

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

11:00 AM

September 27, 2026



Whom Shall I Love and Whom Shall I Fear?

AS WE GATHER

We always want to know why. The rulers of the people wanted to know why Jesus was saying what He said and doing what He did. But Jesus challenged them with His Word and with the prophetic voice of John the Baptist. Why did they not listen, and why did they not repent?

Why do we not listen and repent? Jesus told a parable of two sons—one whose words were yes but his heart was no, and the other whose words were no but whose heart said yes. We are called to listen. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and we shall be saved.

WELCOME – Pastor

Preservice Music / Harpist – Brittany DeYoung

How Great Thou Art *Arranged by Brittany DeYoung*

Homesick For Heaven

Verse

My heart belongs to a country and a
King
Of a land I've always known but I've
never seen
Some call it paradise or the land of the
living
Well I call it home and I'm homesick for
Heaven

Chorus

I want to walk with Moses
On streets of gold
And dance with David
Before Your throne
To thank You face to face
For the grace You've given

I want to see my children
Run to Your arms
And worship the Savior
Who wears my scars
There's an ache in my heart
I'm homesick for Heaven

Verse

In my Father's house there are many
rooms
Enough for everyone enough for you
I know it takes some faith
But today you can know without
question

Believe in the power of Jesus' name
And you're going to Heaven
Hallelujah in Jesus' name
We're going to Heaven

Chorus

I want to walk with Moses
On streets of gold
And dance with David
Before Your throne
To thank You face to face
For the grace You've given

I want to see my children
Run to Your arms
And worship the Savior
Who wears my scars
There's an ache in my heart
I'm homesick for Heaven

Bridge

No more fear no more pain
Every tear wiped away
Crying holy holy

Every knee on the floor
Every voice evermore
Crying holy holy

Oh I want to go home
Oh I want to go home

Chorus 2

To see the ones I love
 Who've gone before
 Where death is a memory and tears are
 no more
 To hear the angels praise

Can you even imagine
 I'll run as fast as I can
 Into Your arms
 'Cause I was created
 To be where You are
 There's an ache in my heart
 I'm homesick for Heaven
 There's an ache in my heart
 I'm homesick for Heaven

There's an ache in my heart
 I'm homesick for Heaven

INVOCATION

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

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 25:6–7; 147:6*

Pastor: The Lord lifts up the humble;

People: He casts the wicked to the ground.

Pastor: Remember Your mercy, O Lord, and Your steadfast love

People: for they have been from of old.

Pastor: Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions;

**People: according to Your steadfast love, remember me, for the sake of
 Your goodness, O Lord!**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION 1 John 1:8–9

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

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

Pastor: Let us therefore come before His throne of grace with humble and sincere hearts to lay our burdens down.

Silent prayer for personal confession

Pastor: Gracious Lord,

People: we come before You, laying the burden of our sin at the foot of Your cross. We openly acknowledge our failure to follow Your plans for our lives. We have stumbled and fallen in our service to You. We have placed our agenda ahead of Yours. We have been shallow in our love toward You and toward those You have placed in our path. We cry out for mercy, trusting in Your promise to forgive us through the love of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Pastor: God has heard your cry for mercy and fulfills His promise to save and deliver you! Lavishing His grace upon you in Jesus, He enables you to love and forgive as He has first loved and forgiven you. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: O God of life and hope, You have given rescue to sinners in despair of their sins and to those marked for death. Turn our attention to Your mercy that we learn to rejoice in Your good will, that all would be saved and strive for unity in Christ our Savior; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

Grace Wins Every Time

In my weakest moment I see You
Shaking Your head in disgrace.
I can read the disappointment
Written all over Your face.

Here come those whispers in my ear,
Saying "who do you think you are?"
"Looks like you're on your own from
here,
'Cause grace could never reach that
far."

But in the shadow of that shame,
Beat down by all the blame,
I hear You call my name ,saying "It's
not over".
And my heart starts to beat so loud
now,
Drowning out the doubt.
I'm down but I'm not out.

There's a war between guilt and grace,
And they're fighting for a sacred space,
But I'm living proof
Grace wins every time.

No more lying down in death's defeat,
Now I'm rising up in victory,
Singing "hallelujah!
Grace wins every time."

Words can't describe the way it feels
When mercy floods a thirsty soul

The broke inside begins to heal
And grace returns what guilty stole

But in the shadow of that shame,
Beat down by all the blame,
I hear You call my name ,saying "It's
not over".

And my heart starts to beat so loud
now,
Drowning out the doubt.
I'm down but I'm not out.

There's a war between guilt and grace,
And they're fighting for a sacred space,
But I'm living proof
Grace wins every time.

No more lying down in death's defeat,
Now I'm rising up in victory,
Singing "hallelujah!
Grace wins every time."

For the prodigal son, Grace wins.
For the woman at the well, Grace wins.
For the blind man and the beggar ,
Grace wins.
For always and forever, Grace wins.

For the lost out on the streets, Grace
wins.

For the worst part of you and me,
Grace wins.
For the thief on the cross, Grace wins.
For a world that is lost...

There's a war between guilt and grace,
And they're fighting for a sacred space,
But I'm living proof
Grace wins every time.

No more lying down in death's defeat,
 Now I'm rising up in victory,
 Singing "hallelujah!
 Grace wins every time."

I'm living proof,
 Grace wins every time!

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Ezekiel 18:1–4, 25–32* (The Lord takes no pleasure in the death of anyone, so turn to Him.)

The word of the Lord came to me: ² "What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'? ³ As I live, declares the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴ Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: the soul who sins shall die.

²⁵ "Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not just.' Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way not just? Is it not your ways that are not just? ²⁶ When a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it; for the injustice that he has done he shall die. ²⁷ Again, when a wicked person turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he shall save his life.

²⁸ Because he considered and turned away from all the transgressions that he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. ²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, 'The way of the Lord is not just.' O house of Israel, are my ways not just? Is it not your ways that are not just?

³⁰ "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, everyone according to his ways, declares the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. ³¹ Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God; so turn, and live."

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**



EPISTLE *Philippians 2:1–18* (At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.)

Christ's Example of Humility

2 So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, **2** complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **3** Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility **count others more significant than yourselves.** **4** Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. **5** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, **6** who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, **7** but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. **8** And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. **9** Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, **10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow**, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Lights in the World

12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, **13** for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing, **15** that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, **16** holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. **17** Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. **18** Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Make It Well*Soloist / Sarah Hughes***HOLY GOSPEL** *Matthew 21:23–32* (Which of the two did the will of his father?)**The Authority of Jesus Challenged**

²³ And when he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴ Jesus answered them, "I also will ask you one question, and if you tell me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ The baptism of John, from where did it come? From heaven or from man?" And they discussed it among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ²⁶ But if we say, 'From man,' we are afraid of the crowd, for they all hold that John was a prophet." ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

The Parable of the Two Sons

²⁸ "What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹ And he answered, 'I will not,' but afterward he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, 'I go, sir,' but did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.

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.



What An Awesome God

Verse 1

God is great
give Him all the praise
Hallelujah Name above all Names

Fire in His eyes
healing in His veins
Everywhere His glory on display

Take a look at those stars
He can name them all
Before His throne every knee falls

The demons have to run
the angels have to praise
Even the wind and waves obey

Chorus 1

Our God is an awesome God
He reigns from heaven above
With wisdom power and love
Our God is an awesome God (2X)

Verse 2

And even when I ran
He didn't run away
He came and put death back in its place

Friday on a cross
broken for my shame
Sunday morning rose up from that grave

Take a look at those scars
on His hands and feet
He saved our souls for eternity

Worthy is the Lamb
glory to the King
Oh let all the saints and the angels sing

Chorus

Our God is an awesome God
He reigns from heaven above
With wisdom power and love
Our God is an awesome God (2X)

Verse 3

Eyes on the sky
there will be a day
He will come and wipe our tears away

No more fear
no more pain
No more sorrow sin or shame

The King is coming back again
A reign of love that will never end
For everything You've done
and everything You do
And everything You are
I'll sing to You

Chorus

My God you're an awesome God
You're great in all you do
I'm made to worship you
My God you're an awesome God

Tag

God is an awesome God
He reigns from heaven above
With wisdom power and love
Our God is an awesome God
(2x)

Our God is an awesome God
Our God what an awesome God

MESSAGE – Pastor Christopher Fairbairn



Glorious Day

Verse 1

I was buried beneath my shame.
Who could carry that kind of weight?
It was my tomb 'til I met You.

Verse 2

I was breathing but not alive.
All my failures I tried to hide.
It was my tomb 'til I met You.

Chorus

You called my name, (and)
I ran out of that grave!
Out of the darkness into Your glorious day!
You called my name, (and) I ran out of that grave!
Out of the darkness, into Your glorious day!

Verse 3

Now Your mercy has saved my soul.
Now Your freedom is all that I know.
The old made new, Jesus when I met You.

Chorus

You called my name, (and)
I ran out of that grave!

Out of the darkness into Your glorious
day!

You called my name, (and) I ran out of
that grave!

Out of the darkness, into Your glorious
day!

Bridge

I needed rescue. My sin was heavy,
But chains break at the weight of Your
glory.

I needed shelter. I was an orphan.
Now You call me a citizen of Heaven.
When I was broken, you were my healing;
Now Your love is the air that I'm breathing.
I have a future. My eyes are open.

Chorus

(Cuz when) You called my name, (and)
I ran out of that grave!

Out of the darkness into Your glorious
day!

You called my name, (and) I ran out of
that grave!

Out of the darkness, into Your glorious
day! (2x)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: As You have promised, Lord, hear Your people when they call, and answer us according to Your mercy. Almighty Father, You take no pleasure in the death of anyone. As John the Baptist once called a people to repentance and faith, so raise up voices within Your Church today to call a world to turn from their sins and live through faith in Christ. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Almighty Father, You have given to us the saving name of Jesus. Continue to bless us with faithful pastors who will preach Jesus Christ and His salvation, and bestow upon us faithful church workers who will serve us in Your name. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Almighty Father, You know our enemies and those whose purpose is set against Yours. Give Your blessing to all who defend our nation here and abroad and to all emergency personnel and disaster workers who come to our aid in time of need. Guide the nations in the paths of peace and deliver us from terror and violence. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Almighty Father, You have given us healing, comfort, and peace in Christ, especially in times of illness, affliction, depression, and sorrow. Hear us on behalf of our hurting families and neighbors, those lonely or facing darkness and all who suffer any need. Grant them grace sufficient to sustain them in their hour of trouble and at last deliver them into the perfect rest of Your eternal presence. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Your Son, Jesus Christ, 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.

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.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: 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

Where Would I Be

Verse 1

Standing where I stand now
 I know that He's the reason
 I almost can't believe it

Every wrong turn He turned around
 And I can just imagine
 If it didn't happen
 How it happened

Oo seeing how good He's been to me
 Oo oh I can't help but think

Chorus

Where would I be if I didn't have Jesus
 Pulling me outta that grave
 Where would I be if I didn't have mercy
 Pulling me away from my ways

I'd probably crash and burn
 Stay stuck down in that dirt
 Like a prodigal running from home
 Where would I be if I didn't have Jesus

Thank God thank God
 Thank God I'll never know

Verse 2

I used to feel the weight

Of the chains that I was holding
 'Til my Savior came and broke 'em

I used to walk with shame
 I was living at a loss
 'Til He settled up my cost

At the cross

Oo giving His life so I could live
 Oo didn't leave me where I've been

Chorus

Where would I be if I didn't have Jesus
 Pulling me outta that grave
 Where would I be if I didn't have mercy
 Pulling me away from my ways

I'd probably crash and burn
 Stay stuck down in that dirt
 Like a prodigal running from home
 Where would I be if I didn't have Jesus

Thank God thank God
 Thank God I'll never know

Whoa --- Thank God I'll never know
 Whoa --- Thank God I'll never know



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	Pastor Christopher Fairbairn
Music Director	Paul Ventimiglia
Guest artist	Harpist / Brittany DeYoung
Family Life	Jeanette Koch
Elder	Mark Potter
Guest Soloist	Sarah Hughes
Ushers	Lenny Elliott Matt Babic
Greeter	Faerber Family
Counters	Katie Helmick Carole Crete
Reader	Janean Potter
Welcome Center	Tim Haubenstricker
Tech Team	James Nordbeck
Acolyte	Tyler Hughes

Remember Our Homebound

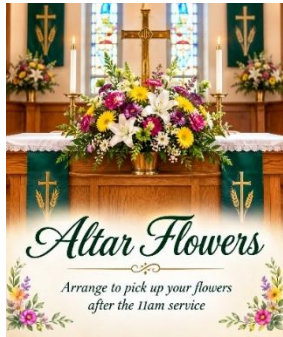
Ann Cook
1823 Crooks Rd.
Rochester, MI 48309

**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



One vase in memory of Russ Kelly's birthday from his wife Ann.

*One vase in appreciation of our music director, Paul Ventimiglia,
for the beautiful music he provides each Sunday from
Doug and Nancy Berg.*

Attendance Last week: 9.20.2026– Attendance – 8:30am - 121 + 11am - 56 = 177

Communion - 149

Received week of 9..2026 for **Church** (Envelopes + loose plate)- **\$15,336** total includes online giving
School - **\$1,795**

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.

One vase of flowers is needed for October 18, the cost is \$15.00. If you would like to sponsor a vase, please contact Anne Burgess at 734-765-4792 or anne.burgess.313@gmail.com.





Maui Vacation in your Plans?

As a way of raising funds for our St. Paul short-term mission trips, a generous family in our congregation is offering the use of their condominium at the beautiful Sands of Kahana Resort in Maui, Hawaii during the week of December 4 - December 11, 2026. More information about the resort at <https://sandsofkahanaresort.com/>. The unit (Orchid Room) is a two bedroom / two bath, with kitchen and with a pull-out couch, comfortably sleeps up to six people. The unit will be awarded to the highest bidder (minimum bid is \$500) in a blind auction with the winning bidder notified on October 1st. Auction proceeds will be deposited to the St. Paul Short-Term mission fund to support future SPL MOST mission trip goers.

Please submit a short statement of your interest along with your bid to Jeff Henning (Jhenning90@comcast.net) by September 30, 2026. If you should have any questions or want more information, please reach out to Jeff Henning or Chris Burgess. Chris and Ann Burgess took advantage of this opportunity last year and would be happy to describe their wonderful experience to interested bidders!

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.

We served another meal at the Family of God meal on Wednesday, September 16th that was very much appreciated.

Chris and Jeff Henning shopped for the lasagnas, bread and beverages the week before. Nancy Berg did the rest of the shopping for the salad and bananas the day before and Michelle Benson joined her to prepare the food in the school kitchen Wednesday afternoon. Kathy and Dennis Verseman, Rich Mai, and Will Hoffmeier took the food down to the mission to serve. They were joined by David Sonac's family from Salem Lutheran, Westland to serve about 70 people. ALL the food was used and many compliments were given. It's always interesting to interact with the people as they come through the serving line. They come from all walks of life and have some great stories to share. About ten people come to the Bible study before the meal and have been the 'regulars' for years. They always look forward to St Paul, Northville coming because they know "they'll get a really good meal!" Please pray for the Pastors Jim, Nick and Alex and the Deacons Paul and John that work so hard for the mission. And, pray for the people that come for this physical food so they will seek the spiritual food that is so much needed there. *Now that the weather is turning colder we expect more people to come for warmth. Thankfully the new furnace is working - however it hasn't been paid for yet and the FoG needs your financial support. Contact Barbara Hoffmeier or Sue Poole for more information.*