



16th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday September 17, 2023

Lutheran Church of the Living Christ
2725 Concord Drive
Florissant, MO 63033

Welcome to Lutheran Church of the Living Christ

Welcome! If you are a guest today, we hope you leave as a friend. May this worship service surround you with the love of God through Christ and fills you with the Holy Spirit.

Invitation to Communion: We welcome all to commune at LCLC. It is not our table, nor this congregation's table, nor our denomination's table. It is the table of Jesus Christ. By his invitation there is a place for everyone. We believe that Jesus is present in the bread and wine that forgives sin, nourishes faith, and calls us to be witnesses of the gospel.

Notes about our worship service: You can follow along with the service by looking at the screen in the front of the worship space. Guidance is printed in *italics* throughout. "P" indicates the speaking part of the presiding minister; "L" indicates a speaking part of a lay leader; "C" and parts in boldface indicate speaking parts of the whole congregation. We use Evangelical Lutheran Worship books (ELW) **Setting 3** for liturgical music. Please be mindful of others' comfort with touch. Ask before giving a handshake or hug.

PRELUDE

WELCOME

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who greets us in this and every season, whose word never fails, whose promise is sure.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of our neighbors.

Silence for reflection.

P: Gracious God,

C: Have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

P: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

C: Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

"Awake, O Sleeper"

ELW#452

GREETING

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

CHOIR ANTHEM: In His Time

The assembly is seated.

Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

L: Word of God, Word of Life

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalms 103:1-7

L: ¹Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God's holy name

C: ²Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all God's benefits—

L: ³who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases;

C: ⁴who redeems your life from the grave and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;

L: ⁵who satisfies your desires ¹ with good things so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

C: ⁶O LORD, you provide vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.

L: ⁷You made known your ways to Moses and your works to the children of Israel.

SECOND READING Romans 14:1-12

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions.

²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. ⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

L: Word of God, Word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING - *Please stand, as you are able, to welcome the gospel.*

P: The holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 18th chapter (verses 21-35)

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. ²³"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt.

³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Following the reading the assembly is seated.

SERMON Pastor Matt Helfrich

HYMN OF THE DAY “Where Charity and Love Prevail” ELW #359

PROFESSION OF FAITH – *The Apostles’ 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

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and healing to rivers clogged with pollution. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in positions of power to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, the disease of addiction, or otherwise afraid or in harm's way. Protect all who cry out for mercy (*especially*). Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We pray for this congregation. Open our hearts to practice intentional invitation. Help us to forgive each other, practice patience, and choose welcome over judgment. Move us to care for those in our community seeking refuge and safety. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for the saints who died in faith. Show us how to live faithfully, creatively, and lovingly in your church and world (*like Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, whom we commemorate today*). Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of the risen Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Share God's peace in whatever way you and/or neighbors are comfortable.

Following the sharing of the peace the assembly is seated.

GATHERING OF OFFERINGS

OFFERING AND PRAYER

P: God of field and forest, sea and sky, you are the giver of all good things. Sustain us with these gifts of your creation, and multiply your graciousness in us, that the world may be fed with your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

COMMUNION LITURGY

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise. Hosanna in the highest!

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

LORD'S PRAYER

P: Remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray,

C: 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

P: All people are called to Christ's table. Come, eat what is good.

C: Amen.

DISTRIBUTION

Time is given for the sharing of bread and wine. Additional verbal directions will be given.

Lamb of God

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.

BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you in God's grace unto eternal life.

C: Amen.

PRAYER

L: We thank you, generous God, for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table. Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

**(ANNOUNCEMENTS – Please see announcements at the end of this bulletin.)*

BENEDICTION

P: The God who calls across the cosmos and speaks in the most gentle voice ✝ bless, keep, and sustain you now and to the end of the age.

C: Alleluia! Amen!

SENDING HYMN

"In Thee Gladness"

ELW#867

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace. Share the harvest. **C: Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE:

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **Bell choir** will meet Thursdays at 6pm **starting Sept. 21.**
2. **FIFTY PLUS TO TOUR BUTTERFLY HOUSE SEPTEMBER 20** - tour the Sophia M. Sachs Butterfly House with 50+ on Wed., Sept. 20, at 11:00. The Butterfly House is located at 15050 Faust Park in Chesterfield. A group rate of \$4 per person can be obtained if there are at least 15 people. Our hosts, Sheila and LeVaughn Smart, plan to write a check for the group, so please pay the \$4.00 in advance to the Smarts, Judy Holmes, or Joyce Wolf. The sign-up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board by September 3. There will be carpooling from church, leaving at 10:15. The tour will begin at 11:00 and last about an hour. Following the tour, the group will go to the Mellow Mushroom Restaurant at 15525 Olive Blvd. for lunch. All are welcome.
3. **Sharing in Mission and Ministry – Great Rivers Collaborative** The Holy Spirit guides our congregation to perform amazing mission and ministry using the resources with which we have been blessed. Recently, leaders from several area ELCA churches gathered to discuss how the gifts within individual congregations could be used in conjunction with gifts in other congregations to provide even greater mission and ministry. From these conversations, the Great Rivers Collaborative (GRC) was formed. The GRC member congregations are

Atonement, Living Christ, Good Shepherd, Shepherd of the Hills, St. Philips, Unity, and Zion. The GRC Committee already has several ideas and will share them with you soon. We encourage you to participate as you are able in upcoming GRC events! Our first event will be a combined Reformation Service at Unity on the afternoon of October 29th . Watch for more details in announcements and The Communicator. If you have questions or ideas, please contact Randy Henning or Laurie Brown.

4. The Call Committee's next meeting is **TODAY**, September 17, @ 10:30am.
5. Thanksgiving Food Baskets. Yes, it's getting to be that time again. Look for announcements in the coming weeks, more exciting details. Bob-the-Builder

September 17, 2023

Preaching/Presiding: Pr. Matt

Assisting Minister: Randy Henning

Lector: Dave Endorf

Zoom: Erle Craig

Musician: Greg Ott

Usher: Gloria Broderick/Cathie Lehr

Greeter: Jann Mueller

Altar Guild: Karen Haynes & Sheila Smart

September 24, 2023

Preaching/Presiding: Pr. Matt

Assisting Minister: Bill Kaepffel

Lector: Angela Bennett

Zoom: Gary & Laurie Brown

Musician: David Eggers

Usher: Glenn & Jann Mueller

Greeter: Kathy Endorf

Altar Guild: Joyce Wolf & Ann Schultz