

18th Sunday of Pentecost
September 27, 2026
9 AM



Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

St. Paul Lutheran Church
4686 E. Walnut Street
Westerville, OH 43081
614-882-7601
www.splcwesterville.org

WELCOME



GATHERING



Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who pours love into our hearts
and healing upon the earth.

Amen.

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,
we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.

Creation groans from overuse.

Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.

Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.

Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love
to others.

Turn our hearts back to you.

Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.

Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Hear this good news:

We have peace with God through ✝ Jesus Christ,
in whom there is no condemnation,
but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.
Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

Amen.

WELCOME SONG

OUR GOD

Water You turned into wine, opened the eyes of the blind;
There's no one like You, none like You.

Into the darkness, You shine; out of the ashes, we rise.
There's no one like You, none like You.

CHORUS

Our God is greater, our God is stronger;
God, You are higher than any other.
Our God is Healer, awesome in power,
our God, our God. *(repeat)*

And if our God is for us then who could ever stop us,
And if our God is with us then what could stand against?
And if our God is for us then who could ever stop us,
And if our God is with us then what could stand against? *(chorus twice)*

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.

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

✠ ✠ ✠ WORD ✠ ✠ ✠

Please be seated.

FIRST READING

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

¹ The word of the LORD came to me: ² What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? ³ As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴ Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins who shall die.

²⁵ Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶ When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed, they shall die. ²⁷ Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸ Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰ Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹ Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

The Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

¹ If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God

as something to be grasped,

⁷ but emptied himself,

taking the form of a slave,

assuming human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a human,

⁸ he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death—

even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly

and gave him the name

that is above every other name,

¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus

every knee should bend,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue should confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

The Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION HALLE, HALLE, HALLELUJAH

Hal-le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal -

- le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le -

lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²³ When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴ Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why, then, did you not believe him?' ²⁶ But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸ "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹ He answered, 'I will not,' but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

Pastor Jonathan Bull

DEDICATION OF PROJECTS

Good and Gracious God,

We dedicate these quilts, trusting fully that your love will go wherever they are taken. They are far more than pieces of material sewn together; they are a sacred gathering of many parts, created through the hands of many, each stitch offered as an intentional expression of love, compassion, and kindness.

We acknowledge that we cannot begin to measure the power or lasting impact of a simple act of kindness — how something as humble as a quilt:

can be used by you to extend comfort, reflect your grace, and radiate your love into the lives of others.

We place these quilts in your service, asking that you use them as instruments of blessings, that they bring warmth to the body and peace to the heart, and serve as reminders to those who receive them that they are valued, faithfully supported, and continually surrounded by your presence and care.

Bless those who created these quilts and those who receive them. Let your goodness be known through this gift now and in the days ahead. We offer this dedication with grateful hearts, trusting all things into your loving hands.

Amen.

Please stand as you are able.

SERMON SONG

MIGHTY KING

You are the Spirit bringing us light,
Igniting the fire of faith in our lives.
You are the Lord; You are a mighty king!
You are the river washing us clean,
Giving us life, setting us free.
You are the Lord; You are a mighty king!

CHORUS

We shout with joy;
You're the Rock of our salvation.
Let our hearts all Your praises sing.
We lift our voice to the one
Who made the earth, the sky, the sea.
You are a mighty king!

You are the voice ancient and new,
Speaking with courage, proclaiming truth.
You are the Lord; You are a mighty king!
You are the Savior, God become man.
Love became real when You stretched out Your hands.
You are the Lord; You are a mighty king! *(chorus 2x)*

APOSTLES' CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

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.

A brief silence.

Center your church in humility as we strive to follow in your way. Help us listen to the cries of those who have been unfairly hurt by the church and dare to name difficult truths. Show all your love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You call us to care for your creation. Lead us into your promise of a better world through sustainable practices and respect for your handiwork. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Inspire all in positions of authority to act honorably. Remind them of their call to use their authority for the sake of the common good. Give them the gift of humility. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Comfort those who come before you in fear and trembling. Calm troubled hearts with your forgiveness. Help all those in need especially those we name silently or spoken. Grant us your salvation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Change this congregation's heart when we say no to your call. Open us to courageous learning and service in our community, especially in new or challenging places. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Your steadfast love holds all the saints who have finished their work and are at rest. As we grieve, remind us of your mercy so we may also give thanks. 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.

Please be seated.

OFFERING

OFFERING SONG

BE EXALTED, O GOD

I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord, among the peoples.
I will sing praises to Thee among the nations.
For Thy steadfast love is great, is great to the heavens;
And Thy faithfulness, Thy faithfulness to the clouds.

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens;
Let Thy glory be over all the earth.
Be exalted, O God, above the heavens;
Let Thy glory be over all the earth. *(repeat all)*

Please stand as you are able.

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.

✠ ✠ ✠ MEAL ✠ ✠ ✠

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

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

This is the table, not of the church, but of the Lord
It is made ready for those who love God
and for those who want to love God more.

So come, you who have much faith
and you who have little;
You who have been here often
and you who have not been here long;
You who have tried to follow
and you who have failed.

Come, because it is the Lord who invites you.

Please be seated.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**
The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

COMMUNION SONG

MAKE US ONE IN YOU

Lord, as grains of wheat from the fields,
And as grapes from fruitful vineyards so are we.
Gathered here as one, gathered in Your Son.
Make us one in You.

As the grains become one loaf of bread,
As the grapes become the wine we drink,
Gathered here as one, gathered in Your Son.
Make us one in You.

CHORUS

Bread which is the body given for us.
Wine which is the blood shed for our sins.
To take away the stain, till only You remain.
Make us one in You.

Gather all your scattered people, Lord.
Bring them all to share this holy meal.
Gather us as one, gathered in Your Son.
Make us one in You.

Here we share a foretaste of the feast
That one day You'll share with us forevermore.
Gathered then as one, gathered in Your Son.
Forever one in You. (*chorus 2x*)

Please stand as you are able.

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

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

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

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.

BENEDICTION

Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.
Amen.

SENDING SONG

BIND US TOGETHER

Bind us together, Lord,
Bind us together with cords that cannot be broken.
Bind us together, Lord,
Bind us together, Lord, bind us together in love.

There is only one God. There is only one King.
There is only one Body; that is why we can sing.

Bind us together, Lord,
Bind us together with cords that cannot be broken.
Bind us together, Lord,
Bind us together, Lord, bind us together in love.

You are the fam'ly of God.
You are the promise divine.
You are God's chosen desire...
You are the glorious new wine.

Bind us together, Lord,
Bind us together with cords that cannot be broken.
Bind us together, Lord,
Bind us together, Lord, bind us together in love.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy. Experience God's love!
Thanks Be to God!

POSTLUDE

DO LORD

arr. Amy Potter

St. Paul Praise Team

Altar flowers are in celebration of Helmut & Linda Bachner's 56th wedding Anniversary!

Prayer requests may be sent to prayer@splcwesterville.org

This Week's Activities at St. Paul

Sunday, 9/27

- 9 AM: **Contemporary Worship** (Sanctuary)
- 9 AM: **Adult Forum** (Library)
- 9:45 AM: **Journeying with Jesus** (Lower Level)
- 10:30 AM: **Worship** (Sanctuary)
- 10:30 AM: **Bible Discussions in Today's World** (Library)
- 3 PM: **St. Paul Cares** (Library)
- 6 PM: **Confirmation & HS Youth** (Fellowship Hall)

Monday, 9/28

- 3 PM: **Music Lessons** (Nursery)
- 5:30 PM: **Yoga** (Fellowship Hall)

Wednesday, 9/30

- 9:30 AM: **Piece & Sew** (Lower Level)
- 7:30 PM: **Praise Team Rehearsal** (Sanctuary)

Thursday, 10/1

- 10 AM: **PBS** (Library)
- 12:30 PM: **Creative Spaces Homeschool** (Fellowship Hall)
- 6 PM: **Inreach/Outreach** (Library)
- 7 PM: **PBS** (Library)
- 7 PM: **Bell Choir Rehearsal** (Sanctuary)

PERMISSIONS

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ST.
PAUL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Celebrating 175 Years of St. Paul Lutheran Church

Founded in Christ, Forward in Faith

*WE WILL TELL TO THE COMING GENERATION, THE
GLORIOUS DEEDS OF THE LORD. PSALM 78:4B*



**GRACIOUS
STEWARDSHIP**

Faithfully using the
gifts God entrusts to
us for His glory.



**INSPIRING
WORSHIP**

Gathering to praise
God through music,
prayer, and His Word.



**AUTHENTIC
RELATIONSHIPS**

Walking alongside
one another in
grace and love.



**NURTURING
COMMUNITY**

Growing together as
a family rooted in
Christ's compassion.

Shop SPLC 175th
Merchandise



**JOIN US FOR A YEAR OF EVENTS LEADING TO THE
CULMINATING CELEBRATION ON SEPTEMBER 12, 2027**

SAVE THE DATE



Sunday, October 25 ~

**All Congregation
Campaign Event**

Luncheon : 12 - 2 PM

ALL WELCOME

RSVP by 10/9

**Sunday, November 1 ~
Commitment Sunday**



CELEBRATING 175 YEARS. BUILDING FAITH FOR THE NEXT GENERATION.

"We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the LORD, about his power and his mighty wonders."

— Psalm 78:4, NLT

Dear Members and Friends of St. Paul,

For nearly 175 years, God has gathered people at St. Paul around the Word, the sacraments, and a shared life of service. Lutherans organized this congregation in 1852. Since then, one generation after another has prayed here, learned here, cared for neighbors, and passed this community of faith to those who followed.

Now it is our turn to care for what we have received, and prepare St. Paul for those who will follow us.

The **Forward in Faith** Capital Campaign brings several needs into one shared vision for ministry. Our parking lot, roof, heating and cooling systems (HVAC), and our boiler require significant work. Reducing the mortgage can free up funds for the ministry God calls us to. Solar power can lower energy costs and help us care for all creation. Additionally, a two-year seed investment for a Children, Youth, and Family Ministry position can give children, young people, and families steady support as they grow in faith.

Every part of this campaign serves our people, our congregation, and our community. A safe parking lot helps members and guests enter with confidence. A lasting roof shelters worship, learning, fellowship, and service. Reliable heating and cooling make it possible to gather throughout the year. Less debt leaves greater room in the budget for ministry. A dedicated staff person helps families practice faith at home and helps St. Paul share the gospel with a new generation.

Our base goal for the Capital Campaign is \$1.22 million. It will fund the parking lot, roof, and HVAC priorities. The full campaign goal is \$1.81 million. It adds mortgage retirement, solar power, and two years of children, youth, and family ministry leadership.

As you read this letter, we invite you to pray about St. Paul's ministry and the people who will find welcome, grace, and belonging here in the years ahead. Consider how you might take part. Gifts will differ in size, and each household will respond from its own circumstances. Together, we can move **Forward in Faith** with gratitude for God's faithfulness and hope for all that God is and will do among us.

In Christ,

Pastor Jonathan Bull
Senior Pastor

Keelie Jurrus
Campaign Co-Chair

Kevin McJunkin
Campaign Co-Chair



Yesterday morning we kicked off the **Forward in Faith** Capital Campaign with Inspiration Visits! Every household at St. Paul was visited by a St. Paul member who dropped off **Inspiration Gifts** that have three items: a Generosity Storybook sharing stories of how God has acted generously in and through the lives of our people here at St. Paul; a **Forward in Faith** Capital Campaign Prayer Card so that we can pray together for the success and vitality of the **Forward in Faith** Capital Campaign; and a save-the-date invitation to our **All Congregation 175th Celebration and Campaign Event** where we will have the opportunity to celebrate the history and future of our church. If you weren't home yesterday morning, make sure you check your front door for your **Inspiration Gifts**!

Recognize Your Need to Give

In a world focused on getting more, the Christian call to generosity invites us to see giving in a new light. Generosity begins with recognizing that all we have—time, skills, and resources—is a gift from God. This awareness frees us from fear of scarcity and helps us view what we hold not as possessions to protect, but as tools for building God's reign of love and justice.

Scripture paints a clear picture of this joy. In 2 Corinthians 9:7 we read, "God loves a cheerful giver." The heart of generosity is not the size of the gift but the spirit in which it's given. When we share freely, we reflect Christ's love, strengthen relationships, and nurture a spirit of unity.

Giving also shapes our hearts. It builds gratitude and reminds us that we need one another. This connection blesses those who receive and deepens our own walk of faith.

Our call to give is not about buildings or budgets—it is about who God made us to be. We are created in the image of the generous One. Each act of generosity reflects the character of God within us and draws us closer to the life God longs for all people.

As we cultivate welcoming communities of faith with our neighbors and world, we strive for a world where everyone **"Experiences God's Love"**.

HOLY COMMUNION

We celebrate Holy Communion at every service. We welcome you to join us at the table of the Lord. Our Communion Bread is gluten, peanut, tree nut, soy, and dairy-free. **White grape juice is always available in the center of the tray.** All are welcome.

NURSERY

The nursery is located at the top of the ramp of the main entrance to the church. Currently, the nursery is not staffed, however, it is available for you to use with your child. Also, for our young worshippers, please find **Worship Wonder Bags** on the small coat rack in the rear of the sanctuary, untie, and enjoy. After worship, please put the **UNTIED bag back** on the rack to be replenished and cleaned.

Online giving to St. Paul is available: Using your mobile device,
scan below or Text **SPLCGIVE** to **73256**.

CONTACTS

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Prayer requests may be sent to
prayer@splcwesterville.org

MUSIC STAFF

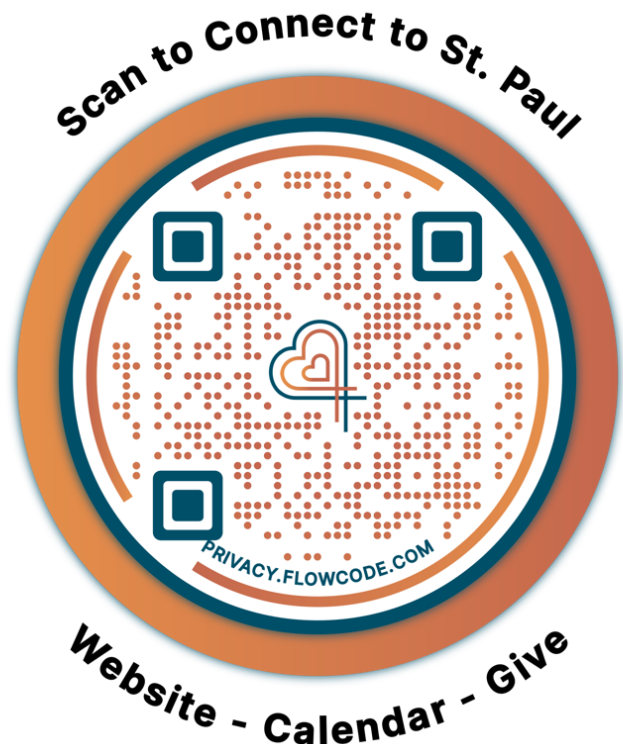
Karla Kruse, Director of Music Ministries

Judy McLeod, Handbell Director

Zach Ruppel, Director of Contemporary Music

Philip Cordell, Organist

Susan Treer, Contemporary Keyboardist



Church Office: M-F 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
Closed for lunch: 12 PM- 1 PM

Please contact us if you have any questions. Check out the web site for more information.
St. Paul Lutheran Church is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.