

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

of Wausau, Wisconsin

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 6, 2026

GATHERING

** Please rise in body or spirit where indicated.
Text in **bold type** is to be spoken or sung in unison*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

*CALL TO WORSHIP from Psalm 26

Sing a song of thanksgiving.
Declare God’s wondrous deeds.
For the Lord dwells among the people;
the glory of God abides with us.

*OPENING PRAYER
Almighty God, in the self-giving love of Christ you have revealed the path of salvation; give us courage to deny our selfish desire and bear the cross of discipleship, that we may live as those who have no fear of death and receive the joy of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

*OPENING HYMN Arise, Your Light Is Come! # 744

1 Arise, your light is come!
The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God,
which shines on you today.

2 Arise, your light is come!
Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captives' liberty,
good tidings to the poor.

3 Arise, your light is come!
All you in sorrow born,
bind up the brokenhearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.

4 Arise, your light is come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing;
God's power will make us strong.

CALL TO CONFESSION
Jesus Christ overcame evil with good so that all people might be saved from sin.
Let us then confess our need for grace, confident of God’s forgiveness.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION
Holy God, God of mercy, we confess that, like the disciples, we set our minds not on divine things but on human things. Doubting your loving care, we grab for more than we need. Doubting your loving purposes, we shrink from living as your followers. Doubting your loving plan, we become stumbling blocks in your creation. Forgive us that we may gain new life in you, for it is in Jesus’ forgiving name we pray. Amen.

Please continue in silent reflection and your personal prayer of confession.

SUNG RESPONSE Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying # 469
Lord, listen to your children praying.
Lord, send your spirit in this place.
Lord, listen to your children praying.
Send us love; send us power; Send us grace.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Friends, hear the good news: Christ has broken the power of sin and evil and has opened to us the way of eternal life. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

The peace of Christ is with you.

And also with you.

*You are now invited to turn to those nearest you and affirm,
“The peace of Christ is with you,” and respond, “and also with you.”*

SUNG RESPONSE

Glory to God

582, v. 1

**Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.**

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

By the power of your Spirit, O Lord, make your Word become a joy to us and the delight of our hearts. **Amen.**

FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON

Romans 12:9-21, NT p. 162

⁹ Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; ¹⁰ love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹ Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers.
¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord.” ²⁰ Instead, “if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink, for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.” ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

PIANO SOLO

Sonatine

Maurice Ravel

SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 16:21-28, NT p. 18

²¹ From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised. ²² And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” ²³ But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance^[a] to me, for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ²⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?
²⁷ “For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. ²⁸ Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

MESSAGE

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

*HYMN

Take Up Your Cross, the Savior Said

718

1 Take up your cross, the Savior said,
if you would my disciple be;
take up your cross with willing heart,
and humbly follow after me.

2 Take up your cross; let not its weight
fill your weak spirit with alarm;

Christ's strength shall bear your spirit up
and brace your heart and nerve your arm.

3 Take up your cross; heed not the shame,
and let your foolish pride be still;
the Lord for you accepted death
upon a cross, on Calvary's hill.

4 Take up your cross, then, in Christ's strength,
and calmly every danger brave:
it guides you to abundant life
and leads to victory o'er the grave.

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

adapted from Confession of 1967

God’s sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of the human mind. Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness. But God reveals divine love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinful men and women. The power of God’s love in Christ to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of God’s love.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

The apostle Paul encourages us: do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. In loving service to this loving Lord, we now return to God a portion of the bounty God has provided.

OFFERTORY

You are invited to use this time to reflect on how you show your gratitude to God, whether through acts of service or sharing of resources. Offering plates are available at the doors to leave a gift before or immediately after the service. You may also give online at www.firstpreswausau.org or through your Realm login.

* SUNG RESPONSE

Praise to God the Father

605

**Praise to God the Father; praise to God the Son;
Praise to God the Spirit; praise to the Three in One.
Sing praise, sing praise to the Lord on high;
Praise to God Almighty; praise to the Holy One!**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Merciful and gracious God, you abound in steadfast love and faithfulness. With gratitude, we bring our gifts to you. Bless these gifts and bless our lives that together we may share your mercy and grace for the world you dearly love. **Amen.**

SENDING OUT

*HYMN

O Jesus, I Have Promised

724

1 O Jesus, I have promised
to serve thee to the end;
be thou forever near me,
my Master and my friend;
I shall not fear the battle
if thou art by my side,
nor wander from the pathway
if thou wilt be my guide.

2 O let me feel thee near me!
The world is ever near:
I see the sights that dazzle;
the tempting sounds I hear.
My foes are ever near me,
around me and within;

but, Jesus, draw thou nearer
and shield my soul from sin.

3 O let me hear thee speaking
in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion,
the murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me,
to hasten or control;
O speak, and make me listen,
thou guardian of my soul.

4 O Jesus, thou hast promised
to all who follow thee
that where thou art in glory
there shall thy servant be.
And, Jesus, I have promised
to serve thee to the end;
O give me grace to follow,
my Master and my friend.

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

Following worship, all are invited to the Parlor for refreshments and fellowship.

Thank you to those who helped us with worship today:

Rev. Rachel A. Wann, senior pastor
Judy North, liturgist
Susan Schaefer, guest organist/pianist
Buzz Schranz, sound and video
Bethel Team, hospitality
Mary Anderson, bulletin assembly