

+The Divine Service+

The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost | September 6, 2026 | 9AM



“Watchers in the Night” by Thomas Blackshear II

The Place of Children in the Kingdom of Heaven

Saint Paul Ev. Lutheran Church—Preble, Indiana

A Congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

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Confession and Absolution

When the bells ring, stand and face the Crucifix.

Hymn of Invocation | 902 Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

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

C Amen.

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth.

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.



The Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 92:1–4; antiphon: v. 5

How great are your works, O LORD!

Your thoughts are very deep!

It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;
**to declare your steadfast love in the morning,
and your faithfulness by night,**
to the music of the lute and the harp,
to the melody of the lyre.

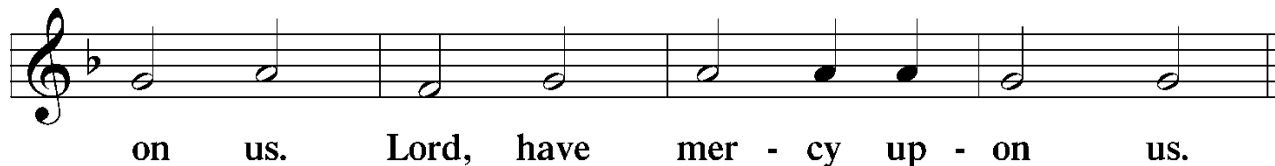
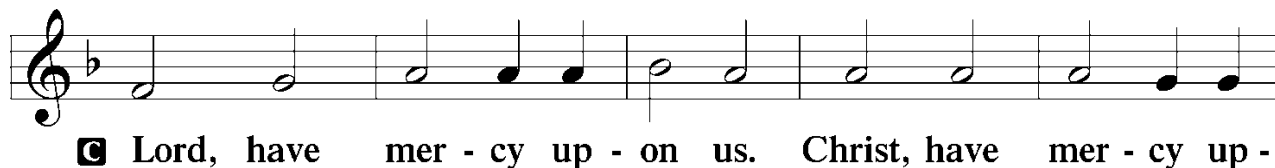
**For you, O LORD, have made me glad by your work;
at the works of your hands I sing for joy.**



How great are your works, O LORD!

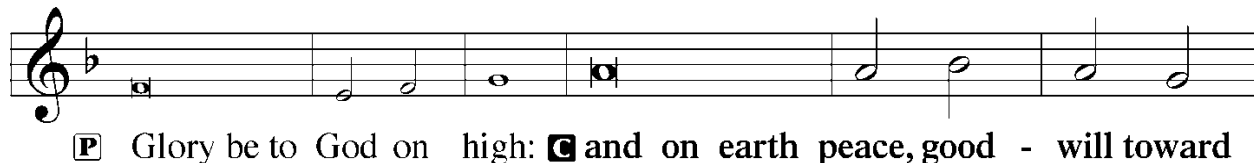
Your thoughts are very deep!

Kyrie



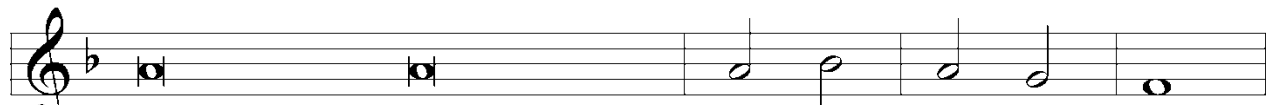
Gloria in Excelsis

LSB 187





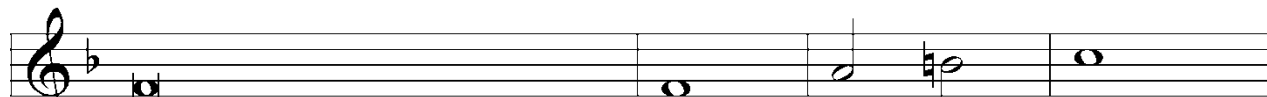
men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,



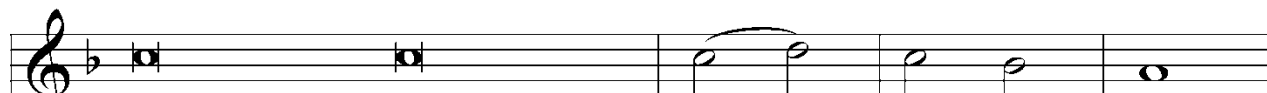
we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.



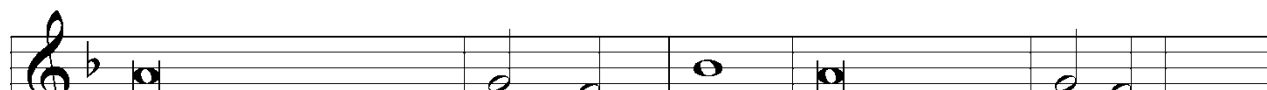
O Lord God, heav'n-ly King, God the Fa-ther Al - mighty.



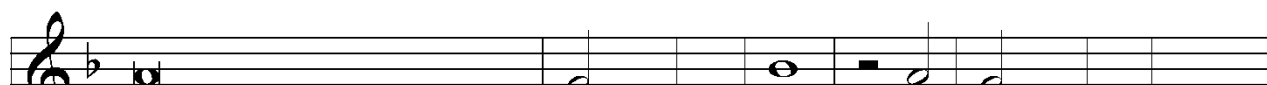
O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;



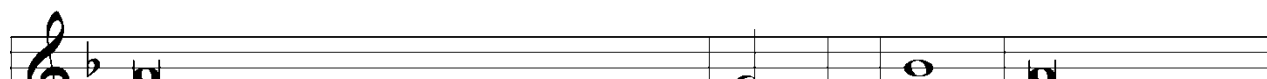
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,



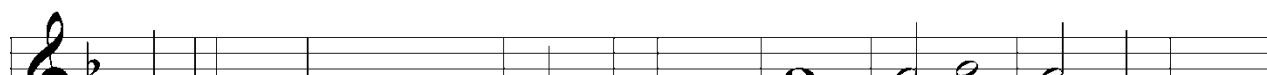
that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up - on us.



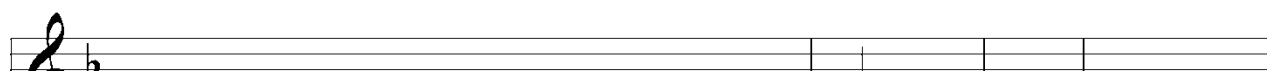
Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re-ceive our prayer.



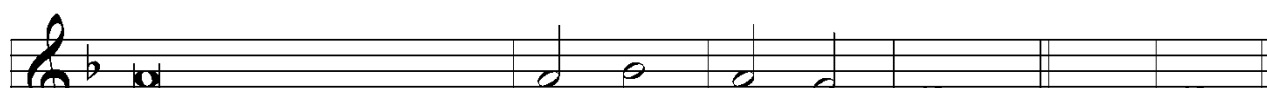
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up -



on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on - ly art the Lord.

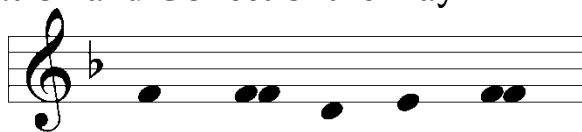


Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Ghost,



art most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

Salutation and Collect of the Day



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.

P Let us pray.

O God, from whom all good proceeds, grant to us, Your humble servants, Your holy inspiration, that we may set our minds on the things that are right and, by Your merciful guiding, accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

Sit

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. 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

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.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand. Face the cross as it enters the nave.

Alleluia and Verse

LSB 190

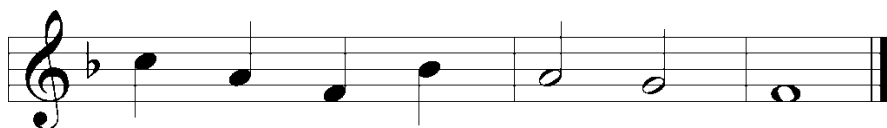


C Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 18:1–20

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



C Glo - ry be to Thee, 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.

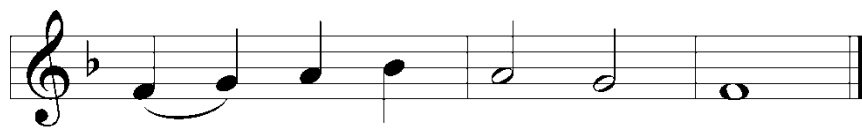
¹⁰“See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. ¹¹For the Son of Man came to save the lost. ¹²What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine 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 be to Thee, O Christ.

The Nicene Creed

back cover of the hymnal.

Sit

Hymn of the Day | 820 My Soul, Now Praise Your Maker

Sermon

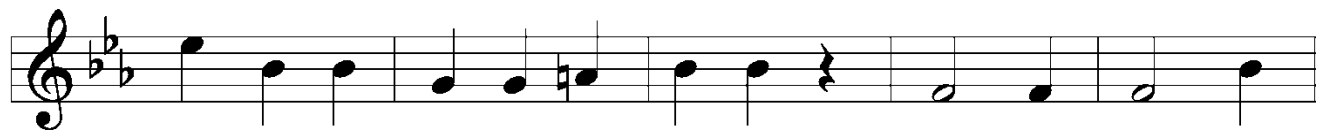
Stand

Offertory

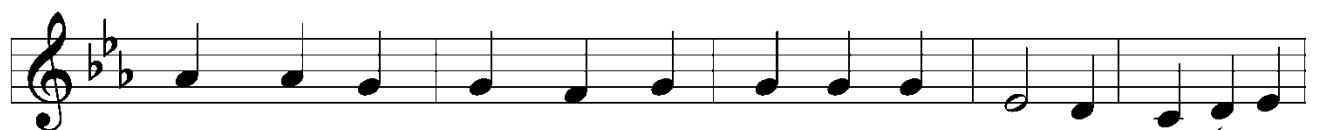
LSB 192



C Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -



new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -



way from Thy pres-ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it



from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -



Sit

The Offering

Stand

The Prayer of the Church

Service of the Sacrament

Preface

LSB 194



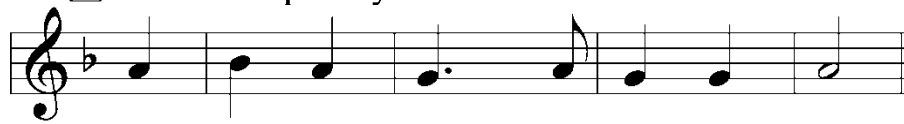
P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.



P Lift up your hearts.



C We lift them up un - to the Lord.



P Let us give thanks un - to the Lord, our God.



C It is meet and right so to do.

P It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who, having created all things, took on human flesh and was born of the virgin Mary. For our sake He died on the cross and rose from the dead to put an end to death, thus fulfilling Your will and gaining for You a holy people. Therefore with

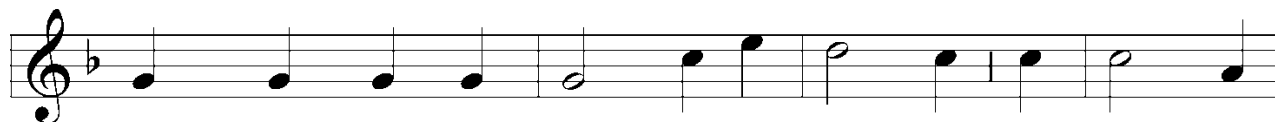
angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

LSB 195



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;



heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,



ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He,



bless - ed is He, bless - ed is He that com - eth in the name of the Lord.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Lord's Prayer

LSB 196

The Words of Our Lord

LSB 197

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."

Pax Domini

LSB 197



P The peace of the Lord be with you al - ways.



C A - men.

Agnus Dei

LSB 198



C O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the



world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that



tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us.



O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the



world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

Sit

Distribution

Holy Communion at St. Paul

Our congregation confesses the bodily presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar. To care for those who are about to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, the Altar is open to those baptized Christians who repent of their sins, have been catechized in the Faith, and are members of our congregation, another congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, or of another Church body with whom we are in fellowship. If you have not communed in a year or are visiting, please speak with one of our Pastors before communing today. Thank you.

Distribution Hymn | 579 The Law of God Is Good and Wise

Distribution Hymn | 614 "As Surely as I Live," God Said

Distribution Hymn | 725 Children of the Heavenly Father

Stand

The Dismissal

P The holy body and precious blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in the one true faith unto life +everlasting! Depart in peace.

C Amen.

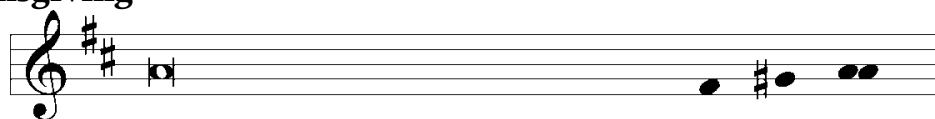
Nunc Dimittis

LSB 199

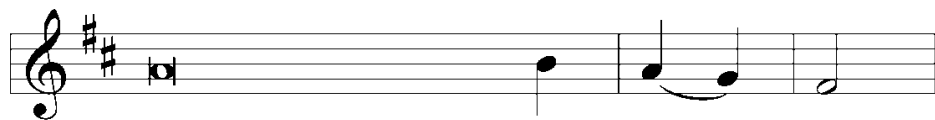
C Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac-
cord-ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,
which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,
a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy
peo-ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and
to the Son and to the Ho-ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ev - er shall be, world without end. A - men.

Thanksgiving

LSB 200



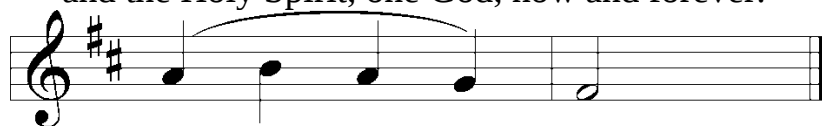
A O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,



C and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

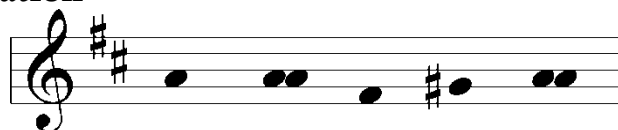
Post-Communion Collect

A 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 A - men.

Salutation



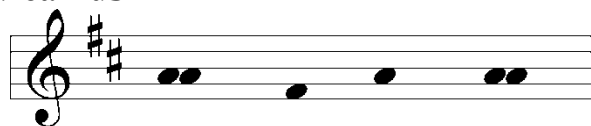
P The Lord be with you.



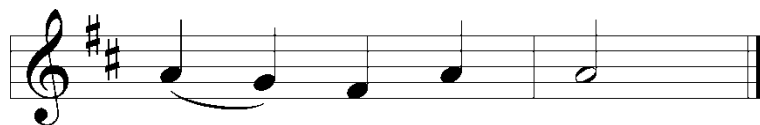
C And with thy spir - it.

Benedicamus

LSB 202



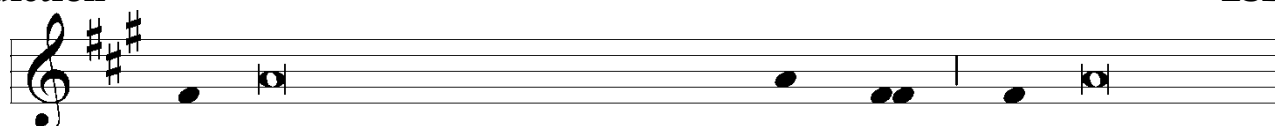
A Bless we the Lord.



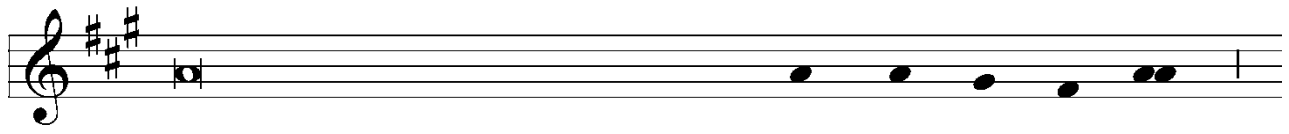
C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

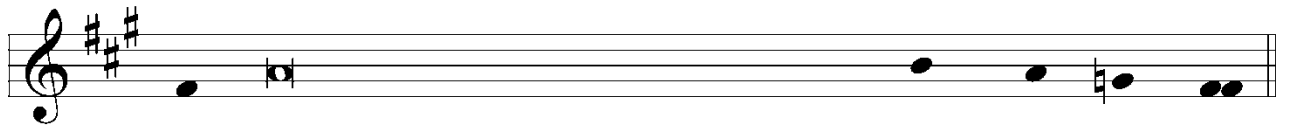
LSB 202



P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make



His face shine upon you and be gra - cious un - to you.



The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and I give you peace.



■ A-men, a-men, a - men.

Hymn to Depart | 731 O God, Forsake Me Not

Who Is the Greatest in The Kingdom of Heaven?

A Meditation on the Word of God | Matthew 18:1—20

In today's Gospel, our Lord shows us that in his kingdom, the model for greatness is a child.

Now first, we have to be clear what our Lord is not saying. He's not saying that children are great in his kingdom because of some kind of superior virtue they possess. Children are the greatest in the kingdom of Jesus, not because they are somehow more innocent than adults, or simpler, or less sinful.

Children are the greatest in Christ's kingdom because of their humility: "*whoever humbles himself like this child,*" Jesus says. And the word '*humble*' speaks to the total dependence of a child. Think of children, and especially the littlest children. They have no resume to speak of—no list of accomplishments to their name. And even more importantly, they have nothing to give to their parents in return for their love. They cannot work. They cannot earn a living. They cannot support themselves. They are totally dependent on their mother and their father for everything. And they live by simple trust in the love of their mother and father for every good thing, even though they have in no way merited or deserved that love for themselves.

Now there is the point of comparison. By setting up a little child as the greatest in his kingdom, Jesus is teaching us that his kingdom is not a kingdom of works, but of grace—not a kingdom where we enter by what we do, but a kingdom where the righteous live by the simple, childlike trust of the heart that looks to God for every good thing, that expects God's help in every trouble. Greatness in Jesus' kingdom means the humility of repentance, turning from sin and trusting in Christ our Savior for forgiveness.

On the one hand, humility means turning away from putting any trust in ourselves. Jesus even uses that word in the Gospel, ‘*turn*.’ He says, “unless you *turn* and become like children.” The word ‘*turn*’ is a word for repentance. It means stop trusting yourself. Stop looking to your own resources and strength to get by in this world, or to save yourself in the next. Realize who you are. Not as sophisticated and self sufficient as you think. In fact, you are helpless—not in control of things, lost like a sheep in Jesus’ little parable. But on the other hand turning means trusting in Jesus your Shepherd, looking to the cross where the blood was shed to satisfy the Law and win our forgiveness. And turning to Jesus means running to him for the forgiveness of sins which he so freely offers in the Absolution and the Holy Supper of his Body and Blood. This is what it is to be the children of God, and the greatest in Jesus’ kingdom.

And therefore, children born and unborn, are to be esteemed and honored in the Church.

And protected. With the ferociousness of a loving mother, defending her small children, Jesus in this morning’s Gospel issues some dire warnings to any who would hurt or harm children in any way. “Better for you,” he says, “to have a millstone hung around your neck and be drowned into the depth of the sea,” than do that. And all of this business about gouging out eyes, cutting off hands and feet, is saying the same thing. It would be better for you to lose one of your members than lead a little one into sin.

Jesus again, like a loving mother or father, is being protective and defensive toward the children. He wants to keep all children safe and secure. Which is why he goes on to talk about their guardian angels who see the face of his Father in heaven. Jesus sends the angels to guard and protect children from all harm and danger. And so we thank God for the ministry of the holy angels among us. And we pray for their continual presence in our lives, as Luther teaches us to pray, “Let your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me.”

Do you see how much Jesus loves children? How highly he regards them? And to drive that point home even further, he makes this beautiful Gospel promise in verse 5, “*Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me.*” That’s like what he says in Matthew 25, “*As you did it to one of the least of these, my brothers, you did it to me.*” To love a child is to love Christ. If you want to love Jesus, love his kids.

Jesus says, “*Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me.*” We all know what that phrase *in my name* means. That’s Baptism language. Baptism where the strong Name of the Triune God is put on us, branding and marking us as one of his own. Baptism, whereby we are received into the kingdom of Jesus and adopted into the family of the heavenly Father by grace. To receive a child in Jesus’ name is none other than to baptize her, and then to bring her back into the arms of Jesus again to hear his Word. Catechizing her in the faith. Teaching her to say her prayers. And even memorize the catechism and biblical texts. All of this is not much at all in the eyes of the world. You’ll never get praise from anyone for doing these things. But how noble is it in the sight of God! How precious it is to Jesus—there is no greater work than you parents can do, then bring their children to Jesus’ feet. Because to this work he has attached his command and promise: *let the children come to me. For my kingdom is of these.*

Announcements

St. Paul

+**We rejoice** with Alyssa Brune and Cole Coshow who will be married at St. Paul on Saturday, September 12th. The Church building is reserved for rehearsal and wedding 9/11 and 9/12.

+**Summer Schedule** for worship ends TODAY, Sunday, September 6th. This will be our last Sunday with only one service at 9AM. Next Sunday, September 13th, we will resume our regular schedule of two services at 8AM and 10:15. Sunday School and Bible Class will begin on Sunday, 9/13 at 9:15AM. Confirmation instruction will take place for our 6-8th grade non-Wyneken students after 2nd service. A brief meeting for all confirmands and their parents is requested after second service on September 13th to discuss expectations for confirmation.

+**Open House:** celebrating the 90th birthday of our sister in Christ, Barb Bulmahn, will be held at the Zion, Friedheim Family Life Center on Sunday, Sept. 27th from 2—5PM. All are invited to attend. Your presence and wishes are the only present Barb needs. Happy birthday Barb!

+The Endowment Committee meets before our October Voters meeting. If you have any **endowment requests**, please get them in to the Treasurer as soon as you can. Thank you.

+An **LBI representative** for St. Paul is still sought. Talk to Pr. Yeager if interested.

Wyneken

+Wyneken Class of 2028 is hosting a **golf outing** on Sunday, September 20th. Proceeds go to their Washington DC trip. \$75 per player; \$300 per foursome. Check in at 11:00 a.m. Shotgun start at 12:00 p.m. They are also looking for sponsors. Meal tickets only are \$12 each. For more information, contact a student from the class of 2028 or Troy Palacios 260-249-5291.

+**Spooktacular Halloween-Themed 5K Run/Walk.** Sat., Oct 10th at Wyneken. 0.5 Mile run for the kids. Race will be completed through cemetery, grass, and country road. Registration includes T-Shirt, snacks, and water. 5K--\$25; 0.5 mile run—free for 10 and under (\$10 if you want shirt). Race day registration is 3:30-4:15pm. Fun Run 4:30PM. 5K 5PM. Register at bit.ly/WMLSRUN. Must register by September 24th to receive a T-Shirt.

Community

SAVE THE DATE! A Red Cross Blood Drive has been scheduled for **Sunday, September 20**, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, Friedheim in their Family Life Center.

Do you want to schedule a time for you to give? Go to the following link, <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=zflc> and sign up or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767)! You can donate blood beginning at the age of 16. You can review the requirements to give by looking at the Red Cross website www.redcross.org. **Just a reminder that when you come to give blood, you MUST have a valid ID with you. Without an ID, you are not allowed to give blood (even if everyone there knows who you are!)** If you have any questions, please contact Wava Lichtle (260-701-

4360) or Dale Heckman (260-437-4424). The Red Cross is looking forward to having another blood drive at our facilities. It's a life-saving event!

+**Hope Clinic Annual Fundraising Banquets** are Wed September 23 at the Mirage, and Thurs September 24 at the First Mennonite Church, Berne. Doors open 6:15PM, dinner at 7PM. RSVP by September 9 online at hopeclinicfundraiser.net or call 260-223-6132 for tickets.

Prayer of the Church

- +**Those who rejoice:** Alyssa Brune and Cole Coshow on their upcoming wedding.
- +**Sick & Recovering:** Joy Hamilton, Troy Gerke.
- +**Our Wyneken School:** teachers, staff, students, childcare.
- +**Expectant mothers:** Kyndal Hall; Jamie Hemsoth; Taylor Selking.
- +**The Homebound:** Laurina Bulmahn, Marilyn Werling, Cindy Gallmeyer, Warren Scheumann, Anita Spiegel, Judy Teague (all at Woodcrest); David Schueler (Ossian Health); Don Haines (home).
- +**Birthdays 9/7—9/13.** Jared Butcher, Meg Todd, Scott Marbach, Ted Buuck, Sue Buuck, Kris Nussbaum, Gavin Pearson, Sydney Keane.

Acolyte

8/30 9AM Oliver Faurote

Attendance

Wednesday 8/26	7PM	8	Sunday 8/30	9AM	152
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Stewardship 8/23/26

Offering for the week: \$4,983.00	Online Offering: \$1,175.13	Total: \$6,158.13
Weekly Goal: \$7,667.00	Vs. YTD Goal: -\$8,550.31	

Weekly Calendar

Sunday, September 6	9AM	The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost—D.S. *LAST SUNDAY OF SUMMER SCHEDULE.
Wednesday, Sept. 9	7PM	Vespers
Saturday, Sept. 11-12		Brune/Coshow Wedding—Church reserved
Sunday, September 13	8AM	The Sixteenth Sun. after Pentecost—Divine Service
	9:15AM	Bible Class, Sunday School
	10:15AM	The Sixteenth Sun. after Pentecost—Office of Matins
	11:30AM	Confirmation Instruction (pre-meeting with parents)