

Christ Lutheran Church & The Bridge Campus Ministry

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost - September 20, 2026

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

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INTRODUCTION

Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.



SERVING TODAY: *Presider/Preacher: Pastor Chad Huebner; Organist: Bekah Davenport; Asst/Lector: Elyce Friedman; Livestream: Dan Snoddy; Upstairs Greeter: Anne Sparks; Downstairs Greeter: Solveig Spjeldnes; Ushers: Linda Batey, JoAnn Ball; Time with Children: Puppets! Acolyte: Nathan; Tray Server: Pam Cochran*

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

Take My Life, That I May Be (ELW 583)

Refrain/Estrillo



To - ma, oh Dios, mi vo - lun - tad, y haz - la tu - ya, na -
Take my life, that I may be con - se - crat - ed, Lord,



da más; to - ma, sí, mi co - ra - zón
to thee; take my mo - ments and my days;



y tu tro - no en él ten - drás. ten - drás.
let them flow in cease - less praise. less praise.



1 Que mi vi - da en - te - ra es - té
1 Take my hands and let them move
2 Take my sil - ver and my gold,
3 Take my voice and let me sing
4 Take my will and make it thine;



con - sa - gra - da a ti, Se - ñor;
at the im - pulse of thy love;
not a mite would I with - hold;
al - ways, on - ly for my King;
it shall be no lon - ger mine;



que a mis ma - nos pue - da guiar el im -
take my feet and let them be swift and
take my in - tel - lect and use ev - 'ry
take my lips and let them be filled with
take my heart, it is thine own; it shall



Refrain/Estrillo
pul - so de tu a - mor.
beau - ti - ful for thee.
pow'r as thou shalt choose.
mes - sag - es from thee.
be thy roy - al throne.

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.



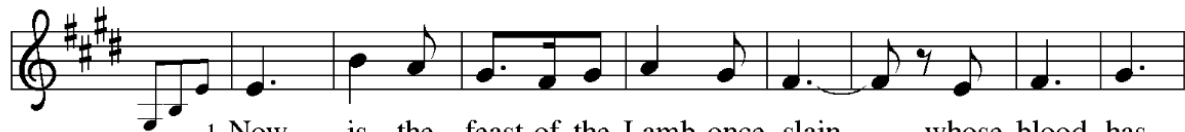
Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion, all of cre - a - tion



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.

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

TIME WITH CHILDREN

FIRST READING: Jonah 3:10—4:11

A reading from Jonah.

¹⁰ When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

^{4:1} But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. ³ And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴ And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵ Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶ The LORD God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered.

⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." ¹⁰ Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night.

¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?"

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Philippians 1:21-30

A reading from Philippians.

²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, ²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that, by my presence again with you, your boast

might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.

²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ and in no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹ For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 20:1-16

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹ "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷ They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹ When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³ But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *Great God, Your Love Has Called Us* (ELW 358)



1 Great God, your love has called us here, as we, by love, for
 2 We come with self - in - flict - ed pains of bro - ken trust and
 3 Great God, in Christ you call our name and then re - ceive us
 4 Then take the towel, and break the bread, and hum - ble us, and
 5 Great God, in Christ you set us free your life to live, your



love were made. Your liv - ing like - ness still we bear,
 cho - sen wrong, half - free, half - bound by in - ner chains,
 as your own, not through some mer - it, right, or claim,
 call us friends. Suf - fer and serve till all are fed,
 joy to share. Give us your Spir - it's lib - er - ty



though marred, dis - hon - ored, dis - o - beyed. We come, with all our
 by so - cial forc - es swept a - long, by pow'rs and sys - tems
 but by your gra - cious love a - lone. We strain to glimpse your
 and show how grand - ly love in - tends to work till all cre -
 to turn from guilt and dull de - spair, and of - fer all that



heart and mind your call to hear, your love to find.
 close con - fined, yet seek - ing hope for hu - man - kind.
 mer - cy seat and find you kneel - ing at our feet.
 a - tion sings, to fill all worlds, to crown all things.
 faith can do while love is mak - ing all things new.

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936

Music: RYBURN, Norman Cocker, 1889-1953

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Music © Oxford University Press. Used by permission.

PRESENTATION OF NEW MEMBERS

Dear friends, we give thanks for the gift of baptism and for these people, one with us in the body of Christ, whom we welcome as new members into the life and ministry of this congregation.

Bob Alexander, Bob and Laura Geyer, Mike Bump, Duane Bump

CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**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.**

ADDRESS AND QUESTIONS

The presiding minister addresses those being welcomed.

In baptism, we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God. We are called to live among God's faithful people, to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

Siblings in Christ,
do you intend to continue in the covenant of your baptism
among God's people in this place?

Those being welcomed respond.

I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

The minister addresses the assembly.

People of God,

do you promise to support and pray for *these* new *members* in *their* life in Christ?

We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.

We welcome these siblings in Christ to this community of faith.

We rejoice with you in the life of baptism.

**Together we will give thanks and praise to God
and proclaim the good news to all the world.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us offer our prayers to God for the life of the world
and for all God's people in their daily life and work.

To God, the beginning and end of all things,
who watches unceasingly over all creation; we offer our prayers
Lord of all life: **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all through whom we receive sustenance and life;
for farmers and agricultural workers, for packers and distributors.
As you have so ordered our life that we depend upon each other,
enable us by your grace to seek the well-being of others along with our own.
Lord of all creation: **hear our prayer**

We pray for all engaged in research to safeguard crops against disease,
and to produce abundant yields so that all may be fed.
Guide the work of their hands and the searching of their minds,
that their labor may be for the welfare of all.
Lord of all wisdom: **hear our prayer.**

We pray for governments and aid agencies,
and those areas of the world where there is disaster, drought and starvation.
By the grace of your Spirit, touch our hearts
and the hearts of all who live in comfortable plenty,
and make us wise stewards of your gifts as we share our bounty with those in need.
Lord of all justice: **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are ill, remembering those in hospitals and nursing homes
and all who are known to us, who we offer prayers for now, either aloud or in our hearts...
We pray also for all who care for them.
Give skill and understanding to all who work for their well-being.
Lord of all compassion:
hear our prayer.

We remember those who have died,
whom we entrust to your eternal love
in the hope of resurrection to new life.
Lord of all peace:
hear our prayer.

We offer ourselves to your service, asking that by the Spirit at work in us
others may receive a rich harvest of love and joy and peace.
Lord of all faithfulness:
hear our prayer.

God of grace,
as you are ever at work in your creation,
fulfill your wise and loving purpose in us and in all for whom we pray,
that through them and in all that you have made,
your glory may be revealed
and the whole earth give praise to you,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
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 "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow" CLC Choir

OFFERTORY

As the Grains of Wheat

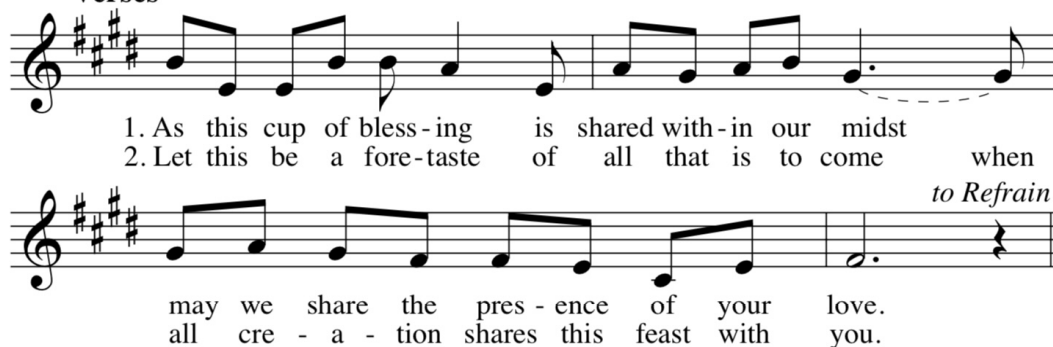
Refrain

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



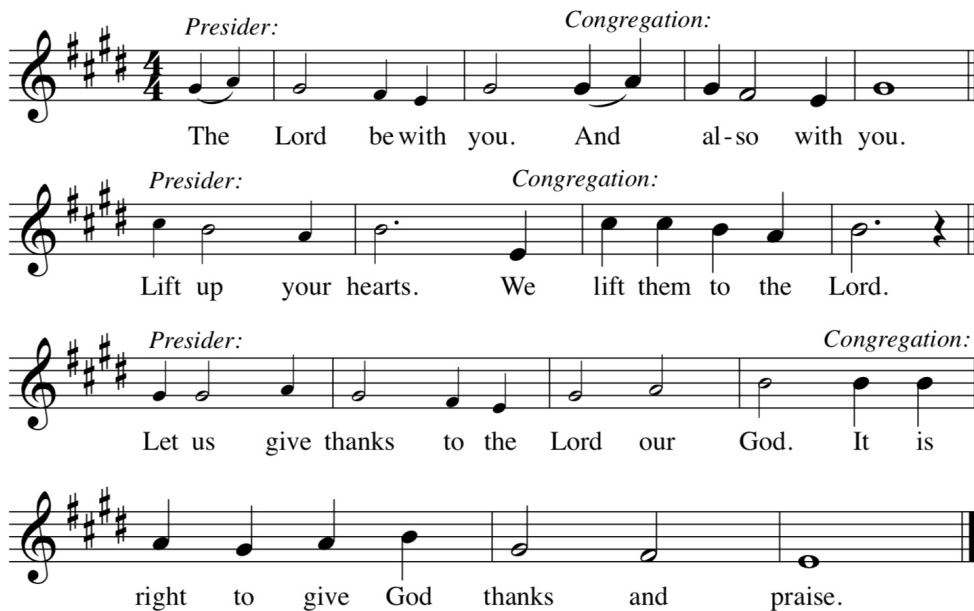
1. As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst
2. Let this be a fore-taste of all that is to come when
to Refrain
may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

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.

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

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 ushers' direction 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.)

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

Lord of All Hopefulness (ELW 765)



1 Lord of all hope - ful - ness, Lord of all joy,
2 Lord of all ea - ger - ness, Lord of all faith,
3 Lord of all kind - li - ness, Lord of all grace,
4 Lord of all gen - tle - ness, Lord of all calm,



whose trust, ev - er child - like, no cares could de - stroy:
whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe:
your hands swift to wel - come, your arms to em - brace:
whose voice is con - tent - ment, whose pres - ence is balm:



be there at our wak - ing, and give us, we pray,
be there at our la - bors, and give us, we pray,
be there at our hom - ing, and give us, we pray,
be there at our sleep - ing, and give us, we pray,



your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.
your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.
your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.
your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

Text: Jan Struther, 1901–1953
Music: SLANE, Irish traditional
Text © Oxford University Press 1931.

DISMISSAL

Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!
Thanks be to God.