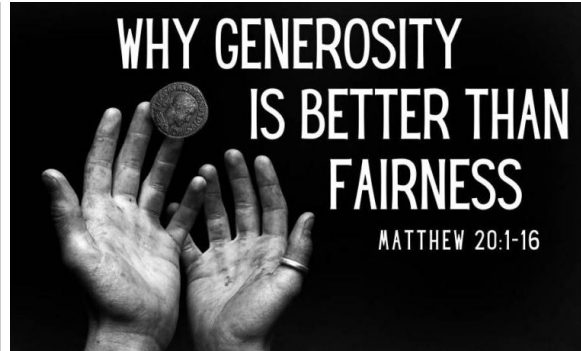
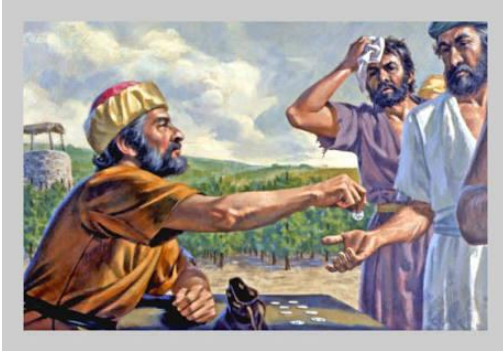


SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

8:30 am

September 20, 2026



Do You Begrudge God's Generosity?

AS WE GATHER

On the surface, the parable of the laborers in the vineyard seems wrong. Shouldn't the worker receive the wages he or she deserves for his or her time and labor? **It offends our sense of fair play** that one who worked less should receive the same as one who worked more.

We think that fairness ought to reign—that each of us should get what we deserve. But this is a dead end. God does not give us what we deserve but acts with mercy and grace beyond belief. He is **scandalously generous** and lavish with us—giving us what we do not deserve and have not earned.

We are tempted to ask God for equity and what we deserve, but God is determined to give us so much more in Christ. Only in faith can we learn to let God be God, to honor His generosity and forgiveness with the only response He desires: faith and thanksgiving. Today we pray the Lord to break through to our hearts and minds with His abundant grace and to rejoice that He is more than fair—He is merciful!

WELCOME – Pastor Christopher Fairbairn

RINGING OF THE BELL

790 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty



1 Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -
 2 Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is won - drous - ly
 3 Praise to the Lord, who has fear - ful - ly, won - drous - ly,
 4 Praise to the Lord, who will pros - per your work and de -



a - tion! O my soul, praise Him, for He is your
 reign - ing And, as on wings of an ea - gle, up -
 made you, Health has be - stowed and, when heed - less - ly
 fend you; Sure - ly His good - ness and mer - cy shall



health and sal - va - tion! Let all who hear Now to His
 lift - ing, sus - tain - ing. Have you not seen All that is
 fall - ing, has stayed you. What need or grief Ev - er has
 dai - ly at - tend you. Pon - der a - new What the Al -



tem - ple draw near, Join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion!
 need - ful has been Sent by His gra - cious or - dain - ing?
 failed of re - lief? Wings of His mer - cy did shade you.
 might - y can do As with His love He be - friends you.

- 5 Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore Him!
 All that has life and breath, come now with praises before Him!
 Let the Amen
 Sound from His people again;
 Gladly forever adore Him!

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 27:1, 7*

Pastor: The LORD is my light and my salvation;

People: whom shall I fear?

Pastor: The LORD is the stronghold of my life;

People: of whom shall I be afraid?

Pastor: Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud;

People: be gracious to me and answer me!

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Almighty God,

People: We confess to You that our ways and thoughts are corrupted by the sinfulness that pervades our whole being. I am by nature sinful and unclean. We hear in the Gospel that You are kind, full of love, and always forgiving. Your ways and thoughts are beyond our comprehension, but not beyond our faith in Your promises which are made sure through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ Jesus our Lord. Have mercy on us, O God, forgive our sins, and fill us with Your Holy Spirit, that we may gladly follow where Jesus leads.

Pastor: Almighty God, who is filled with compassion, hears your humble confession and speaks to you words of abundant pardon. 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.

People: Amen.

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus (tune: Ode to Joy)

1 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus;
 His the scepter, His the throne;
 Alleluia! His the triumph,
 His the victory alone.
 Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion
 Thunder like a mighty flood:
 "Jesus out of ev'ry nation
 Has redeemed us by His blood."

2 Alleluia! Not as orphans
 Are we left in sorrow now;
 Alleluia! He is near us;
 Faith believes, nor questions how.
 Though the cloud from sight received Him
 When the forty days were o'er,
 Shall our hearts forget His promise:
 "I am with you evermore"?

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. Lord God, heavenly Father, since we cannot stand before You relying on anything we have done, help us trust in Your abiding presence and care that confidently we may live according to Your Word, learning of You at all times and ever growing in Your grace and mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 55:6–9* ("Return to the Lord.")

⁶ "Seek the Lord while he may be found;
 call upon him while he is near;
⁷ let the wicked forsake his way,
 and the unrighteous man his thoughts;
 let him return to the Lord, that he may
 have compassion on him, and to our God,
 for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
 neither are your ways my ways,
 declares the Lord.

⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the
 earth, so are my ways higher than your
 ways and my thoughts than your
 thoughts

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

FIRST READING *Philippians 1:12–14, 19–30* (Paul writes that to live is Christ.)

¹² I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, ¹³ so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. ¹⁴ And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

¹⁹ for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, ²⁰ as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 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 on your account. ²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶ so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

²⁷ Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. ²⁹ For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, ³⁰ engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

HOLY GOSPEL Matthew 20:1-16 (*God's generosity is explained by Jesus with an illustration of laborers being paid for work they didn't do*)

Reader: "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

"About the third hour he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. He told them,

People: 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.'

Reader: So they went.

"He went out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour and did the same thing. About the eleventh hour he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them,

People: 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

Reader: " 'Because no one has hired us,' they answered.

"He said to them,

People: 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'

Reader: "When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman,

People: 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.'

Reader: "The workers who were hired about the eleventh hour came and each received a denarius (a full day's wage). So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. 'These men who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.'

"But he answered one of them,

People: 'Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?'

Reader: "So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Reader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**



THE 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.

Jesus Paid it All

I hear the Savior say,
 "Thy strength indeed is small.
 Child of weakness....watch and pray
 Find in Me....Thine all in all."

Chorus:

**Jesus paid it all,
 All to Him I owe;
 Sin had left a crimson stain,
 He washed it white as snow.**

Lord, now indeed I find
 Thy power, and Thine alone,
 Can change the leper's spots,
 And melt the heart of stone.

Chorus:

And when before the throne
 I stand in Him complete,
 Jesus died my soul to save
 My lips shall still repeat.

Chorus:

Oh praise the One who paid my debt
 and raised this life up from the dead.
 Oh praise the One who paid my debt
 and raised this life up from the dead.
 Oh praise the One who paid my debt
 and raised this life up from the dead.

Chorus:

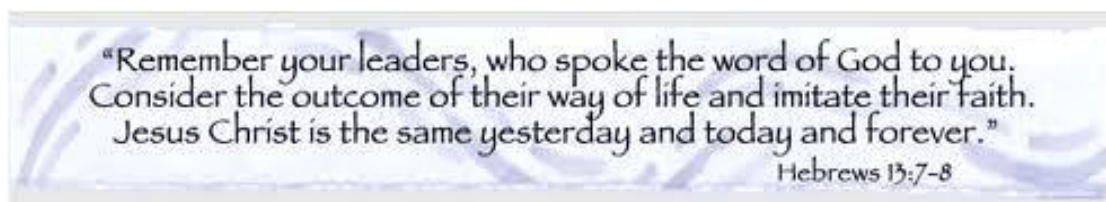
MESSAGE – Pastor Christopher Fairbairn

And when before the throne
 I stand in Him complete,
 Jesus died my soul to save
 My lips shall still repeat.

Chorus:



Prayerful Dedication and Blessing of Sunday School Staff



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Trusting in Your promise to be a blessing to all the nations of the world, we bring our prayers before You, our merciful and amazing Lord. Generous Father, look with mercy on all laborers in Your vineyard.

Grant strength to all who speak words of Law and Gospel on Your behalf—whether pastors, missionaries, or any of Your baptized children—that through our mouths, Your Word may not return empty, but accomplish the purposes for which You have sent it. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Pastor: Compassionate Healer, look with kindness on all who are sick, injured, or suffer any affliction of body, mind, or spirit. Grant them patience to endure their suffering in faith that Christ suffers with them, and bring them at last to full healing in Your presence. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Pastor: Wise Ruler of All, look with abundant grace on all civil leaders and public servants. Grant wisdom to Donald Trump, our president, Gretchen Whitmer, our governor, as well as all who make, administer, and judge our laws in this and every land, that Your people may lead quiet and peaceable lives in godliness and honesty. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Pastor: Look with love on our guests today and all families gathered in Your house of worship. Grant us honest repentance and sincere faith, that we may embrace with joy Your undeserved grace. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Pastor: Returning King, look generously on all who hope for Your coming. Grant us Your guidance on our pilgrim way, and bring us at last with all Your saints to Your Kingdom that lasts forever. Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your unbounded generosity; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.

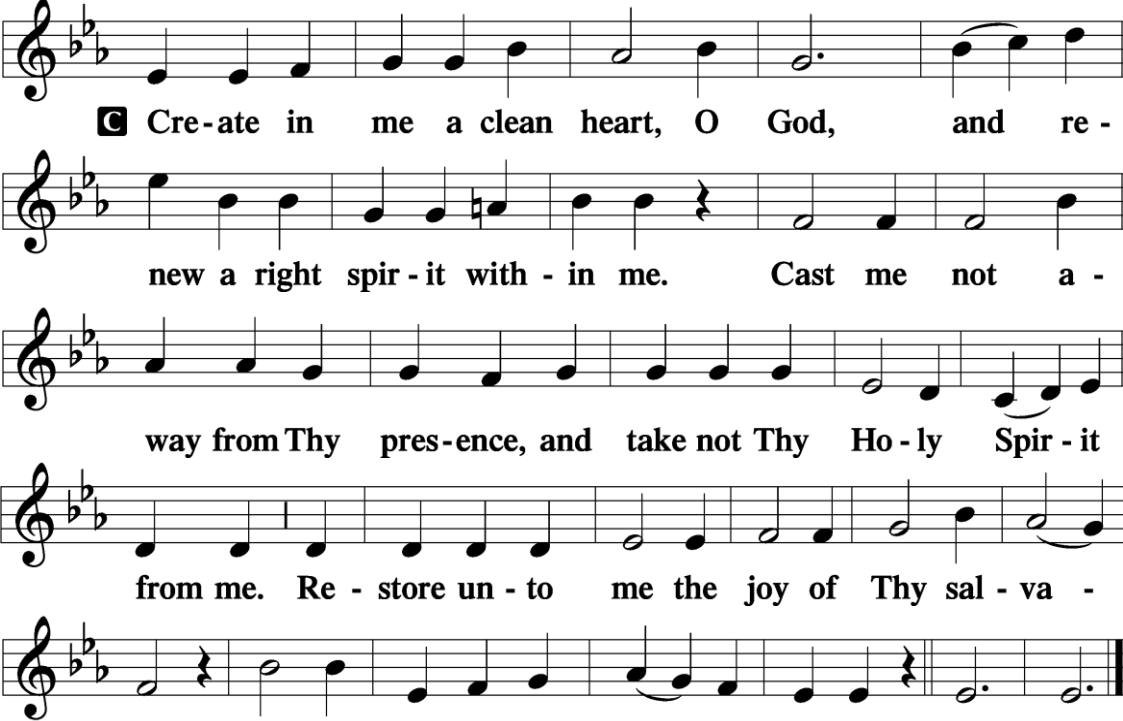
People: Amen.

OFFERING OF OUR TITHES AND GIFTS

If you brought your offering today, you are welcome to leave it in the offering box you will find at the back of the church. **Thank you.**

We invite our guests and members to fill out our Friendship Card during worship, which is found on the back of the pew. Please leave your card at the end of the pew near the center aisle as you leave.

Please Stand **Offertory**



C Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
 new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -
 way from Thy pres-ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it
 from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -
 tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir-it. A - men.

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

Please see our communion policy stated on the inside front cover.

PREFACE *2 Timothy 4:22*

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

THE 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.

The Words of Our Lord

Pax Domini

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: And also with you.



680 Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise

1 Thine the a - men Thine the praise Al - le -
 4 Thine the king - dom Thine the prize Thine the

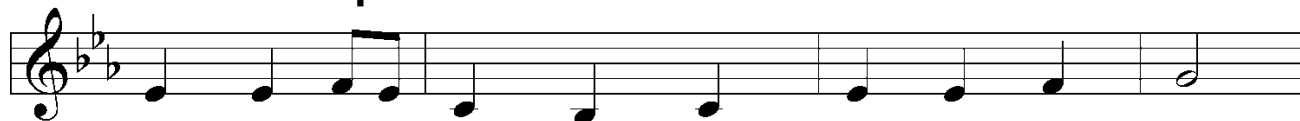
lu - ias an - gels raise Thine the ev - er - last - ing head
 won - der full sur - prise Thine the ban - quet then the praise

Thine the break - ing of the bread Thine the glo - ry Thine the
 Then the jus - tice of Thy ways Thine the glo - ry Thine the

sto - ry Thine the har - vest then the cup Thine the
 sto - ry Then the wel - come to the least Then the

vine - yard then the cup is lift - ed up lift - ed up.
 won - der all in - creas - ing at Thy feast at Thy feast.

738 Lord of All Hopefulness



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:

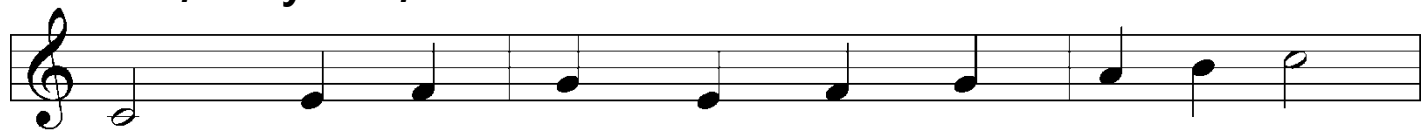


Be there at our wak - ing, and give us, we pray,
 Be there at our la - bors, and give us, we pray,
 Be there at our hom - ing, and give us, we pray,
 Be there at our sleep - ing, and give us, we pray,



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.

631 Here, O My Lord, I See Thee Face to Face



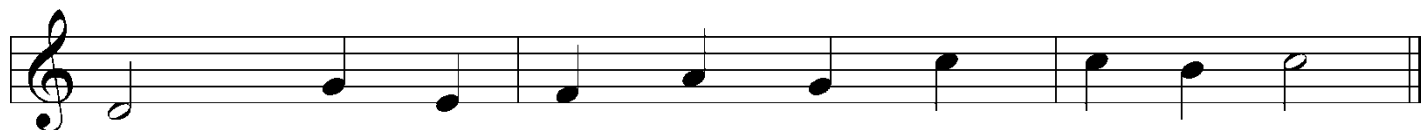
1 Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face;
 2 Here would I feed up - on the bread of God,
 3 This is the hour of ban - quet and of song;
 4 I have no help but Thine; nor do I need



Here would I touch and han - dle things un - seen;
 Here drink with Thee the roy - al wine of heav'n;
 This is the heav'n - ly ta - ble spread for me;
 An - oth - er arm but Thine to lean up - on.



Here grasp with firm - er hand the e - ter - nal grace,
 Here would I lay a - side each earth - ly load,
 Here let me feast and, feast - ing, still pro - long
 It is e - nough, my Lord, e - nough in - deed;



And all my wea - ri - ness up - on Thee lean.
 Here taste a - fresh the calm of sin for - giv'n.
 The brief bright hour of fel - low - ship with Thee.
 My strength is in Thy might, Thy might a - lone.

411 I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light



1 I want to walk as a child of the light.
 2 I want to see the bright-ness of God.
 3 I'm look - ing for the com - ing of Christ.



I want to fol - low Je - sus.
 I want to look at Je - sus.
 I want to be with Je - sus.



God set the stars to give light to the world.
 Clear Sun of Righ - teous - ness, shine on my path,
 When we have run with pa - tience the race,



The star of my life is Je - sus.
 And show me the way to the Fa - ther.
 We shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain



In Him there is no dark - ness at all.



The night and the day are both a - like.



The Lamb is the light of the cit - y of God.



Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING *Psalm 106:1*

Pastor: Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good,

People: for His steadfast love endures forever!

Pastor: We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICAMUS

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: "Keep justice, do righteousness," says the Lord, who promises to gather yet others to Him besides those already gathered. *Isaiah 56:1, 8*

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.

People: Amen.

THE INVITATIONS

RECESSIONAL HYMN

827 Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling



1 Hark, the voice of Je - sus call-ing, "Who will go and work to - day?
2 Some take up His task in morn-ing, To their Lord re - spond-ing soon;
4 Hear - ken to the Lord whose com-ing Marks the time when grace shall end,



Fields are white and har-vests wait-ing—Who will bear the sheaves a - way?"
Some are called in heat of mid-day, Oth - ers late in af - ter-noon;
When with His an - gel - ic reap - ers He in glo - ry shall de-scend.



Loud and long the Mas - ter call - eth; Rich re-ward He of - fers thee.
E - ven as the sun is set - ting, Some are sent in - to the fields,
Soon the night, the fi - nal har - vest; Soon the time for work shall cease.



Who will an-swer, glad - ly say - ing, "Here am I, send me, send me"?
There to gath - er in the boun - ty That God's Word so rich - ly yields.
Then the souls His grace has gar-nered Shall en - joy His Sab - bath peace.



Need some PRAYER? Anyone who desires special private prayer with a pastor or a Stephen Minister may do so by coming forward after service to one of the front pews.

Our Vision — a place to come for comfort, support, answers, opportunities to serve, and to strengthen a salvation relationship with Jesus



WHERE WE SERVE

Preacher/Officiant

Music Director

Family Life

Elder

Pastor Christopher Fairbairn

Paul Ventimiglia

Jeanette Koch

Bob McGuigan

Ushers

John Nordbeck

Barry Helmick

Katie Helmick

Carole Crete

Paul Kemp

Greeter

Jenter Family

Counters

Jan Paver

Christine Lewis

Reader

Shelly Ernst

Welcome Center

Pat McGuigan

Coffee Hour

Board of Evangelism

Tech Team

Patrick Baker

Acolyte

Caleb Norton

Altar Society

Karen Frusti

Christine Lewis

Remember Our Homebound

Ann Cook

1823 Crooks Rd.

Rochester, MI 48309

Bible Study and Small Group Opportunities

WEDNESDAYS: Women's Bible Study- Wednesdays @ 9:30am in the church Parish Hall.

SUNDAYS: Join us for Bible study and fellowship @ 9:45am in the church Parish Hall.

SATURDAYS: Men's Bible Study – Every 1st and 3rd Saturday @ 9:00am – Parish Hall

Altar Flowers

One vase in honor of my husband Chris' birthday from Anne Burgess.

One vase in honor of Margo Schmidt's birthday

Please arrange to pick up your flowers after the 10:30am service.

Attendance Last week: 9.13.2026– Attendance – 10:30am - 125

Received week of 9.13.2026 for **Church** (Envelopes + loose plate)- **\$4,045**total includes online giving
School - \$0

Good morning church. On October 4, we are going to recognize and celebrate the work of our LWML, Lutheran Women's Missionary League. You will see women participating as readers, ushers, welcome center, greeters, coffee hour helpers, Bible study leader, banner makers, children's message and much more. You can show your support by wearing purple on October 4th, if you have questions, please talk to us. We appreciate the coins (mites) you put in the little boxes, this money goes next door to around the world to tell those that don't know about Jesus in a variety of ways. Thank you Pastor, Paul and our Bells for your support of our Lutheran Women in Mission, helping us celebrate it's work.

Serving with Gladness, Sue

For the month of September, Women in Christ is featuring the mission grant entitled "I Was Hungry and You Fed Me—Orphan Grain Train" for the amount of \$18,000. Jesus said whatever care is given others out of Christ-centered love and Christian faith has been done to him (Matthew 25:40). Nourishing with food those who are hungry is the most elementary act of mercy. Jesus did this Himself for thousands. The Mercy Meals initiative of Orphan Grain Train—Michigan is entirely congruent with, and in furtherance of, the LWML mission intention of feeding people the Bread of Life. Please consider putting coins into your MITE box to help those who need our help.



Would you consider helping to keep this tradition alive?



Does it seem like we are recruiting early? Well, you are right.

Traditionally the Board of Evangelism organizes this event. As it turns out, this year 4 of the 7 members are unavailable on October 31. We would like to continue this event, but need to make sure we have enough people available the evening of the 31st to make it work. We can do the preliminary work but need to get our helpers lined up early. If you can spare a few hours, you will be truly appreciated. Sign up Genius will be arriving soon and a poster in the hall.

Pastor Nick Gapski, from the Family of God mission in southwest Detroit was our guest speaker on Sunday, September 6th. We appreciate him leading the services and Adult Bible Class while Pastor Chris and Lisa were out of town for their granddaughter's 1st birthday. Our congregation has been involved with the FoG since December 2009 by providing some financial support and meals for their outreach ministry. We appreciate those in our congregation who have volunteered and contributed toward our designated account at St Paul. *What Pastor Nick didn't ask for was your financial support for the FoG.* The mission is in need of monetary donations to continue their mission ..."To bring the charity of Jesus Christ in both body and soul to the broken lives of the least of these." If you could, please send a check to: Family of God in Christ Ministry, Inc. P.O. Box 801 Mount Clemens Michigan 48043. Or go to their website: www.fogdetroit.com And, if you would like to "COME AND SEE" the mission, contact Barbara Hoffmeier, a Board Member, for more information.

ANOTHER WAY PREGNANCY CENTER
PRESENTS

— Our Annual Fall Banquet —

CONTENDERS

October 22, 2026
6:00-9:00pm

Italian American Banquet Center
39200 Five Mile Road
Livonia, MI 48154
www.awpcfriends.org/events

Featuring Dr. Marc Newman, Pro-Life Advocate



St. Paul has 3 reserved tables at the banquet. The tickets are discounted to \$50 if you reserve through the McGuigans. We are ready to take your reservation. Paying by check, write the check out to Pat McGuigan for \$50 per ticket or pay cash and your choice of either chicken or vegetarian meal. Questions contact Pat @ 734-718-8597. The deadline for getting discounted tickets from us is October 4.

Check out the
Lost and Found basket
on the shelves as you enter
the church.
We would like to
purge the basket soon!
There is even a hearing aid in a case
that is pinned to the bulletin board
above the basket

