

16TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - SEPTEMBER 13, 2026



...how often should
I forgive?
"Not **SEVEN** times,
but, I tell you,
**SEVENTY-
SEVEN**
times."

Matthew 18:21-22, NRSV

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 250 * 205 West Jefferson Street
Cole Camp, MO 65325

"Being Transformed By God's Grace To Love And Serve."

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If it is uncomfortable for you to stand where indicated, please feel free to remain seated. The congregation responds where it is bold print.



Prelude

Welcome/Announcements

please stand in body or spirit

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, 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

“All Creatures, Worship God Most High!”

#835

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.**

Hymn of Praise

“Gloria”

p. 176

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.**

please be seated

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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsive Reading

Psalm 103: 8-13

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

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.**

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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

please stand in body or spirit

Gospel Acclamation

"Alleluia"

p. 179

Gospel

Matthew 18: 21-35

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 18th chapter. **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.***please be seated*

Sermon

Pastor Stephen Zeller

please stand in body or spirit

Hymn of the Day "Our Father, We Have Wandered"

#606

Apostle's 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

Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Sharing The Peace

The Peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

please be seated

Offering



please stand in body or spirit

Offertory "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ"

#674

Offertory Prayer

Let us pray... God of creation, you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. **Amen.**

The 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.

Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer

Hear, O Lord, the prayer you taught us to 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, forever and ever. Amen.**

please be seated

HOLY COMMUNION

by Stations

All who believe that Jesus is present in the Bread and the Wine
and has the power to forgive are welcome to commune.

Red wine or white grape juice is available.

Communion Hymns

"Where Charity and Love Prevail"

#359

"As We Gather at Your Table"

#522

please stand in body or spirit

Post-Communion Blessing

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen**

Post-Communion Prayer

Let us pray....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.**

Blessing

The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind,
in the body of Christ Jesus.

Amen.

The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit.

Amen.

The God of grace ☩ bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Sending Hymn

“Go, My Children, with My Blessing”

#543

Dismissal

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

Thanks be to God.

"GOD'S HOPE FOR ALL IN NEED"



Welcome: We are so glad you have joined us today for the Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost. As we continue through this season of Ordinary Time, our liturgy and scriptures remind us of the ongoing work of discipleship in our everyday lives. Today, we gather to renew our faith, lift our voices in praise, and support one another in community.

We invite everyone to enjoy coffee and fellowship before worship in the Gathering Space. Please join us!

In Our Prayers: "Unspoken prayer concerns", Dennis Balke, Suzanne Lutjen, Mary Haluptzok, Ken Holland, Kevin Tatum, Nathan Vanderlinden, Norene Ives, Jon Beckman and Kyle Luetjen.

Richard Lee, Colin Kabler (brother of Alexis Smith), Tom Ferguson, Tanner Huffman, Merle Fuelling (brother of Paul Fuelling), Dan Sabala, Pam Bruns (Cousin of Ruth Ann Kreisel), Pat Higgins, Kathy Harms, Kylie Simon, Hazel Karstons, Marvin Logan (brother of Gale Logan), Larry Haase (brother-in-law of Gene Beckman), David Mobely (brother-in-law of Randy Healan), Joyce Jones (sister of Connie Gerken), Kris Barnes (friend of Julie Cronin), Joe Campbell, Cliff Eckhoff, Joseph Fuelling (nephew of Paul Fuelling), Karen Haase (sister-in-law of Gene Beckman), Jackie Ross (sister of Randy Healan), and Adam Gumbel (son of Jim & Kim Gumbel).



Nursing Home & Homebound: Vern Dean Bohling, Shirley Cash: *Anew*. Judie VonHolten, Eugene Beckman, Florence VonHolten, Arlene Schlesselman & Larry & Judy Schlesselman: *GSCC*. Earl Bauer: *Windsor Nursing Home*.

Prayers: If you would like your name added or removed from the prayer list, please contact the church office at 668-3537.



Military: Please keep all those who have served our country past and present in your prayers, especially: Rank E3 Jensen Hamilton (grandson of Dennis Hamilton), Private Bradyn Hood (grandson of Connie Gerken), MSgt. Jason Ostberg (son-in law of Suzanne Lutjen), J. Phillips Navy Petty Officer E-4 MMN (nephew of Katy Schlesselman), Lt. Col. Ron Poe, SSG Nick Smith and Major Joseph Strathman.



One Stitch at a Time: The Sewing Group meets every **Monday** at 9:00am in the Luther League Room. Everyone is welcome to join!

Yoga: Dr. Stephanie Shirding is once again offering a free Community Yoga class! This class is held from 6:30-7:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall **every Monday**. We thank Dr. Shirding for offering this once again! Search for “Monday Mediations” on Facebook for more information about the class.



Health Care: The Benton County Health Department will be here on Thursday, **September 17th**, from 8:00am until 10:00am to assist you with your health care needs.

Committee: The Worship & Music Committee will meet on **September 16th** at 3:30 pm in the Meeting Room



Meeting: The Church Council will meet on **September 16th** at 6:00 pm in the Meeting Room.

Circle: The Esther Circle will meet at 7:00 pm on **September 21st** at Sharel Wienberg's home.

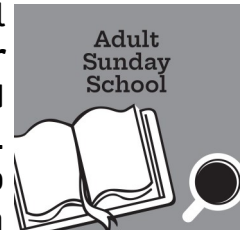


Sunbeam: The Sunbeam Committee will meet on **September 23** at 2:00 pm in the Gathering Space.



Sunday School & Confirmation: A new year of Christian Education begins here at St. Paul's on Sunday, **September 20**. Children in preschool through 6th grade will meet in the classrooms in the Fellowship Hall each Sunday at 9:00 am. Youth in 7th & 8th grade will meet with Pastor Stephen in the Meeting Room each week at 8:45 am. And the adult Sunday School class will meet in the Chapel each week at 9:00 am. We hope you'll take advantage of one of these classes so that you can continue to grow in your faith!

Adult Sunday School: The Adult Sunday School class will start the new Sunday School year on Sunday, **September 20**, at 9 a.m. in the Chapel. We will review what we learned about the Beatitudes last Spring and finish up that study. Even if you did not attend in the Spring, you are welcome to participate this year. Would love to fill the room up again this year. This group has some spirited discussion during our Bible Study! Not sure what the next Bible Study will be following the Beatitudes so stay tuned for that announcement. Hope you will plan to join us!



Little Blessings: Our daycare is in need of some new rocking chairs similar to what is pictured here. They prefer upholstered chairs, not gliders, and they do not need to recline. If you have something that is gently used please let us know to make sure it's what we're looking for. Thank you!

Junior Lutherans: We're going to bring back an experiment we did a few years ago. To utilize the gifts, ideas, and interests of many parents we're seeking volunteers to sign up for a month to plan and lead a Junior Lutheran youth event. Once you claim a month, you pick the day and activity, and we'll do the advertising. There's more information and a place to sign up on the Junior Lutheran Facebook page. Anyone from the congregation is welcome to sign up and help lead an activity for our youth!



ELCA Youth Gathering: Can you “Imagine More” courage, joy, love, grace, welcome? That’s the theme of the upcoming 2027 ELCA Youth Gathering: *Imagine More*. The Gathering will take place **June 28 - July 2, 2027**, in Minneapolis, MN. Youth currently in grades 8th-12th and their families are invited for an informational meeting on **September 27th** following worship to discuss next year's ELCA Youth Gathering trip next summer. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall after worship for a light lunch. See you there! Please RSVP to Anne Goosen if you can be there.



Senior Sunday: The Luther League would like to invite all of our members who are young at heart to be honored at our Senior Sunday event on **October 4th**. Lunch will follow worship in the Fellowship Hall. The League members will be providing the meat, potatoes, and bread. We would love for our honored guests to RSVP, and we invite the congregation to attend and provide a side dish (salad, vegetable, or dessert).

~*~ In Our Community ~*~



Fish Fry: Mt. Hulda Lutheran Church will be hosting their annual Fish Fry on **September 27th**. Serving from 4:30pm until approximately 7:00pm or until the fish is gone! A free will offering will be taken to help support local families through the Lutheran Early Response Team, (LERT), and the Cole Camp Area Church Alliance.

Sprinkle and split

A sprinkle of pepper and a dab of soap illustrate a big concept from God's Word.



What you need:

- Shallow dish
- Water
- Black ground pepper
- Toothpick
- Dish soap
- Bible

What you do:

1. With the dish on a table, fill it halfway with water. Don't jiggle the dish.
2. Sprinkle pepper on the water.
3. Dab the toothpick into a drop of soap. Then touch its tip to the center of the water and observe.
4. Read Psalm 103:8-12. How does this experiment illustrate God's forgiveness?
5. Explain the science behind this experiment: The soap disturbs the water's surface tension. The soap molecules don't want to interact with the water. This repels the water molecules from the soap, causing the floating pepper to also move to the sides.

?? ? Bible Quiz ? ??

How many times does Jesus say we should forgive others?

- A. 7
- B. 70
- C. 77
- D. 70 x 7
- E. C or D, depending on the translation

forgive

Answer: E (See Matthew 18:22.)

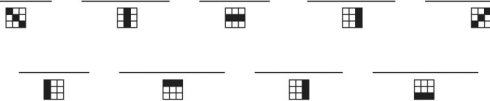


SEPARATION FROM SIN

David praises God for his love and compassion.
What does God do for people who fear him?

Directions: Using each grid pattern marked below, find the word that appears in all three of those squares. Write the words in the spaces below to complete Psalm 103:12, NIV.

FROM as is can	NORTH from far	at the EAST FROM
is South AS	do far EAST	the his up as
WEST THAT is East	far (down) WEST	THE be AS West



... so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

PSALM 103:12, NIV

Answer: As far as the east is from the west

SERMON NOTES **for kids**

AS YOU ATTEND CHURCH SERVICE WITH YOUR FAMILY, USE THIS SHEET TO HELP YOU PAY ATTENTION AND LEARN. WE WANT YOU TO WORSHIP WITH US BY SINGING TO GOD AND LISTENING TO THE MESSAGE!

WHAT IS THE MAIN PASSAGE
WE ARE READING TODAY?

BOOK:

CHAPTER:

VERSE:

WHAT ARE YOU
LEARNING ABOUT
FROM THIS
PASSAGE:

DRAW SOMETHING YOU
HEARD IN THE SERMON OR
IN A SONG TODAY!



WHO IS SPEAKING?

DATE:

MESSAGE TITLE:

MY QUESTIONS & NOTES



THINGS I HAVE QUESTIONS ON TODAY:

IMPORTANT POINTS / VERSES FROM TODAY:

MY FAVORITE SONG FROM TODAY WAS...

THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S

Sunday, September 13:	10:00 am	Worship Service Holy Communion by Stations
Monday, September 14:	9:00 am	Sewing Group
	6:30 pm	Yoga
Wednesday, September 16:	3:30 pm	Worship & Music Committee
	6:00 pm	Church Council Meeting
Thursday, September 17:	8:00 am	BCHD
Saturday, September 19:		No Casual Worship Service
Sunday, September 20:	10:00 am	Worship Service Holy Communion by Stations



~ * ~ Coming Events ~ * ~

September 16	Worship & Music Committee
September 16	Church Council Meeting
September 20	Sunday School Resumes
September 21	Esther Circle
September 26	WELCA Mid-MO Fall Gathering

Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Ministers	The Whole Congregation
Presiding Minister	Pastor Stephen Zeller
Organist.....	Sandy Schlesselman
Pianist	Jeannette VonHolten
AV Technicians.....	Russ Oelrichs & Todd Rusk
Altar Guild	Susan Goosen & Debbie Vaughn
Ushers.....	Melinda Strathman, Head Usher
.....	Chad Schlesselman, Mark Oelrichs, Randy Schlesselman, Steve Triplett



16th Sunday after Pentecost ~ September 13, 2026

Assisting Minister.....	Anne Goosen
Communion Assistants	Virgil & Diann Holsten
Reader.....	Charlotte Zeller
Children's Sermon	Paul Fuelling
Acolytes.....	Miranda Gerken & Lexi Goyette
Flowers	Mary Balke



17th Sunday after Pentecost ~ September 20, 2026

Assisting Minister.....	Darin Oelrichs
Communion Assistants	Luther League
Reader.....	Susan Goosen
Children's Sermon	Pastor Stephen Zeller
Acolytes.....	Gannon Elliott & Tristan Fox
Flowers	Debbie Vaughn