



FIRST LUTHERAN
CHURCH AND SCHOOL

**For I take no pleasure in
the death of anyone who
dies, declares the Lord
God. So repent and live!**

Ezekiel 18:32

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 27, 2026

Welcome



Worship Series: Unexpected Truths

September 27, 2026

The opening lines of the United States Declaration of Independence boldly assert that certain truths are “self-evident”—truths accessible to human reason and widely recognized by observation of the world. Among these are that all people are created equal and possess unalienable rights such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The founders appealed to principles they believed reasonable people could recognize simply by reflecting on human nature and justice. These truths were meant to be obvious, clear to the mind, and persuasive in the public square.

Lutherans, however, note that the most important truths revealed in the Bible are not self-evident at all. In fact, they frequently appear surprising or even contrary to human expectations. Scripture teaches that humanity is not naturally good but deeply sinful. It declares that salvation cannot be achieved through human effort but comes entirely by God’s grace. Most unexpected of all is the message that God brings forgiveness and eternal life through the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. Biblical truth is revealed by God rather than discovered by reason alone. While some truths may seem obvious to human judgment, the truths of the Bible are often unexpected.

Today’s Focus: Real Repentance Looks Different

It might be expected for someone to look sorry when they are caught doing something wrong. You might even see tears and hear words of apology. But you might not be surprised if the shock of being caught wears off and so does the intensity of the repentance.

Real repentance looks different. God doesn’t want us to simply go through religious motions like some sort of show. God’s desire is that our repentance would demonstrate sincere sorry over sin. It might be unexpected, but God wants us to see the grace and forgiveness he has shown us in Christ, and in response, to love him back deeply and sincerely.

Opening Hymn

651 In Hopelessness and Near Despair



1 In hope-less - ness and near de - spair, I cry to you,
 2 I see my heart's con - di - tion now, my heart's di - verse
 3 I trem - ble as I feel your hand, ex - pec - ting re -
 4 For - giv - en, free of guilt and shame, grant me some time



my Sav - ior! My guilt is more than I can bear,
 af - fec - tions. Why do I love the things you loathe?
 tri - bu - tion, yet hear no curse or re - pri - mand,
 to ren - der a gift to glo - ri - fy your name,



I have not earned your fa - vor. You know me as
 I'm torn in two di - rec - tions: now prod - i - gal,
 but grace and ab - so - lu - tion. With you there is
 love to re - flect your splen - dor. This world must know



I real - ly am: how much is truth, how much is sham;
 now Phar - i - see, O God, be mer - ci - ful to me;
 for - give-ness, Lord; you speak the sweet, con - sol - ing word,
 what I have learned, that you be - stow what none has earned:



why should you heed my plead - ing?
 who else but you can help me.
 and I am sure you love me!
 the joy of full for - give - ness!

Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1919–2008
 Tune: Teutsch kirchen ampt, Strassburg, 1525
 Text: © 1987 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 712282
 Tune: Public domain

In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Confession

Our help is in the name of the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.

Let us confess our sins to God and ask for his forgiveness.

Almighty God, merciful Father, I confess to you that I have not loved you with all my heart. In what I have done and left undone, I have pursued my ways instead of your ways. I have not loved others as you command. For this I deserve your punishment now and forever. I am sorry for my sins. I repent of them. I beg for your mercy.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

In peace let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

Glory to God in the Highest



Glo - ry to God in the high - est and peace to his peo - ple on earth.



Lord God, heav-en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther. We



wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your



glo - ry. Glo - ry to God in the high - est and peace to his

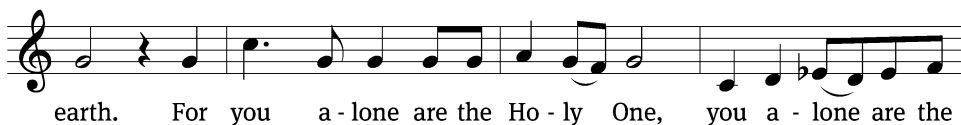


peo - ple on earth.

Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly



Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, you



The Word

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Mercifully grant, O God, that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, for without your help we are unable to please you; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

First Reading

Ezekiel 18:1–4,25–32

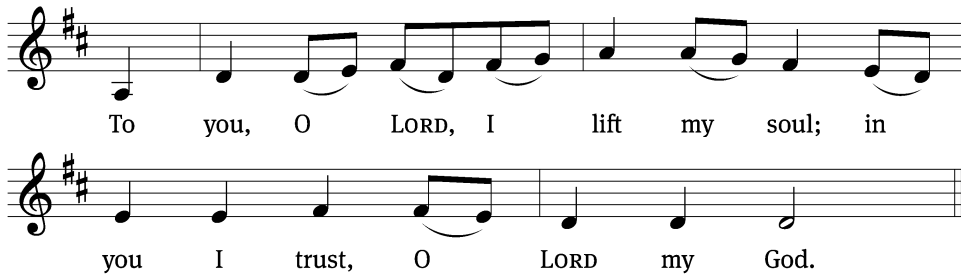
A strong warning to Christians who have grown dismissive of their sin.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 25

Refrain



Tone



In you, LORD my God, I / put my trust.

I trust in you; do not let me be / put to shame.

Show me your ways, LORD, teach me / your paths.

Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my / Savior.

Remember, LORD, your great mer- / cy and love,
for they are / from of old.

Do not remember the sins of my youth and my re- / bellious ways;
according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, / are good.

Refrain

LORD, forgive my iniquity, though / it is great.

Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and af- / flicted.

Look on my affliction and / my distress
and take away / all my sins.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,**

as it was in the be- / ginning,

is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain*

Second Reading

Philippians 2:1–11

Moved by Christ's love and empowered by the Spirit, we seek to imitate the humility of Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Psalm 51:17



Refrain



Hymn of the Day

547 At the Name of Jesus



1 At the name of Je - sus ev - 'ry knee shall bow,
 2 At his voice cre - a - tion sprang at once to sight,
 3 Hum - bled for a sea - son to re - ceive a name
 4 Bore it up tri - um - phant with its hu - man light,



ev - 'ry tongue con - fess him King of glo - ry now;
 all the an - gel fac - es, all the hosts of light,
 from the lips of sin - ners un - to whom he came,
 thro' all ranks of crea - tures to the cen - tral height,



'tis the Fa - ther's plea - sure we should call him Lord,
 cher - u - bim in heav - en, stars up - on their way,
 faith - ful - ly he bore it spot - less to the last,
 to the throne of God - head, to the Fa - ther's breast,



who from the be - gin - ning was the might - y Word.
 all the heav'n - ly or - ders in their great ar - ray.
 brought it back vic - to - rious when from death he passed;
 filled it with the glo - ry of that per - fect rest.

5 In your hearts enthrone him;
 there let him subdue
 all that is not holy,
 all that is not true.
 Crown him as your captain
 in temptation's hour;
 let his will enfold you
 in its light and pow'r.

6 Christians, this Lord Jesus
 shall return again
 in his Father's glory,
 with his angel train;
 for all wreaths of empire
 meet upon his brow,
 and our hearts confess him
 King of glory now.

Sermon

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

Offering

The Sacrament

Preface

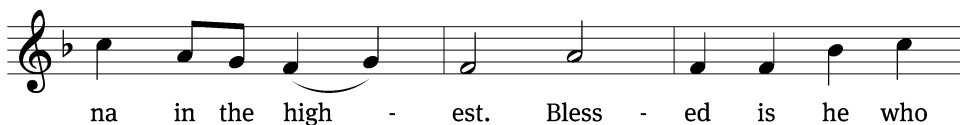
The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

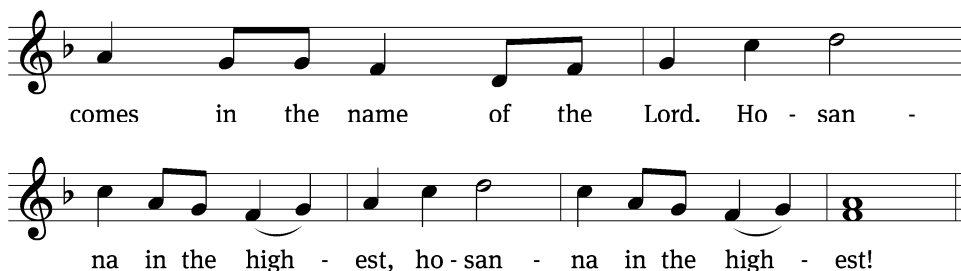
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock until he comes again in glory. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy





Tune: Kermit G. Moldenhauer
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Prayer of Thanksgiving

Blessed are you, O Lord of heaven and earth. We praise and thank you for sending your Son, Jesus Christ, and we remember the great acts of love through which he has ransomed us from sin, death, and the devil's power.

By his incarnation, he became one with us.

By his perfect life, he fulfilled your holy will.

By his innocent death, he overcame hell.

By his rising from the grave, he opened heaven.

Invited by your grace and instructed by your Word, we approach your table with repentant and joyful hearts. Strengthen us through Christ's body and blood, and preserve us in the true faith until we feast with him and all his ransomed people in glory everlasting.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my + body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my + blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

O Christ, Lamb of God

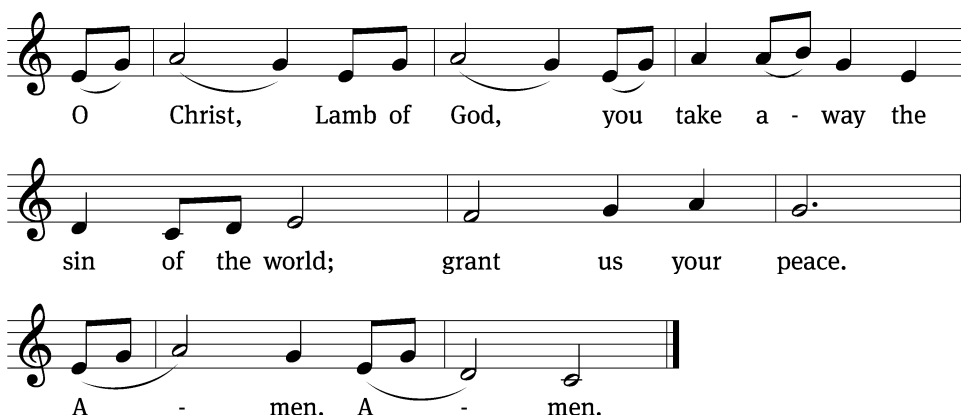
The musical notation is written on five staves, each with a treble clef. The first staff contains a short melodic phrase. The second and fourth staves are identical and contain the lyrics: "O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the". The third and fifth staves are identical and contain the lyrics: "sin of the world; have mer - cy on us." The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes.

O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the

sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.

O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the

sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.

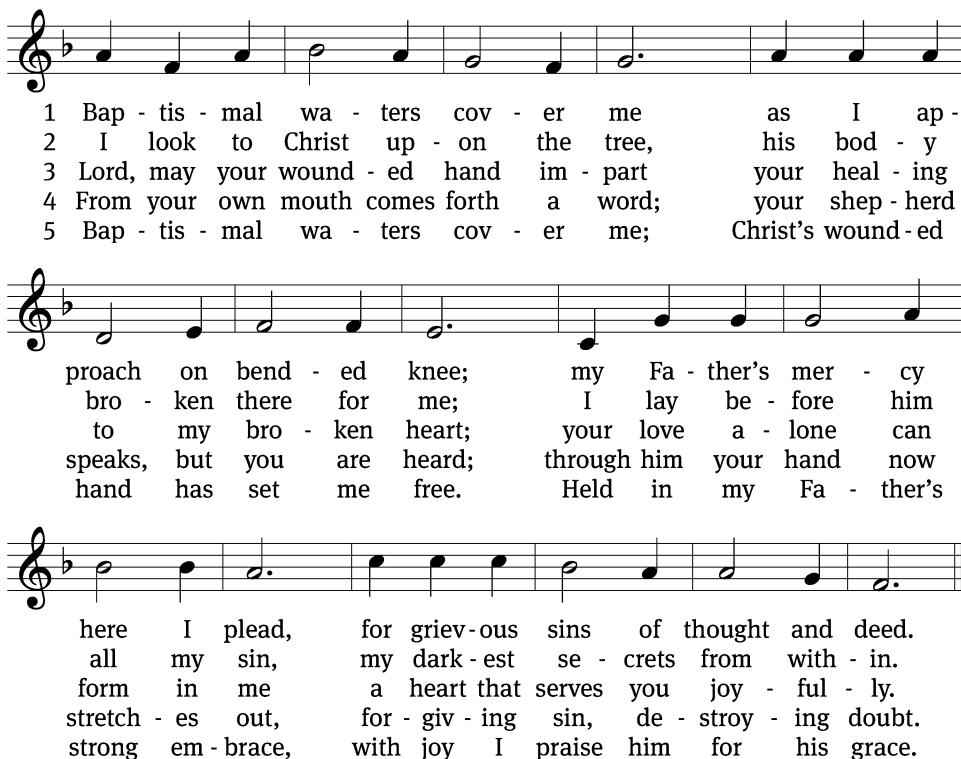


O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us your peace.
A - men. A - men.

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Distribution Hymn

657 Baptismal Waters Cover Me



1 Bap - tis - mal wa - ters cov - er me as I ap -
2 I look to Christ up - on the tree, his bod - y
3 Lord, may your wound - ed hand im - part your heal - ing
4 From your own mouth comes forth a word; your shep - herd
5 Bap - tis - mal wa - ters cov - er me; Christ's wound - ed
proach on bend - ed knee; my Fa - ther's mer - cy
bro - ken there for me; I lay be - fore him
to my bro - ken heart; your love a - lone can
speaks, but you are heard; through him your hand now
hand has set me free. Held in my Fa - ther's
here I plead, for griev - ous sins of thought and deed.
all my sin, my dark - est se - crets from with - in.
form in me a heart that serves you joy - ful - ly.
stretch - es out, for - giv - ing sin, de - stroy - ing doubt.
strong em - brace, with joy I praise him for his grace.

Distribution Hymn

312 Comfort, Comfort All My People



1 "Com - fort, com - fort all my peo - ple; speak of peace," so
 2 All their sins our God will par - don, blot - ting out each
 3 John the Bap - tist's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert
 4 Then make straight the crook - ed high - way; make the rough - er



says our God. "Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness, groan - ing
 dark mis - deed; all that well de - served his an - ger he no
 far and near, call - ing peo - ple to re - pent - ance for the
 plac - es plain. Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, read - y



from their sor - rows' load. Speak to all Je - ru - sa - lem
 more will see or heed. They have suf - fered man - y a day;
 king - dom now is here. O that warn - ing cry o - bey!
 for his ho - ly reign. For the glo - ry of the Lord



of the peace that waits for them; tell them that their
 now their griefs have passed a - way. God will change their
 Now pre - pare for God a way; let the val - leys
 now o'er earth is spread a - broad, and all flesh shall



sins I cov - er, that their war - fare now is o - ver."
 ach - ing sad - ness in - to ev - er - spring - ing glad - ness.
 rise to meet him and the hills bow down to greet him.
 see the to - ken that his word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1611–1684; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878; alt.
 Tune: Trente quatre Pseaumes de David, Geneva, 1551, ed. Louis Bourgeois
 Text and tune: Public domain

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift.
We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our
love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who
lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
Amen.

Closing Hymn

927 Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing



1 Lord, dis - miss us with your bless - ing; fill our hearts with
 2 Thanks we give and ad - o - ra - tion for the gos - pel's
 3 So when - e'er the sig - nal's giv - en us from earth to



joy and peace. Let us each, your love pos - sess - ing,
 joy - ful sound; may the fruits of your sal - va - tion
 call a - way, borne on an - gels' wings to heav - en,



tri - umph in re - deem - ing grace. O re - fresh us,
 in our hearts and lives a - bound! Ev - er faith - ful,
 glad the sum - mons to o - bey, may we ev - er,



O re - fresh us, trav - 'ling through this wil - der - ness.
 ev - er faith - ful to your truth may we be found.
 may we ev - er reign with Christ in end - less day.

Text: attr. John Fawcett, 1740-1817, alt.
 Tune: Henry T. Smart, 1813-1879
 Text and tune: Public domain

SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE TODAY

Presiding Minister: Pastor Derek Bartelt

Accompanist: Robert Joseph | **Elder:** Paul Nehlen

Altar Guild: Kelly Schwartz and Gail Michnay | **Projectionist:** Margie Smith

Acknowledgments

Setting Four from Christian Worship

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JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

SUNDAYS

Worship | 9:00am

1ST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

Worship with Lord's Supper | 6:30pm

OUR STAFF

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OUR MISSION

As a family of believers, the mission of First Evangelical Lutheran Church is to glorify God by growing in the faith of our Savior Jesus Christ and by sharing the good news of His Word with others.

OUR INVITATION

It is a privilege for us to share with you the assurance Jesus offers about how imperfect people like us can enjoy a right relationship with our holy Creator.

Our church services are designed to be Christ-centered worship and include three main elements: God speaks to us in His Word, we respond with praises and prayers, and we encourage each other.

We are eager to have you learn more about the Triune God and about our church. If you are looking for a spiritual family in which you can be at home, please speak with our pastor.