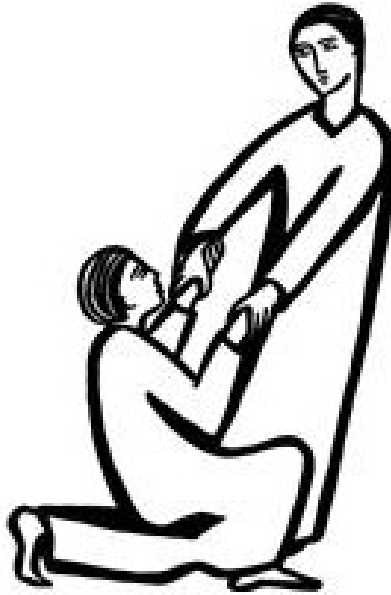




**Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Thursday, September 10, 2026**

**First English Lutheran Church
402 N. 3rd Ave., Wausau, Wisconsin 54401-4448
715-842-5727**

<https://www.firstenglishlutheranwausau.org>

A Congregation of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

**Pastor: Reverend Mary E. Zupansic
Minister of Music: Daniel Larson
Pianist: Hal Osborn
Parish Administrator: Debra Kluetz**

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father,
and of the ✙ Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. 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. 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.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

GATHERING SONG *Ten Thousand Reasons*

**Refrain: Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul;
 Worship His Holy name.
 Sing like never before, O my soul;
 I'll worship your Holy name.**

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning;
It's time to sing your song again.
Whatever may pass, and whatever lies before me,
Let me be singing when the evening comes. (R)

You're rich in love, and you're slow to anger.
Your name is great, and Your heart is kind.
For all Your goodness, I will keep on singing
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find. (R)

And on that day when my strength is failing,
The end draws near, and my time has come;
Still, my soul will sing your praise unending
Ten thousand years and then forevermore! (R)

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness.

Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21

A reading from Genesis.

¹⁵ Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves."
¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 103:8-13

⁸ **LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**

⁹ you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.

¹⁰ **You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**

- ¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.
- ¹² **As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**
- ¹³ As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12

A reading from Romans.

¹ Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷ For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

¹² So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹ Peter came and said to [Jesus,] “Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²² Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³ “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt.

³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Paster Mary E. Zupansic



1 I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and
 2 I come with Chris - tians far and near to find, as all are
 3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud di - vi - sion
 4 The Spir - it of the ris - en Christ, un - seen, but ev - er
 5 To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound by all that God has



free, the life of Je - sus to re - call in
 fed, the new com - mu - ni - ty of love in
 ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and
 near, is in such friend - ship bet - ter known, a -
 done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the



love laid down for me, in love laid down for me,
 Christ's com - mu - nion bread, in Christ's com - mu - nion bread.
 strang - ers now are friends, and strang - ers now are friends.
 live a - mong us here, a - live a - mong us here.
 love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936

Music: DOVE OF PEACE, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

Text © 1971, rev. 1995 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

Each petition ends with the following response.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

**God of creation,
you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly.
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. Amen.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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.

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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Christ invites you to this table.
All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!
Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION HYMNS: Instrumental Interlude

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ,
strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

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

Amen.

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

Amen.

The God of grace

✝ bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG *God's Work, Our Hands*



1 God's work, our hands: work - ing to - geth - er,
2 God's work, our feet: trav - 'ling to - geth - er,
3 God's work, our voice: sing - ing to - geth - er,
4 God is at work in and a - round us:



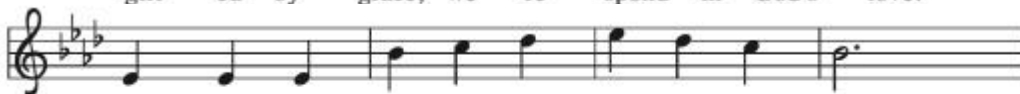
build - ing a fu - ture, re - pair - ing the world,
fol - low - ing Je - sus to plac - es un - known,
prais - ing, pro - claim - ing to all who will hear,
seed - lings are sprout - ing and bread's on the rise!



rais - ing up homes, plant - ing new gar - dens,
walk - ing as friends, march - ing for free - dom,
pray - ing for peace, shout - ing for jus - tice,
Washed and set free, hum - bled and hon - ored,



feed - ing the hun - gry and shelt - 'ring the cold.
run - ning the race with God's fu - ture the goal.
claim - ing God's love for the lost and the least.
gift - ed by grace, we re - spond in God's love.



Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,
Bless, God, our feet as we fol - low your way,
Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,
Bless, God, our lives as we an - swer your call,



shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954

Music: EARTH AND ALL STARS, David N. Johnson, 1922–1987

Text © 2019 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, admin. Augsburg Fortress

Music © 1968 Augsburg Publishing House, admin. Augsburg Fortress

DISMISSAL

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

From sundaysandseasons.com.

Copyright © 2026 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Scripture readings and liturgy from Sundays and Seasons.com Copyright 2011 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #42253. New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Church of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Hymns reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-743975. All rights reserved.

PASTORAL CARE

If you would like a visit from Pastor Mary, or if you have a pastoral emergency, please call Pastor on her cell phone 920-671-4338.

ATTENTION MEMBERS – HOSPITAL VISITATION

If you or someone in your family is admitted to the hospital and would like a pastoral visit, please let Pastor Mary or the church office know. We want to support you and give you the spiritual guidance you need while you are hospitalized. If you would like to have your name included on our Prayer List in the bulletin, please let us know.

CARDS OF THE WEEK

Joan and Mike Alters on the passing of Joan's sister, Bernice Schuster
Karen & John Otto on the passing of Karen's sister, Kay Krejci

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

Thursday, Sept. 3: 22

Sunday, Sept. 6: 73



This Sunday marks the kick-off for our Sunday School and Confirmation Classes.

All classes run from 10:15-11:15 a.m. We are very pleased with our educational staff. Parents and grandparents, please feel welcome to stop in and visit your child's class. Check with your child's teacher if they could use some help with projects, snacks, etc.

Confirmation Students and Parents are required to attend an orientation with Pastor Mary in the Youth Room.

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

This Sunday: Andrea Velasquez will tell us all about Headstart. You've supported it; now learn more about the good work they are doing!

Next Sunday, Sept. 20: ShyAnn Egwalata will fill us in on what's happening in Uganda.

After worship grab a cup of coffee or juice and a treat and join us in the Fireside Room for these very interesting topics!

CHARITY CIRCLE

will meet tomorrow, Sept. 14, 10:00 a.m. in the Bethany Room.

APPRECIATION DINNER

There will be an Appreciation Dinner for all Fair Stand AND Treasure Sale workers and their family on Wednesday, September 16, 5:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. If you helped at either of these events, please come and enjoy a delicious meal and fellowship!



SHALOM CIRCLE will meet on Thursday, September 17, at 6:45 p.m. in the Fireside Room.

We will begin a three-month Bible study from the Fall issue of Gather Magazine, titled "Bold Faith on an Unexpected Journey."

If you do not subscribe to Gather Magazine, print copies of the study will be provided (reprint permission has been arranged). Please bring your Bible.

We look forward to welcoming back our returning members. If you are not currently a member but are interested in learning more about Shalom Circle, you are warmly invited to join us.

ENVELOPE PACKETS containing the 'special' envelopes

for Sept. and Oct. are in the narthex and church office. In the packets are Food Pantry, Building Fund and ELCA Lutheran Disaster Response.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Women Build is a chance to use skills you have or learn something new while helping complete work on a Habitat home! Several 1st English members participated last year and had a great time. Each shift is only 4 hours. There are a few slots left on Wednesday morning, September 16 and Saturday morning, September 19. Dina and I signed up for the 16th. Let me know soon if you are interested and I'll walk you through the registration process. Lynne Santangelo

LET US REMEMBER IN PRAYER...

John & Karen Otto, Lyle Jaegler, Jerry Roemke, Linda Kittel, Ron Wiese (*friend of the DeWitt family*), Melinda (*sister of Matt Heyne*), Diane (*Aunt to Angela Greenfield & Jarek Nelson*), Janet Alters (*family member of Mike & Joan, Jack & Kim, Erin, Spencer and Ella*), Tracey (*friend of Sheri Fochs*)

Joan & Mike Alters on the recent passing of Joan's sister Bernice Schuster, and for Joan's brother-in-law, Tim.

Karen & John Otto on the passing of Karen's sister, Kay Krejci, on August 28.

May God grant these two families comfort and peace in the days ahead.

Homebound / Assisted Lived: Kathie Peterson (*Primrose*), Dolores Hintz (*Sylvan Crossings*), Sue McKee (*Rennes in Weston*), Diane Zuelke (*Mountain Terrace*), Michelle Detert (*Cady Home*), Ila Barttelt (*Rennes in Weston*), Gary Klingbeil (*Wood Aven*), Dennis & Laurayne Nicoliasen (*Rennes in Weston*)
Sue Crone
Audrey Fellbaum
Gary Pagel
Delphine Saeger
Eleanor Thorpe

Daily Prayers Offered for: Bishops Anne Edison-Albright (*East Central Synod*) and Yehiel Curry (*Presiding Bishop of the ELCA*), and all those who work in the East Central Synod and National ELCA Offices; ShyAnn and Peter Egwalata (*in Uganda*)

PEEK AT THE WEEK of Sept. 13-20, 2026

Sunday, Sept. 13:	9:00 a.m.	Worship
	10:15 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:15 a.m.	Coffee and Conversation
Monday, Sept. 14:	10:00 a.m.	Charity Circle
Tuesday, Sept. 15:	9:00 a.m.	Quilting Ministry
Wednesday, Sept. 16:	5:30 p.m.	Appreciation Dinner
Thursday, Sept. 17:	6:00 p.m.	Worship
	6:45 p.m.	Shalom Circle
Friday, Sept. 18:	6:30 p.m.	NA Meeting
Sunday, Sept. 20:	9:00 a.m.	Worship
	10:15 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:15 a.m.	Coffee and Conversation

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Holy Cross Day

Monday, September 14, 2026

Helena, mother of Constantine, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and found what may be the actual site of Jesus' crucifixion. Her son built two churches there, and the dedication of one of them gave rise to this celebration of our Lord's victory on the cross.

Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, died 1179

Thursday, September 17, 2026

A mystic who was widely influential within the church, Hildegard advised and reproved kings and popes, wrote poems and hymns, and produced treatises in medicine, theology, and natural history. She was also a musician and artist.