

St. Paul Lutheran Church
of Stillwater, Minnesota
October 19, 2025
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost



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.

Pray always. Do not lose heart. This is Christ's encouragement in the gospel today. Wrestle with the word. Remember your baptism again and again. Come regularly to Christ's table. Persistence in our every encounter with the divine will be blessed.

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.

Prelude



Gathering Song

"Come, Now is the Time to Worship"

Come now is the time to worship.

Come now is the time to give your heart.

Come just as you are to worship.

Come just as you are before your God.

Come.

One day every tongue.

Will confess You are God.

One day every knee will bow.

Still the greatest treasure remains.

For those who gladly choose You now. *R*

Willingly we choose to surrender our lives.

Willingly our knees will bow.

With all our heart soul mind and strength.

We gladly choose You now. *R*

Come, come just as you are come, come.

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

O Lord God, tireless guardian of your people, you are always ready to hear our cries. Teach us to rely day and night on your care. Inspire us to seek your enduring justice for all this suffering world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

WORD

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



First Reading

Pew Bible: Old Testament Page 30

Genesis 32:22-31

Returning to the home he had fled many years before after stealing his brother's birthright and his father's blessing, Jacob wrestles all night long with a divine adversary who ultimately blesses him and changes his name to "Israel," a name that means "he wrestles with God."

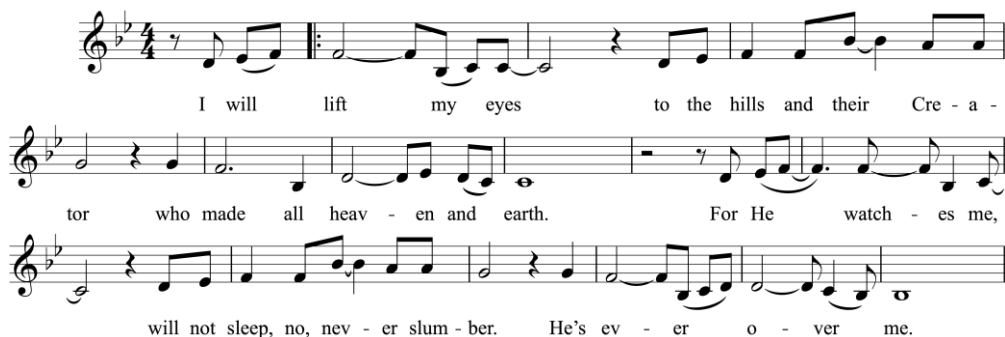
At the conclusion:

Word of God, word of life.

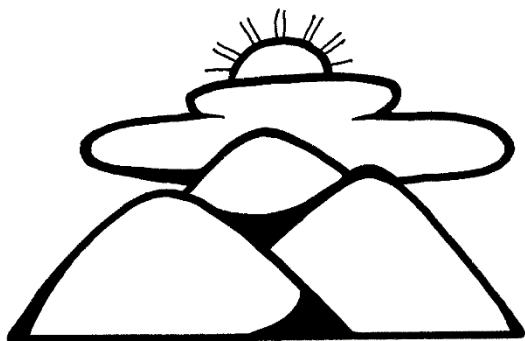
Thanks be to God.



Psalm 121



- 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills;
from where is my help to come?
- 2 **My help comes from the LORD,
the maker of heaven and earth.**
- 3 The LORD will not let your foot be moved
nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.
- 4 **Behold, the keeper of Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep; R**
- 5 the LORD watches over you;
the LORD is your shade at your right hand;
- 6 **the sun will not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.**
- 7 The LORD will preserve you from all evil
and will keep your life.
- 8 **The LORD will watch over your going out and your
coming in, from this time forth forevermore. R**



2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

The writer of this letter continues his instruction of Timothy, his younger colleague in ministry, by emphasizing the importance of faithful teaching despite opposition.

At the conclusion:

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Children's and Outreach Message

Jenny Brelje



Gospel Acclamation

"My Sweet Lord"

***My sweet Lord,
Mmm, my Lord,
Mmm, my Lord.***

**I really want to see you.
Really want to be with you.
Really want to see you, Lord.
But it takes so long, my Lord. R**

**I really want to know you.
Really want to go with you.
Really want to show you, Lord.
That it won't take long, my Lord. R**

Luke 18:1-8

Jesus tells a parable of an unjust judge who is worn down by a widow's pleas. Jesus is calling God's people to cry out for justice and deliverance. For if an unethical judge will ultimately grant the plea of a persistent widow, how much more will God respond to those who call.

The gospel is introduced:

The holy gospel according to Luke.

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

"Turn, Turn, Turn"

To everything, turn, turn, turn.

There is a season, turn, turn, turn.

***And a time to every purpose,
under heaven.***

A time to be born, a time to die.

A time to plant, a time to reap.

A time to kill, a time to heal.

A time to laugh, a time to weep. *R*

A time to build up, a time to break down.

A time to dance, a time to mourn.

**A time to cast away stones,
a time to gather stones together. *R***

A time of love, a time of hate.

A time of war, a time of peace.

A time you may embrace,

a time to refrain from embracing. *R*

A time to gain, a time to lose.

A time to mend, a time to sew.

A time for love, a time for hate.

A time for peace, I swear it's not too late. *R*



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

After each prayer:

God of grace,

receive our prayer.

At the conclusion:

We offer our prayers, O God, trusting in your everlasting grace and mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

"Amazing Grace"

John Ostrem, soloist

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 Prayer

Lord of the harvest, we return to you a portion of what you have given to us. Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches, but on you, who richly provides for us. Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are suffering and in need, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts,

We lift them to the Lord

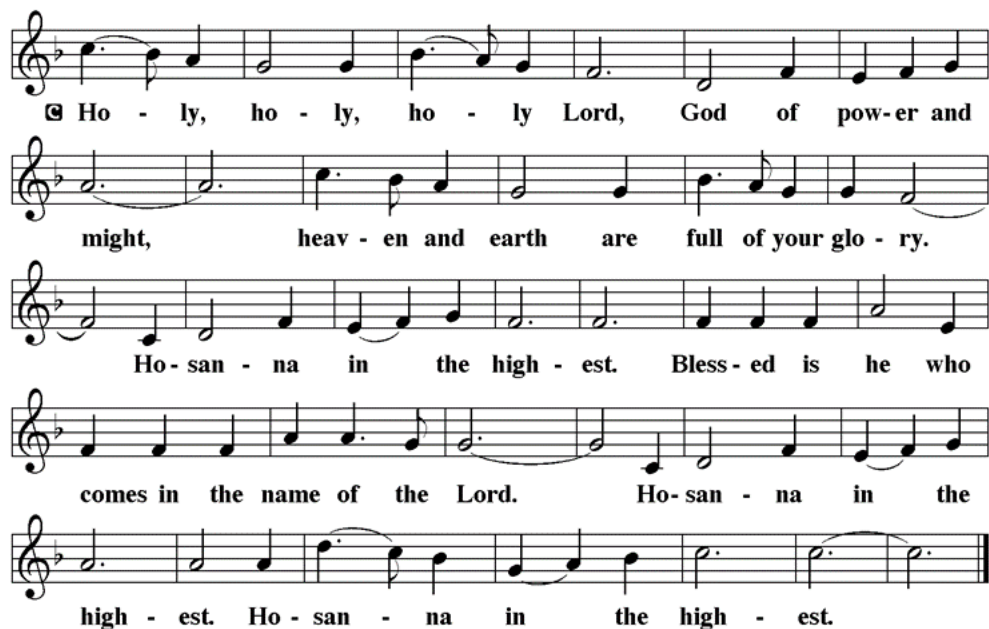
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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:

(Continued on the next page.) 9



Blessed are you, God Most High! . . .

. . . We praise and magnify you, O God!

We praise and magnify you, O God!

Blessed are you, Jesus Christ, forgiving Savior . . .

. . . We praise and magnify you, O God!

We praise and magnify you, O God!

In the night in which he was betrayed . . .

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

For this meal and for your presence within it,
we praise and magnify you, O God!

We praise and magnify you, O God!

Blessed are you, Holy Spirit, Power of the Most High . . .

. . . Send us into the all the world, preaching the power of
your peace.

We praise and magnify you, O God!

We praise and magnify you, O God!

(Continued on the next page.) 10

Blessed are you, Mighty One, Father, Son, and Spirit . . .
. . . Glory to God in the highest heaven, today tomorrow,
and forever.

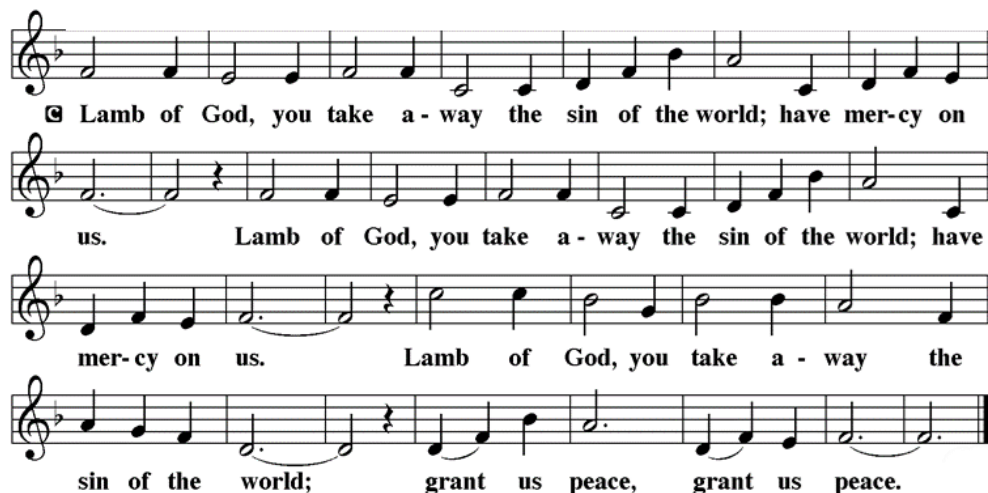
Amen.

Amen.

**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.**



☞ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

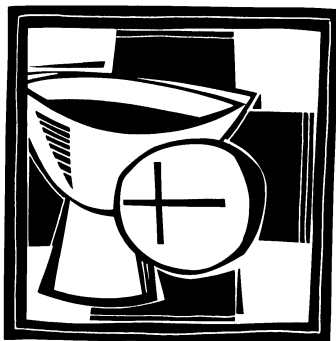
Communion

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.



Prayer After Communion

O God, through this meal you have strengthened us and appointed us to be your servants. Send us to do good and to share our possessions with all in need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

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 744

"Leaning On The Everlasting Arms"

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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DAILY PRAYER

For Responsible Citizenship

Lord God, you call your people to honor those in authority. Help us elect trustworthy leaders, participate in wise decisions for our common life, and serve our neighbors in local communities. Bless the leaders of our land, that we may be at peace among ourselves and a blessing to other nations of the earth; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

CONNECTIONS WITH THE LITURGY

Worship is Story

Like the widow, each Sunday, when perhaps at worship we have wrestled with God, we are sent away with God's blessing. Each Sunday we are instructed in the inspired Scripture going all the way back to God's first chosen people, Israel (first reading), the earliest Christians (second reading), and we receive the proclaimed good news of Jesus (gospel reading). Each Sunday we join with the widow to plead for justice in the world. It is as if the weekly assembly is enacting especially this Sunday's readings.

CATECHISM CONNECTION

God's Justice

In today's gospel we encounter a judge who neither fears God nor respects people. This is exactly opposite of what the Ten Commandments teach us, which Martin Luther (and Jesus before him) summarize as loving God and loving your neighbor. The widow is remarkable because she so completely and fully embodies Luther's teaching on the First Commandment, namely, "We are to fear, love, and trust God above all things." She focuses her energy and prayers not on an unjust leader, but on the justice of God's ways.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

James of Jerusalem, martyr, died around 62

Thursday, October 23, 2025

One of three early-church leaders named James, this man is identified in the New Testament and by a historian of the time as a brother of Jesus. Scholars are uncertain whether this means a blood brother. He was a leader of the church in Jerusalem.

GOSPEL MESSAGE

Prayerful Perseverance

How should we pray? What should we pray for? We might sometimes treat prayer like putting coins in a divine vending machine, and some rely on the story of the persistent widow to claim that God will indeed shower us with blessing if only we pray “enough.” Yet, despite fervent prayer, we don’t always get that job, the illness comes anyway, the doubts continue. If we take literally the claims of those who promise prosperity for God’s people, the condition of humanity suggests none of us has been persistent enough. Because, after all, life happens to all of us.

In Jesus’ parable, the woman is not praying strictly for herself; rather, she is praying for justice. A better word may be “vengeance.” The persistent widow is coming to the judge and crying out, “Avenge me! Avenge me against my adversaries!” Her focus is laser-sharp, and she does not give in to distractions. She waits with fervent hope that there will come a day when the judge brings balance, restores what has been lost, and humbles those who have done wrong. The widow is asking for something much larger than her daily needs. She is pleading on behalf of the world.

Like Jacob in Genesis 32, sometimes we wrestle with God, pleading for our own blessing. Our striving can feel overwhelming or even pointless. But Jesus invites us to focus and be persistent, to cry out to him day and night.

Though our prayers are not always answered in the way we want or expect, we can count on God to keep promises. We can count on a day when we are all restored. We can count on a time when God will avenge all of us against the crushing force of death. We can hang our hope on the fact that God receives our persistence with love, patience, and grace.