

The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

09/20/2026

Greg Fetzer, Pastor

J.V. Trautwein, Pastor Emeritus

P In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen**

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen**

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P Most merciful God,

C **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen**

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for our sake God forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ he gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen**

GATHERING HYMN: [ELW#685 "Take My Life, That I May Be"](#)

- P** Sisters and brothers in Christ, beloved chilfredn of God: grace, mercy, and peace be with you all.
- C** **And also with you.**

HYMN OF PRAISE: [ELW#845 “Voices Raised to You”](#)

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And also with you.**
- P** Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God,
- C** **you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen**

FIRST READING Jonah 3:10 – 4:11

L A reading from Jonah: ¹⁰When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

^{4:1} But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the LORD and said, “O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. ³ And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” ⁴ And the LORD said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” ⁵ Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶ The LORD God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush.

⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." ¹⁰ Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?"

L The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to
God.

PSALM145:1-8

I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.

² Every day I will bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.

³ Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised;
his greatness is unsearchable.

⁴ One generation shall extol your works to another
and shall declare your mighty acts.

⁵ They will recount the glorious^[a] splendor of your majesty,
and on your wondrous works I will meditate.

- ⁶ They will proclaim the might of your awesome deeds,
and I will declare your greatness.
- ⁷ They shall celebrate the fame of your abundant goodness
and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.
- ⁸ The LORD is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

SECOND READING Philippians 1:21-30

L A reading from Philippians: ²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me. ²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel ²⁸and in no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, ³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

L The word of the Lord.

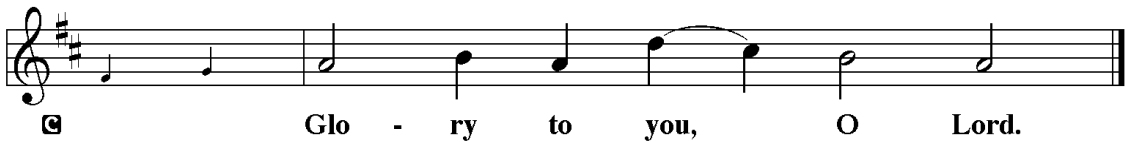
C **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand, as you are able.



GOSPEL READING Matthew 20:1-16

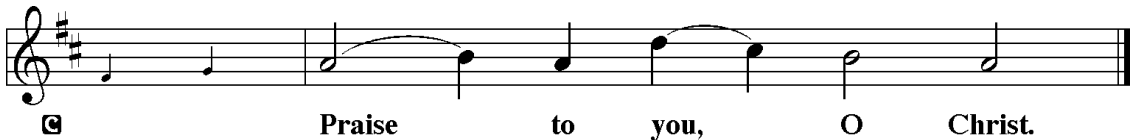
L The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.



L [Jesus said to the disciples:] ²⁰ "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷ They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹ When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they

thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³ But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

L The Gospel of the Lord.



HYMN OF THE DAY: [ELW#588 "There's a Wilderness in God's Mercy"](#)

SERMON: [\(Sermon Audio Link\)](#)

Please stand, as you are able.

- P** Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith:
C **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose

again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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

- L** Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

A brief silence.

- L** Hold your church accountable for our unwillingness to share your good news and our anger at your generosity to others. Nourish us by your grace to be witnesses to your love. Hear us, O God.
- C** **Your mercy is great.**
- L** Guide scientists and researchers studying responses to the climate crisis so that all your creation may inspire us to give thanks for your great goodness. Hear us, O God.
- C** **Your mercy is great.**
- L** Show employers the benefits of equal pay standards for all their employees. Reconcile conflicts between employees. Fill places of employment with camaraderie, and bring an end to employment disparity. Hear us, O God.
- C** **Your mercy is great.**
- L** Encourage any who cannot work with the truth that their value comes from your everlasting love for them. Provide for those who are injured, ill, and for all in any need. We pray for Barbara Ash, Heidi Brackbill, Rebecca Brennan, the Elshafei family, Jeff Fultz, Bob Hardy, Mark Hughes, Charlotte Leer, John McCarthy, Wendy Neumann, Rick Newman, Peter Olsen, Valerie Roth, Claudia Schober, Esther Trautwein, and Pastor Jack. Hear us, O God.
- C** **Your mercy is great.**
- L** Gathering God, resolve conflicts in this community through your righteousness

and grace. Reconcile us to each other, making your good news known even through our imperfections. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

L For whom or what else shall we pray?

- *For peace and reconciliation among the nations, especially in Iran, Gaza, Yemen, South Sudan, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Ukraine, and Myanmar ...*
- *For elections and political transitions, especially in Germany, Sweden, Syria and Russia, and for political leaders in the US and around the world ...*
- *For the Haitian immigrant community navigating the end of TPS ...*
- *For the Indonesian families impacted by a sinking ferry ...*
- *For ongoing flood recovery in Nepal and for ongoing flood threats in the region ...*
- *For families impacted by gun violence, especially in the Philippines ...*
- *For those killed in a bus collision and helicopter accident in Los Angeles, CA . . .*
- *For those injured and killed during a mosque attack in Pakistan . . .*
- *For compassion and safety for all migrants, and for renewed commitment to human dignity . . .*
- *For the discovery of a new cat species in Bolivia and for all the ongoing mysteries and wonders of creation ...*

L Comfort us with the promise of the resurrection as we remember all our loved ones whose desire to be with Jesus is fulfilled.. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

L 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.

C Amen

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

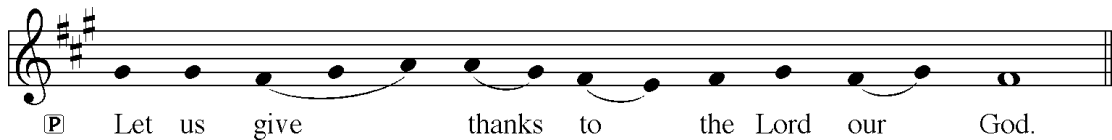
OFFERING*: ([On-Line giving Link](#))

The Offering is received and is presented at the altar.

C Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
 bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
 fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -
 nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your
 pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

P Let us pray. Merciful Father,

C we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us - ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen



The thanksgiving continues with the preface; the congregation responds:

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.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:

- P** Holy God, our Maker, Redeemer, and Healer, in the harmonious world of your creation, the plants and animals, the seas and stars were whole and well in your praise. When sin had scarred the world, you sent your Son to heal our ills and to form us again into one.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his acts of healing, his body given up, and his victory over death, we await that day when all the peoples of the earth will come to the river to enjoy the tree of life. Send your Spirit upon us and this meal: as grains scattered on the hillside become one bread, so let your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth, that all may be fed with the Bread of life, your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

C Amen

P Lord, 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

P The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for the table is now ready.

C Thanks be to God.

After all have communed, the following is sung:



C 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.

Please stand, as you are able.

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

C Amen



C Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let ev- 'ry- one who seeks the Lord re - joice and proud- ly bear his name.



He re - calls his prom - is - es and leads his peo - ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

P Let us pray. Almighty God,

C you gave your Son both as a sacrifice for sin and a model of the godly life. Enable us to receive him always with thanksgiving, and to conform our lives to his; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

C Amen

SENDING HYMN [ELW#731 "Earth and All Stars"](#)

P Go in peace. Love and serve God and neighbor.

C Thanks be to God.

*Offering to be sent to

Robert Brackbill
10274 Raleigh Tavern Lane
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Epiphany Lutheran Church
9122 Sybert Drive
Columbia Hills
Ellicott City, MD 21043
<https://www.epiphanylutherancolumbia.org>

Please note that you now have the opportunity of online giving with the link found after the offering designation or here: https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithely/give-one-time/2627291

ANNOUNCEMENTS and Upcoming Events

- Sunday, Oct 3, 9 am – 2 pm, Fall Fair at Salem Lutheran Church, Jarrettsville
- Tuesday, Oct 27, 10 am, Shock Trauma Lecture on Fall Prevention

READER SCHEDULE

First Sunday	Heidi and Bob
Second Sunday	Julie and Dave
Third Sunday	Ron
Fourth & Fifth Sunday	Greg

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