

St. Paul Lutheran Church
of Stillwater, Minnesota
October 11, 2026
20th Sunday after Pentecost



Our Vision

Love and serve God by walking with, caring for,
and learning from our members, friends, and neighbors.

Our Values

Welcome. Generosity. Faithfulness.

Your presence at worship is important to God and to us! Whether you are a first-time visitor, frequent participant, neighbor, member, or friend, please take a moment as you prepare for worship to share some information on the "Welcome to Worship" card included with your bulletin. Place it in the offering plate at the time the offering is received.

In Isaiah we are given a vision of the great feast to come, when God will wipe away death forever. In Jesus' parable about a great banquet, those invited do not come, so the invitation is extended to others. In our liturgy God spreads a table before us. Even amid anxiety and hardship we rejoice in the peace of God which surpasses all understanding. With great joy we feast at the table of the Lord, and we go forth to share the wonderful invitation with others hungering and thirsting for the abundant life of God.

Many of our worship materials are taken from the red Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW). Page numbers are located in the front half of the book, and hymn numbers are located in the back half of the book.

The assembly speaks or *sings* the **bold** responses.

GATHERING

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



Confession and Forgiveness

ELW page 94

Gathering Song

ELW hymn 870

"We Praise You, O God"

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

Lord of the feast, you have prepared a table before all
peoples and poured out your life with abundance. Call us
again to your banquet. Strengthen us by what is honorable,
just, and pure, and transform us into a people of righteousness
and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

WORD

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

Children's Word

Vicar Allison Klein

First Reading

Pew Bible: Old Testament Page 652

Isaiah 25:1-9

*After a hymn of praise acknowledging God as a shelter for
the poor, the prophet portrays a wonderful victory banquet
at which death—which in ancient Canaan was depicted as a
monster swallowing up everyone—will be swallowed up
forever. The prophet urges celebration of this victory of
salvation.*

At the conclusion:

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

"Shepherd Me, O God"

Second Reading Pew Bible: New Testament Pages 198-199

Philippians 4:1-9

Though writing from prison and facing an uncertain future, Paul calls on the Philippians to rejoice and give thanks to God no matter what the circumstance. God's peace is with us and binds together our hearts and minds in Jesus Christ, especially when things around us do not seem peaceful.

At the conclusion:

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.



Gospel Acclamation



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus tells a parable indicating that the blessings of God's kingdom are available to all, but the invitation is not to be taken lightly.

The gospel is introduced:

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At the conclusion:

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Nathan Baker-Trinity

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

Hymn of the Day

ELW hymn 522

"As We Gather at Your Table"

Prayers of Intercession

After each prayer:

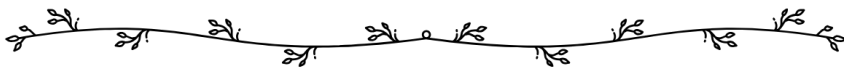
Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

At the conclusion:

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.



Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

All are invited to greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Offering

Our offering is a collection of money for the church's mission, including the care of those in need, as a sign of the giving of our whole selves in grateful response for all God's gifts. Your offering and "Welcome to Worship" card may be placed in the offering plate. The QR code on the right may be used if you wish to give electronically.



Offering

Handbell Choir

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

Offering Prayer

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.



Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

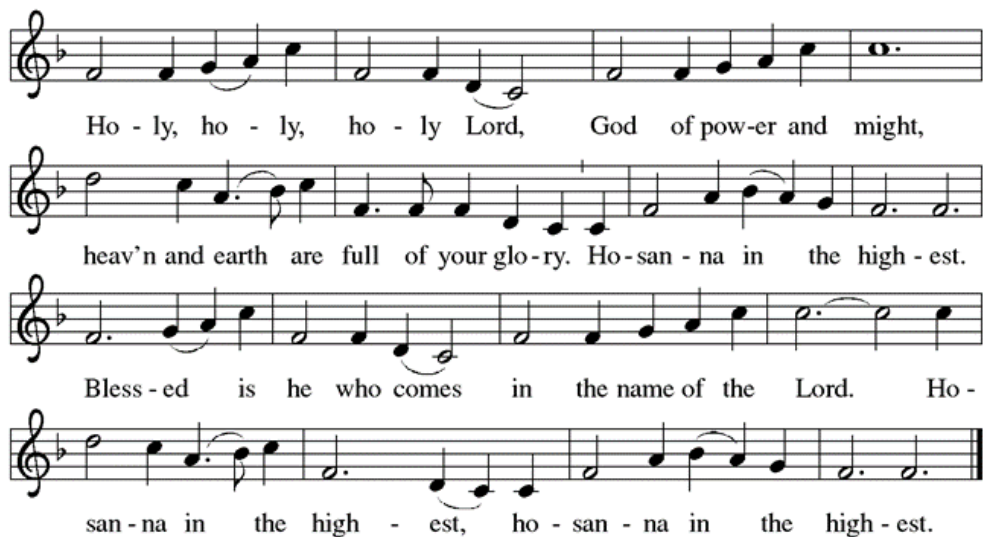
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy . . .

. . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Holy God, our Bread of life . . .

In the night in which he was betrayed . . .

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks . . .

By your Spirit nurture and sustain us with this meal . . .

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father,
 with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and
 forever.

Amen.



Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;

2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;

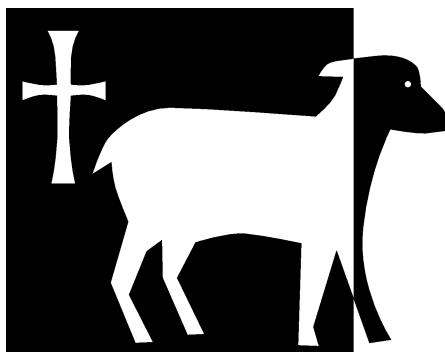
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.

you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.

e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.



Communion

We celebrate at an open communion table. All who hear our Lord's invitation are welcome to participate. Receive the bread first with an open hand and eat immediately, followed by the juice (white) or wine (red). Gluten-free bread is available at the front end of the center aisle. Please indicate to an usher if you need to receive communion from your pew. Children who have received age-appropriate instruction are welcome to commune. If you prefer instead to receive a blessing, please indicate by crossing your arms over your shoulders.

*When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say:
The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.*

and each person may respond:

Amen.



Communion Songs

"In the Singing"

ELW hymn 466

"Eat This Bread"

ELW hymn 472

Prayer After Communion

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SENDING

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

Announcements

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Amen.

Sending Song

ELW hymn 547

"Sent Forth by God's Blessing"

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Marmaduke N. Carter, pastor, 1961

Wednesday, October 14, 2026

In 1916 Marmaduke Carter became the principal of the Christian Day School (formerly called the Rosebud School) and the first pastor of Christ Church, Rosebud, Alabama, a pioneering congregation in African American ministry among Lutherans in the South.

Teresa of Ávila, teacher, renewer of the church, died 1582

Thursday, October 15, 2026

A mystical writer and reformer of the monastic order (Carmelites) to which she belonged, Teresa may also be commemorated with John of the Cross on December 14. Latino Christians traditionally remember her on this date.

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, martyr, died around 115

Saturday, October 17, 2026

Ignatius was the second bishop of Antioch in Syria, the city where the name "Christians" originated. Ignatius is known to us from his letters, which encouraged Christians to live in love, yet stand firm in true doctrine.

PRESIDING BISHOP MESSAGE

Celebrating Our Diversity

Dear beloved children of God,

As a church, we collectively continue to celebrate the diversity with which God has created the world. Scripture tells us that, from the very beginning, we were made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). In the book of Acts, many were gathered in one place when the Holy Spirit came upon them. Each was given the power to witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the promise of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:32-33). In 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, the human body serves as a metaphor, demonstrating that a healthy Christian community relies on the many distinct gifts and qualities of each unique member — emphasizing unity through continuing to be a connected church.

I am thankful to serve this church in the office of presiding bishop. I am also grateful for my experience as an activist and leader in communities and congregations that are at the margins. Whatever our role and wherever our place in the church, God calls us to develop trusting relationships with our neighbors. In the service of Affirmation of Baptism, the presiding minister asks, “Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism ... to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?” (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 236). Striving for justice involves learning about underlying causes of division and inequity. It is a commitment our church makes because of baptism.

Celebrating diversity and striving for equity, inclusion and accessibility for all reflect this baptismal call. The words “diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility” and the initialism “DEIA” mean different things to different people. For the ELCA, as church together, these terms reflect our “delight in the fact that the people called, gathered, and enlightened” by God represent such a wide array of identities, backgrounds and life stories (ELCA social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*, 1993, p. 3). The terms remind us of the gospel vision of community, in which all are truly welcome. They are terms this church has chosen to include in its teachings and constitutions as reflections of our faith in God, who creates, redeems and sustains all people.

Everyone matters in this church. I have celebrated with synods and congregations as they build communities that reflect the people and neighborhoods around them. I have worshiped in places where many languages are spoken and people from different backgrounds feel welcome. Together we have expanded our understanding of what it means to be church through relationships with companion churches around the world and through relationships between congregations in rural, urban and suburban settings here in the United States. We are joined together through holy baptism, through which God calls us to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. “Diversity,” “equity,” “inclusion” and “accessibility” are reflections of justice when it is

fulfilled. Like many saints before us have said, justice is the form love takes in society.

The road is long, but we go forth in faith, trusting in the risen Christ and inspired by one another for the work ahead. Let us continue in the covenant God has made with us, to serve all people in love.

In Christ,

The Rev. Yehiel Curry

Presiding Bishop - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

GOSPEL MESSAGE

Welcomed In

A crowd gathered in the church basement like they did every third Thursday of the month. They walked past the kitchen window. They grabbed their plates. They filled up cups of ice water and coffee and swung by the dessert table on their way to folding chairs situated around circular folding tables throughout the room. Conversations bubbled up as old friends greeted each other around the free meal provided, as it was every month. Everyone was welcome, no questions asked.

This image of a free meal in the church basement, attended by any and all comers, is reminiscent of the wedding feast the king gives in today's parable. When those who are invited fail to show up, the king sends his servants out into the entire surrounding countryside to bring to the meal any and all who will attend. The king doesn't check credentials; the king doesn't ask questions. The joy of the wedding feast is open to all.

The parable tells us of one guest without a wedding robe, who winds up outside the joy of the feast. This can cause us to worry or despair. Do we have a wedding robe fit for the kingdom of heaven? What happens to us if we do not? Our baptism in Jesus, however, reminds us that we have no need to fear. We have been clothed not with a robe but with the grace of Jesus, which assures us that we, who have been gathered into the feast of the reign of God, have a place and an inheritance among God's people. Gathered around that table of grace, we too are sent to share the good news and welcome others into the reality of God's reign.