

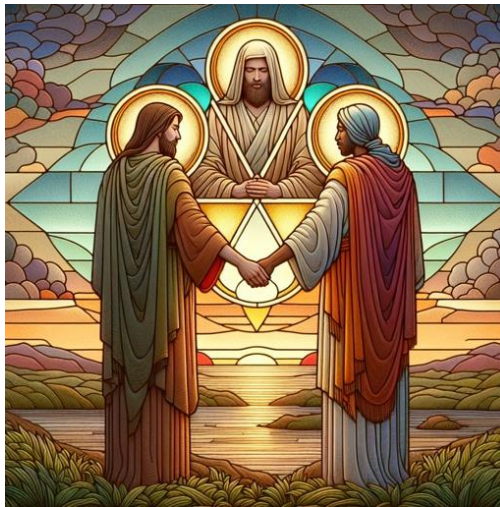


ASCENSION

Lutheran Church

A **Christ-centered** community where we ***connect, learn, and serve.***

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost – September 6, 2026



Rev. Scott Kuntz, Guest Pastor, pastorkuntz@gmail.com

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Welcome! We're happy you're with us for worship today.

IF YOU ARE VISITING FOR THE FIRST TIME, please take a moment to sign in at the podium at either sanctuary entrance. We pray your time with us strengthens your faith in the Lord. We are a member congregation of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS). You can find more information about our beliefs at LCMS.org/about/beliefs.

IF YOU HAVE SMALL CHILDREN, we understand that God made them wiggly and noisy at times, but we also believe they should be with us in worship. If you need a moment, we have a nursery available to you through the hallway to the right of the altar. Children's bags are also available in the Narthex for use during service.

HOLY COMMUNION is celebrated at Ascension Lutheran on each Sunday. We receive this Holy Sacrament in the glad confidence that our Lord Jesus, as His word says, gives not only bread and wine, but also His true Body and Blood for us to eat and drink for the forgiveness of our sins (Matthew 26:26-28). Our Lord invites to His table those who, repenting of their sins, believe His word that His body and blood are truly present for the forgiveness of our sins. All baptized believers who hold our confession of faith and have examined themselves according to Scripture's guidance (1 Corinthians 11:27-29), are invited to receive His Sacrament. If you are not yet baptized or are visiting us for the first time, we invite you to come forth during communion and fold your arms over your heart for a blessing. Pastor would be happy to discuss receiving Holy Communion at Ascension with you.

AFTER EACH SERVICE from September to May, please join us for a brief time of **FELLOWSHIP** with coffee and treats downstairs in our Fellowship Hall briefly before we begin our **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION** hour for those ages 2 and above.

If you have any questions, seek out an usher or a member with a name tag; they will be happy to help you out.

SERVING TODAY:

ELDER(S): Bob Booth & Mike Fiffik

LAY READER: Bob Booth

USHERS: Edie Krom & Ron Curcio

ACOLYTE: Dalaney Gard

SERVING NEXT WEEK:

ELDER(S): Cooper Blake & Dave Dille

LAY READER: Trish Young

USHERS: Ken Lindsey & Lynn Gunther

ACOLYTE: Juliette Schroeder

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Pre-Service – America the Beautiful

Welcome

Stand

Opening Hymn - I Need Thee Every Hour

Verse 1

I need Thee every hour
Most gracious Lord
No tender voice like Thine
Can peace afford

Chorus

I need Thee O I need Thee
Every hour I need Thee
O bless me now my Savior
I come to Thee

Verse 2

I need Thee every hour
Stay Thou near by
Temptations lose their pow'r

When Thou art nigh
(Chorus)

Verse 3

I need Thee every hour
In joy or pain
Come quickly and abide
Or life is vain
(Chorus)

Verse 4

I need Thee every hour
Most Holy One
O make me Thine indeed
Thou blessed Son
(Chorus)

Invocation

Matthew 28:19b; 18:20

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

C Amen.

Exhortation

Hebrews 10:22; Psalm 124:8; Psalm 32:5

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Confession of Sins

P Let us 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.

Absolution

[John 20:19–23]

P Almight 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.

Hymn of Praise - How Deep the Father's Love for Us

Verse 1

How deep the Father's love for us
How vast beyond all measure
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure
How great the pain of searing loss
The Father turns His face away
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory

Verse 2

Behold the Man upon a cross
My sin upon His shoulders
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers
It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life

Sit

I know that it is finished

Verse 3

I will not boast in anything
No gifts no pow'r no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection
Why should I gain from His reward
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom

Tag

Why should I gain from His reward
I cannot give an answer
But this I now with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom

Old Testament

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. ⁸If 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. ⁹But 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.”

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle Reading

Romans 13:1–10

¹Let 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 the same reason 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. ⁹The 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.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

Holy Gospel

Matthew 18:1–20

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

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” ²And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them ³and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will

never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

⁵“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, ⁶but 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! ⁸And 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. ⁹And 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. ¹¹For the Son of Man came to save the lost. ¹²What 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? ¹³And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. ¹⁴So 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. ¹⁶But 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. ¹⁷If 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. ¹⁸Truly, 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. ¹⁹Again 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. ²⁰For 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.

Sit

Children's Message

Hymn of the Day - Children of the Heavenly Father

LSB 725

Sermon

Lutheran Catechesis - Asking A Blessing

- P** *The children and members of the household shall go to the table reverently, fold their hands, and say:*
- C** **The eyes of all look to You, [O Lord,] and You give them their food at the proper time. You open Your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing. (Psalm 145:15–16)**
- P** *Then shall be said the Lord's Prayer and the following:*
- C** **Lord God, heavenly Father, bless us and these Your gifts which we receive from Your bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Stand

Nicene Creed

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.

Sit

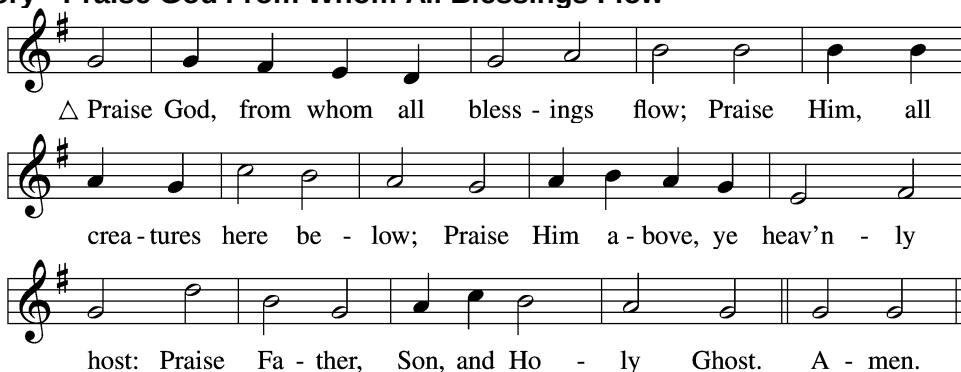
Offering

Meditation Song - Instrumental

Stand

Offertory - Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

LSB 805



△ Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise Him, all
crea - tures here be - low; Praise Him a - bove, ye heav'n - ly
host: Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637-1711
Tune: Trente quatre Pseaumes de David, 1551, Geneva, ed. Louis Bourgeois
Text and tune: Public domain

Prayer of the Church

[1 Timothy 2:1-4]

After each prayer, the response will be:

- P** Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** Hear our prayer.

Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

- 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.

The Words of Institution *Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25*

P 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."

Peace of the Lord

John 20:19

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Sit

Holy Communion

Distribution Hymns - Here Is Bread, Here Is Wine

Verse 1

Here is bread here is wine
 Christ is with us He is with us
 Break the bread drink the wine
 Christ is with us here

Chorus

In this bread there is healing
 In this cup there's life forever
 In this moment by the Spirit
 Christ is with us here

Verse 2

Here is grace here is peace
Christ is with us He is with us
Know His grace find His peace
Feast on Jesus here
(Chorus)

Verse 3

Here we are joined in one
Christ is with us He is with us
We'll proclaim 'til He comes
Jesus crucified
(Chorus)

Tag

Christ is with us here

Behold the Lamb**Verse 1**

Behold the Lamb who bears our sins
away
Slain for us and we remember
The promise made that all who come in
faith
Find forgiveness at the cross
So we share in this Bread of Life
And we drink of His sacrifice
As a sign of our bonds of peace
Around the table of the King

Verse 2

The body of our Saviour Jesus Christ
Torn for you eat and remember
The wounds that heal the death that
brings us life
Paid the price to make us one
So we share in this Bread of Life
And we drink of His sacrifice
As a sign of our bonds of love
Around the table of the King

Verse 3

The blood that cleanses every stain of
sin
Shed for you drink and remember
He drained death's cup that all may
enter in
To receive the life of God
So we share in this Bread of Life
And we drink of His sacrifice
As a sign of our bonds of grace
Around the table of the King

Verse 4

And so with thankfulness and faith we
rise
To respond and to remember
Our call to follow in the steps of Christ
As His body here on earth
As we share in His suffering
We proclaim Christ will come again
And we'll join in the feast of heaven
Around the table of the King

Communion Dismissal

- P** Now may this true body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,
strengthen and preserve you, in body and soul, unto life everlasting. Depart
in His peace ☩ and with joy.

C Amen.

Stand

Post-Communion Canticle - For the Bread Which You Have Broken

For the bread, which You have broken
For the wine, which You have poured
For the words, which You have spoken
Now we give You thanks, O Lord.
By the promise that You love us
By the gift of peace restored
By Your call to Heav'n above us
Hallow all our lives, O Lord

Post-Communion Prayer

P Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benediction

Numbers 6:24-26

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.

Closing Song - Where Charity and Love Prevail

LSB 845

Sit

Announcements

Memory Verse For The Week: Matthew 18:10-11 - 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. For the Son of Man came to save the lost.

Dismissal

- P** Go in peace and
C serve the Lord!

Acknowledgments

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Looking Ahead - Next Week's Verses:

Gen. 50:15-21; Psalm 103:1-12; Rom. 14:1-12; Matt. 18:21-35

This week we pray for:

- **NEW:** God's blessings on the marriage of Emily Marcellus and Michael Schildt on Saturday, September 5th.
- **NEW:** For the family and friends of Denise Bedel, who died in the faith. Comfort them with the hope and peace that comes from the promise of the resurrection victory in Jesus.
- For guidance, peace, and increased reliance on faith in God's provision at Ascension Lutheran Church during the transition of Pastor Thompson's departure and our vacancy.
- Thanksgiving for Aaron and Catherine Townley and the gift of new life given. Protect Catherine and baby Townley throughout her pregnancy through delivery.
- For protection for all who serve in our armed forces and especially for Joshua, Lynn Rodina's grandson, who is a marine deployed in the conflict in Iran.
- John Fagen, for strength and faith as he battles cancer.
- Kurt Dolph's continued cancer treatment and for a quick recovery and healing.
- Greg Horne, husband of Rosalie Horne, as he deals with physical and mental distresses. Grant him relief and healing from his afflictions.
- We give thanks for the progress Jim Obringer Sr. has made recovering from his stroke. We pray you continue to grant him a return to even more mobility.

- Shirley Waselko's continued cancer treatments to give good results and for continued faith in the midst of her suffering.
-

Church News & Announcements:

Happy Birthday: Ruth Holmes September 6th
Kurt Dolph September 8th
Michael Fantin September 8th

Prayer and Praise: There is no Prayer and Praise this Wednesday, September 9th. Prayer and Praise will resume Wednesday, September 16th.

New Members needed for Praise Team – With the departure of some of our long-time Praise Team members we need some new people to help serve the worship of the congregation on Sundays. Please prayerfully consider joining our Praise Team! If you have any questions, please contact Lisa or Emily Marcellus.

Bridal Shower: Women and girls of Ascension, help us celebrate the upcoming nuptials of Lisa Marcellus and Alex McMillan with a bridal shower on Saturday, September 26th, from 11:00 am to 2 pm in Fellowship Hall. Please RSVP in the narthex or to Vicki W at 724-816-0413 by Sept 6. Recipe cards are on the Connect Table to help build a recipe collection for Lisa & Alex - please take one or two and return them to the recipe box on the table when you are done! Their registry link can be found in the weekly email.

Recipes Wanted!: Please take home a few recipe cards from the Narthex (or bring a few of your own 4x6 cards from home) full of good recipes for the bride to be, Lisa Marcellus! Return them to the recipe card box in the narthex or bring them to her bridal shower.

Rally Day: Rally Day next Sunday, Sept 13th. Immediately following Divine service the kids will have a quick meet and greet with their teachers in the classrooms. Then there will be the annual rally day picnic outside. Signups will be in the Narthex for side dishes and/or desserts. Outreach committee will provide hotdogs and buns and drinks and condiments. Please join us for a fun time of food and fellowship to kick off the start of the new year!!

Children's Message: Interested in leading a Children's Message during a Sunday worship service? During our vacancy Cristen Fiffik will be coordinating volunteers to help with this very important part of our worship. Ideas that coincide with the weekly Gospel reading will be provided to you! Please contact Cristen if you are able to help. clfiffik66@gmail.com or 412-496-9118

Operation Christmas Child - THANK YOU to everyone who came down and packed a shoebox at our mini-packing party after the service Sunday. We were blessed to pack 50 shoeboxes (our goal was 40)! That's 50 children who otherwise would not have received a box. Every shoebox matters! A good time was had by all and we look forward to the regular packing activity in the fall. Thanks again! Bob Marcellus

This week at Ascension Lutheran Church:		
Sunday 09/06	Divine Service	9:00 AM
Monday	Church Office Closed	
Tuesday	Church Council Meeting	6:30 PM
Sunday 09/13	Divine Service Rally Day Picnic	9:00 AM 10:30 AM