



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

ORDER OF DIVINE SERVICE



EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST
SEPTEMBER 27, 2026

AS WE GATHER



We are all professional procrastinators when it comes to God. We treat His commands like a software update on our phones, clicking "remind me tomorrow" while we stay comfortable on the couch. This week, Pastor explores Jesus' Parable of the Two Sons and forces us to drop our polite "church masks." Join us as we look at the word *Afterward*—the exact moment where the Holy Spirit crashes into our stalling tactics, drags us out of our ruts, and frees us for radical obedience in the vineyard. Your "afterward" is now!

PRELUDE

TOLLING OF THE BELL

WELCOME

Please stand

INVOCATION HYMN

848 Lord, Whose Love through Humble Service



1 Lord, whose love through hum - ble ser - vice Bore the weight of
2 Still Your chil - dren wan - der home - less; Still the hun - gry
3 As we wor - ship, grant us vi - sion, Till Your love's re -
4 Called by wor - ship to Your ser - vice, Forth in Your dear



hu - man need, Who up - on the cross, for - sak - en,
cry for bread; Still the cap - tives long for free - dom;
veal - ing light In its height and depth and great - ness,
name we go, To the child, the youth, the a - ged,



Of - fered mer - cy's per - fect deed, We, Your ser - vants, bring the
Still in grief we mourn our dead. As, O Lord, Your deep com -
Dawns up - on our quick - ened sight, Mak - ing known the needs and
Love in liv - ing deeds to show; Hope and health, good - will and



wor - ship Not of voice a - lone, but heart, Con - se -
pas - sion Healed the sick and freed the soul, Use the
bur - dens Your com - pas - sion bids us bear, Stir - ring
com - fort, Coun - sel, aid, and peace we give, That Your



crat - ing to Your pur - pose Ev - 'ry gift that You im - part.
love Your Spir - it kin - dles Still to save and make us whole.
us to tire - less striv - ing, Your a - bun - dant life to share.
ser - vants, Lord, in free - dom May Your mer - cy know and live.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–84, alt.

Tune: The Sacred Harp, 1844, Philadelphia

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Tune: Public domain

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Please sit

BAPTISM | 10:45am

WELLS DANIEL STAUFFER

Daniel and Alison Stauffer

OPENING SENTENCES

P I will go to the altar of God,

C to God my exceeding joy.

P Our help is in the name of the LORD,

C who made heaven and earth.

P Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, that He might save us.

C This is the LORD; we have waited for Him; let us be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

EXHORTATION

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

CONFESSION OF SINS & ABSOLUTION

Please kneel or sit. Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P God invites His whole creation to the great feast of His salvation. That we may boldly enter into His gates of mercy, let us lift up our prayer of repentance and faith.

C Lord God, heavenly Father, with thanksgiving for Your great love and promise of new life and hope for living, we confess to You all our sins, our waywardness, our neglect of Your call, as well as our failure to be of help to our neighbor and one another. We humbly pray, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew and cleanse our hearts and minds, and give us true faith in Your promised grace and deliverance.

P The feast of God's salvation has already begun for you by your Baptism into Christ. Now receive the Lord's abiding forgiveness, faith, strength, and help to live in the certain hope of eternal life in fellowship with Him: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Please stand

SERVICE OF THE WORD

KYRIE

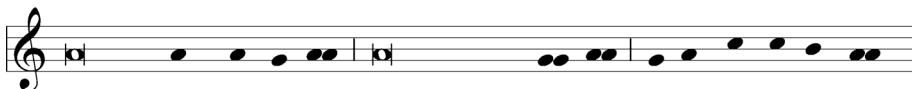
Mark 10:47



A In peace let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



A For the peace from a-bove and for our sal-va-tion let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and strength and
hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are His.
This is the feast of vic - to-ry for our God. Al - le -
lu - ia. Sing with all the peo - ple of
God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion:
Bless - ing and hon - or and glo - ry and might be to
God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.
This is the feast of vic - to-ry for our God,
for the Lamb who was slain has be - gun His reign.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, You exalted Your Son to the place of all honor and authority. Enlighten our minds by Your Holy Spirit that, confessing Jesus as Lord, we may be led into all truth; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Please sit

FIRST READING

Ezekiel 18:1–4, 25–32

A The Old Testament Reading is from Ezekiel, chapter 18.

¹The word of the LORD came to me: ²“What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge’? ³As I live, declares the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: the soul who sins shall die. . . .

²⁵“Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way not just? Is it not your ways that are not just? ²⁶When a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it; for the injustice that he has done he shall die. ²⁷Again, when a wicked person turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he shall save his life. ²⁸Because he considered and turned away from all the transgressions that he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ O house of Israel, are my ways not just? Is it not your ways that are not just?

³⁰“Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. ³¹Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord GOD; so turn, and live.”

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

- A** To you, O LORD,
I lift up my soul.
- C** O my God, in you I trust;
let me not be put to shame;
let not my enemies exult over me.
- A** Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame;
they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.
- C** Make me to know your ways, O LORD;
teach me your paths.
- A** Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all the day long.
- C** Remember your mercy, O LORD, and your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.
- A** Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for the sake of your goodness, O LORD!
- C** Good and upright is the LORD;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
- A** He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.
- C** All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

EPISTLE

Philippians 2:1–4, 14–18

- A** The Epistle is from Philippians, chapter 2.

¹If there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ²complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

...

¹⁴Do all things without grumbling or questioning, ¹⁵that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, ¹⁶holding fast to the word

of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. ¹⁷Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. ¹⁸Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Please stand

ALLELUIA

John 6:68



HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 21:23–32

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-first chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

²³When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴Jesus answered them, “I also will ask you one question, and if you tell me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵The baptism of John, from where did it come? From heaven or from man?” And they discussed it among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ ²⁶But if we say, ‘From man,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for they all hold that John was a prophet.” ²⁷So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

²⁸“What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹And he answered, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he changed his mind and went. ³⁰And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. ³²For

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 when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.”

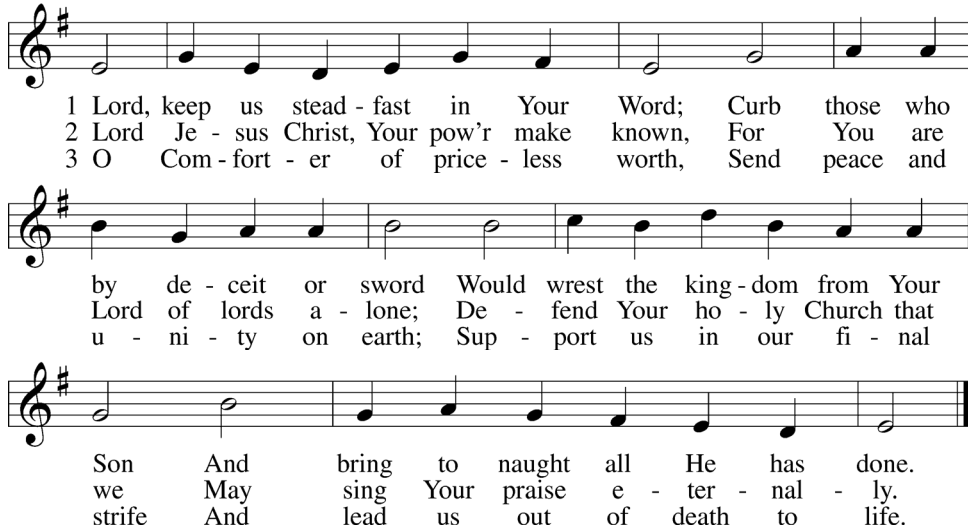
P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Please sit

SERMON HYMN

655 Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word



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
Lord of lords a - lone; De - fend Your ho - ly Church that
u - ni - ty on earth; Sup - port us in our fi - nal
Son And bring to naught all He has done.
we May sing Your praise e - ter - nal - ly.
strife And lead us out of death to life.

SERMON

"Afterwards"

Pastor Mark Stapleton

Please stand

APOSTLES' CREED

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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.
The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life ✠ everlasting. Amen.

Please kneel

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Jesus Christ and for all people according to their needs.

For the whole Christian community around the world that, as people united in faith, we are emboldened to witness to the good news that is ours in Christ Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For all nations of the earth, that there be times of peace; for our own nation that it would seek to bring that which is good and God-pleasing; and for our own communities and neighborhoods, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For faithfulness to carry out our callings with faithfulness, living each day with hope and confidence as we await the time of the great and glorious final harvest, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the needs that are specially known to us at this time, including health and family concerns, situations of disability or bereavement, and the changes that are part of human life, [*especially* . . .]. With assurance that our petitions are heard, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P With thanks to You for all those who have completed their earthly journeys in faith and who serve to inspire us in our times, we bless You, abiding Lord. Confident that our prayers and petitions are heard and that all which is best for us is done according to His good and gracious will, let us pray to the Lord.

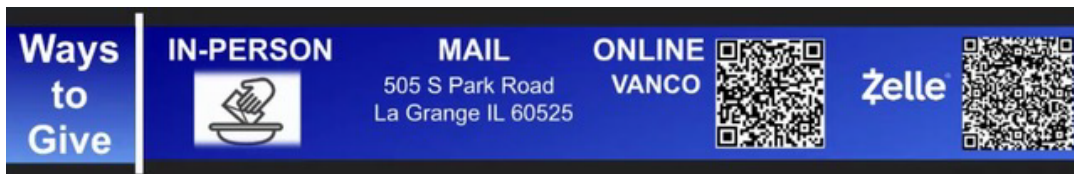
C Lord, have mercy.

P Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Please sit

OFFERING



ANTHEM | 8:00am

O TASTE AND SEE

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)



O taste and see how gracious the Lord is: blest is the man that trusteth in him.

Please stand

OFFERTORY

Psalm 116:12-13, 17-19

C What shall I ren - der to the Lord for all His ben - e-fits to
me? I will of - fer the sac - ri - fice of thanks - giv - ing and will
call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal -
va - tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my
vows to the Lord now in the pres - ence of all His peo - ple, in the
courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je - ru - sa - lem.

LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C 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.

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24–26

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and  give you peace.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

900 Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love



1 Je - sus! Name of won-drous love, Name all oth - er names a - bove,
2 Je - sus! Name de - creed of old, To the maid-en moth-er told,
3 Je - sus! Name of price-less worth To the fall-en of the earth
4 Je - sus! Name of mer-cy mild, Giv-en to the ho-ly Child



Un-to which must ev-'ry knee Bow in deep hu-mil-i-ty.
Kneel-ing in her low-ly cell, By the an-gel Ga-bri-el.
For the prom-ise that it gave, "Je-sus shall His peo-ple save."
When the cup of hu-man woe First He tast-ed here be-low.

5 Jesus! Only name that's giv'n
Under all the mighty heav'n
Whereby those to sin enslaved
Burst their fetters and are
saved.

6 Jesus! Name of wondrous love,
Human name of God above;
Pleading only this, we flee
Helpless, O our God, to Thee.

Please sit

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE



SERVING IN WORSHIP

Rev. Mark Stapleton, Homilist & Liturgist

Dr. Marc Brunelle, Director of Music/Organist

The Cantata Choir | 8:00am

Lynne Braun, Lector | 8:00am

Member of the Youth Group, Lector | 10:45am

ALTAR FLOWERS

Flowers at the altar are dedicated to the glory of God in thanksgiving for many blessings received, and in celebration of grandson Trevino Fukar's birthday, with love from grandma, Marie Fukar.

THE MUSIC FUND OF ST. JOHN'S



The Music Ministry at St. John's is sustained entirely through the generosity of our congregation and the faithful contributions made to the Music Fund. Through your support, we are able to offer uplifting and inspirational sacred vocal and instrumental music that enriches our worship, strengthens our faith, and glorifies God.

The three pillars of Christian stewardship—**time, talent, and treasure**—are essential to the vitality and continued growth of our Music Ministry. In that spirit, the Board of Worship prayerfully invites you to consider making a contribution to the Music Fund. Your generosity enables us to continue offering music of excellence and beauty in praise of God and in service to His Church.

White Music Fund contribution envelopes are available in the pews, and gifts may also be made conveniently through our online giving options.

We are deeply grateful for your continued generosity and for the important role you play in sustaining the Music Ministry of St. John's.

SCHOOL NEWS

"Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14

The school year is off to a great start with returning students as well as new students. The teachers are well-prepared with age appropriate and creative lessons worked into child-friendly routines. New families call weekly to inquire about enrollment at St. John's. We are so grateful to God for continuing to send us families that want their children to be at a Christ-centered school.

The Board of Education is thankful to all our faithful volunteers already working with Special Events, school chapel, music classes and library time. To support our growing school, please consider one or more of the following:

- 1) Recommend our Preschool and Kindergarten to your family, friends and neighbors.
- 2) Give or continue to give to the Annual Fund (goes directly to support the school.)
- 3) Participate in TRIP program (goes toward school scholarship fund.)
- 4) If you are a Thrivent client, you can direct your Choice Dollars to St. John's School by December 31st.
- 5) Pray for the school staff and Board of Education members, as well as more students and families that need to hear the Good News about Jesus.

The day school here at St. John's has always been a big outreach ministry of our church. Our school is smaller, but growing as our mission remains the same - teaching children and their families about the love of Jesus while providing excellent academic education with a Christian worldview.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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EQUIPPING
them with God's Word
through Christian
Education

ENGAGING
them in Worship
and Fellowship

ENCOURAGING
them to serve and love
more like Jesus

ST. JOHN'S
— **LUTHERAN CHURCH** —
— LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS —