

**St. Paul Lutheran Church
of Stillwater, Minnesota
September 6, 2026
15th 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.

Conflict is a part of relationships and life in community. Jesus' words in today's gospel are often used in situations having to do with church discipline. The prophet Ezekiel tells of warning the wicked to turn from their ways, and Paul reminds us that love is the fulfilling of the law.

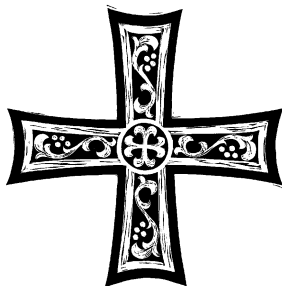
We gather in the name of Christ, assured that he is present among us with gifts of peace and reconciliation.

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 470

"Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether"

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, enliven and preserve your church with your
perpetual mercy. Without your help, we mortals will fail;
remove far from us everything that is harmful, and lead us
toward all that gives life and salvation, through Jesus
Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

WORD

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

Children's Word

First Reading

Pew Bible: Old Testament Page 802

Ezekiel 33:7-11

*God appointed Ezekiel as a sentinel for the house of Israel.
Ezekiel must faithfully convey God's warnings to the people.
Remarkably, God—who is about to attack Jerusalem—gives a
warning with the hope that repentance will make the attack
unnecessary.*

At the conclusion:

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.



"Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways"

Second Reading

Pew Bible: New Testament Page 162

Romans 13:8-14

The obligation of Christians is to love one another and so fulfill the heart and goal of the law. Clothes make the person as we "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" and live today in light of the future God has in store for us.

At the conclusion:

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel Reading

Pew Bible: New Testament Page 20

Matthew 18:15-20

Jesus offers practical advice to his disciples on how individuals and the church as a whole should go about restoring relationships when one member has sinned against another.

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 Laurel Halvorson Bernard

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

Hymn of the Day

ELW hymn 359

"Where Charity and Love Prevail"

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 Hymn

ELW hymn 639

"When We Are Living Pues si vivimos"

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:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth.
From age to age your creation sings your praises.
You feed even the birds of the air,
and you clothe the fields with lilies.
You gave your blessing to Abraham and his descendants,
and you spoke with Moses, Elijah, and David.
Blessed are you, Lord our God:

Blessed are you, Lord our God.

You fulfilled your covenant with us in Jesus.
He is Emmanuel, your beloved Son,
the star that guides us to wisdom,
the treasure hidden in a field.
He is the landowner who overpays the workers,
the judge who separates good from evil.
Blessed are you, Lord our God:

Blessed are you, Lord our God.

For us he lived, for us he died, for us he rose to eternal life.
Then and now he invites us to your banquet.
On the night in which he was betrayed,
he 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.

We hear his call, we repent our ways,
and we enter with joy into the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you, Lord our God:

Blessed are you, Lord our God.

Send your Holy Spirit here on your gathered disciples.
Make of this meal the body and blood of forgiveness.
Heal us and grant us your righteousness,
that we may love you and serve our neighbors.
Blessed are you, Lord our God:

Blessed are you, Lord our God.

Blessed are you, Lord our God,
our Father in heaven,
the Rock on which we build,
the Dove alighting on us all.
We worship you and sing our praises,
today and to the end of the age.
Amen.

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.**



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.

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 836

"Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee"

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Peter Claver, priest, missionary to Colombia, died 1654 Wednesday, September 9, 2026

Born into Spanish nobility, Claver became a Jesuit missionary, and served in present-day Colombia. His ministry was focused on the enslaved people who arrived there. He gave them food and medicine, learned their dialects, and taught them Christianity.

GOSPEL MESSAGE

Community Is Complicated

Navigating life with other humans is not always easy. We who call ourselves the church likely know this all too well. Perhaps you've witnessed church council meetings gone awry, frustrating conversations about the budget, or intense disagreements over worship styles. Maybe your faith community has had to navigate conflicting visions for mission and outreach, welcome and hospitality, or diversity and justice. Maybe the generational or political divides in your community feel like rifts too big to cross. As the church, we are called to wrestle with difficult questions about faith and life, but at times, even with the best of intentions, we leave one another feeling hurt, overlooked, or misunderstood.

Jesus knew a thing or two about life in community. He knew what it was like to be betrayed by the ones he loved. He shared meals with people of different backgrounds, people whose identities at times put them at odds with one another. Even his disciples never quite seemed to be on the same page! Yet Jesus knew that despite the complexity of these situations, faith is best practiced in community. Accompanying one another, sharing one another's burdens, encouraging one another, forgiving one another, and holding each other accountable are vital to the Christian life.

Therefore, managing conflict is not something to be taken lightly. Disagreements are not to be just swept under the rug, ignored until the next issue emerges. We are instead called to embrace truth-telling, courage, accountability, and compassion in our dealings with one another. The work of conflict resolution is not easy or glamorous. In fact, it can be awkward and downright painful. But it is holy work. And by God's grace, it can be an invitation to build a community that more truly reflects God's love poured out for the whole world.