

SUNDAY WORSHIP | LECTIONARY 17

JULY 26, 2026



ST. PAUL'S

Evangelical Lutheran Church

WELCOME

Welcome! We are glad you are joining our community of faith for worship today. Whether you are a long-time Lutheran, or you come from another Christian tradition, or you're wandering or wondering about faith and the church, you are welcome to participate in worship in whatever ways are comfortable for you. If you are new to St. Paul's you can request more information on our web site contact page here:

www.stpaulsbrenham.org/contact

Our worship liturgy is rooted in the ancient church's practice of gathering on Sundays to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus through hearing God's Word and sharing the communion meal in the presence of Christ. We welcome all baptized Christians to receive communion. Children who are communing in other churches are invited to commune here. All who are not receiving are invited to come forward for a blessing—you may indicate you want a blessing by holding your hands together or crossing your arms in front of you.

This bulletin is a helpful guide to our worship liturgy, as are ushers and friendly people gathered here with you to worship God together.

ST. PAUL'S STAFF

Michael Coffey	Lead Pastor
Donna Krueger	Pastor of Care Ministry
Diane Garrett	Organist
Larry Smith	Choir Director
Dr. Sarah Burke	Director of Contemporary Music
Lisa Eben	Financial Director
Thomas Johnson	Communications Coordinator
Anne Briggs	Membership Coordinator
Sarah Zwahr	Director of Youth and Family
Julie Guiberteau	Media Technician
Kay Domel	Director of Christian Day School

CONTACT US

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*St. Paul's is a congregation of
the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
Learn more at www.elca.org*

LECTIONARY 17 A

As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!

HEALING PRAYER

Once a month we offer healing prayer, a ministry that has been a part of the church's practice since ancient times. The early church described Jesus as the Great Physician, who is both the doctor and the medicine, giving the remedy of himself to those with whom he is in relationship. In the completeness of Christ's nature, including both humanity and divinity, Jesus enacts for us both physical and spiritual healing. Those who wish to receive healing prayer with laying on of hands and anointing with oil may come to the altar rail at any time during the communion distribution.

OFFERING

Offering plates are on the welcome table in the narthex. Feel free to leave your offering there. The offering will be presented during the worship liturgy. You can also make an offering online at www.stpaulsbrenham.org/give

FIRST AID

A First Aid Kit and AED (defibrillator) are located in the closet of the usher room in the Narthex.

OUR MISSION

Together in Jesus Christ, we are freed by grace to live faithfully, witness boldly, and serve joyfully.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Aria Charles Callahan

SOUNDING OF THE BELL

WELCOME

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Remembering that we are members of the body of Christ,
let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, holy and gracious God,
for you created the waters of the earth:
wide oceans, rushing streams, clear lakes, mighty rivers.

You led your people through the sea and called them to life in covenant with you.
Your Son was baptized in the river Jordan to begin his mission among us.
You pour out your Holy Spirit to renew the face of the earth.

Through this water remind us of the gift of baptism.
Renew us in your promise so that we may serve this world in all its need;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Almighty God,
who gives us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit
and forgives us all our sins,
strengthen us in all goodness
and by the power of the Holy Spirit
keep us in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

GATHERING SONG

ELW 771 *God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens*

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

Leader



HYMN OF PRAISE

1. Many and great, O God, are your works,
maker of earth and sky.
Your hands have set the heavens with stars;
your fingers spread the mountains and plains.
Lo, at your word the waters were formed;
deep seas obey your voice.

ELW 837 *Many and Great, O God*

2. Grant unto us communion with you,
O Star-abiding One.
Come unto us and dwell with us;
with you are found the gifts of life.
Bless us with life that has no end,
eternal life with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Please be seated.

WORD

FIRST READING

1 Kings 3:5-12

Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people well.

⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I should give you.” ⁶ And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷ And now, O LORD

my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this

great people of yours?”

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this.

¹¹ God said to him, “Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding

to discern what is right, ¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you.”

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalm 119:129-136

The psalm is sung responsively.

¹²⁹ Your de-^l crees are wonderful;
therefore I obey them with ^l all my heart.

¹³⁰ **When your word is opened ^l it gives light;
it gives understanding ^l to the simple.**

¹³¹ I open my ^l mouth and pant
because I long for ^l your commandments.

¹³² **Turn to me and be gra-^l cious to me,
as you always do to those who ^l love your name.**

¹³³ Order my footsteps ^l in your word;
let no iniquity have dominion ^l over me.

¹³⁴ **Rescue me from those ^l who oppress me,
and I will keep ^l your commandments.**

¹³⁵ Let your face shine up-^l on your servant
and teach ^l me your statutes.

¹³⁶ **My eyes shed ^l streams of tears,
because people do not ^l keep your teaching.**

SECOND READING

Romans 8:26-39

These words celebrate the depth of God's actions for us. Through Christ's death for us and the activity of the Spirit praying for us, we are fused to God's love poured out in Jesus Christ. Nothing, not even death itself, is able to separate us from such incredible divine love.

²⁶ The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family.

³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God,

who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword?

³⁶ As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able for the Gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW 172 *Halle, Halle, Hallelujah*



GOSPEL

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

³¹ [Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

³³ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴ “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great

value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind;

⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹ “Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵² And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**
Please be seated.

SERMON

Pastor Michael Coffey

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW 793 *Be Thou My Vision*

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Trusting you receive all our prayers, we commend our spoken and unspoken prayers to you,
O God, through Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

Greet one another with the peace of Christ. After the Peace, please be seated.

(10:30) WELCOME OF NEW MEMBERS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEAL

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

Offering plates are on the welcome table in the narthex before and after the service.

MUSICAL OFFERING

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us A. D. Miller

OFFERING PRAYER

Loving God

we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you
and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. Amen.

DIALOGUE AND PREFACE

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW 191 *Holy, Holy, Holy*

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and

might; heav - en and earth are filled with your

glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Bless - ed is the one who comes in your name. Ho -

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

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, you alone are holy,
you alone are God.

The universe declares your praise:
beyond the stars; beneath the sea;
within each cell; with every breath.

We praise you, O God.

Generations bless your faithfulness:
through the water; by night and day;
across the wilderness; out of exile;
into the future.

We bless you, O God.

We give you thanks for your dear Son:
at the heart of human life;
near to those who suffer; beside the sinner;
among the poor; with us now.

We thank you, O God.

In the night in which he was betrayed...

Remembering his love for us on the way,
at the table, and to the end,
we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We pray for the gift of your Spirit:
in our gathering; within this meal;
among your people; throughout the world.

Blessing, praise, and thanks to you, holy God,
through Christ Jesus, by your Spirit,
in your church, without end.

Amen.

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.**

INVITATION

We welcome all baptized Christians to receive communion. Children who are communing in other churches are invited to commune here. All who are not receiving are invited to come forward for a blessing—you may indicate you want a blessing by holding your hands together or crossing your arms in front of you. Please follow the guidance from the ushers. Gluten-free wafers are available on request.

*Wine is red; grape juice is white. Those unable to come forward,
remain seated and communion will be brought to you.*

LAMB OF GOD

Now the Feast and Celebration

Marty Haugen

Congregation: *Congregation or Assistant:*



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
you break the chains of ha - tred and
you are the way of jus - tice and
you are the way of mer - cy and

Congregation:



world: have mer - cy on us, mer - cy on us,
fear:
peace:
love.

Final Stanza

Congregation or Assistant:



mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you

Congregation:



take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace,



grant us peace, grant us peace.

HEALING PRAYER

Anyone seeking healing in body, mind, or soul may come to the altar rail during the communion distribution for healing prayer with laying on of hands and anointing with oil.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

Music

For the Beauty of the Earth arr. C. Duncan

Song

ELW 483 *Here Is Bread*

Please stand as you are able.

TABLE BLESSING

Response: **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Response: **Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Love others with the love you have received. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

God of Grace Paul Manz

GOSPEL MESSAGE

It's the Small Things

Children like to collect things: rocks, sticks, and more. Adults tend to pretend-love the items that are brought to them: "Oh, how beautiful!" "Oh, that's a good one." Children, encouraged, continue their collections, finding the smallest of things and displaying them like they are the most valuable items in the world.

Jesus' parables in today's gospel reading teach the disciples about things that are so small they are often overlooked: a mustard seed, a little bit of yeast, a tiny pearl, and even a net that is quite small until it is filled with fish. These little things in his parables are treasures important for understanding the reign of God. Adults tend to overlook the small things while seeking larger things, heavier things, shinier things. We walk right past the tiny flower in the crack of a sidewalk, which once would have caught our eye. One pearl? A full necklace is better. A shrub that provides creatures a home? It's now in an inconvenient place.

But Jesus teaches that in God's reign all things, large and small, matter. All people matter. It is a wise disciple who recognizes this. Even King Solomon, with all his wealth, prayed for wisdom. Wisdom helps us see more clearly and begin to understand the depth of God's grace.

And that grace Jesus displayed immediately. "Have you understood all this?" he asked. The disciples answered simply, "Yes" (Matthew 13:51). What a bold answer! They were too worried to admit they did not understand. A little yeast, though, goes a long way. Jesus knew this. Each parable would build on another until the disciples understood the entire collection.

For us today, understanding God's grace takes study, prayers for wisdom, and walking the path while looking for the small things that matter. The reign of God is like a rose among a bramble bush? A child's picture of their home? However you visualize it, it is a treasure to cherish and to share.

COMMEMORATIONS

Johann Sebastian Bach, died 1750; Heinrich Schütz, died 1672;

George Frederick Handel, died 1759; musicians

Tuesday, July 28, 2026

These three German-born musicians have done much to enrich the life of the church. Schütz was an early master who focused on settings of biblical texts. Bach wrote over 300 cantatas along with works for organ and instrumental pieces, and has been called the "fifth evangelist" for the way he proclaimed the gospel in music. Handel's great work, *Messiah*, is a setting of scriptural texts.

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus of Bethany

Wednesday, July 29, 2026

Friends of Jesus, Mary and Martha are remembered for the hospitality of their home that they offered him—Martha focused on serving their guest, and Mary on listening to him. Their brother Lazarus was raised from the dead as a sign of the greater resurrection to come.

Olaf, King of Norway, martyr, died 1030

Wednesday, July 29, 2026

Considered the patron saint of Norway, Olaf went from a life of piracy to becoming Christian and declaring himself king of Norway. He revised the laws and tried to administer them fairly. Driven from Norway in a rebellion, he was killed in battle trying to regain his kingdom.