



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

ORDER OF DIVINE SERVICE



SIXTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST
SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

AS WE GATHER



Ever survived a dysfunctional family holiday? We've all been there—political rants over mashed potatoes or competing casseroles. But in Genesis 50, Joseph's brothers face a family crisis that goes way beyond holiday drama. Trapped by their own guilt and a "born accountant" mindset, they are terrified of what happens when the score is finally settled. As we look at the radical, scandalous story of Joseph and his brothers, and discover how God takes our heaviest ledgers of debt and destroys them at the cross, remember - step away from the calculator—freedom is waiting!

PRELUDE

TOLLING OF THE BELL & WELCOME

Please stand

INVOCATION HYMN

501 Come Down, O Love Divine



1 Come down, O Love di - vine; Seek Thou this soul of mine,
2 O let it free - ly burn, Till world - ly pas - sions turn
3 Let ho - ly char - i - ty Mine out - ward ves - ture be
4 And so the yearn - ing strong, With which the soul will long,



And vis - it it with Thine own ar - dor glow - ing;
To dust and ash - es in its heat con - sum - ing;
And low - li - ness be - come mine in - ner cloth - ing—
Shall far out - pass the pow'r of hu - man tell - ing;



O Com - fort - er, draw near; With - in my heart ap - pear,
And let Thy glo - rious light Shine ev - er on my sight,
True low - li - ness of heart, Which takes the hum - bler part,
No soul can guess His grace Till it be - come the place



And kin - dle it, Thy ho - ly flame be - stow - ing.
And clothe me round, the while my path il - lum - ing.
And o'er its own short - com - ings weeps with loath - ing.
Where - in the Ho - ly Spir - it makes His dwell - ing.

INVOCATION

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

C Amen.

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 Since we are here assembled to hear God's Word, to call upon Him in prayer, and to receive the body and blood of Christ, let us first think of our unworthiness; confess before God our sins of thought, word, and deed; and acknowledge also that we, by our own strength, cannot free ourselves from our sinful nature or the sins we have committed. Therefore, let us take refuge in the infinite mercy and grace of our heavenly Father, seeking and imploring Him to behold us through Jesus Christ, saying:

C God have mercy on me, a poor, sinful being, forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and grant to me the Holy Spirit that I may amend my sinful ways; through Jesus Christ, my Lord, I pray. Amen.

P God, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to life everlasting. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P He who began this good work within you will bring it to completion on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

Please stand

KYRIE

Mark 10:47

A In peace let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

A For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

A 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.



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

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



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

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



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

THE HYMN OF PRAISE: Gloria in Excelsis

A musical score for a hymn, featuring ten staves of music in G major (one sharp). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to His peo-ple on earth." The second staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "Lord God, heav - en - ly king, al - might - y God and". The third staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "Fa - ther: We wor - ship You, we give You thanks, we". The fourth staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "praise You for Your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly". The fifth staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God: You". The sixth staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on". The seventh staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "us. You are seat - ed at the right hand of the". The eighth staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "Fa-ther; re - ceive our prayer. For You a-lone are the". The ninth staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "Ho - ly One, You a-lone are the Lord, You a-". The tenth staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa-ther. A - men."

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

G 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. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly

Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God: You

take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on

us. You are seat - ed at the right hand of the

Fa-ther; re - ceive our prayer. For You a-lone are the

Ho - ly One, You a-lone are the Lord, You a-

lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,

in the glo - ry of God the Fa-ther. A - men.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

O God, our refuge and strength, the author of all godliness, hear the devout prayers of Your Church, especially in times of persecution, and grant that what we ask in faith we may obtain; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Please sit

REMEMBRANCE OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

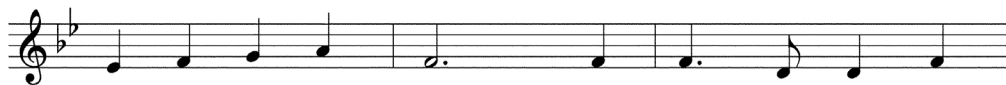
Remarks by Pastor Mark Stapleton

Please stand

HYMN



1. O beau - ti - ful for spa - cious skies, For
2. O beau - ti - ful for pil - grim feet, Whose
3. O beau - ti - ful for he - roes proved In
4. O beau - ti - ful for pa - triot dream That



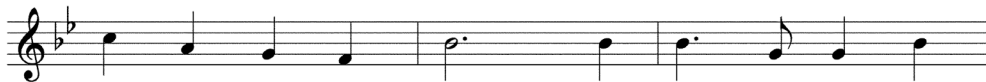
am - ber waves of grain, For pur - ple moun - tain
stern, im - pas-sioned stress A thor - ough-fare for
lib - er - at - ing strife, Who more than self their
sees be - yond the years Thine al - a - bas - ter



maj - es - ties A - bove the fruit - ed plain! A -
free - dom beat A - cross the wil - der - ness! A -
coun - try loved, And mer - cy more than life! A -
cit - ies gleam, Un - dimmed by hu - man tears! A -



mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God
mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God
mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! May
mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God



shed his grace on thee, And crown thy good with
mend thine ev - 'ry flaw, Con - firm thy soul in
God thy gold re - fine, Till all suc - cess be
shed his grace on thee, And crown thy good with



broth - er - hood From sea to shin - ing sea.
self - con - trol, Thy lib - er - ty in law.
no - ble - ness, And ev - 'ry gain di - vine.
broth - er - hood From sea to shin - ing sea.

Text: Katherine L. Bates, 1859-1929
Tune: MATERNA, CMD; Samuel A. Ward, 1848-1903

CLOSING PRAYER

Prayed by all

P Holy and merciful God, Creator of all peoples and all nations,

C we come together today in solemn remembrance of the tragic events of September 11, 2001. With heavy hearts, we lift to You all who died in the Twin Towers, at the Pentagon, and on United Airlines Flight 93 in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. We entrust them to Your eternal love and care.

Lord of comfort, draw near to the families, friends, and all who still mourn and carry the deep grief of that day. Wrap them in Your peace and grant them strength amid lingering sorrow.

We give thanks for the courageous first responders—the firefighters, police officers, emergency workers, and ordinary citizens—who ran toward danger to aid and comfort the afflicted. Heal the painful memories of that day, and transform our collective grief into resolve, compassion, and service to others.

O God of peace, our world remains broken and shaken. Deliver us from fear, hatred, and the desire for revenge. Help us to see every human being as worthy and dignified, created in Your divine image. Guide our leaders with wisdom, mend what has been torn down, and lead our world away from the ways of war.

Make us instruments of Your light in times of darkness and let Your steadfast peace dwell in our hearts and in our world.

In Your strong and holy name, we pray. Amen.

Please sit

FIRST READING

Genesis 50:15–21

A The Old Testament Reading is from Genesis, chapter 50.

¹⁵When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." ¹⁶So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ²¹So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalms 103:1–12; antiphon: v. 13

A Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name!

C Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits,

- A** who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
who redeems your life from the pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
who satisfies you with good
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
- C** **The LORD works righteousness
and justice for all who are oppressed.**
- A** He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.
- C** **The LORD is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**
- A** He will not always chide,
nor will he keep his anger forever.
- C** **He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.**
- A** For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

EPISTLE

Romans 14:1–12

- A** The Epistle is from Romans, chapter 14.

¹As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ²One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

⁵One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. ⁷For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this

end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; ¹¹for it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall confess to God.”

¹²So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Please stand

ALLELUIA

John 6:68



Text: Traditional

Tune: Fintan O'Carroll, d. 1977

Text: Public domain

Tune: © 1985 Fintan O'Carroll and Christopher Walker, admin. OCP Publications. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 708390

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 18:21–35

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eighteenth chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

²¹Peter came up and said to [Jesus], “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” ²²Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.

²³“Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷And out of pity for him, the master of that

servant released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. ³²Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

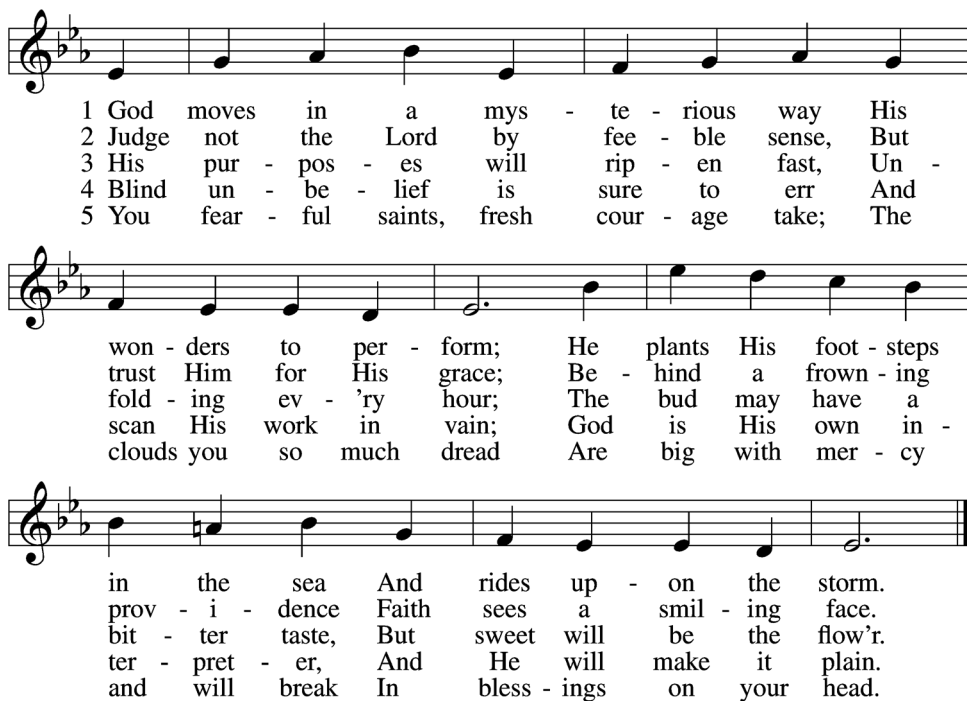
P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Please sit

SERMON HYMN

765 God Moves in a Mysterious Way



1 God moves in a mys - te - rious way His
 2 Judge not the Lord by fee - ble sense, But
 3 His pur - pos - es will rip - en fast, Un -
 4 Blind un - be - lief is sure to err And
 5 You fear - ful saints, fresh cour - age take; The

won - ders to per - form; He plants His foot - steps
 trust Him for His grace; Be - hind a frown - ing
 fold - ing ev - 'ry hour; The bud may have a
 scan His work in vain; God is His own in -
 clouds you so much dread Are big with mer - cy

in the sea And rides up - on the storm.
 prov - i - dence Faith sees a smil - ing face.
 bit - ter taste, But sweet will be the flow'r.
 ter - pret - er, And He will make it plain.
 and will break In bless - ings on your head.

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 Dear heavenly Father, strengthen us to fight the good fight of faith. Give us boldness and confidence to speak Your Word of mercy and justice in a world that does not care to listen. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

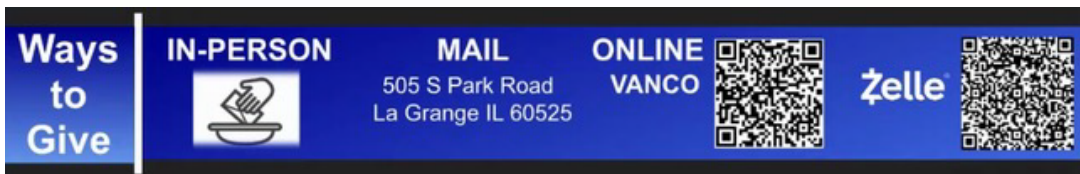
P Lord, raise up faithful pastors, missionaries, teachers, and other church leaders. Stir up the hearts of Your faithful people to serve You with gladness and humility. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

- P** Lord, walk with all those who are grieving the death of loved ones, [*especially* . . .]. Comfort them with the hope of the resurrection to eternal life. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Lord, give strength and patience to those who are struggling financially. Raise up people and institutions that will assist them in their struggles. Help us all to look with mercy upon those who need help. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** For all who perished in the terrorist attacks in New York, at the Pentagon, and in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, that God may welcome them into eternal peace and light, for the firefighters, police officers, medical personnel, and all military members who responded with extraordinary courage, and for those who continue to serve and protect us today, that God may watch over and bless them. Lord, in your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Lord, look with favor upon all who are sick, injured, and recovering, [*especially* . . .]. Have mercy upon them and heal them according to Your will. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Lord, we commend all of these things to Your infinite mercies, which are new every morning. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer. Amen.**

Please sit

OFFERING



OFFERTORY

Psalm 116:12–13, 17–19

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.

- 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.

G Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

730 What Is the World to Me



1 What is the world to me With all its vaunt - ed plea - sure
 2 The world seeks to be praised And hon - ored by the might - y
 3 The world seeks af - ter wealth And all that mam - mon of - fers
 4 What is the world to me! My Je - sus is my trea - sure,

When You, and You a - lone, Lord Je - sus, are my trea - sure!
 Yet nev - er once re - flects That they are frail and flight - y.
 Yet nev - er is con - tent Though gold should fill its cof - fers.
 My life, my health, my wealth, My friend, my love, my plea - sure,

You on - ly, dear - est Lord, My soul's de - light shall be;
 But what I tru - ly prize A - bove all things is He,
 I have a high - er good, Con - tent with it I'll be:
 My joy, my crown, my all, My bliss e - ter - nal - ly.

You are my peace, my rest. What is the world to me!
 My Je - sus, He a - lone. What is the world to me!
 My Je - sus is my wealth. What is the world to me!
 Once more, then, I de - clare: What is the world to me!

Please sit

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE



SERVING IN WORSHIP

Rev. Mark Stapleton, Homilist & Liturgist

Dr. Marc Brunelle, Director of Music/Organist

Sue Kunz, Lector | 8:00am

ALTAR FLOWERS

Flowers at the altar are dedicated to the glory of God in thanksgiving for His many blessings received by John and Amy Buonassisi during their 38 years of marriage to be celebrated this September 17th

THE MUSIC FUND OF ST. JOHN'S

The Music Ministry at St. John's is entirely supported by the generosity of our congregation through contributions to the Music Fund. This fund enables us to offer uplifting and inspirational sacred vocal and instrumental music that enriches our worship and glorifies God.

The three pillars of Christian stewardship—time, talent, and treasure—are essential for any music program to flourish and grow. In that spirit, the Board of Worship invites you to prayerfully consider supporting the Music Fund. White contribution envelopes are available in the pews, and online donations may also be made.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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