



September 6, 2026

The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Rev. Kenneth Bersche

Maggie Kent, Secretary

Prelude

Processional Hymn *Please Stand*

“The Lord’s My Shepherd, Leading Me”

♪ The Lord’s my shepherd, leading me To pastures newly green
Deep flow the waters of His care, His mercies unforeseen.
He loves me so, He leads me to His pastures gently green.

♪ My hungry soul He fills again With manna from above;
He sets my footsteps right again In pathways of His love.
For His name’s sake He nurtures me With manna from above.

♪ Even within the vale of death I feel no threat’ning chill,
His rod and staff protecting me, His love beside me still.
His guardian love protecting me, I fear no threat of ill.

♪ How He confounds my enemies By richly blessing me;
His cup of promise overflows With generosity.
Anointing me His chosen one, He richly blesses me.

♪ I take my stand forevermore Within my shepherd’s fold,
Secure in His forgiving love. How gently strong His hold!
He loves me so, He leads me to His blessings rich and bold.

*Lutheran Worship, Hymn, 417—Text: Henry L. Lettermann 1932-1996;
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Invocation

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

Matthew 28:19b

Amen.

Confession and Absolution

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

A Time of Silence

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. 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.

Amen.

Hymn of Praise

“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

♪ Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 805 -Text: Thomas Ken 1637-1711; Public domain

Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. O God, from whom all good proceeds, grant to us, Your humble servants, Your holy inspiration, that we may set our minds on the things that are right and, by Your merciful guiding, accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Old Testament Reading *Please Be Seated*

Ezekiel 33:7–9

⁷“So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. ⁹But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Epistle

Romans 13:1–10

¹Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ³For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. ⁵Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. ⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. ⁷Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

⁸Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn

“Rejoice, O Pilgrim Throng”

- ♪ Rejoice, O pilgrim throng! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing;
Your festal banner wave on high, The cross of Christ your king.
~Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!
- ♪ With voice as full and strong As ocean’s surging praise,
Send forth the sturdy hymns of old, The psalms of ancient days. ~Rejoice...
- ♪ With all the angel choirs, With all the saints on earth
Pour out the strains of joy and bliss, True rapture, noblest mirth. ~Rejoice...
- ♪ Yet on and onward still, With hymn and chant and song,
Through gate and porch and columned aisle The hallowed pathways throng. ~Rejoice...
- ♪ Still lift your standard high, Still march in firm array,
As pilgrims through the darkness wend Till dawns the golden day. ~Rejoice...
- ♪ At last the march shall end; The wearied ones shall rest;
The pilgrims find their home at last, Jerusalem the blest. ~Rejoice...

Please Stand

- ♪ Praise Him who reigns on high, The Lord whom we adore:
The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, One God forevermore. ~Rejoice....

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 813–Text: Edward H. Plumptre 1821-91; Public domain

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 18:1–20

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eighteenth chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

¹At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” ²And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them ³and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

⁵“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, ⁶but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

⁷“Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! ⁸And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. ⁹And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

¹⁰“See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. ¹²What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? ¹³And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. ¹⁴So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

¹⁵“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷If he refuses

to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

Nicene Creed

Children’s Message *Please Be Seated*

The Hymn

“Children of the Heavenly Father”

- ♪ Children of the heav’nly Father Safely in His bosom gather;
Nestling bird nor star in heaven Such a refuge e’er was given.
- ♪ God His own doth tend and nourish; In His holy courts they flourish.
From all evil things He spares them; In His mighty arms he bears them.
- ♪ Neither life nor death shall ever From the Lord His children sever;
Unto them His grace He showeth, And their sorrows all He knoweth.
- ♪ Though He giveth or He taketh, God His children ne’er forsaketh;
His the loving purpose solely To preserve them pure and holy.

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 725–Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903;
tr. Ernst W. Olson, 1870–1958; Text: Public domain*

Proclamation of the Word

“Episodes of Greatness”

Matthew 18:1–20

Offering and Musical Offering

Preface *Please Stand*

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Colossians 3:1

Let us give thanks to Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Psalms 136

Proper Preface

Sanctus Hymn *Music:*

“When I Survey”, Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 425

- ♪ Holy, holy, holy Lord God, Heaven and earth Your glory acclaim
Sing hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He who comes to us!

Lord’s Prayer

Words of Our Lord

The Peace of the Lord

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

Agnus Dei

Music: "When I Survey", Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 425

♪ O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world.

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.

Distribution Hymns *Please Be Seated*

"Christ the Eternal Lord"

♪ Christ the eternal Lord, Whose promise here we claim, Whose gifts of grace are freely poured
On all who name Your name; With thankfulness and praise We stand before Your throne,
Intent to serve You all our days And make Your glory known.

♪ Christ the unchanging Word To ev'ry passing age, Whose timeless teachings still are heard
Set forth on Scripture's page; Transform our thought and mind, Enlighten all who read,
Within Your Word by faith to find The bread of life indeed.

♪ Christ the redeeming Son, Who shares our human birth, And by His death salvation won
For ev'ry child of earth; Inspire our hearts, we pray, To tell Your love abroad,
That all may honor Christ today And follow Him as Lord.

♪ Christ the unfading Light Of everlasting day, Our Morning Star in splendor bright,
The Life, the Truth, the Way; That light of truth You give To servants as to friends,
Your way to walk, Your life to live, Till earth's brief journey ends.

♪ Christ the ascended King Exalted high above, Whose praise unending ages sing,
Whom yet unseen we love; When mortal life is past Your voice from heaven's throne
Shall call Your children home at last To know as we are known.

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 829—Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, 1926–2024
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"The Lamb"

♪ The Lamb, the Lamb, O Father, where's the sacrifice?
Faith sees, believes God will provide the Lamb of price!

~Worthy is the Lamb whose death makes me His own! The Lamb is reigning on His throne!

♪ The Lamb, the Lamb, One perfect final offering.
The Lamb, the Lamb, Let earth join heav'n His praise to sing. ~Worthy...

♪ The Lamb, the Lamb, As wayward sheep their shepherd kill
So still, His will On our behalf the Law to fill. ~Worthy...

♪ He sighs, He dies, He takes my sin and wretchedness.
He lives, forgives, He gives me His own righteousness. ~Worthy...

♪ He rose, He rose, My heart with thanks now overflows.
His song prolong Till ev'ry heart to Him belong. ~Worthy....

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 547—Text: Gerald P. Coleman, 1953–2023;
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Prayer of the Church *Please Stand Each petition is concluded with the following:*

Lord, in Your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on You with favor and + give You peace.

Numbers 6:24–26

Amen.

Recessional Hymn *Please Be Seated*

“Go, My Children, with My Blessing”

- ♪ Go, My children, with My blessing, Never alone.
Waking, sleeping, I am with you; You are My own.
In My love’s baptismal river I have made you Mine forever.
Go, My children, with My blessing, You are My own.
- ♪ Go, My children, sins forgiven, At peace and pure.
Here you learned how much I love you, What I can cure.
Here you heard My dear Son’s story; Here you touched Him, saw His glory.
Go, My children, sins forgiven, At peace and pure.
- ♪ Go, My children, fed and nourished, Closer to Me;
Grow in love and love by serving, Joyful and free.
Here My Spirit’s power filled you; Here His tender comfort stilled you.
Go, My children, fed and nourished, Joyful and free.
- ♪ I, the Lord, will bless and keep you And give you peace;
I the Lord will smile upon you And give you peace;
I, the Lord, will be your Father, Savior, Comforter, and Brother.
Go, My children; I will keep you And give you peace.

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Postlude