

Welcome to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Building up God's people through His word for His world

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 27, 2026

Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel, the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. (See page 9 of this bulletin for the readings from Ezekiel and Paul's letter to the Philippians.) Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

We especially welcome our guests who are worshipping here today. What a privilege to greet you! If you have no church home in the area, we invite you to participate in the life and ministry of Good Shepherd. For information about our congregation, visit gslcva.org. Also, please fill out a Welcome card, which you'll find near the hymnals, and place it in the basket on the Welcome/resource table or hand it to an usher.

Our worship reflects the liturgical tradition of the Christian church. Holy Communion is celebrated on the first, third, and fifth Sundays at 8:00 and 11:00 a.m. Our informal worship service features contemporary music and is held in the Fellowship Hall at 11:00 a.m. on the second and fourth Sundays of the month, with communion celebrated on fourth Sundays.

To all worshippers: The presence of children in worship is a gift to the Body of Christ and a reminder that our congregation is growing. Remember that Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me." Please welcome our young ones and give their parents a smile of encouragement or a helping hand, if needed.

To the parents of young ones, here are a few suggestions for worshipping with your children: Relax! God put the wiggles and giggles in kids; don't feel that you have to suppress them in His house. All are welcome! Sit toward the front, where it is easier to see and hear what's going on. Quietly explain the parts of the worship service and actions of the pastor, ushers, communion assistants, etc. Sing the hymns and songs, pray, and voice the responses aloud. Children learn worshipful behavior by copying you. If you have to leave the worship service with your child or stand up and walk around the back of the sanctuary, feel free to do so, but please come back! And finally, if you so choose, . . .

You are welcome to use our nursery, as well as our parents' room next to the nursery, if your young ones need a break from the service. The Parents' Room is also a comfortable place where mothers may nurse their babies. The worship service is livestreamed to a monitor in the Parents' Room.

We offer Sunday School and a variety of Bible studies and spiritual growth opportunities for children, youth, and adults on Sunday mornings. All Sunday School classes meet at 9:30 a.m. See News and Announcements for class information.

Flowers and plants in our worship areas are supported by financial donations to the Flower Fund. These floral offerings beautify the church, uplift service participants, and remind us of God's good creation. You can find information about being a flower sponsor on the bulletin board near the Fellowship Hall and at gslcva.org/giving (look for the sponsorship form at the bottom of that page).

SUNDAY/PRAISE

GATHERING SONG "House of the Lord"

We worship the God who was
We worship the God who is
We worship the God who evermore will be
He opened the prison doors
He parted the raging sea
My God He holds the victory yeah

Chorus:

*There's joy in the house of the Lord
There's joy in the house of the Lord today
And we won't be quiet
We shout out Your praise
There's joy in the house of the Lord
Our God is surely in this place
And we won't be quiet
We shout out Your praise
Oh oh oh
We shout out Your praise*

We sing to the God who heals
We sing to the God who saves
We sing to the God who always
makes a way
'Cause He hung up on that cross
Then He rose up from that grave
My God's still rolling stones away

Chorus

*('Cause) We were the beggars
Now we're royalty
We were the prisoners
Now we're running free
We are forgiven accepted
Redeemed by His grace
Let the house of the Lord sing praise*

Chorus (Repeat)

"House of the Lord." Jonathan Smith, Phil Wickham. © 2020 Be Essential Songs; Cashagamble Jet Music; Phil Wickham Music; Simply Global Songs. CCLI #858354.

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP

SHARING OF GOD'S PEACE

SONG OF PRAISE "Glorious Day (Living He Loved Me)"

One day when heaven was filled with His
praises
One day when sin was as black as could be
Jesus came forth to be born of a virgin
Dwelt among men my example is He
The Word became flesh
And the light shined among us
His glory revealed

Chorus:

*Living He loved me dying He saved me
Buried He carried my sins far away
Rising He justified freely forever
One day He's coming
O glorious day (glorious day)*

One day the grave could conceal Him no
longer
One day the stone rolled away from the
door
Then He arose over death He had
conquered
Now is ascended my Lord evermore
Death could not hold Him
The grave could not keep Him
From rising again

Chorus

*One day the trumpet will sound for His
coming
One day the skies with His glories will shine*

Wonderful day my beloved one bringing
My Savior Jesus is mine

O glorious day glorious day
O glorious day

Chorus

"Glorious Day (Living He Loved Me)." John Wilbur Chapman, Mark Hall, Michael Bleecker. © 2009 Curb Songs; Be Essential Songs; My Refuge Music. CCLI #858354.

READING FROM GOD'S WORD

Psalm 25:1-9

P: To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

C: My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.

P: Let none who look to you be put to shame; rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

C: Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.

P: Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

C: Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.

P: Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.

C: You are gracious and upright, O LORD; therefore you teach sinners in your way.

P: You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.

READING FROM GOD'S WORD

Matthew 21:23-32

²³ When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴ Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why, then, did you not believe him?' ²⁶ But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸ "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹ He answered, 'I will not,' but later he changed his mind and went.

³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him."

KIDS' MESSAGE

"Yes or No? The Story of Two Sons"

Pastor James

RESPONSE SONG: "We Will Not Be Shaken"

*Chorus: For we trust in our God
And through His unfailing love
We will not be shaken
We will not be shaken
We will not be shaken
(repeat)*

Though the battle rages
We will stand in the fight
Though the armies rise up against us on
all sides
We will not be shaken
We will not be shaken
We will not be shaken

For in the hour of our darkest day
We will not tremble we won't be afraid
Hope is rising like the light of dawn
Our God Is for us He has overcome

Chorus (repeat)

All those against Him will fall
For our God is stronger
He can do all things
No higher name we can call
For Jesus is greater
We can do all things
(repeat)

Chorus (repeat)

"We Will Not Be Shaken." Ben Fielding, Bob Hartley, Bobby Strand, Brian Johnson, Chris Greely. © 2014 Hillsong Music Publishing Australia (Capitol CMG Publishing); Bethel Music Publishing. CCLI #858354.

MESSAGE

"By Whose Authority?"

Pastor James

MUSICAL REFLECTION

OFFERINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

Communication Director Jeff Donahue

Please take this opportunity to fill out the Welcome Card and hand it to one of the ushers or place it in the basket on the Welcome/resource table as you leave.

PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

After the pastor says "Lord, hear our prayer," we respond by singing:

Band: You hear us calling, You hear us calling, Abba Father
You hear us calling, You hear us calling, Abba Father

People: *Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

[We confess together] **God of grace and mercy, we confess that we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions; time and time again we have failed to love You with all that we have; we have failed to love our neighbors and those in need. Forgive the wrong we have done, and the good we have left undone. For our sins we deserve separation from you. But Lord, You are overflowing with mercy. Bring back to life within us the joy of Your saving grace; heal our brokenness, give light to our path, and rest to our souls. Give us the desire and the power to grow in Your image, through Jesus Christ, the Light of the world. Amen.**

COMMUNION

Some notes about Holy Communion

We believe that Jesus Christ is truly present in the bread and wine, according to His Word: “This is My body ... this is My blood” (Matthew 26:26–27), and that in this sacrament our Lord gives us forgiveness of our sins, unity with God, and strength for a life of service.

We invite all baptized Christians who have received their First Communion, examined themselves, acknowledge the true body and blood of Jesus Christ in the sacrament for the forgiveness of their sins, and sincerely seek to amend their lives to join us in this holy meal.

The cups in the innermost circle of the communion tray contain juice for those who do not wish to drink wine.

COMMUNION SONG “Who You Say I Am”

Who am I that the highest King
Would welcome me
I was lost but He brought me in
Oh His love for me
Oh His love for me

Chorus 1:

*Who the Son sets free
Oh is free indeed
I'm a child of God
Yes I am*

Free at last
He has ransomed me
His grace runs deep
While I was a slave to sin
Jesus died for me
Yes He died for me

Chorus 1

Chorus 2:

*In my Father's house
There's a place for me
I'm a child of God
Yes I am*

I am chosen not forsaken
I am who You say I am
You are for me not against me
I am who You say I am
(Repeat)

I am who You say I am

Chorus 1

Chorus 2 (sing 2x)

BLESSING & SENDING

SENDING SONG

"Forever"

Give thanks to the Lord
Our God and King
His love endures forever
For He is good, He is above all things
His love endures forever
Sing praise, sing praise

With a mighty hand
And outstretched arm
His love endures forever
For the life that's been reborn
His love endures forever

Pre-chorus:

Sing praise, sing praise

Sing praise, sing praise

Chorus:

Forever God is faithful

Forever God is strong

Forever God is with us

Forever

From the rising to the setting sun
His love endures forever
By the grace of God
We will carry on
His love endures forever

Pre-chorus

Chorus (2x)

Sing praise, sing praise

Sing praise, sing praise

Oh, sing praise, sing praise

Sing praise, sing praise

Chorus

Chorus 2:

Forever You are faithful

Forever You are strong

Forever You are with us

Forever

Forever

"Forever." CCLI Song # 3148428 Chris Tomlin © 2001 Rising Springs Music; Vamos Publishing; worshiptogether.com songs CCLI License # 858354

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Instagram.com/gslcva

Connect with us by liking our Facebook page and following us on Instagram. Find them by searching @gslcva on those platforms. We also encourage you to subscribe to our YouTube channel and follow us on Vimeo so that you don't miss any of our virtual services, kids' message, and more. Questions? Contact Communications Director Jeff Donahue, jeff@gslcva.org

Serving Today	
Worship Leader	Pastor James
Preacher	Pastor James
Ushers	Jim Ellis (lead) Marty Gurtz
Greeter	Bill Ciesar (door) Deb Ciesar (door)
Guest Welcome	David Johns Jeannie Johns
Engagement	Heidi Cooper
Praise Team	Tara Planeta (violin) MaryAnn Perkel (cello) Peter Revell (bass) Steve Mutter (guitar) Paul Jung (drums) Jackie Huffman (vocals) Matt Hardy (leader; piano)
Altar Care	Shanna Brown
Projectionist	Jen Pelletier
Audio Engineer	Scott Shepherd
Livestream Manager	Adam Sherman
Closer	Martin Farley
Kitchen Cleanup	*

* = unfilled as of September 23

Be a part of the SUNDAY/PRAISE community by serving in our worship gatherings as greeters, ushers, singers, instrumentalists, AV support, and others. Interested? Contact us by emailing gslc@gslcva.org or calling 703-437-5020.

Board of Servant Leaders

Tony Esse, chair
Paul Devine, vice-chair
John Purtilo, secretary

Rob Fekete
Andrew Otterbacher
Dan Pelletier
Bernie Schoch

Core Ministry Areas

Worship

Team Leaders: Georgia Thorstenson and Julie Schorfheide; Staff Liaison: Pastor Johann

The Worship Team encompasses music, seasonal celebrations, arts, worship schedule, Sanctuary Choir (Anne Lee), Handbell Choir (Anne Lee), traditional worship, and contemporary worship (Matt Hardy), the worship spaces, and support personnel (e.g., ushers, greeters, acolytes).

Discipleship

Team Leader: Pastor James

The Discipleship Team oversees adult education, Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, children's ministry (Michelle Tenhaeff), and youth ministry (Holly Vanderhoof).

Parish Life

Team Leader: Brian Cors; Staff Liaison: Heidi Cooper

The Parish Life Team helps foster our community through Life Groups, member engagement, fellowship events, new member inclusion, concerts, public events, picnics, and intergenerational events, and reaches out to guests who worship at Good Shepherd.

Mission

Team Leader: Pastor Johann

Through this core ministry area, Good Shepherd supports a variety of mission efforts: financial and prayerful partnering with missionaries, worldwide and local (Randy and Melanie Stockman); synod/district, social ministry, and community service (Holly Vanderhoof); evangelism, publicity, media, and social media (Jeff Donahue).

Congregational Care and Nurture

Team Leader: June McGurn; Staff Liaison: Pastor Johann

The Congregational Care and Nurture Team helps support the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health of the congregation through literature, programs, and opportunities to serve others at Good Shepherd. This ministry's volunteers help in many ways: at memorial services and receptions; through member care visits and transportation; by sending cards for life events; and by arranging meals ("Take Them a Meal" team) for the sick and infirm, for their families, and for families with newborns.

Administration

Team Leader: Pastor Johann

This team is in charge of property and contracts (Roger Thorstenson), financing the mission (Mike DeWan), stewardship (Don Kidwell), human resources/personnel (Matt Frankner), communications (Jeff Donahue), and technology (Gary Budzier).

Good Shepherd's Staff

Jotham Johann, Senior Pastor

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Georgia Thorstenson, Business Manager

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Heidi Cooper, Director of Engagement

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Michele Clair, Administrative Assistant

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Holly Vanderhoof, Community Service Coordinator & Youth Ministry Director

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Matt Hardy, Praise Band Director & Video Production Specialist

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Michelle Tenhaeff, Children's Ministry Coordinator

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Julie Schorfheide, Communications Assistant

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Reid Otterbacher, Communications Assistant

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Chloe Vanderhoof, Social Media Assistant

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Please note that the church office is closed on Mondays.

Good Shepherd is a member congregation of the Southeastern District
of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

ADDITIONAL READINGS FOR THIS WEEK FROM GOD'S WORD

From the Old Testament

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

¹ The word of the Lord came to me: ² What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? ³ As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴ Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins who shall die.

²⁵ Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶ When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed, they shall die.

²⁷ Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸ Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰ Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹ Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

From the New Testament

Philippians 2:1-13

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

¹ If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, ⁸ he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name that is above every other name, ¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.