

St. Paul Lutheran Church
of Stillwater, Minnesota
August 17, 2025
Tenth Sunday after Pentecost



Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church. We are grateful to God you are here. We pray that you will feel the Spirit and warm welcome of this faith community.

The word of God is a refining fire. Jesus is the great divide in human history. He invites our undivided attention and devotion.

Today in worship we are surrounded by a great “cloud of witnesses.” In the word and in holy communion we are invited yet again to look to Jesus, “the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.”

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

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who looks upon us in compassion,
forgives our sin, and heals our lives.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

**against you, you alone,
we have sinned.**

**In your compassion,
cleanse us from our sin
and take away our guilt.
Create in us a new heart
and give us a steadfast spirit.**

**Do not cast us away,
but fill us with your Holy Spirit
and restore your joy within us.
Amen.**

As tender as parent to child,
so deep is God's compassion for you.
As high as heaven is above earth,
so vast is God's love for you.
As far as east is from west,
so far God removes your sin from you,
renewing your life through Jesus Christ.
Blessed be God who crowns us with mercy and love.

Blessed be God forever.



Gathering Song

ELW Hymn 596

"My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less"

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 God, judge eternal, you love justice and hate oppression,
and you call us to share your zeal for truth. Give us courage
to take our stand with all victims of bloodshed and greed,
and, following your servants and prophets, to look to the
pioneer and perfecter of our faith, your Son, 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 726

Jeremiah 23:23-29

Because Jeremiah preaches the unpopular message of God's judgment, he suffers rejection. Today's reading distinguishes between the true prophet, like Jeremiah, who speaks God's word, and the false prophet who misleads the people through dreams. One is like wheat; the other like worthless straw.

At the conclusion:

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.





Psalm 82



“How long, O God?” the psalm-ist cries, a cry we make our own,



for we are lost, a - lone, a - fraid, and far a - way from home.

God stands to charge the divine council assembled,
giving judgment in the midst of the gods:

**“How long will you judge unjustly,
and show favor to the wicked?**

Save the weak and the orphan;
defend the humble and needy;

**rescue the weak and the poor;
deliver them from the power of the wicked. Refrain**

They do not know, neither do they understand;
they wander about in darkness;
all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

**Now I say to you, ‘You are gods, (continued on the next page.)
and all of you children of the Most High;**

nevertheless, you shall die like mortals,
and fall like any prince.’”

**Arise, O God, and rule the earth,
for you shall take all nations for your own. Refrain**

Hebrews 11:29-12:2

The author of Hebrews presents us with rich stories of faith. In a long list of biblical heroes, we find examples of trust in God that enabled them to face the trials of life faithfully. In addition to this “cloud of witnesses,” we have Jesus, the perfect model of faithful endurance.

At the conclusion:

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Children's and Outreach Message

Jenny Brelje

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.



Luke 12:49-56

Jesus delivers harsh words about the purifying and potentially divisive effects of obedience to God's call. The way of the cross often leads followers to encounter hostility and rejection, even from those they love.

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 Marla Amborn

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

Hymn of the Day

ELW Hymn 631

"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"



Prayers of Intercession

After each prayer:

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

At the conclusion:

Confident in God's presence and promise, we entrust our prayers to the one who always receives them; through Jesus Christ, our wisdom and companion.

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.

Announcements

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Offering "Light of the World"

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

Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, 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:



Blessed are you, O God . . .

In the night in which he was betrayed . . .

Again, after supper . . .

As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit . . .

Glory and praise to you, O God, Author of life,
Word made flesh, Power of the Most High, 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.

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.

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 805

"Lead On, O King Eternal!"

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, died 1153

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

Bernard, a Cistercian monk, was a man of great spirituality who wrote mystical works and criticized those whom he thought took an overly intellectual approach to the faith. He became an abbot, and wrote several hymns that are still beloved today.

GOSPEL MESSAGE

It's So Confusing

Entering someone else's conversation halfway through can be disorienting. You don't know the context, and you're confused about the background, so you can't really make heads or tails of what's being discussed. Today's gospel reading is kind of like that experience. It's so confusing to hear Jesus talk like this!

But if we're honest with ourselves, we know our world is already full of the divisions Jesus describes. Political divisions have only deepened. Religious divisions cause people to talk over one another. We encounter racial divisions that we're afraid to talk about or even acknowledge, and economic divisions that isolate people according to status and means. Yes, our world is already full of divisions. And what about the tone of this gospel reading? Jesus' sayings are so provocative! With the kind of rhetoric being thrown around in our world today, do we need more alarming words?

When we look closely at the reading and pay attention to the context, we can get a better idea of what exactly Jesus is proposing in these inflammatory sayings. Notice the divisions he mentions here: divisions within families. In the context of the ancient world, the family was the central unit of connection and the source of your identity. The family told you who you were and how you could (or could not) operate.

It is into that kind of ordering, the foundation of identity, that Jesus brings disruption. His point is that in the kingdom of God, whether you were born into wealth or poverty, a family of prestige or one of pandemonium, you are God's beloved child. The message of God in Christ breaks up the social boxes and social games of this world, erasing the dividing lines we already set up for ourselves.

In the death and resurrection of Christ, we're all united in God's family, enjoying a new ordering of identity that breaks down what divides us.