July 26, 2026 ☩

9th Sunday after Pentecost

We welcome you to First Lutheran Church!

"God's Work. Our Hands. To serve ALL people."

An asterisk * invites you to stand in body or in spirit, and you are invited to read aloud responses found in **bold.**

P: Indicates the Presider. AM: Indicates the Assisting Minister.

We Gather

Prelude –

Words of Welcome

***Gathering Hymn** - no. 532 "Gather Us In"

***Confession and Forgiveness**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God, **we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.**
Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love. **Amen.**

***Apostolic Greeting**

P: 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** – *see next page*

Kyrie eleison

*__Hymn of Praise__ – no. 821 "Shout to the Lord"

***Prayer of the Day -**

P: 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.**

We Listen to God's Word

First Reading: 1 Kings 3:5-12

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."

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: *the psalm will be spoken responsively by whole verse* Psalm 1119:129-136

129 Your decrees are wonderful;
therefore I obey them with all my heart.
130 **When your word is opened it gives light;**
it gives understanding to the simple.
131 I open my mouth and pant
because I long for your commandments.
132 **Turn to me and be gracious to me,**
as you always do to those who love your name.

133 Order my footsteps in your word;
let no iniquity have dominion over me.
134 **Rescue me from those who oppress me,**
and I will keep your commandments.
135 Let your face shine upon your servant
and teach me your statutes.
136 **My eyes shed streams of tears,**
because people do not keep your teaching.

Second Reading: Romans 8:26-39

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.

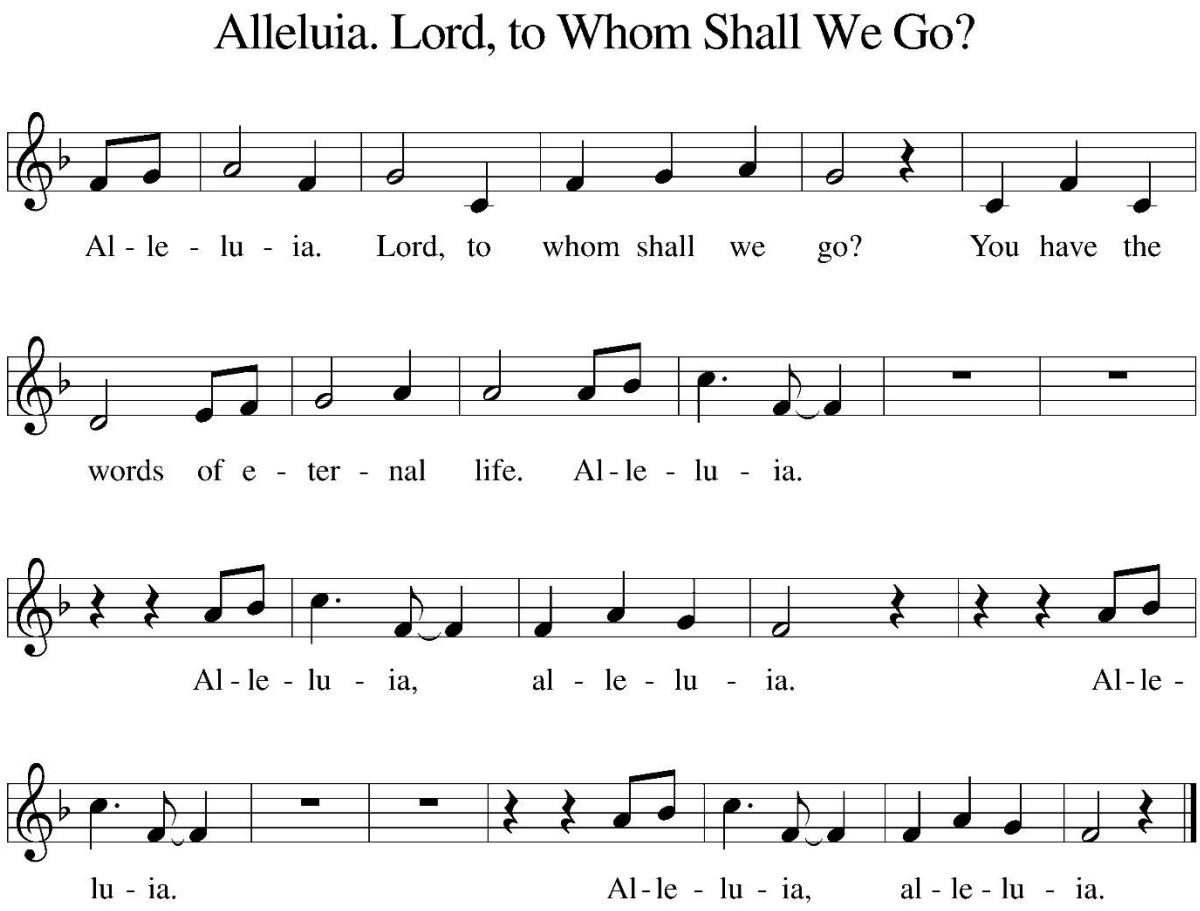
31 What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? 33 Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn?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

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

***Gospel Acclamation –**



***Gospel:** Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52

The Gospel of Matthew, the 13th Chapter. **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**

Sermon - Pastor Chris Culuris

Hymn –All Creation Sings (see next page) "What is the World Like?"

What Is the World Like

*__The Apostles' Creed –__
Together let us profess 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 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__
AM: Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. *After each petition*: God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

AM: Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

*__Sign of Peace__ P: The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**
Please offer one another some sign of Christ's peace.

Offering -For electronic giving please scan the QR on acknowledgement page and ***Thank you!***

Offering Music -

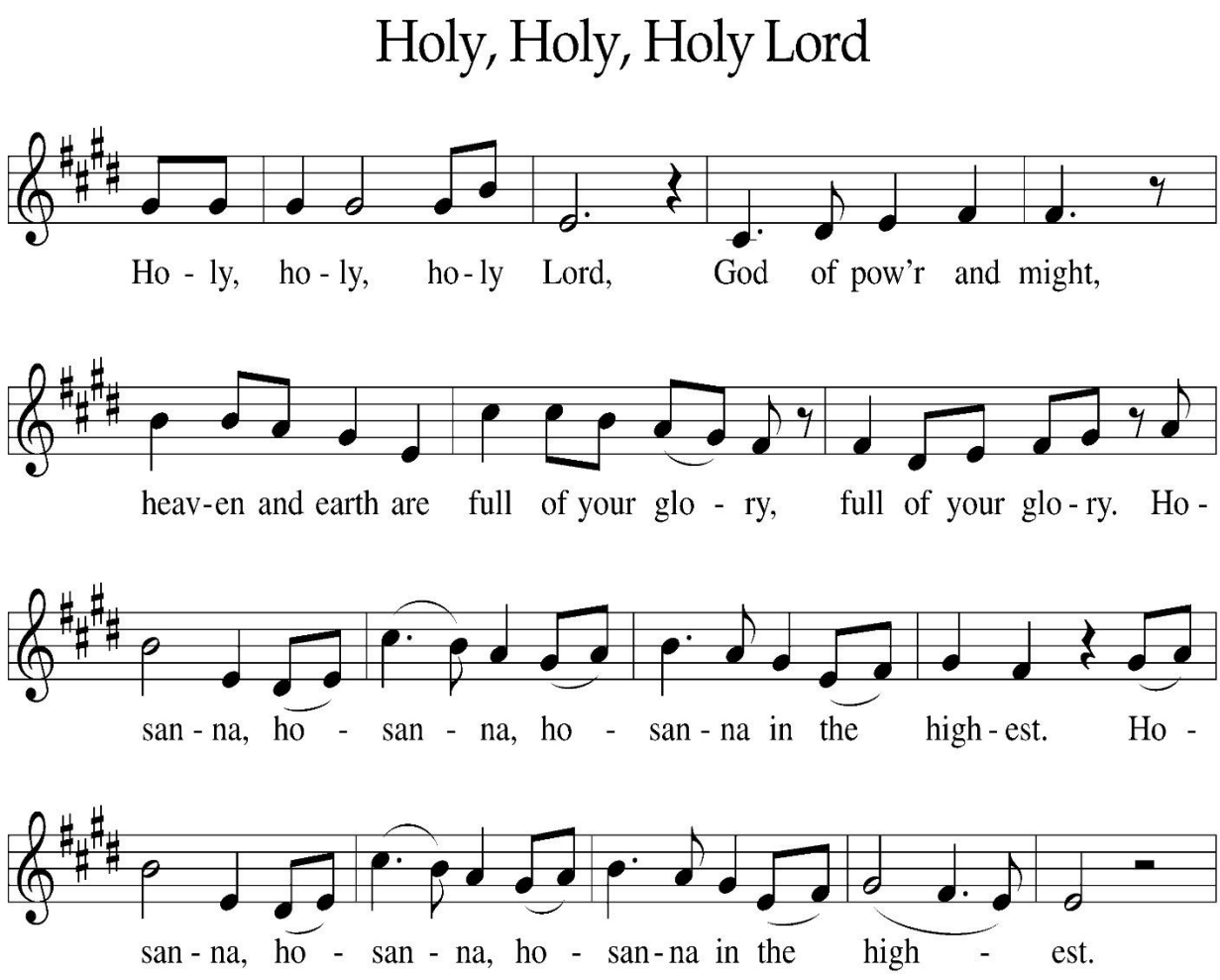
***Offering Prayer**

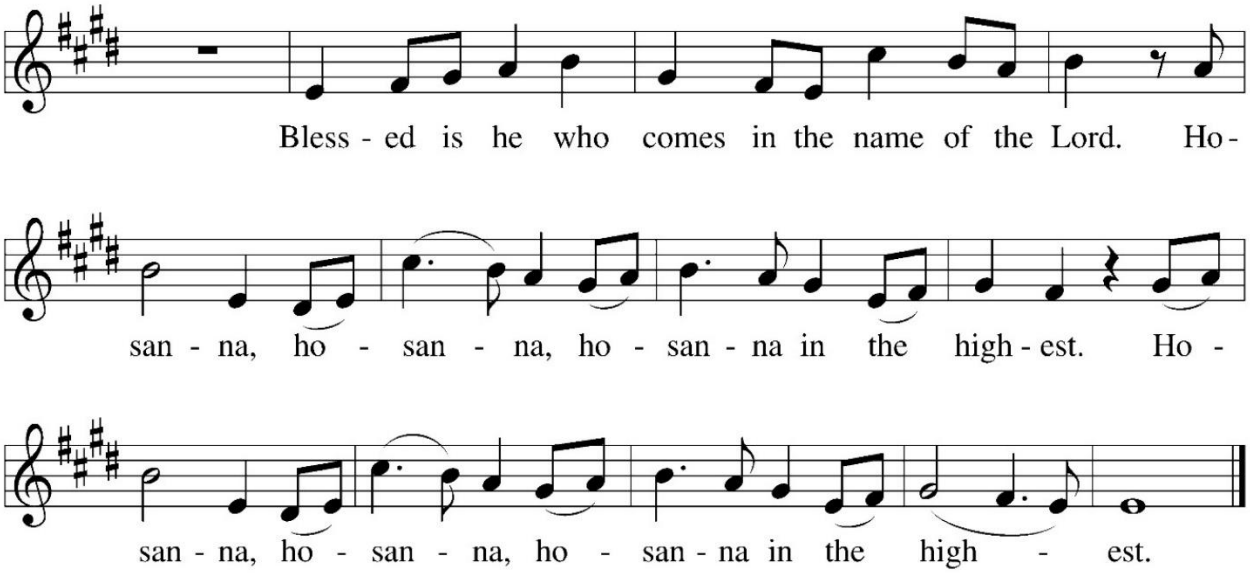
AM: Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. **Amen.**

We Share God's Holy Meal

***Great Thanksgiving and Preface** (spoken) – page 190, *ELW Setting Eight*

***Holy, Holy, Holy –**





***Words of Institution** – page 108-109, *ELW Setting One*

***The 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.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

***Invitation to the Table –**

P: Heaven has come near. Come, share in the feast!

Distribution of Communion – *Communion will be served standing up (continuously) today*.

Hymn – (see back page) "Seek Ye First"
Hymn – no. 472 "Eat This Bread"

Prayer After Communion

P: Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. **Amen.**

We Go in Peace

Announcements

***Sending Hymn –** "Every Time I Feel the Spirit"

***Blessing & Dismissal**

P: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ☩ one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always. **Amen.**
AM: Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news! **Thanks be to God.**

***Postlude** "Toccata Breve" Edward Broughton

In Worship Today	Musicians: Karen Mari, Oscar Peterson	Tech: Brad Chambers
Pastor: Chris Culuris	Ushers:	Bread Baker: Lynn Kidder
Organist: Deacon Brenda Handel-Johnson	Communion Preparers:	
Assisting Minister: Nancy Timm	Communion Servers: Mike and Diane Stewart	

Prayers: We pray for those on our long-term list: Betty Gustafson, Paul Aasen, Karen Handel, Erika Schuldt, Ruth Edberg, Bob Lamb, Dorothy and Paul Lutz, Steve Erickson, Barbra Grabowski (Ted Kunze's sister), Garrett Paul, Mary Ann Scharf, Kay Moline, Kevin Nicholson (Betty Thompson's nephew), Leah Crosby and baby (niece of Aileen Bipes), Hazel Adelman (niece of Mary Gaebler), Lisa Handel-Dalvand, family of Barb Moss (friend of Deacon Brenda).

Acknowledgments

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FLC Refrigerator Page

Worship, Education and Service:

- **Fellowship** will be provided and served by the .
- **Service project today following worship: Pet food packing for the St Peter Area Food Shelf. Bring your willing hands and spirits to the tables in the Gathering Space**
- **FLC Director of Choirs and Handbells position is open.** If you are interested in applying for this position to lead Youth and Adult Choirs, or Handbells, please contact Kaari Bly, Pastor Chris, or Deacon Brenda.
- **Rental Assistance:** The need for emergency funds continues as many of our immigrant neighbors who have been recently released were told NOT to return to work. All money collected will be dispersed through the Good Neighbor Diversity Council's Emergency Fund.
- **Personal care donation for SPAF:** FLC is collecting bar soap and laundry detergent during July. Place any donations in the grocery cart in the Gathering space. Thank you!

Events at FLC and around the area:

- **Vacation Bible School** will be held at FLC, August 2 – 6, from 5:30 – 8 pm, for youth Age 4 – Grade 6. Staffers from Camp Shetek will lead the week themed "Wear Love." FLC youth and adult helpers are needed. Service Hours will be given to any NHS or Confirmation students who assist. To register go to: flcstp.org
- **Are you available to serve as a teacher for our Education hour this coming school year?** Deacon Brenda is building teams of teachers for our student classes which meet on Wednesday nights. Contact her if you can assist in team teaching this fall.