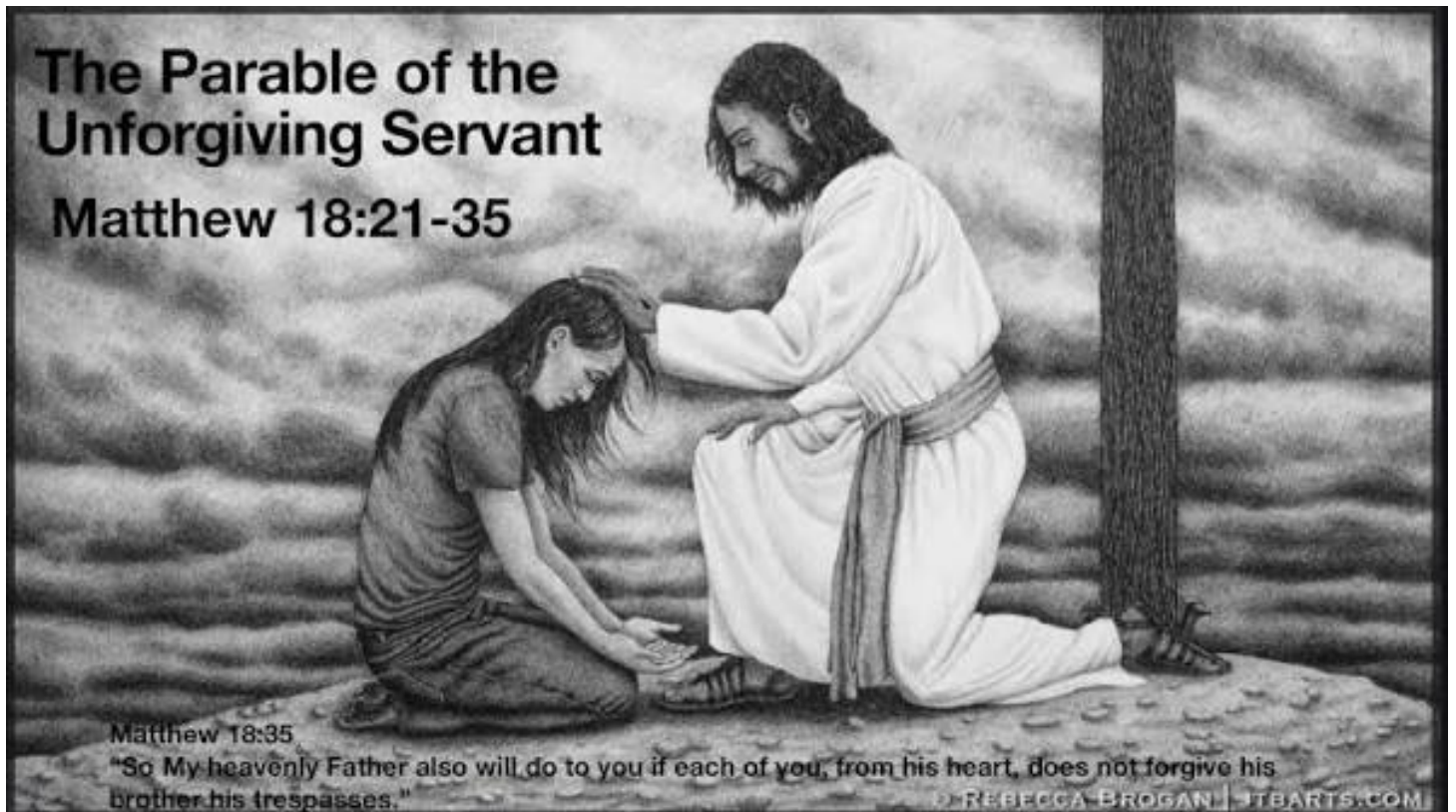




September 13, 2026

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
14531 Old Olga Road
Fort Myers, FL

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

14531 Old Olga Road S.E.

Ft Myers, FL 33905

Sunday Worship: 10:30 AM

Sunday School & Bible Class: 11:30 AM

Church Office: **(239) 694-3878**

bethlehemlutheranfortmyers.org

E-Mail: bethlehemlc@gmail.com

Rev. Karl P. Glander, Pastor

Pastor's Cell Phone: **(239) 293-1489**

Pastor's E-Mail Address:

pastorkarlglender@gmail.com

Linda Kirsch, Church Secretary

The people of God forgive.

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love.

Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you extend a word of forgiveness to someone who has hurt you?

The theme this week in the Bible readings is forgiveness. Genesis 50:15-21 is the story of Joseph forgiving his brothers for throwing him in a pit and selling him into slavery. Forgiving someone

who has hurt you is not easy. Think of someone who needs your forgiveness. Write a note to that person. Take a moment to read your note silently. Hold your note as you pray the Lord's Prayer. Pause for thought when you pray, *"forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us,"* then finish the prayer. Choose whether or not to send the note to them.



IT IS GREAT TO HAVE YOU IN WORSHIP WITH US TODAY!

Here at Bethlehem Lutheran, we believe in the teachings of the Bible as taught by Jesus and the apostles and strive to live our lives in accord with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are all fellow sinners who live together in the mercy and grace of Jesus. Jesus is the heart and center of all that we say and do as we serve Him and live in Christian love with one another.

If you would like to learn more about this church, or are looking for a church family, please talk to our pastor or one of the elders. They would be happy to talk with you! Regardless of whether you join or not, we welcome you and your family to worship with us any time! We want to know who you are, so please provide your contact

information in the Friendship Book as it is passed during the Offertory. If you are visiting, honor us by signing the Guest Register in the Narthex.

If you have a prayer request, please fill out a Blue Prayer Card from the pew rack and usher will be collecting them.

Thank you. Come visit us again sometime soon and may the Lord richly bless you!

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 13, 2026

PRELUDE

✙ ORDER OF WORSHIP ✙

HYMN OF INVOCATION

645 BUILT ON THE ROCK

- 1 Built on the Rock the Church shall stand
Even when steeples are falling.
Crumbled have spires in ev'ry land;
Bells still are chiming and calling,
Calling the young and old to rest,

But above all the souls distressed,
Longing for rest everlasting.

- 2** Surely in temples made with hands
God, the Most High, is not dwelling;
High above earth His temple stands,
All earthly temples excelling.
Yet He who dwells in heav'n above
Chooses to live with us in love,
Making our bodies His temple.
- 3** We are God's house of living stones,
Built for His own habitation.
He through baptismal grace us owns
Heirs of His wondrous salvation.
Were we but two His name to tell,
Yet He would deign with us to dwell
With all His grace and His favor.
- 4** Here stands the font before our eyes,
Telling how God has received us.
The altar recalls Christ's sacrifice
And what His Supper here gives us.
Here sound the Scriptures that proclaim

Christ yesterday, today, the same,
And evermore, our Redeemer.

- 5 Grant, then, O God, Your will be done,
That, when the church bells are ringing,
Many in saving faith may come
Where Christ His message is bringing:
“I know My own; My own know Me.
You, not the world, My face shall see.
My peace I leave with you. Amen.”

(Please rise)

+ CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION +

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son
and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

EXHORTATION

LSB 151

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive
ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

(Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.)

CONFESSION OF SINS

LSB 151

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. 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. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. 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.

ABSOLUTION

LSB 151

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

(Please be seated)

+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +

RESPONSIVE PSALM

Psalms 103:1–12

Bless the LORD, O My Soul

P Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name!

C Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits,

P who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,

C who redeems your life from the pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and
mercy,

P who satisfies you with good
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

C The LORD works righteousness
and justice for all who are oppressed.

P He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.

C The LORD is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast
love.

P He will not always chide,
nor will he keep his anger forever.

C He does not deal with us according to our
sins,

nor repay us according to our iniquities.

P For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who
fear him;

C as far as the east is from the west,
so far does he remove our transgressions
from us.

(Please rise)

KYRIE

LSB152

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.

♪GLORIA IN EXCELSIS♪

LSB 204

C 1 To God on high be glory
And peace to all the earth;
Goodwill from God in heaven
Proclaimed at Jesus' birth!
We praise and bless You, Father;
Your holy name, we sing—
Our thanks for Your great glory,
Lord God, our heav'nly King.

2 To You, O sole-begotten,
The Father's Son, we pray;
O Lamb of God, our Savior,
You take our sins away.
Have mercy on us, Jesus;
Receive our heartfelt cry,

**Where You in pow'r are seated
At God's right hand on high—**

**3 For You alone are holy;
You only are the Lord.
Forever and forever,
Be worshiped and adored;
You with the Holy Spirit
Alone are Lord Most High,
In God the Father's glory.
“Amen!” our glad reply.**

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

O God, our refuge and strength, the author of all godliness, hear the devout prayers of Your Church, especially in times of persecution, and grant that what we ask in faith we may obtain; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

(Please be seated)

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Genesis 50:15–21

God's Good Purposes

¹⁵When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." ¹⁶So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ²¹So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

Romans 14:1–12

Do Not Pass Judgment on One Another

¹As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ²One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

⁵One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. ⁷For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. ⁸If

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. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; ¹¹for it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall confess to God.”

¹²So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

(Please rise)

♪ **ALLELUIA AND VERSE** ♪

LSB 156

C Alleluia.

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

Alleluia, alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 18:21–35

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew,
the eighteenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

²¹Peter came up and said to [Jesus], “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” ²²Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.

²³“Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’

²⁷And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But when that same servant went out, he found one of

his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. ³²Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON HYMN

496 HOLY SPIRIT, LIGHT DIVINE

- 1 Holy Spirit, light divine,
Shine upon this heart of mine;
Chase the shades of night away,
Turn the darkness into day.
- 2 Let me see my Savior's face,
Let me all His beauties trace;
Show those glorious truths to me
Which are only known to Thee.
- 3 Holy Spirit, pow'r divine,
Cleanse this guilty heart of mine;
In Thy mercy pity me,
From sin's bondage set me free.
- 4 Holy Spirit, joy divine,
Cheer this saddened heart of mine;
Yield a sacred, settled peace,
Let it grow and still increase.
- 5 Holy Spirit, all divine,
Dwell within this heart of mine;

Cast down ev'ry idol throne,
Reign supreme, and reign alone.

SERMON

"Forgiven Forgivers"

. . . Pastor Karl

(Please rise)

APOSTLES' CREED

**☐ I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.**

**The third day He rose again from the
dead.**

**He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the
Father Almighty.**

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ✝ everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Lord, in Your mercy

C Hear our prayer.

(Please be seated)

OFFERING

♪OFFERTORY RESPONSE♪

(Please rise)

956 CREATE IN ME

1 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence;
and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation;
and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.

♪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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
Forever. Amen.**

(Please be seated)

CLOSING HYMN

527 O SAVIOR, PRECIOUS SAVIOR

1 O Savior, precious Savior,
Whom yet unseen we love;
O name of might and favor,
All other names above,
We worship Thee, we bless Thee,
To Thee, O Christ, we sing;
We praise Thee and confess Thee,
Our holy Lord and King.

2 O bringer of salvation,
Who wondrously hast wrought
Thyself the revelation
Of love beyond our thought,
We worship Thee, we bless Thee,
To Thee, O Christ, we sing;
We praise Thee and confess Thee,
Our gracious Lord and King.

3 In Thee all fullness dwelleth,
All grace and pow'r divine;
The glory that excelleth,
O Son of God, is Thine.
We worship Thee, we bless Thee,

To Thee, O Christ, we sing;
We praise Thee and confess Thee,
Our glorious Lord and King.

4 O grant the consummation
Of this our song above
In endless adoration
And everlasting love;
Then shall we praise and bless Thee
Where perfect praises ring,
And evermore confess Thee,
Our Savior and our King!

BENEDICTION

LSB 166

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be
gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give
you peace.

C Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE



SERVING IN THE LORD'S HOUSE TODAY

Preacher: Rev. Karl P. Glander

Organist: Holly Bell

Flutist: Nancy Rybak

Bells: Debbie Jackow

The Sound System: Jeff Kirsch

Elder: Klaus Naumann

Altar Guild: Emmy Larson, Betty Willis

Ushers: Greg and Yvonne Murray

Reader: Greg Murray

**Signup Sheets in the Fellowship Hall. This is
your chance to get involved in worship.**

Introducing "**GIFTS OF THANKSGIVING**"

For many years, our congregation has beautifully adorned the sanctuary with flowers to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, and the lives of loved ones. As our traditions evolve, we are introducing a new way to honor these special milestones: **The Gifts of Thanksgiving Program.**

Instead of altar flowers, you are invited to make a commemorative financial gift on your special day.

These gifts directly sustain our church home and care for our church family. When you give, you can choose to direct your offering to one of four traditional areas of need:

Where would you like your gift used?

The Church Home: Supporting our mortgage and debt reduction.

The Church Grounds: Maintaining our lawn, trees, and outdoor spaces.

The Church Structure: Funding building maintenance, roofing, and structural repairs.

The Church Family: Providing direct benevolence to members in financial need.

Just like our traditional flower calendar, your milestone and dedication will be printed right here in the Sunday bulletin so the congregation can celebrate and pray with you.

Celebrating birthdays this week: 9/15: Pat Duckwitz

Celebrating anniversaries this week: 9/15: Carrie & Brad Stecklein(19yrs), **9/19:** Diane and Mike Pfaff(46yrs)

Our Response to God's Love

Worship Service – 47

Adult Bible Class – 13

COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Join us in the Fellowship Hall after the 10:30 service for coffee and goodies. The refreshments this week are from The Murray's. Thank you!

ADULT SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY and SUNDAY SCHOOL

Pastor Glander leads a Bible study in the Fellowship Hall after the 10:30 service and Sunday school for the children is in the classroom.

CHURCH COUNCIL

Today, Sunday, September 13, 2026 ~ will meet right after Bible Class

MONDAY MORNING GATHERINGS!

Join us on Monday mornings from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for a time of health, fun, and fellowship. We will start each gathering with a gentle session of **Chair Exercises** to stretch and relax. Afterward, we will

transition ourselves into other group activities. Everyone is invited to attend! **Bring a Friend:** Neighbors, family, and friends are always welcome! Please bring your own ideas of what activities, crafts, or games we might do together at these future gatherings. We hope to see you there!

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

10:30 A.M. This gathering offers an opportunity to study God's Word together in the Fellowship Hall.

PRAYERS FOR HEALTH AND HEALING

For good test results, treatment, positive thinking, healing, and comfort during cancer treatments, for those suffering from addiction, mental illness and for healing, strength, comfort, and peace for family we pray for:

Nancy, McGee family, Christine, Sonia, Chelsie, Kyle and family, Jack, Melinda, Sandi, Pam, Paul, Debbie, Amy, Jennifer, Bill, Denny, Guatemala, David, Holly, Matt, Maggie, Doug, Johanna, Kerry, Addison, Dustin, Peggy, Andrea, Jackson, Sue, Pat, Tim, Phil S., Tina, Thomas, Nick, Felix, Cindy,

Klaus, Linda, Gail, Johnny, Wendy, Les
Dreischerf, Sharon, Will, Melissa Johnson, Barb,
Kayla, Katie, John, Jim Rode, Becky, Johnny,
Catherine, Kim, Kayla, Rose, Helen, Tasha,
Yvonne, Cody, Dan, Carl, Holly, Rose, Diane
Pfaff, Ken Zanto, Gary, Chris Tobeck, Keith
Tobeck, Paul, James and his family, John and
Judy Wittenberg, And those in our hearts

For Those Who have recently lost loved ones:
The family and friends of John Wittenberg, The
family and friends of Meme

**PRAYERS for Homebound, Assisted Living,
Nursing Home**

**Those who can't attend common worship that
they would find comfort knowing that the Lord
is with them.**

Pam, Edison and Karen Johnson, Chester and
Linda Rust

PRAYERS FOR PROTECTION

For our full-time troops and public servants, for
travel, missionaries, and for peace and protection
for families.

missionaries in Guatemala, Son-in-law (being deployed for a year in the Coast Guard), Smiths (missionaries)

Dear Lord, we come to You today with heavy hearts, as we lift up those who are in need of prayer. We ask that You would bring healing and restoration to their body, mind, and spirit Amen.