

Bethlehem & St. John Lutheran Churches

~ The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod ~

Dual Parish Office: 715-352-2888

www.stjbeth.org

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
233500 County Rd E
Milan, WI 54411

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church
119415 Huckleberry Rd
Edgar, WI 54426



Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 27, 2026

Reverend Michael Mathey, Pastor

The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod's Statement on Close Communion:

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, Our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but His very body and blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust in His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that they may show forth His death until He comes.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the Sacrament, are asked to first speak with the Pastor.

(CTCR, *Admission to the Lord's Supper*, Nov 1999)

Life Thoughts: September 27 – Pentecost 18 – The consistent refrain of the foes of life is something like, “You are more significant than others” or “Look to your own interests.” This refrain seeps into the everyday routine of many because it resonates with our sinful nature. In fact, we grumble at the slightest infringements on our lives of convenience. The Apostle Paul instructs each of us to “look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Philippians 2: 4). The world tries to drum into our minds that raising up children, serving those in need, caring for the elderly, and tending to those who are dying are useless pursuits. But in Christ we see the value of each life and the joy that God provides in seeing people loved.

Life Quotes: September 27 “Grief is not a sign of weak faith; it is the natural response to love and loss. But for those in Christ, grief is always shaped by hope. We do not mourn as those who have no future, no promise, no Savior (1 Thessalonians 4: 13). We mourn with the certainty that our loved ones in the faith are with the Lord and that we will see them again.” *Rev. M.L. Smith, Director of International Missions of Lutheran Church–Canada (LCC) – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

LCMS National Mission: September 27 – 18th Sunday after Pentecost Matthew 21:26 – **“But if we say, ‘From man,’ we are afraid of the crowd...”** Foolish Pharisees! They fear men more than they fear God, and so they miss out on the great blessing of knowing Jesus and His love. All our sins are like this: we fear something more than we fear God. And how foolish that is! Just think of the blessings we miss out on whenever we place our fear or trust in something other than God.

Divine Service III

Hymn: “The Law of God is Good and Wise”

LSB 579

Confession and Absolution

Invocation and Exhortation (p.184)

Corporate Confession (p.184) installation

Service of the Word

Psalm 25:1-10

Kyrie (p.186)

Gloria in Excelsis (p.187)

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And with thy spirit.

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.

Old Testament *Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32*

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.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual

He will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways.

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

Epistle *Philippians 2:1–18*

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. ⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

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.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God

Alleluia (p.190)

Holy Gospel

Matthew 21:23-32

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

C Glory be to Thee, 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 be to Thee, O Christ.

Nicene Creed (p.191)

Office Hymn: “Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word” LSB 655
Sermon

Offertory (p.192)

Prayer of the Church

Service of the Sacrament

Preface (p.194)

Sanctus (p.195)

The Lord’s Prayer (p.196)

The Words of Our Lord (p.197)

Pax Domini (p. 197)

Agnus Dei (p.198)

Distribution of the Sacrament

Distribution Hymns:

“I Come, O Savior, to Thy Table” LSB 618

“Crown Him with Many Crowns” LSB 525

“What Wonderous Love Is This” LSB 543

Nunc Dimittis: (p.199)

Thanksgiving (p.200)

Post Communion Collect (p.201)

Salutation and Benedicamus (p.201)

Benediction (p.202)

Hymn: “Praise Be to Christ” LSB 538

Announcements

Prayers

- Remember in our prayers our Shut-ins
- Rejoice in the gifts of Confession and Absolution as you pray: Thank God that He always answers our confession with words of forgiveness and life.

Next SUNDAY at Bethlehem and St. John

Beth:	Sun.	Oct. 4	Worship Service	8:00 am
			Sunday School	9:15 am
			Adult Bible Study	9:15 am
STJ:	Sun.	Oct. 4	Worship Service	10:30 am
			Sunday School	9:30 am
			Adult Bible Study	11:45 am

Next SUNDAY Acolytes and Greeters

Beth: Sun. Oct. 4 Acolyte: Isaac Kosik
Greeters: Verlyn & Judy Wittlinger
STJ: Sun. Oct. 4 Acolyte: Lexie Noller

This Week at Bethlehem and St. John

M-W	Sept. 28-30	Pastor at Fall Pastor's Conference
Beth: Wed.	Sept. 30	Confirmation 6:00 pm
Beth: Wed.	Sept. 30	Youth Bible Study 6:00 pm
Beth: Wed.	Sept. 30	LifeLight 7:00 pm
STJ: Thurs.	Oct. 1	LifeLight 10:30 am
STJ: Thurs.	Oct. 1	Harvest Supper Prep
STJ: Fri.	Oct. 2	Harvest Supper Prep
STJ: Sat.	Oct. 3	Harvest Supper

Upcoming Meetings

*Dual Parish Meeting October 11 at 7pm at St. John
*Quarterly Voters' Meetings Sunday, October 18th
Bethlehem at 9:15 am
St. John at 11:45 am

Higher Things Conference Informational Meeting

If you have a youth that is interested in going to the Higher Things Conference in the Summer of 2027, please attend this short informational meeting on Sunday, October 4th after church. Bethlehem at 9:15 am and St. John at 11:45 am.

St John's Congregation Harvest Supper We are in the final week of prep for the Harvest Supper. The donation list is full and there are a few places where extra volunteers would be helpful. Extra meat donation envelopes are on the cupboard. The schedule is posted on the bulletin board in the hallway. Check it out and sign up where you can. Please continue to pray for a successful community event. Thank you, Nancy and Mary .



Volunteers are needed for the Bethlehem Soup Supper. Dates for the Soup Supper are December 4th and 5th. We need a list of people who would be interested in helping us November 30th thru December 4th with the Soup Supper prep. We have some key people with health issues & can't do it alone. A signup sheet is available on the table in the Narthex. Please consider volunteering.



Portals of Prayer for October – December 2026 are available at church. Please feel free to pick up a copy.

New Address for Arabella Syring:

Wells Nature View
1016 S. Adams Ave.
Room 10a
Marshfield, WI 54449

Kwik Trip Gift Card available at Bethlehem.

When you purchase a Kwik Trip gift card through us, you will be donating 5-15% back to our church. There are multiple cards on hand, but if you would like to order card(s), please fill out a pre-order form located on the table.



Liturgical Glossary Alleluia: Hebrew for "praise the Lord" (though in its Greek spelling). It is a word of joy and gladness. An ancient custom is to refrain from using Alleluia during Lent in order to distinguish the penitential nature of this season from the exuberance of the Easter season that follows.

October Newsletter deadline is September 28th.

St. John members: Copies of The Constitution and Bylaws of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, LCMS are available. Please pick one up in the carport area.

HOPE
IT'S IN OUR BLOOD

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Blood Drive

WHEN & WHERE

Sat, October 17
7:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
233500 County Road E, Milan

Blood donation tips

- Eat a healthy meal & drink plenty of water before donating
- Wear a shirt with short or easy-to-roll sleeves.
- Don't forget to bring your ID.

Schedule your appointment
Appointments preferred.
Walk-ins welcome!

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Blood Center of Wisconsin