

THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Sunday, September 27, 2026

10:30 AM

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Welcome to ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

We are happy you have joined us for worship today. Wherever you are on your journey with or toward God, you are welcome here—you are a blessing to this assembly. We welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or relationship status.

We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Christ.

Lutherans believe, teach, and confess that in, with, and under the bread and wine in Holy Communion we receive the true Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation. All who are drawn in faith are welcome to join in this confession and receive the Sacrament.

We invite and encourage your full participation in our worship this morning. With this service bulletin you can follow and participate in this morning's liturgy.

New to St. Paul? If you have questions or want more information, please fill out a newcomer form with the QR code at the right. Questions about transferring membership from another Lutheran church, or for beginning the process for baptism, confirmation, membership, or transferring from one of the other Christian traditions, may be directed to the Church Office at 781-646-7773 or parishadmin@stpaularlington.org.



SUNDAY SERVICE

8:15 AM | Holy Communion
9:00 AM | Choir Practice
9:30 AM | Education Hour:
Sunday School, Confirmation meeting,
Adult Forum
10:30 AM | Holy Communion &
livestreamed

LIVESTREAMING

Worship is streamed on our Facebook page StPaulArlingtonMA. A Facebook account is not necessary to stream, but without a Facebook account the stream works on a computer browser only and not on a phone.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY TODAY

Marie Breitenbach and
Lydia Zuehsow, *Altar Guild*
Peter Schmidt, *Cantor*
Piercen Oliver, *Lector*
Sandy Walker, *Assisting Minister*
Mat Carter and Hollie Schmidt,
Livestream Broadcast Team
Peter & Hollie Schmidt and Lisa
Chiulli Lay, *Coffee Guild*



*When the instruction for standing * appears, please stand as you are able and as seems comfortable.*

At the ☒, you may make the sign of the cross, which reminds us of our baptism.

*The congregational responses are printed in **bold**.*

GATHERING

PRELUDE

William Byrd (1540-1623): Earl of Salisbury: Pavan

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose compassion endures forever. **Amen.**
Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your lovingkindness. In your great mercy, wash away our iniquity and cleanse us from our sin.

Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Do not remove us from your presence; do not take your Spirit away.

Restore to us the joy of your salvation, and sustain us with your Spirit. Amen.

God is merciful and gracious, granting forgiveness through Jesus Christ to all who confess their sin. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sin, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*** GATHERING HYMN**

“The Trumpets Sound, the Angels Sing” ELW 531

1 The trum - pets sound, the an - gels sing, the feast is
 2 Ta - bles are la - den with good things; oh, taste the
 3 The hun - gry heart he sat - is - fies, of - fers the

read - y to be - gin. The gates of heav'n are o - pen wide,
 peace and joy he brings. He'll fill you up with love di - vine;
 poor his par - a - dise. Now hear all heav'n and earth ap - plaud

and Je - sus wel - comes you in - side.
 he'll turn your wa - ter in - to wine.
 the a - maz - ing good - ness of the Lord.

Refrain

Sing with thank - ful - ness songs of pure de - light.

Come and rev - el in heav - en's love and light.

Take your place at the ta - ble of the King.

The feast is read - y to be - gin;

the feast is read - y to be - gin.

*** 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.**

*** KYRIE**

Refrain

Assistant: *Congregation:*

In peace, in peace, let us pray to the Lord, have mer-cy,
Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy.

to Verses

Assistant: For the Reign of God, and for peace throughout the world, for the unity of all . . . (to Refrain)

Assistant: For your people here, who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your Word . . . (to Refrain)

Assistant:

Help, save and de - fend us, O

Congregation:

God. A - men.

* HYMN OF PRAISE

Refrain

Now the feast and cel - e - bra-tion, all of cre - a - tion
sings for joy, to the God of life and love and free-dom;
praise and glo - ry for - ev - er - more!

Verse 1

1. Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain,

whose blood has freed and u - nit-ed us

to be one great peo - ple of God. D.C.

Verse 2

2. Pow-er and rich-es, wis-dom and might, all hon - or and

glo - ry to Christ for - ev - er. D.C.

Verse 3

3. For God has come to dwell with us, to make us

peo-ple of God; to make all things new. D.C.

* PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

A reading from Ezekiel.

The word of the Lord came to me: 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"? As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. 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.

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? 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.

Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. 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?

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. 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? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalm 25:1-9



To ' you, O Lord,

I lift ' up my soul.

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

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

**Show me your ' ways, O Lord,
and teach ' me your paths.**

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.

**Remember, O Lord, your compas- ' sion and love,
for they are from ' everlasting.**

Remember not the sins of my youth and ' my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your good- ' ness, O Lord.

**You are gracious and up- ' right, O Lord;
therefore you teach sinners ' in your way.**

You lead the low- ' ly in justice
and teach the low- ' ly your way.

SECOND READING

Philippians 2:1-13

A reading from Philippians.

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

who, though he existed in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God

as something to be grasped,

but emptied himself,

taking the form of a slave,

assuming human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a human,

he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death—

even death on a cross.

Therefore God exalted him even more highly
 and gave him the name
 that is above every other name,
 so that at the name given to Jesus
 every knee should bend,
 in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
 and every tongue should confess
 that Jesus Christ is Lord,
 to the glory of God the Father.

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, for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

*** GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Congregation:

Al-le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we
 go? You have the words of e - ter - nal
 life. Al - le - lu - ia!

Optional Repeat

*** GOSPEL**

Matthew 21:23-32

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, the 18th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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?" 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. 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?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet." 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.

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

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

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE AND SERMON

Pastor Don Larsen

* HYMN OF THE DAY

“Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word”

ELW 517

1 Lord, keep us stead - fast in your word; curb those who
 2 Lord Je - sus Christ, your pow'r make known, for you are
 3 O Com - fort - er of price - less worth, send peace and

by de - ceit or sword would wrest the king - dom from your Son
 Lord of lords a - lone; de - fend your ho - ly church, that we
 u - ni - ty on earth; sup - port us in our fi - nal strife

and bring to naught all he has done.
 may sing your praise e - ter - nal - ly.
 and lead us out of death to life.

APOSTLES CREED

With praise and gratitude, we confess our faith.

**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 into hell.**

**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

As is our custom, please face one another across the center aisle. The deacon invites us to prayer and offers the first intercession. As you are moved to pray, you are invited to pray any of the following intercessions aloud.

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

A brief silence

Center your church in humility as we strive to follow in your way. Help us listen to the cries of those who have been unfairly hurt by the church and dare to name difficult truths. Show all your love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You call us to care for your creation. Lead us into your promise of a better world through sustainable practices and respect for your handiwork. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Inspire all in positions of authority to act honorably. Remind them of their call to use their authority for the sake of the common good. Give them the gift of humility. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Comfort those who come before you in fear and trembling. Calm troubled hearts with your forgiveness. Help all those in need especially Bobby, Dan, Heather, Jim, Kate, Lynn, Mark, Meredith, Naomi, Paul, Roberta, and Susan. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Change this congregation's heart when we say no to your call. Open us to courageous learning and service in our community, especially in new or challenging places. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For what else do we pray? *Other prayers, silent or aloud, are invited.*

Your steadfast love holds all the saints who have finished their work and are at rest. As we grieve, remind us of your mercy so we may also give thanks. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

INSTALLATION OF SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS (10:30)

* PEACE

Keep your hands together or make the peace sign if you'd rather not pass the peace with touch.

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

MEAL

OFFERING

You may give an offering through the Givelify app by scanning this QR code:



* OFFERING SONG

Refrain

Congregation:

As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread;
so may all your peo-ple from all the ends of earth be
gath-ered in - to one in you.

Verses

1. As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst
2. Let this be a fore-taste of all that is to come when
to Refrain
may we share the pres-ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

*OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

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.**

* GREAT THANKSGIVING

Presider: *Congregation:*



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

Presider: *Congregation:*



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

Presider: *Congregation:*



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is



right to give God thanks and praise.

It is our duty and delight, that we should everywhere and always offer thanks and praise to you, O God, through Jesus Christ; who calls us to follow his way of humble service and love, And so, with the church on earth, all creation and the host of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Congregation:



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!

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

* 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.

COMMUNION

All are welcome to receive the bread and the wine. Gluten free wafers are available on request. Both wine (red) and grape juice (white) are available in each tray. Come forward in the center aisle starting at the front of the church. The pastors will motion the first people forward.



1. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
2. Lamb of God, you break the chains of ha - tred and fear;
3. Lamb of God, you are the way of jus - tice and peace:
4. Lamb of God, you are the way of mer - cy and love:



have mer-cy on us, mer-cy on us, mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world:



grant us peace, grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN

"Take, Oh, Take Me as I Am"

ELW 814

Take, oh, take me as I am; sum-mon out what I shall be;

set your seal up - on my heart and live in me.

The musical score is written for two staves, treble and bass clef, in a key with three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The melody is in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the notes.

* TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

* BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor ☩ and grant you peace. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

* SENDING HYMN

"The Lord Now Sends Us Forth"

ELW 538

En - via - do soy de Dios, mi ma - no lis - ta es - tá
The Lord now sends us forth with hands to serve and give,

pa - ra cons-truir con él un mun - do fra - ter - nal.
to make of all the earth a bet - ter place to live.

The musical score is written for two staves, both in treble clef, in a key with one sharp (F#). The melody is in the upper staff, and the accompaniment is in the lower staff. The lyrics are written below the notes.



Los án - ge - les no son en - via - dos a cam - biar
The an - gels are not sent in - to our world of pain

un mun - do de do - lor por un mun - do me - jor;
to do what we were meant to do in Je - sus' name;

me ha to - ca - do a mí ha - cer - lo rea - li - dad.
that falls to you and me and all who are made free.

A - yú - da - me, Se - ñor, a ha - cer tu vo - lun - tad.
Help us, O Lord, we pray, to do your will to - day.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

William Byrd (1540-1623): Earl of Salisbury: Gaillard

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING HAPPENINGS at ST. PAUL

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS | October 4, St. Francis Day

We will celebrate the Blessing of the Animals next week in worship at 8:15 and 10:30. All are invited to bring well-behaved, leashed or otherwise contained pets into the sanctuary. If your pet prefers to remain at home, you can also bring a picture of your pet or a beloved stuffed animal to receive a blessing. Since plants are also our companions, if you wish to bring a houseplant to be blessed, please do! This would be a great way to invite your neighbors into St. Paul's life!

MEALS FOR THE JOURNEY

St Paul is re-establishing a meal ministry to support members of our congregation who are navigating grief, recovery, or life transitions. If you'd like to help by cooking a meal or delivering one, we'd love to have you.

We want to have a system to respond when there is a need so if you are open to even occasionally participating, please sign up to be included on the distribution list where we'll arrange specific needs. Please fill in this [St. Paul Meal Information Form](#) if you'd like to help by either making a meal, delivering a meal, or buying a gift card to help someone.

Lisa Hynes (lmhynes@gmail.com) and Jan Sniffen (JSniffen.js@gmail.com) will organize volunteers and liaise with members as they accept this form of support. We're honored to walk alongside our church family in trying times.

ARLINGTON EATS | September Spotlight Items:

Gluten Free items - cereal, pasta, crackers, granola bars, Quinoa, Farro, Pasta sauce, Coconut milk, Laundry detergent, Dish soap

LUTHERAN BASICS

Ever wonder what makes Lutheranism tick? What its contribution is to the Christian story and our witness? You are invited to participate in a conversation about Lutheran basics over four Wednesdays in September, beginning September 9, at 7 PM. We'll meet at church.

ADULT FORUM THIS SUNDAY SEPT 27

Allison Van Deventer will present on the work of the LUCE Immigrant Justice Network of Massachusetts at 9:30 AM in the fellowship hall. In addition to offering a snapshot of LUCE's important work, Allison will facilitate discussion of resources offered by the network and ways to get involved in it at different levels.

MEETING FOR PARENTS AND CONFIRMANDS

Confirmation ministry begins this Sunday, Sept 27, at 9:30 AM with a meeting for parents and students in the sanctuary. We plan to take up and explore Martin Luther's Small Catechism this fall.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Wednesday	Thursday	Sunday
September 30	October 1	October 4
7-8 PM Lutheran Basics at St. Paul - upstairs on the second floor	7-8 PM Bible Study via Zoom	Both services St. Francis Day Blessing of the Animals



SAINT PAUL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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Altar Guild

Faith Formation Committee

Intern Committee

Social Ministry Committee

Nomination Committee

Worship & Music Committee

Finance Committee

Audit Committee

Usher Committee

Property Committee

Call Committee

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Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



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