

st. John's

Serving Christ & Community! Serving you!



Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost

September 5/6, 2026

As We Gather

Although the attention of many is distracted on this Labor Day weekend, the focus of the Readings is clear. We have a Savior who has come to find the lost and restore them through forgiveness, and we have a purpose in speaking this Gospel to the whole world. This is not an easy calling. The lost often do not want to be found, and the wicked are content in their ways. We act not as self-appointed guardians of the truth but as instruments of God, through whom He speaks His Word of love to the lost and erring and by whom they are saved. The most difficult application is always to those who have fallen from the faith into error or sin. Our greatest temptation is to surrender them to their error or sin. Our greatest calling is to address them with the voice of God's Word through whom the Spirit works to restore the lost. Today we pray that we will not be distracted from this goal and purpose.

Chimes and Prelude

Please Stand

Opening Hymn

"That's Why We Praise Him"

Verse 1

He came to live- live a perfect life
He came to be the living word our light
He came to die so we'd be reconciled
He came to rise to show His pow'r and might

Chorus

That's why we praise Him that's why
we sing
That's why we offer Him our ev'rything
That's why we bow down and worship
this King

'Cause He gave His ev'rything

'Cause He gave His ev'rything

Verse 2

He came to live- live again in us
He came to be our conquering King
and friend

He came to heal and show the lost
ones His love

He came to go prepare a place for us

Chorus

Invocation and Call to Worship

P In the Name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Confession and Absolution

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. 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. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. 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 Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P He who began this good work within you will bring it to completion on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

Please be Seated

Old Testament Reading

Ezekiel 33:7-9

⁷ "So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel.

Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸ If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. ⁹ But if you warn the

wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.

P This is the Word of the Lord

C **Thanks be to God**

Epistle

Romans 13:1-10

13 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ³For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. ⁵Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. ⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. ⁷Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed. ⁸Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God**

Choir

"From the Day You Were Born"

by Russell Nagy

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eighteenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord**

Holy Gospel

Matthew 18:1-20

18 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ² And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them ³ and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

⁵ "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, ⁶ but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

⁷ "Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! ⁸ And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. ⁹ And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

¹⁰ "See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. ¹² What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? ¹³ And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. ¹⁴ So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

¹⁵ "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸ Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth

shall be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord

C Praise to You, O Christ

Nicene Creed

C I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.

**And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.**

Please Be Seated

Sermon Hymn

“Be Thou My Vision”

Verse 1

Be Thou my vision O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me save that
Thou art
Thou my best thought by day or by night
Waking or sleeping Thy presence my
light

Verse 2

Be Thou my wisdom and Thou my
true Word
I ever with Thee and Thou with me Lord
Thou my great Father I Thy true son
Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one

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Sermon

“Living in Mercy and Faithful Obedience”

(Romans 13:1-10)

- 1) God’s Mercy in Jesus**
- 2) God’s Rule through Civil Authorities**
- 3) In Christ: Living, Dying, and Rising to Eternal Life**

Hymn

“Be Thou My Vision”

Verse 3

Riches I need not nor man's empty praise
Thou mine inheritance now and always
Thou and Thou only first in my heart
High King of heaven my treasure
Thou art

Verse 4

High King of heaven my victory won
May I reach heaven's joys
O Bright heaven's Sun
Heart of my own heart whatever befall
Still be my vision O Ruler of all

Offering (Please place in the Box located in the Narthex)

Prayer of the Church

- P** Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ and for all people according to their needs.
- P** That the Lord would move us to seek out the lost, address them with the voice of God's Word, and restore them who receive this warning with penitence, that the hearts of all once forgiven be moved to forgive one another in Christ's name, let us pray to the Lord.
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** That the church burn with zeal for the lost and for those caught up in heresy, error, and immorality and learn to rejoice with the angels over every sinner who repents and is saved, let us pray to the Lord.
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** That the Lord of the church well supply His people with faithful pastors and church workers and that He impart His rich blessing upon those newly ordained and consecrated and those training up for church work vocations, let us pray to the Lord.
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** That the Lord raise up for us good and faithful leaders on every level of government, bless those who serve with gifts of wisdom and prudence, and protect and defend all who protect and defend us, let us pray to the Lord.
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** That the Lord continue to show mercy to those afflicted in body, mind, or soul; grant them comfort and aid; and sustain them in this mercy to everlasting life, [***and especially do we pray for . . .***], let us pray to the Lord.
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** That the Lord would bless the homes where His people dwell, giving courage and strength to husbands and wives in the fulfillment of their promises and blessing all parents with wisdom and grace to attend to the children in their care, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P That we learn gratitude for the manifold and rich gifts that God supplies every day and that we learn generosity to share with those in need, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P That we use our skills and abilities in honest labor and that the work of our hands be blessed, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P That the Lord would grant to all who approach this altar with repentant hearts and faith to receive here the gifts bestowed in this communion of Christ's flesh and blood, and that the Lord bless us with unity of doctrine and life together, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P That the Lord grant us a blameless life and a blessed death, that at the last we be received into the arms of His mercy, and that the Lord grant His comfort and peace to the dying and all who grieve, [*especially . . .*], let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

LSB 179

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.



Service of the Sacrament



Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–2*

Communion Statement of Love

We rejoice in this celebration of the LORD'S Supper as the Lord Jesus indeed comes to us in a very intimate manner, giving to us His true Body and Blood in with and under the bread and wine in this sacred meal. St. Paul writes, "*Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.*" ²⁹ *For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves*" (1 Corinthians 11:28-29). It is out of love and care for every baptized individual that comes to the Lord's Supper that we ask those who are not instructed in the faith and/or doubt the presence of the Body and Blood of Jesus in this Sacrament to speak to the Pastor before attending the Lord's Supper.

Distribution Hymn:

"Feed Us Now"

Verse 1

Feed us now Bread of Life
In this holy meal
Let us know Your love anew
We hunger for You

Feed us now Bread of Life
Come and live within
Let Your peace be ours today
Lord Jesus we pray

Verse 2

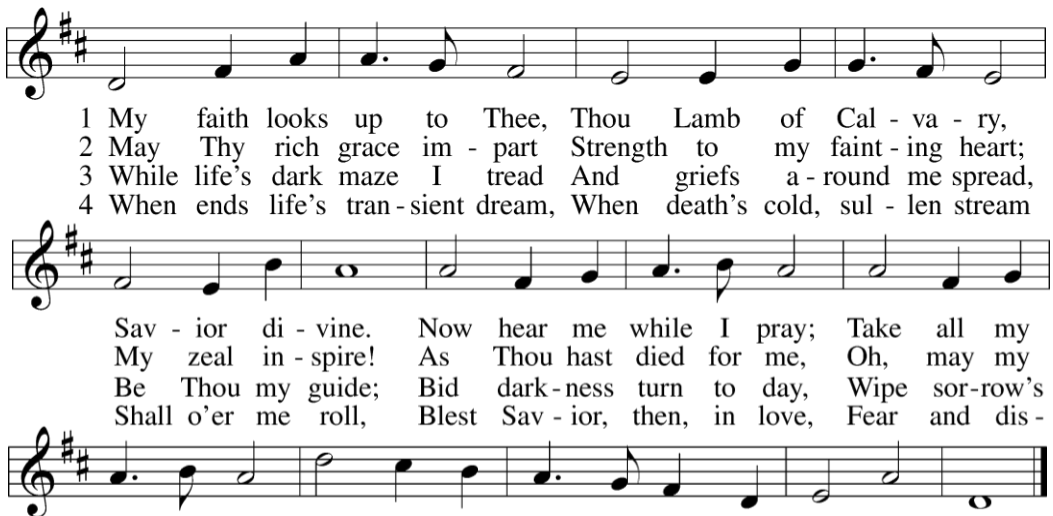
Piece of bread glass of wine
Lord this food is good
Love and mercy come to us
Your promise we trust
Piece of bread glass of wine
Who can understand
How His mercy works in these
Yet Lord we believe

Verse 3

God is here O so near
Nearer than our thoughts
Stay with us where'er we go
Lord help us to grow
God is here O so near
In this heaven's meal
May we always feed on You
On the Bread that's true

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Distribution Hymn: "My Faith Looks Up to Thee" LSB 702 (sts 1-4)



1 My faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Cal - va - ry,
2 May Thy rich grace im - part Strength to my faint - ing heart;
3 While life's dark maze I tread And griefs a - round me spread,
4 When ends life's tran - sient dream, When death's cold, sul - len stream

Sav - ior di - vine. Now hear me while I pray; Take all my
My zeal in - spire! As Thou hast died for me, Oh, may my
Be Thou my guide; Bid dark - ness turn to day, Wipe sor - row's
Shall o'er me roll, Blest Sav - ior, then, in love, Fear and dis -

guilt a - way; O let me from this day Be whol - ly Thine!
love to Thee Pure, warm, and change - less be, A liv - ing fire!
tears a - way, Nor let me ev - er stray From Thee a - side.
trust re - move; O bear me safe a - bove, A ran - somed soul!

Text: Ray Palmer, 1808–87 Tune: Lowell Mason, 1792–1872 Text and tune: Public domain

Closing Hymn

"White As Snow"

Verse

White as snow white as snow
Though my sins were as scarlet

Lord I know Lord I know
That I'm clean and forgiven

Chorus

Through the power of Your blood
Through the wonder of Your love

Through faith in You I know
That I can be white as snow

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Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C **Amen.**

Silent Prayer: "Good Shepherd, because You have established civil authorities for our good and Your glory, grant that I be faithful in promoting and defending godly leaders. Amen."

Announcements

Postlude

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Chris Winter, Ministry Assistant.....815-291-6994
Lisa Lobdell, Organist 815-275-5165
Ruth Maedge, Choir Director 815-238-1595
Sharon Thompson, Accompanist 815-493-8347
Joy Shaw, Handbell Director 573-987-8421

WORSHIP TIMES

Saturday at 5:30 pm

Sunday at 8:00 am

Sunday at 9:15 am – Education Hour

Sunday at 10:30 am

**Acoustic – 4th Sunday 10:30 service*

STAY CONNECTED

www.stjohnslena.org

Facebook: St Johns Lena

BIBLE EDUCATION

Sunday at 9:15 am

Adults w/ the Pastor – Luke



- **Christian Education will be on break for the summer and will resume in Sept.**

1st and 3rd Monday's at 3:00 & 6:00 pm

Bible Journaling – Mark

Tuesday's 10:00 am

Stitching Blessings – Mark

Wednesday at 9:30 am

Women's Bible Study – Luke

Friday at 6:30 am

Men's Breakfast Bible Study – Fellowship H.

See Church Calendar & Newsletter for additional studies and gatherings!

COMMUNITY

Church Van: If you live in Lena and would like a ride to the 10:30 am service, please call the church office.

My Friends Closet: Visit our thrift store for heavenly deals! 511 W Lena St, Lena, IL 61048. [\(815\) 369-4527](tel:8153694527)

Adult Day Care: Visit our "Friendship Center" to care for your loved ones. 311 N Lake Rd, Lena, IL 61048. [\(815\) 369-2690](tel:8153692690)

REMEMBER OUR MISSIONARIES: (A card of encouragement is always welcomed)

L.W.M.L./WOMEN'S SOCIETY TIM (Together In Mission)

†Supporting: Danelle Putnam Schumann & husband Carlos Schumann, Apartada 1356, Santiago, Dominican Republic.

Danelle.Putnam@lcms.org lcms.org/international lcms.org/putnam

L.W.M.L./WOMEN'S SOCIETY ADOPT A STUDENT: Mr. Derek Arrington Campus Post Office Box, 801 Seminary Pl., St. Louis, MO 63105-3196; arringtond@csl.edu

ST. JOHN'S TIM (Together in Mission):

Rev. Carl & Chenhsi Hanson with Emma, Andrea, and Lydia serving in Seoul South Korea as Pastor at International Lutheran Church. 148 Hannam-daero, Yongsan-gu, Seoul, South Korea 04417

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Mr. Blake Brockman (wife Hannah, son, Judah) Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 2100 Wadsworth Blvd., Lakewood, CO 80214-5707. brockmanb@csl.edu

Mr. Daniel Hampton (wife, Christie, son William, daughter Abigail) 328 Winter Lake Ct. Fenton, MO 63026. OR Campus Post Office Box, 801 Seminary Pl. Clayton, MO 63105-3196

Mr. Tristan Jones (and wife Carolyn and son Micah) 801 Seminary Pl. Clayton, MO 63105-3196, jonest@csl.edu. (Vicarage) Saint Stephens Lutheran Church, 2304 Springs Rd. N.E., Hickory, NC 28601-3066

MY FRIEND'S CLOSET THRIFT STORE TIM (Together in Mission)

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Deaconess Tirzah Kray, serving in Latin America & Caribbean, Tirzah.krey@lcms.org, facebook.com/groups/TirzahTales, c/o The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, P.O.Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

Zach & Christy Yoder serving in Nigeria with Wycliffe Bible translators.

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Rev.8/26

SERVING THE LORD THIS WEEK – September 5/6

	Saturday – 5:30 pm	Sunday – 8:00 am	Sunday – 10:30 am
ELDERS	Donny Fox/ Don Bamberg	Mike Rothschadl/ Dave Thompson/ Steve Stich	Kevin Keltner/ Brett Richardson/ Mark Mau
GREETERS	Jim/ Joan Liles	Deb/ Dana Turnmeyer	Chad/ Chris Winter
USHERS	Larry Maaske	Dave Nolan	Korbin Winter
ACOLYTES	Usher	Charlie Kent/ Ella Korte	Max Winter/ Addie Solverson
AUDIO/VIDEO	Dave/ Judy Zier	Gary Erickson/ Jeff Jones	Hudson Winter/ Steve Levan
ALTAR GUILD	Karen Spinhirne/ Jodi Zeal	Karen Spinhirne/ Jodi Zeal	Karen Spinhirne/ Jodi Zeal

SERVING THE LORD NEXT WEEK –September 12/13

	Saturday – 5:30 pm	Sunday – 8:00 am	Sunday – 10:30 am
ELDERS	Tom Bannon	Jon Werkheiser	Rob Cobine
GREETERS	TBD	Dave/ Peggy Murphy	Dean/ Arlene Holmes
USHERS	Ken Lutz	Jeff Jones	Ron Conway
ACOLYTES	Usher	Ashlynn Wade	Gavyn Gerke
AUDIO/VIDEO	Angie Bamberg / Dave Zier	Denny Potter/ Kory Gerbick	Anita Mau/ Michelle Rotschadl
ALTAR GUILD	Karen Spinhirne/ Jodi Zeal	Karen Spinhirne/ Jodi Zeal	Karen Spinhirne/ Jodi Zeal