



AUGUST 9, 2026 | 9:00 AM | ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE OR WHERE YOU ARE ON
LIFE'S JOURNEY, YOU'RE WELCOME HERE!

Technical Directors: Jody Meyer, Corey Dornbrack
Organist: Darlene Johnson
Music Director: Tiffany Bucheger
Faith Formation Director: Kari Weiland

Sunday School is on break for the summer. Children are welcome and valued in worship with all of us.

To encourage children to participate in worship, please use the bookmarks available to mark the pages for today's hymns. Go through the bulletin with your children and circle the things in which they might be interested (Children's time, hymns, helping with the offering). Mark the bulletin with symbols for when it is time to be quiet and listen, join in the hymn, read a prayer aloud, etc.

Busy Bags are available in the church entryway. Quite often, children can absorb what is going on in church if their hands are occupied and their minds do not have to focus so much on "behaving." It takes a great deal of energy and concentration for a child to stay quiet and still. Please use the busy bags to occupy their hands so they are free to listen. Nudge them when it is time for a hymn and ask them to sing along with you. Encourage them to come forward for the *Time for All Ages* and to participate in other ways during the service.

POINTS TO PONDER PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

A.A. Milne, 20th century

"Piglet sidled up to Pooh from behind. 'Pooh?' he whispered.

'Yes, Piglet?' 'Nothing,' said Piglet, taking Pooh's hand. 'I just wanted to be sure of you.'"

Quick and Easy Electronic Giving!!

To give an offering to the church, text **"SAINTSTEPHENS" to 73256** to give using your mobile device. This number will never send unsolicited texts to you. To cancel further messages, text STOP. If you need assistance with text giving, text HELP. Standard text message and data rates may apply. **OR Scan the QR Code** to be connected to our website.



SOMETHING TO INSPIRE

GATHERING MUSIC

All Belong Here (audio only)
Dream God's Dream (audio only)

WELCOME

PRELUDE

GREETING AND INVOCATION

The love of God, the creator of all that is, the peace of Christ who calms the storms of life and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit who calls us into community, be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray: ... through us for your glory. Amen.

* CALL TO WORSHIP (Inspired by Psalm 105)

One: O give thanks to the Holy One; call on God's name

Many: Make known God's deeds among the peoples.

One: Sing of the Holy One's abiding love, grace, compassion, and justice

Many: Rejoice in the God's redemptive power

One: Seek the Holy One's presence, strength, and wisdom

Many: Remember God's wondrous works. Praise the Holy One!

* PRAISE HYMN

"Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult"

#337

* PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

Gracious and eternal God, we, like Jacob, struggle when confronted with hard things. We use avoidance to shield us from acknowledging and correcting the wrongs we have done and continue to perpetuate.

We, like Joseph, fail to consider the impact we have on others and how we contribute to making life better or worse for those around us. We, like those jealous siblings, attempt to find our own way and create our own schemes rather than trusting in your love that knows no favorites and embraces us all. Help us to shift our attitude and behaviors toward accountability, reconciliation, and love. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE

...Be made new in Christ Jesus.

PASSING THE PEACE

The Peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

A TIME FOR ALL AGES

A LESSON FROM TORAH

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28

Jacob settled in the land where his father had lived as an alien, the land of Canaan. This is the story of the family of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was shepherding the flock with his brothers; he was a helper to the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he had made him a long robe with sleeves. But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him.

Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." He answered, "Here I am." So he said to him, "Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock; and bring word back to me." So he sent him from the valley of Hebron.

He came to Shechem, and a man found him wandering in the fields; the man asked him, "What are you seeking?" "I am seeking my brothers," he said; "tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock." The man said, "They have gone away, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan. They saw him from a distance, and before he came near to them, they conspired to kill him. They said to one another, "Here comes this dreamer. Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; then we shall say that a wild animal has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams." But when Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, "Let us not take his life." Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but lay no hand on him"—that he might rescue him out of their hand and restore him to his father. So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves that he wore; and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

Then they sat down to eat; and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balm, and resin, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers agreed. When some Midianite traders passed by, they drew Joseph up, lifting him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

THE GOOD NEWS

Matthew 14:22-33

Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. And early in the morning he came

walking towards them on the lake. But when the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."

Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came towards Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

This is the good news. In this truth we find eternal life.
Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL
... God in your mercy,
Hear our prayers.

LORD'S PRAYER

MISSION FOCUS

Blue Jay Nest

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

OFFERTORY

* PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS *"Take My Gifts"* #381

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Giver of perfect gifts, refine these offerings and our hearts so that they may bear fruit. Bless each of us with the joy of gift giving and help us to know the good that our generosity lends to the world in your Holy and Precious Name. Amen.

ORDER FOR COMMUNION

* INVITATION

* COMMUNION HYMN *"Touch that Soothes and Heals"* Next Pg

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953

Music: Gregg DeMey, b. 1972

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1 Touch that soothes and heals the hurt - ing, hands that
 2 Feed the hun - gry, clothe the na - ked, vis - it
 3 Love and serve with - out dis - tinc - tion all earth's
 4 Hands that beck - on lit - tle chil - dren, bind a

break a loaf of bread; steps that walk be - side the
 ones in need of care, give the home - less warmth and
 peo - ple, first and least. Know with - in each act of
 wound, pre - pare a meal, feet that rush to share good

wea - ry, bear - ing bur - dens in their stead:
 shel - ter: Christ will find a wel - come there.
 kind - ness hope and whole - ness are in - creased.
 tid - ings, Christ a - ris - en, still re - veal.

Refrain

"See my hands and feet," said Je - sus, love a - ris - en from the
 grave. "Be my hands and feet," said Je - sus, "live as
 ones I died to save."

* PREFACE TO THE COMMUNION PRAYER

As many individual grains are milled together into one flour
 and one loaf is baked, and as many individual grapes are pressed together
 and flow into one wine,

**So shall we be incorporated together in love,
 for the sake of Christ our Savior,
 who loves us and calls us to show forth his love in word and deed.**

COMMUNION PRAYER

PRAYERS OF INSTITUTION AND CONSECRATION

PROCLAIMING THE MYSTERY OF FAITH

Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

Broken Body of Christ

video

*(The inner ring of cups contains white grape juice; 2 outer rings contain red wine.
Please use the bowls on either side to dispose of your used cups)*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Minister: What is your only comfort in life and in death?

**That I belong—body and soul, in life and death—
not to myself but to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ,
who at the cost of his own blood has fully paid for my sins.
By his Holy Spirit he assures me of eternal life
and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready
from now on to live for him. Amen.**

—Question 1, Heidelberg Catechism, adapt.

* CLOSING HYMN

“Leaning on the Everlasting Arms”

#560

* BENEDICTION

May the God who loves you
Give you the strength and compassion
To love our neighbors tangibly
To protect the vulnerable, marginalized, and threatened
To make space for the stranger
To embrace our siblings
Go, in peace, to redeem the pain of the world
Through ordinary and extraordinary acts of love and hope
Thanks be to God!

RESPONSE

“May the God of Hope Go With Us”

Next Pg

Words: Alvin Schutmaat, 1921-1988, alt.

Music: Argentine folk melody

Public Domain

POSTLUDE

Portions of today’s service from: ***Lived as an Alien: Service Prayers for the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost Year A*** was written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ. Used by permission through Worship Ways, United Church of Christ.

May the God of Hope Go with Us

Dios de la esperanza



¡Dios de la es - pe - ran - za, da - nos go - zo y paz!
May the God of hope go with us ev - 'ry day,



Al mun - do en cri - sis, ha - bla tu ver - dad.
to a world in need with news of joy and peace.



Dios de la jus - ti - cia, mán - da - nos tu luz,
May the God of jus - tice speed us on our way,



luz y es - pe - ran - za en la os - cu - ri - dad.
bring - ing light and hope to ev - 'ry land and race.



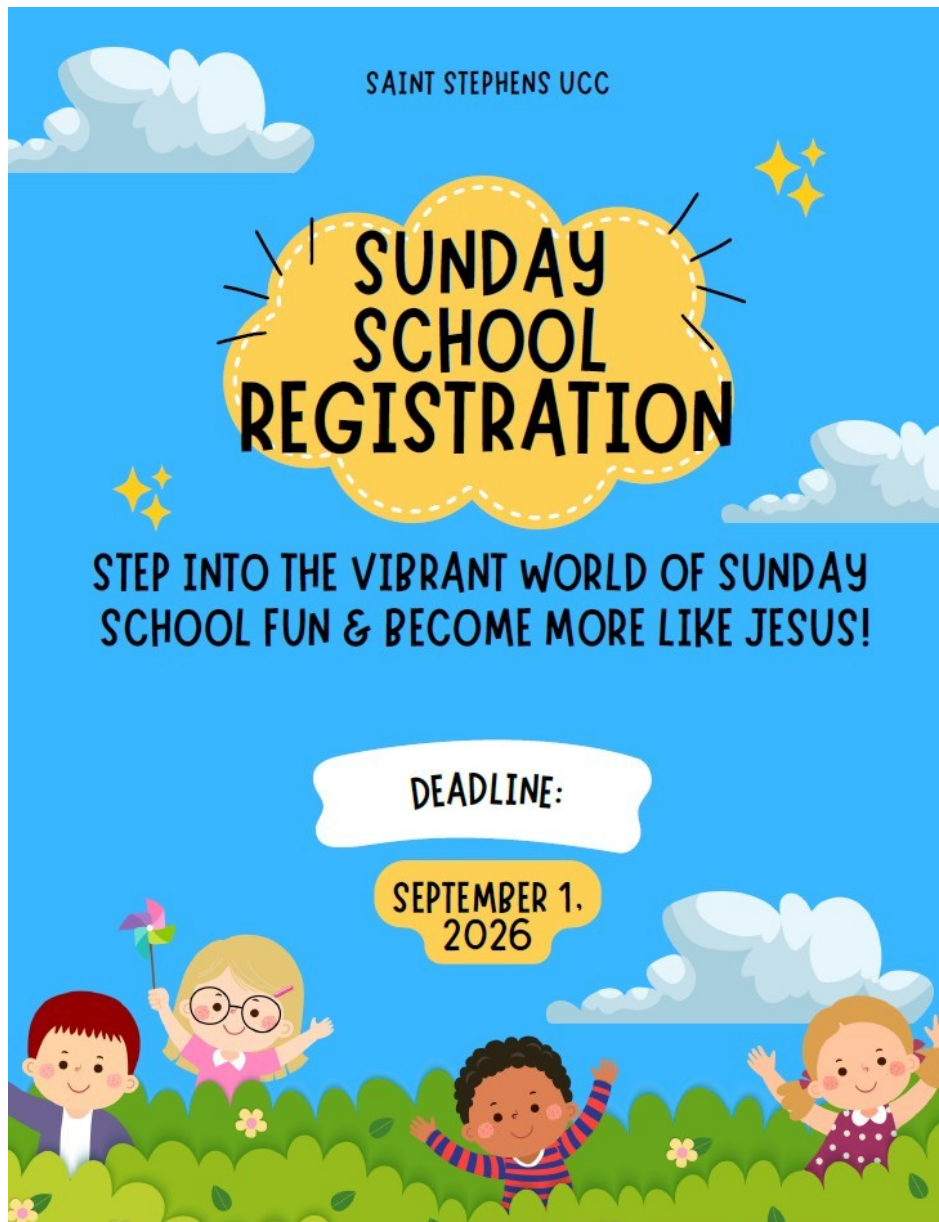
O - re - mos por la paz, can - te - mos
Pray - ing, let us work for peace; sing - ing, share our



de tu a - mor. Lu - che - mos por la paz,
joy with all; work - ing for a world that's new,



fie - les a ti, Se - ñor.
faith - ful when we hear Christ's call.



**Registration forms for this upcoming Sunday School Year
are now available!**

THANK YOU!

Musicians today are Terry Krueger and Darlene Johnson.

Radio Ministry is sponsored in memory of Jon's brother, Bruce Robinson, on his August 17 birthday, from Jon & Gerri Robinson.

Livestream is sponsored in memory of Grandparents Edna & Harold Fausch, from the Harlan Fausch Family.

Technical Directors: Jody Meyer, Corey Dornbrack

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TAKING THE LESSONS HOME

The Gospel story today gives us a good opportunity to talk about fear. You might ask your children or think about yourself and ask, “What are you most afraid of?” Use these thoughts to develop one or two petitions for prayers.

Ask God to give you the courage to work through your fears, not to suppress them or ignore them. How can your fears help you understand others or increase your empathy?

Ask your children or yourself how you know God is with them (you) through those times. How is God present in silence, story, through others or in their own hearts and minds? Close your eyes and imagine Jesus’ outstretched hand to save us. What is he saying?

Which is the better idea—to step out into the storm alone or stay with the other believers in the boat? How can you rely on others when you are afraid or anxious? These are all good conversations to have with children during calmer moments so that they have some lessons to rely on when a storm comes.

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