St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Twenty-first Sunday After Pentecost

October 18, 2026 – 9:30 a.m.



In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

Pastor Christian McMullan
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WELCOME

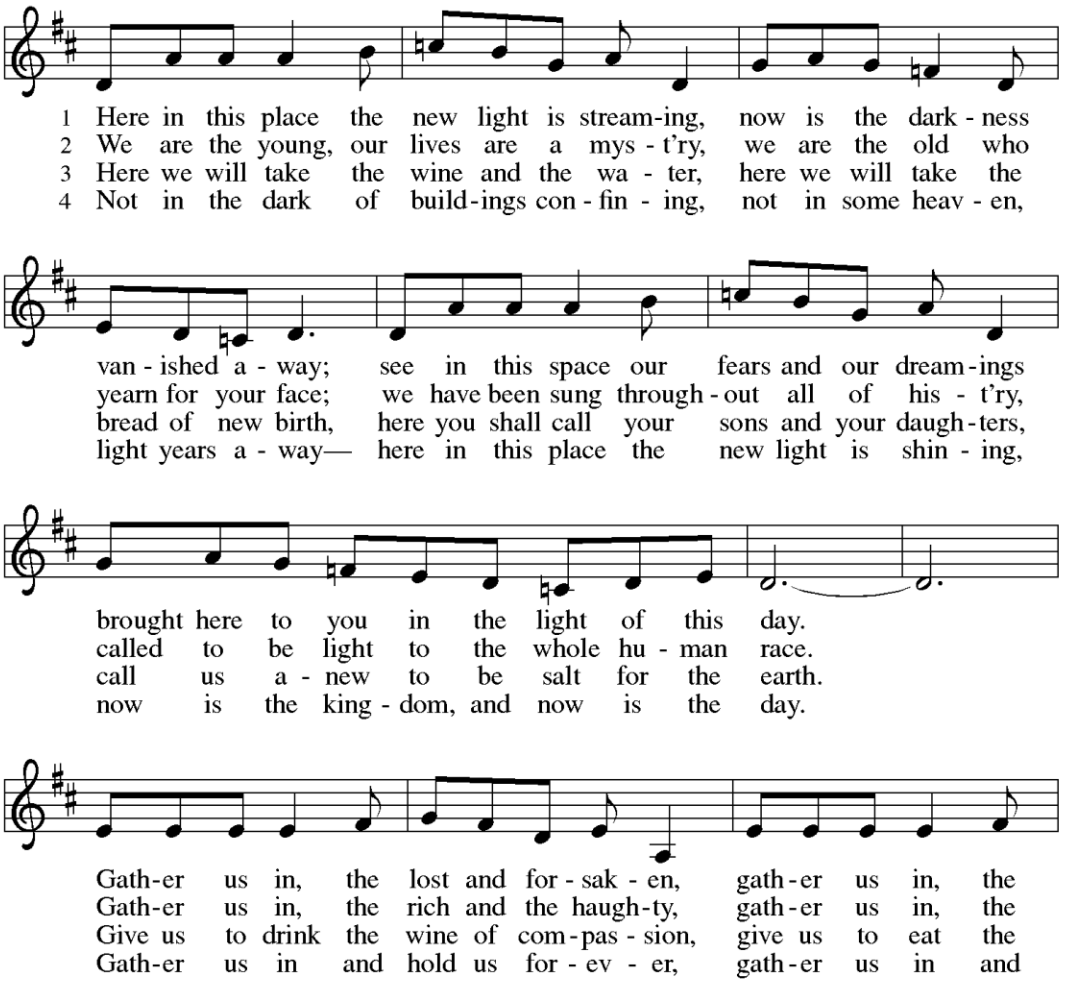
Please stand

GREETING

P: The boundless grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

OPENING HYMN — Gather Us In ELW 532





CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is 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.
C: Amen.

P: Confident that God restores us by grace through faith,
let us confess our sin.
Silence is kept for reflection.
P: Compassionate God,
C: we confess that we struggle to live out your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.
Nature groans from our overuse.
Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.
Apathy keeps us from seeking justice.
Divisions stop us from showing genuine love
to others.
Turn our hearts back to you.
Restore our world and reconcile us to you and one another.
Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.
Amen.

P: 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.
C: Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

C: Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Please be seated

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FIRST READING Isaiah 45:1-7

A: A reading from the Book of Isaiah, the twenty-fifth chapter.

[1] Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus,
whose right hand I have grasped
to subdue nations before him
and to strip kings of their robes,
to open doors before him—
and the gates shall not be closed:
[2] I will go before you
and level the mountains;
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron;
[3] I will give you the treasures of darkness
and riches hidden in secret places,
so that you may know that it is I, the Lord,
the God of Israel, who call you by your name.
[4] For the sake of my servant Jacob
and Israel my chosen,
I call you by your name;
I give you a title, though you do not know me.

[5] I am the Lord, and there is no other;
besides me there is no god.
I arm you, though you do not know me,
[6] so that they may know, from the rising of the sun
and from the west, that there is no one besides me;
I am the Lord, and there is no other.
[7] I form light and create darkness,
I make well-being and create evil things.
I the Lord do all these things.

A: The Word of the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING — Psalm 96:1-13

A: A reading from Psalm 96.

A:[1] Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
C: [2] Sing to the Lord, bless the name of the Lord;
proclaim God's salvation from day to day.
A:[3] Declare God's glory among the nations
and God's wonders among all peoples.
C:[4] For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised,
more to be feared than all gods.
A:[5] As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;
but you, O Lord, have made the heavens.
C:[6] Majesty and magnificence are in your presence;
power and splendor are in your sanctuary.
A:[7] Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord honor and power.
C:[8] Ascribe to the Lord the honor due the holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts of the Lord.
A:[9] Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
tremble before the Lord, all the earth.
C:[10] Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is king!
The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved
will judge the peoples with equity.

A:[11] Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.
**C:[12] Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O Lord,
for you come to judge the earth.**
A:[13] You will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with your truth.

A: The Word of the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.

Please stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION **Halle, Halle, Hallelujah ELW 172**



GOSPEL Matthew 22:15-22

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-second chapter.
C: Glory to you, O Lord.

15 The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. 16 So they sent their disciples
to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the
way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one, for you do not regard
people with partiality. 17 Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or
not?" 18 But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you
hypocrites? 19 Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. 20 Then he
said to them, "Whose head is this and whose title?" 21 They answered, "Caesar's." Then he said
to them, "Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are
God's." 22 When they heard this, they were amazed, and they left him and went away.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.
C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated

MESSAGE

HYMN In the Sweet By & By

There's a land that is fairer than day
And by faith we can see it afar
For the Father waits over the way
To prepare us a dwelling place there

In the sweet by and by
We shall meet on that beautiful shore
In the sweet by and by
We shall meet on that beautiful shore

We shall sing on that beautiful shore
The melodious songs of the blessed
And our spirit shall sorrow no more
Not a sign for the blessing of rest

In the sweet by and by
We shall meet on that beautiful shore
In the sweet by and by
We shall meet on that beautiful shore

In the sweet by and by
We shall meet on that beautiful shore
In the sweet by and by
We shall meet on that beautiful shore

In the sweet by and by
In the sweet by and by, oh

THE PRAYERS

P: Seeking the Spirit of God who makes all things new, we pray for the church and the world.
A brief silence.

P: …Hear us, O God.
C: hear our prayer.

P: Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
C: Amen.

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The Peace of the Lord be with you always.
C: And also with you.

Please be seated

THE OFFERING

Please stand

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS

In gratitude to God we give out of the abundance that God has given us.

OFFERING PRAYER

P: God of creation,
you send rain and the earth is abundantly fruitful.
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.
C: Amen.

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 God thanks and praise.
P: Holy God, our Maker, Redeemer, and Healer,
In the harmonious world of your creation the plants and animals
The seas and stars were whole and well giving you praise.
When sin had scarred the world,
You sent your Son to call us to yourself,
to heal our ills, and to form us again into one.

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.

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 Holy Spirit nurture and sustain us with this meal:
Strengthen us to serve all who are hungry and in need,
And by this bread and cup form us into 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.
C: Amen.

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:
C: 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

COMMUNION

This is God's table so all are welcome to join the feast.

Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available.

P: Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: Sustaining God,
with this bread and cup,
you nourish us with mercy and forgiving love.
By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world.
Make us living signs of your freedom, healing, and love,
following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.
C: Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand

BLESSING

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

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

P: The God of grace
☩ bless you now and forever.
C: Amen.

SENDING HYMN — Forever

Give thanks to the Lord
Our God and King
His love endures forever
For He is good He is above all things
His love endures forever
Sing praise sing praise

With a mighty hand
And an outstretched arm
His love endures forever
For the life that's been reborn
His love endures forever
Sing praise sing praise

Sing praise sing praise
Forever God is faithful
Forever God is strong
Forever God is with us
Forever forever

From the rising to the setting sun
His love endures forever
And by the grace of God
We will carry on
His love endures forever
Sing praise sing praise

Sing praise sing praise

Forever God is faithful
Forever God is strong
Forever God is with us
Forever forever

Forever God is faithful
Forever God is strong
Forever God is with us
Forever forever

DISMISSAL

P: Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.
C: Thanks be to God.

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