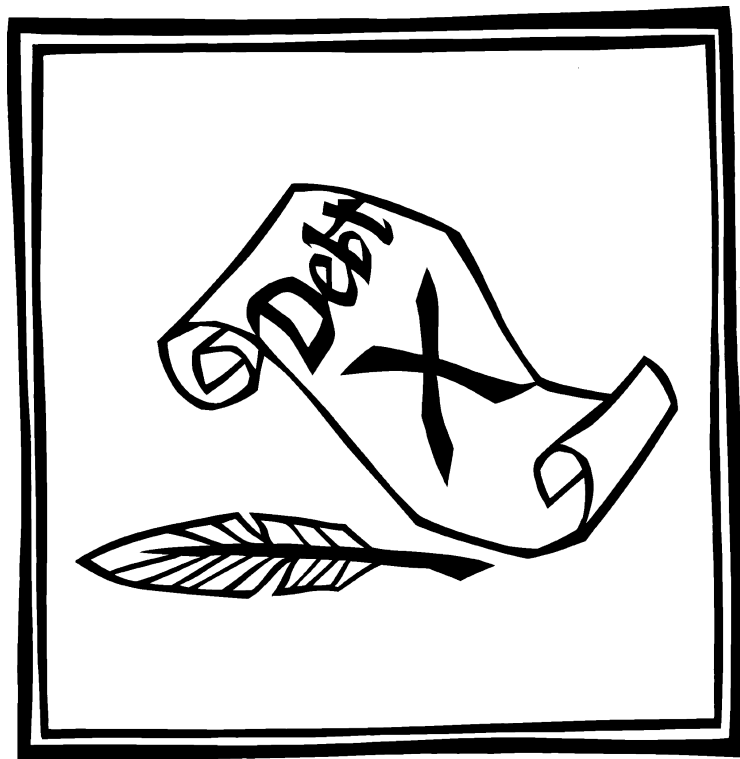
Connecting people to people • people to faith • faith to life

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INTRODUCTION

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.



SERVING TODAY: *Presider/Preacher: Pastor Chad Huebner; Organist: Bekah Davenport; Asst/Lector: Susan Urano; Livestream: Doug Debrick; Upstairs Greeter: Chris Snoddy; Downstairs Greeter: Karen Beverly; Ushers: Wanda Weinberg, Marilyn Shealy; Time with Children: Cheryl Huebner; Acolyte: Elizabeth; Tray Server: Greg Newton*

WELCOME

(PLEASE POWER OFF OR AIRPLANE MODE YOUR DEVICES)

Here in Athens, in SE Ohio, we are occupying the traditional homeland of the Shawnee people. Before the Shawnee, this land was occupied by the Osage people, and by the Adena, Hopewell, and Fort Ancient cultures.

PRELUDE

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
whose compassion endures forever.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,

we confess to you all our sins.

Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves.

In your mercy, call us back to you.

Your yoke is easy and your burden is light.

Restore us to dwell in your peace.

In Christ's name we pray,

Amen.

Jesus says, "Come to me,
all you who are weary
and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest."

In the name of God,

Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit,
your sins are forgiven.

Rest in God's love.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG

Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death (ELW 452)



- 1 A - wake, O sleep-er, rise from death, and Christ shall give you light;
- 2 To us on earth he came to bring from sin and fear re - lease,
- 3 There is one bod - y and one hope, one Spir - it and one call,
- 4 Then walk in love as Christ has loved, who died that he might save;
- 5 For us Christ lived, for us he died, and con - quered in the strife.



so learn his love, its length and breadth, its full - ness, depth, and height.
to give the Spir - it's u - ni - ty, the ver - y bond of peace.
one Lord, one faith, and one bap - tism, one God who made us all.
with kind and gen - tle hearts for - give as God in Christ for - gave.
A - wake, a - rise, go forth in faith, and Christ shall give you life.

Text: F. Bland Tucker, 1895–1984

Music: AZMON, Carl G. Gläser, 1784–1829

Text © 1980 Augsburg Publishing House, admin. Augsburg Fortress

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.

KYRIE

Assistant: In peace, in peace,

Refrain

Assistant: *Congregation:*

Let us pray to the Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have
mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy.

to Verses

Assistant: For the Reign of God, and for peace throughout the world, for the unity of all . . . (to Refrain)

Assistant: For your people here, who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your Word . . . (to Refrain)

Assistant:

Help, save and de - fend us, O

Congregation:

God. A - men.



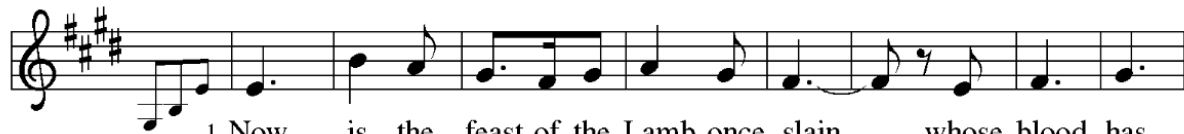
Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion, all of cre - a - tion



sings for joy to the God of life and love and free-dom;



praise and glo - ry for - ev - er - more!



1 Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain, whose blood has



freed and u - nit-ed us to be one great peo-ple of God.



2 Pow - er and rich-es, wis-dom and might, all hon - or and



glo - ry to Christ for - ev - er.



3 For God has come to dwell with us, to make us peo-ple of



God; to make all things new.

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.

TIME WITH CHILDREN

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21

A reading from Genesis.

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12

A reading from Romans.

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

The holy gospel according to 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

HYMN OF THE DAY

Forgive Our Sins As We Forgive (ELW 605)



1 "For - give our sins as we for - give," you taught us, Lord, to pray;
2 How can your par - don reach and bless the un - for - giv - ing heart
3 In blaz - ing light your cross re - veals the truth we dim - ly knew:
4 Lord, cleanse the depths with - in our souls and bid re - sent - ment cease;



but you a - lone can grant us grace to live the words we say.
that broods on wrongs and will not let old bit - ter - ness de - part?
how tri - fling oth - ers' debts to us; how great our debt to you!
then, by your mer - cy rec - on - ciled, our lives will spread your peace.

Text: Rosamond E. Herklots, 1905–1987, alt.
Music: DETROIT, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844
Text © Oxford University Press 1969.

CREED

Let us confess our faith in the words of the 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

For those suffering from violence and injustice, we pray,
Have mercy on them, O God.

For those who are weighted down by poverty, we pray,
Have mercy on them, O God.

For those who want to work and have no prospects of work, we pray,
Have mercy on them, O God.

For those who are oppressed by racism, sexism,
and other types of discrimination, we pray,
Have mercy on them, O God.

For those who worry about being able to provide for their children
and loved ones, we pray,
Have mercy on them, O God.

For those dealing with illness of any sort, and for those who may struggle to care for them.
Have mercy on them, O God.

For those who have died and for those who mourn
Have mercy on them, O God.

For those who are our political leaders
who fail to address our problems, we pray,
Have mercy on us, O God.

For those who have a bounty of resources
and yet refuse to share what they have with those in need, we pray,
Have mercy on them, O God.

For those we love – family, friends and neighbors, who we pray for now, either aloud or in our
hearts....
Have mercy on them, O God.

Lord, we pray for your church
that we will be a beacon of hope, grace, love and light in this world.

May our hands reaching out to those in need reflect your love for all, and especially those who
will receive the snack bags we fill today.

AMEN

PEACE The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING – THANK YOU! YOUR GENEROSITY MAKES OUR MINISTRY POSSIBLE.

Giving is easy online through our website at <https://www.clcathens.org/give>

There you will also find instructions on how to text to give or download our church app!

MUSICAL OFFERING

OFFERTORY

As the Grains of Wheat

Refrain

Congregation:



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread;
so may all your peo-ple from all the ends of earth be
gath-ered in - to one in you.

Verses



1. As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst
2. Let this be a fore-taste of all that is to come when
to Refrain
may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

OFFERING PRAYER

Merciful God,

accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory.

You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day
when we will hunger and thirst no more.

Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus,

that goodness and mercy may follow us

and bless the world you love.

In the name of Jesus, **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Presider: *Congregation:*

The Lord be with you. And al-so with you.

Presider: *Congregation:*

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Presider: *Congregation:*

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is

right to give God thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

It is our duty and delight that we should everywhere and always offer thanks and praise to you, O God, through Jesus Christ who calls us to follow his way of humble service and love and so with the church on earth, all creation and the host of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and

might; heav - en and earth are filled with your

glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Bless - ed is the one who comes in your name. Ho -

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

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
 as we forgive those
 who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
 and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
 and the glory are yours,
 now and forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the table of new life.
Receive the risen Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

AGNUS DEI

Congregation: *Congregation or Assistant:*

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
 you break the chains of ha - tred and
 you are the way of jus - tice and
 you are the way of mer - cy and

Congregation:

world: have mer - cy on us, mer - cy on us,
 fear:
 peace:
 love.

Final Stanza

Congregation or Assistant:

mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you
 take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace,
 grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION

(Whatever the state of your faith today, ALL are invited to the Lord's table. No Exceptions. To receive communion, come forward at the direction of the ushers and take a place at the altar rail. You may stand or kneel as you wish. You will first receive the bread, then you may choose either red wine or white grape juice in a small glass, or sip wine from the chalice. If you choose a small glass, you will place it in the empty tray carried by the acolyte. After receiving the bread and wine, you will return to your seat.)

POST COMMUNION CANTICLE

Congregation:

1. Praise to you, O God of mer - cy:
2. From of old you loved and sought us:

Thanks be to you for ev - er! Rais - ing high the
Thanks be to you for ev - er! Truth and jus - tice

weak and low - ly: Thanks be to you for ev - er!
you have taught us: Thanks be to you for ev - er!

Strong is your faith - ful-ness, strong is your

love, re - mem - b'ring your cov-e-nant of

life with us. 3. Praise to you, O

God of mer - cy: Thanks be to you for ev - er!

Rais-ing high the weak and low - ly: Thanks be to you for

ev - er! Thanks be to you for ev - er!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Compassionate God,
through the gifts of bread and wine
our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love.
Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal,
may share your love freely, as you have shared with us.
We ask this in the name of Jesus,
through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever.
Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS**BLESSING**

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ☩ one God,
bless, heal, and hold you
today and always. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG

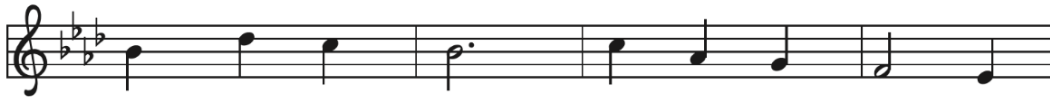
God's Work, Our Hands (ACS 1000)



1 God's work, our hands: work - ing to - geth - er,
 2 God's work, our feet: trav - 'ling to - geth - er,
 3 God's work, our voice: sing - ing to - geth - er,
 4 God is at work in and a - round us:



build - ing a fu - ture, re - pair - ing the world,
 fol - low - ing Je - sus to plac - es un - known,
 prais - ing, pro - claim - ing to all who will hear,
 seed - lings are sprout - ing and bread's on the rise!



rais - ing up homes, plant - ing new gar - dens,
 walk - ing as friends, march - ing for free - dom,
 pray - ing for peace, shout - ing for jus - tice,
 Washed and set free, hum - bled and hon - ored,



feed - ing the hun - gry and shelt - 'ring the cold.
 run - ning the race with God's fu - ture the goal.
 claim - ing God's love for the lost and the least.
 gift - ed by grace, we re - spond in God's love.



Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,
 Bless, God, our feet as we fol - low your way,
 Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,
 Bless, God, our lives as we an - swer your call,



shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954

Music: EARTH AND ALL STARS, David N. Johnson, 1922–1987

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Music © 1968 Augsburg Publishing House, admin. Augsburg Fortress

DISMISSAL

Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

Thanks be to God.