

Service of Holy Communion

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 20, 2026



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.

GATHERING

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

The Congregation stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P. Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

P. Let us confess our sin to God.

The congregation sits or kneels. 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. Freely receive this healing gift of grace. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN Oh, I Woke Up This Morning TFF 166
(printed in back)

THE 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

A. In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

A. For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

A. 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.

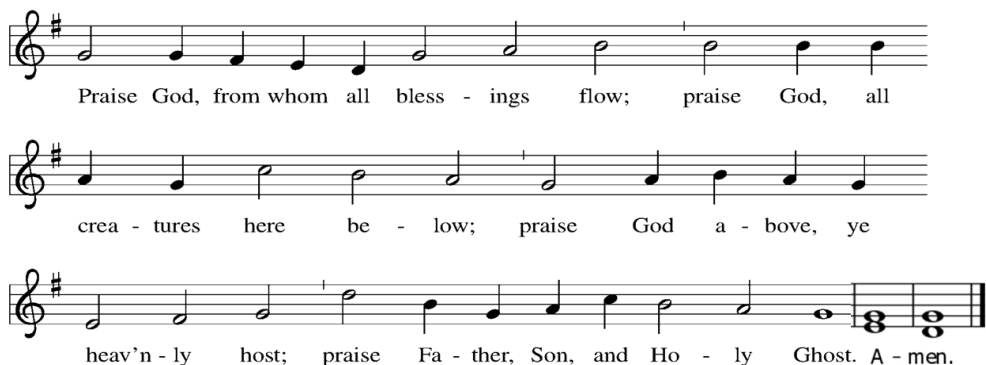
A. For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

A. Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C. Amen

CANTICLE OF PRAISE



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise God, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711, alt.

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P. 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.**

Congregation is seated

WORD

FIRST READING: Jonah 3:10-4:11

¹⁰ When God saw what [the people of Nineveh] 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?"

A. Word of God, word of life.

C. Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 145:1-8 (*read responsively*)

- ¹ I will exalt you, my God and king,
and bless your name forever and ever.
- ² **Every day will I bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.**
- ³ Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised!
There is no end to your greatness.
- ⁴ **One generation shall praise your works to another
and shall declare your power.**
- ⁵ I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty
and all your marvelous works.
- ⁶ **They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts,
and I will recount your greatness.**
- ⁷ They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.
- ⁸ **The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

SECOND READING: Philippians 1:21-30

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 God has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as I, ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I

still have.

A. Word of God, word of life.

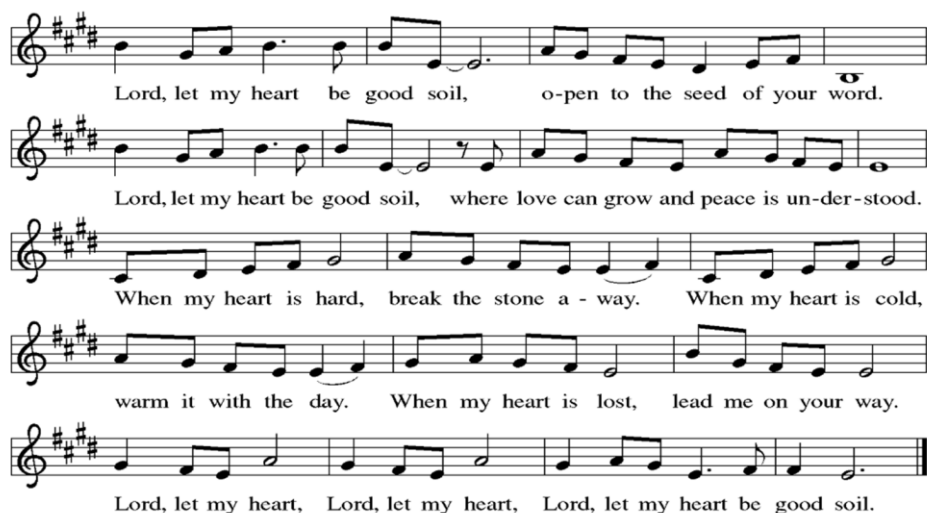
C. Thanks be to God.

A TIME FOR THE CHILD IN US ALL

Children & Youth are invited forward for a special sermon time with Pastor Peggy.

Congregation stands

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,

warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

GOSPEL: Matthew 20:1-16

P. The holy gospel according to Matthew. **C. Glory to you, O Lord.**

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.”

P. The gospel of the Lord. **C. Praise to you, O Christ.**

Congregation is seated

SERMON

Slow to Anger

Congregation stands

HYMN OF THE DAY

Rise Up, O Saints of God!

ELW 669

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 THE CHURCH

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

A brief silence.

A. Hold your church accountable for our unwillingness to share your good news and our anger at your generosity to others. Nourish us by your grace to be witnesses to your love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A. Guide scientists and researchers studying responses to the climate crisis so that all your creation may inspire us to give thanks for your great goodness. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A. Show employers the benefits of equal pay standards for all their employees. Reconcile conflicts between employees. Fill places of employment with camaraderie and bring an end to employment disparity. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A. Encourage any who cannot work or who cannot work a full day with the truth that their value comes from your everlasting love for them. Provide for those who are injured, ill, and for all in any need. We pray especially for... those we name aloud... and those we hold in our hearts... Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A. Strengthen all those in this congregation whose labor serves the needs of others in the community. Inspire all in this congregation to support community endeavors with our time and talents. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A. Comfort us with the promise of the resurrection as we remember all our loved ones whose desire to be with Jesus is fulfilled. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

P. 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

P. The Peace of Christ be with you always.

C. And also with you.

P. Let us share with each other a sign of Christ's peace.

Congregation is seated

MEAL

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Scan to give
via Venmo ↓



Offering can be given by putting it in the offering plate when it is passed, online directly via the QR codes for Tithely or Venmo, or by requesting your bank to send a check to the church. Find more details on our website.

Thank you for your generous gifts!

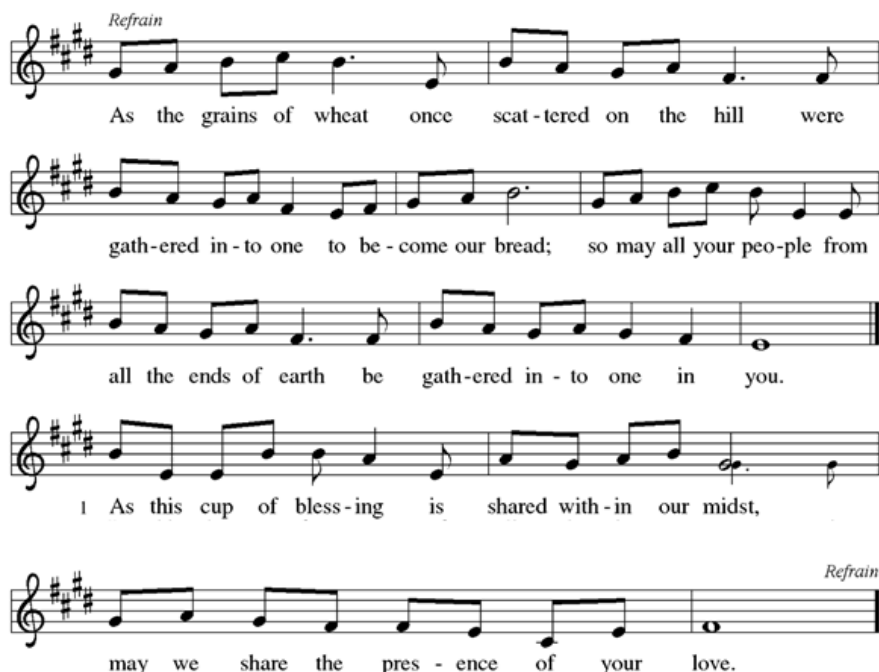
Scan to give
via Tithely ↓



Congregation stands

OFFERTORY SONG

Refrain



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.
1 As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst,
Refrain
may we share the pres - ence of your love.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A. 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.**

DIALOGUE & PREFACE OF THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

P. It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so with all the choirs of angels, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn: *(Sing 2x—English 1st time; Spanish 2nd time)*



San - to, san - to, san - to, mi co - ra-zón te a - do - ra.
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, my heart, my heart a - dores you.



Mi co - ra-zón te sa - be de-cir: San - to, e-res Se - ñor.
My heart is glad to say the words: You are ho - ly, God.

Text: Argentine traditional

Music: ARGENTINE SANTO, Argentine traditional

Congregation is seated

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P. Holy God, our Bread of life, our Table, and our Food, you created a world in which all might be satisfied by your abundance.

You dined with Abraham and Sarah, promising them life, and fed your people Israel with manna from heaven. You sent your Son to eat with sinners and to become food for the world.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, 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.

Remembering, therefore, his life given for us and his rising from the grave, we await his coming again to share with us the everlasting feast.

By your Spirit nurture and sustain us with this meal: strengthen us to serve all in hunger and want, and by this bread and cup make of us the body of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty God, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. **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 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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Believing in the real presence of Christ, we practice Eucharistic hospitality. All baptized persons are welcome to Communion this morning. Please come forward, guided by the Ushers, to receive the bread and wine. Children are invited to the table for a blessing.

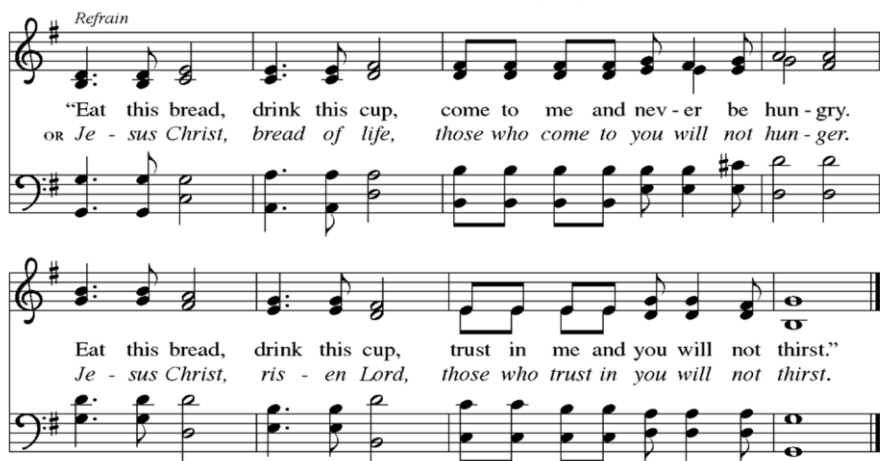
Gluten free and traditional wafers are available, please note this to Pastor Peggy when you come up. The bread is dairy and egg free. Grape juice is available in the second communion plate. As you return to your seat via the side aisles you can place your empty cup in the baskets on either side.

P. Christ invites you to this table.

All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

COMMUNION SONG

Refrain



"Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and nev - er be hun - gry.
OR Je - sus Christ, bread of life, those who come to you will not hun - ger.

Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst."
Je - sus Christ, ris - en Lord, those who trust in you will not thirst.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

After all have received Communion the congregation stands.

TABLE BLESSING

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

SONG AFTER COMMUNION



Thank-ful hearts and voic - es raise; tell ev-'ry-one what God has done.

Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and bear Christ's ho - ly name.

Send us with your prom - is - es and lead your peo - ple forth in joy with

shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A. 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.**

SENDING

BENEDICTION

P. 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 Take My Life, that I May Be ELW 583

DISMISSAL

A. Go out in joy! Be led forth in peace.

C. Thanks be to God.

Announcements for September 20, 2026

Welcome to Holy Counselor Lutheran Church. May you experience the joy of God's presence in our worship!

If today is your **first time** worshipping at Holy Counselor, please be sure to fill out the "Guest Book" on the table in the narthex and **take a welcome bag**. Please ask our ushers any questions you may have regarding worship this morning. **Large print bulletins are available.**

The **Pray-ground** is a special place to help **support kids and families** in worshipping. We love the sound of kids in worship! God made kids wiggly and curious, and we celebrate that here. **Tips:** explain, participate, and move around together. Need to leave? No problem, but please come back!

Worship is live streamed to our church Facebook page, but the camera is pointed away during Communion and is not on the children when they come forward during A Time for the Child in Us All. **Anyone on the altar is on camera.**

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**Altar flowers are in celebration of Matthew and Susan Moller's Anniversary!!**

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Volunteers for Today's Worship

Lay Asst.	Emilie Dupont
Ushers	Volunteer needed
Comm. Asst.	Volunteer needed
Tech	Mark Rossi
Tellers	Volunteer needed
Refreshments	Volunteer needed

***** Join us for refreshments after worship*****

THIS WEEK AT HOLY COUNSELOR

Sunday, September 20: Sunday School, 8:45-9:15am

Worship w/Communion, 9:30am

Usher Training, 10:45am

No Choir Rehearsal

Tuesday, September 22: Pastor's Community Office Hours,

Café Dolci Franklin, 12:30-2:30pm

Wednesday, September 23: Adult Ed, [Zoom](#), 10:00am

Mindfulness Walk, 4-5pm

Saturday, September 26: Sisters in Prayer, [Zoom](#), 8:30am

Sunday, September 27: Sunday School, 8:45-9:15am

Worship w/Communion, 9:30am

Choir Rehearsal following worship

Pastor's Community Office Hours: Pastor Peggy will be at Café Dolci in Franklin, **THIS Tuesday, September 22nd from 12:30-2:30pm**, as well next Tuesday the 29th for Community Office Hours. All are welcome to visit as she is present in the community.

Usher Training: If you are interested in Ushering/Greeting or already participate in worship in this way stay **after worship TODAY, September 20th** for a brief training session. Talk with Kathy Heeren or Diane Rossi for more information.

Sunday School: Sunday School begins **TODAY, Sunday, September 20th**! Sunday School is from 8:45-9:15am Sunday mornings before worship for ages 3yrs old-6th grade. **Register** for the new program year [via this link](#). Kristina Garnett, is our new Sunday School Coordinator! Connect with her or Pastor Peggy for help or with any questions.

Mindfulness Walk: Join Pastor Peggy for a fall **Mindfulness Walk at Maple Grange Park THIS Wednesday, September 23rd from 4-5pm**. We will meet in the first parking lot and determine our route based on the group. You're invited to **wear your 'Live Generously T-shirt'**. All ages are welcome!

Pampered Chef Fundraiser: Pam has organized a Pampered Chef fundraiser for the church. You are welcome to **order** any products through this link: www.pamperedchef.com/party/pamkucks0914 **by September 27th** and the church will earn the proceeds, plus the Kucks family will be matching any funds. Connect with Pam for more details.

Bring-A-Friend Sunday: Start inviting your friends now to join you for worship on **Sunday, October 4th**! We are excited to add this event to our 2026 calendar. **Everyone who brings a friend** will get a raffle ticket into drawings for gift cards to local spots in town. Let's show others how wonderful Holy Counselor is and how God's love shines. The more the merrier!

Stop The Bleed & AED Training: After worship on **Sunday, October 4th from 11am-12:30pm** we will have an AED training and Stop the Bleed class led by Claire Speroni's husband, Dale. He has been an EMT in Vernon for over 12 years and is graciously volunteering his time to offer this training for us. All are welcome, however **anyone who regularly cooks at church, works with kids, or is an active leader in the congregation (ushers, council members, etc.) is highly encouraged to attend.** Let's help keep everyone safe and healthy together!

Blessing of the Animals: Our annual Blessing of the Animals will be **Tuesday, October 6th at 6pm on the church front lawn.** Invite anyone with a pet! Please bring your leashed or crated pet, or their picture for a blessing. **All are welcome** to join us for this brief gathering, even if you don't have an animal but want to spread God's love through pets and smiles.

New Member Inquiry Class: Pastor Peggy will be offering a New Members Inquiry class **Sunday, October 11th after worship at 11am.** **Anyone interested** in learning more about the church, how we work, and what we do is invited to attend. After attending the class, you can decide if joining as a member is right for you at this time. For those who are interested in being members we will pick a date to welcome all new members in worship on a Sunday. Please **let Pastor Peggy know by 10/4**, if you are interested in the class even if you can't attend (pastorpeggy@hc-lutheranchurch.org).

Church Road Clean-up: As part of the Clean Communities Project, the Vernon Twp DPW will pay HCLC to pick up garbage on Sand Hill and McPeck roads. **Volunteer** to help with the Road Cleanup on **Sunday, October 18th from 11am-2pm** (any time available during those hours is appreciated). Please see Diane Rossi if you are available to help!

Food Pantry: **Food items to help restock:** 4-pack toilet paper, canned tuna, canned chili, canned corn, canned soup, canned green beans, canned fruit, mac & cheese, boxed potatoes, tuna helper, peanut butter, jelly, children's juice boxes or pouches, kid's snacks, toothpaste, shampoo. You can always bring donations of canned goods, paper goods, and hygiene products. All donations can be **placed in the blue bin** by the sanctuary doors. Thank you!

Oh, I Woke Up This Morning



1 Oh, I woke up this morn - ing with my mind, and it was
 2 Can't hate your neigh - bor in your mind, when you keep it
 3 Makes you love ev - 'ry - bod - y with your mind, when you keep it
 4 The dev - il can't catch you in your mind, when you keep it
 5 Je - sus, the cap - tain in your mind, when you keep it



stayed, stayed on Je - sus, woke up this morn - ing with my
 stayed, stayed on Je - sus, can't hate your neigh - bor in your
 stayed, stayed on Je - sus, love ev - 'ry - bod - y with your
 stayed, stayed on Je - sus, dev - il can't catch you in your
 stayed, stayed on Je - sus, Je - sus, the cap - tain in your



mind, and it was stayed, stayed on Je - sus,
 mind, when you keep it stayed, stayed on Je - sus,
 mind, when you keep it stayed, stayed on Je - sus,
 mind, when you keep it stayed, stayed on Je - sus,
 mind, when you keep it stayed, stayed on Je - sus,



woke up this morn - ing with my mind, and it was
 can't hate your neigh - bor in your mind, when you keep it
 love ev - 'ry - bod - y with your mind, when you keep it
 dev - il can't catch you in your mind, when you keep it
 Je - sus, the cap - tain in your mind, when you keep it



stayed, stayed on Je - sus, hal - le - lu, hal - le - lu, hal - le -



lu, hal - le - lu, hal - le - lu - jah.



Contact Information

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The Reverend Peggy Ludlow: pastorpeggy@hc-lutheranchurch.org

Director of Music: June Tarantino: music@hc-lutheranchurch.org

Office Administrator: Cathy Nemecek: office@hc-lutheranchurch.org

Bookkeeper: Wynn White: accounts@hc-lutheranchurch.org

MISSION STATEMENT

As Children of God, we are called to share and serve Christ's love and bring God's word to all.

CHURCH COUNCIL

Pastor Rev. Peggy Ludlow

President Nancy Knecht

Vice President Frank Urbaniak

Treasurer Claire Speroni

Recording Secretary Dawn McCormick

Financial Secretary John Heeren

Outreach Coordinator Francine Vince

Nurture Coordinator Fred Schoenagel

Administration Coordinator Diane Rossi

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Kristina Heeren

Pam Kucks

Matt Moller

Aileen Donovan

Holy Counselor is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Munsee people, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

