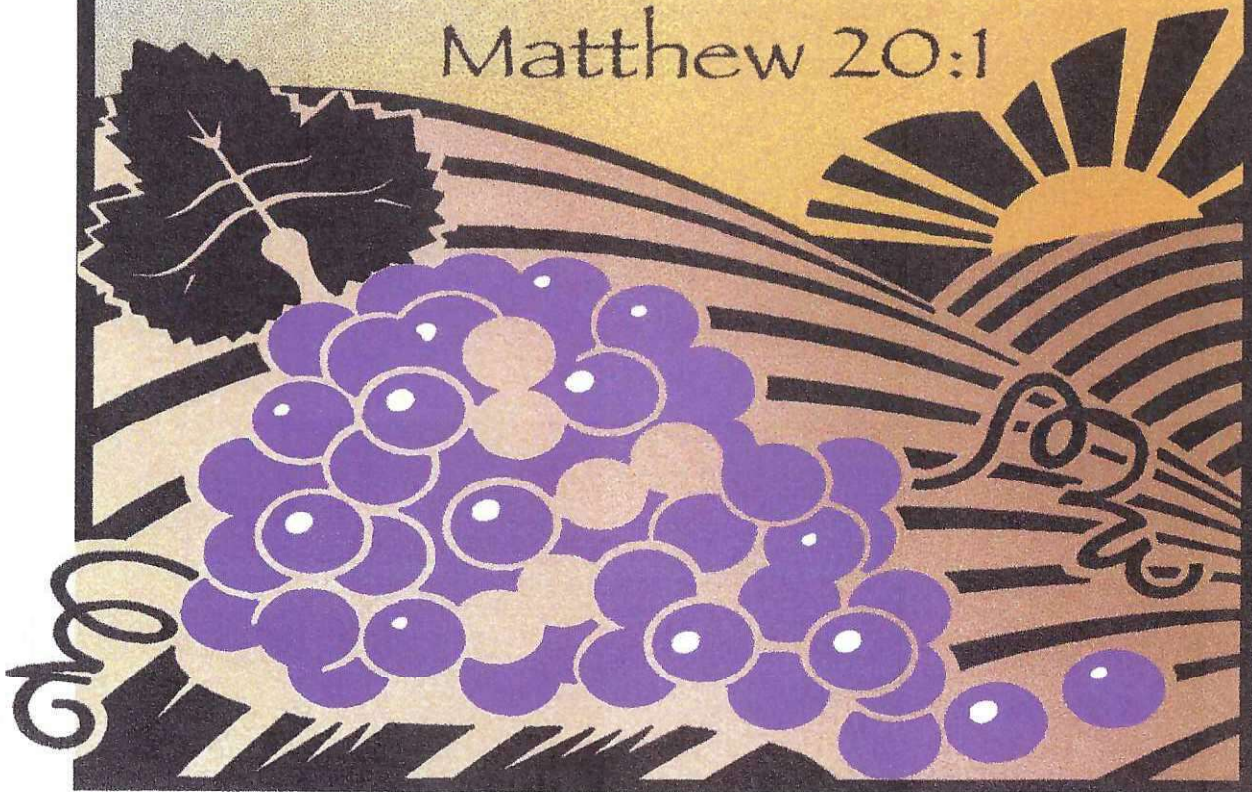


Christ Lutheran Church

Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
Hillsboro, Texas

"For the Kingdom
of Heaven
is like a landowner who
went out early in the
morning to hire laborers
for his vineyard."

Matthew 20:1



17th Sunday after Pentecost

THE WAY OF GRACE

September 20, 2026

TODAY'S MESSAGE: THE WAY OF GRACE

Getting something for nothing does not happen very often. People work to earn what they have. However, when it comes to our standing before God, the words of Holy Scripture are filled with grace – God's undeserved favor. God brings His grace to us through the Gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ, which we receive through His Word, through the water of baptism and through the very body and blood of Jesus in the Lord's Supper. Through these "means of grace", God freely grants us faith, forgiveness and everlasting life. God's grace comes to us generously, without any merit, work or effort of our own. Truly, God's ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8) and God's generosity is beyond human comprehension (Matthew 20:15).



In the Lord's Supper, Jesus gives us His body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins. The Lord's Supper is also a very sacred and intimate proclamation of fellowship among those who confess the same faith (doctrine, teachings) concerning God's Word and the Gospel of His Son Jesus Christ. Therefore, we practice close communion and ask that those who are not confirmed members of an LC-MS congregation receive instruction prior to receiving the Lord's Supper.

Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

1 Corinthians 11:27-29

Before receiving the Lord's Supper, we need to examine ourselves in the following way:

(1) Am I truly repentant (sorry) for all of my sins and do I truthfully desire to change my sinful life? (2) Do I believe that Jesus is my Lord and Savior and that in the Lord's Supper I receive His body and His blood for the forgiveness of all my sins? And (3) Have I been instructed in the Scriptures and have I publicly confessed my belief that the teachings of this church and the LC-MS are faithful to God's Word and the Gospel of His Son Jesus Christ?

If you have questions about what God's Word says concerning the Lord's Supper, please speak with the pastor and/or pick up our brochure titled "Fellowship in the Lord's Supper".

Those not confirmed are welcome to come to the altar, keep your hands down and folded and receive a blessing. For those who will be communing: **Non-alcoholic** wine is located in the center of each tray for those who have concerns with alcohol. We offer the **chalice** as well as individual cups. If you desire the chalice, do not take an individual cup from the tray and the pastor will serve you from the chalice. Christ is present in both to grant you forgiveness.

✠ ORDER OF SERVICE WITH COMMUNION ✠

[“Divine Service: Setting One” from LSB p.151]

Please silence – or turn off – your phones and refrain from using them during the service.

Welcome

Opening Hymn

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

LSB 686

**Come, Thou Fount of ev’ry blessing, tune my heart to sing Thy grace.
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.
While the hope of endless glory, fills my heart with joy and love,
Teach me ever to adore Thee. May I still Thy goodness prove.**

**Here I raise my Ebenezer, hither by Thy help I’ve come.
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wand’ring from the fold of God.
He, to rescue me from danger, interposed His precious blood.**

**Oh, to grace how great a debtor, daily I’m constrained to be.
Let that grace now like a fetter, bind my wand’ring heart to Thee:
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love.
Here’s my heart, O take and seal it. Seal it for Thy courts above.**

**Oh, that day when freed from sinning, I shall see Thy lovely face.
Clothed then in the blood washed linen, how I’ll sing Thy wondrous grace!
Come, my Lord, no longer tarry. Take my ransom’d soul away.
Send Thine angels soon to carry, me to realms of endless day.**

Invocation

Matthew 28:19b

P: In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: (sung) A - - - men

Confession of Sins

Hebrews 10:22; 1 John 1:8-9

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.**

P: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

ALL: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P: Almighty God in his mercy has given his Son to die for you and for his sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of the Word, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. *John 20:19-23*

C: *(sung)* **A - - - men.**

Entrance Psalm [ESV]

Psalm 27:1-9

P: The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

C: **The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?**

P: When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall.

C: **Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.**

P: One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.

C: **For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me high upon a rock. And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the LORD.**

P: Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me!

C: **You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, LORD, do I seek."**

P: Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help.

C: **Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation!**

ALL: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Hymn of Praise

“Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God”

LSB 712

**Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.
And all these things shall be added unto you. Allelu, alleluia!**

**Ask and it shall be given unto you. Seek and ye shall find.
Knock and the door shall be opened unto you. Allelu, alleluia!**

**Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word . . .
That proceeds from the mouth of the Lord. Allelu, alleluia!**

Salutation

2 Timothy 4:22

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *(sung)* And also with you.

P: Let us pray.

Opening Prayer

ALL: Gracious Heavenly Father, since we cannot stand before you relying on anything we have done, help us to trust in your abiding grace and to live according to your Word; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Old Testament Reading [ESV]

Isaiah 55:6-9

Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: We live by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4

I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

Yes, and I will rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **We live by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.** Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4

Gospel Reading [ESV]

Matthew 20:1-16

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 20th chapter.

C: *(sung)* **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] “For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’”

“And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’ So the last will be first, and the first last.”

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: *(sung)* Praise to You, O Christ.

Children’s Message

Sermon Hymn

“Seek Where You May to Find a Way”

LSB 557

**Seek where you may, to find a way, that leads to your salvation.
My heart is stilled. On Christ I build. He is the one foundation.
His Word is sure. His works endure. He overthrows, all evil foes.
Through Him I more than conquer.**

**Seek whom you may, to be your stay, none can redeem his brother.
All helpers failed. This man prevailed. The God-man and none other.
Our Servant-King, of whom we sing. We’re justified, because He died.
The guilty being guiltless.**

**Seek Him alone who did atone, who did your souls deliver.
O seek Him first, all you who thirst, for grace that fails you never.**

**In ev'ry need, seek Him indeed. To ev'ry heart, He will impart,
His blessings without measure.**

**My heart's delight, my crown most bright, O Christ, my joy forever.
Not wealth nor pride, nor fortune's tide, our bonds of love shall sever.
You are my Lord. Your precious Word, shall guide my way, and help me stay,
Forever in Your presence.**

Sermon

THE WAY OF GRACE

Confession of Faith

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And he will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Offertory (*sung*)

Psalm 116:12-13, 17-19

What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?

I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call on the name of the Lord.

I will take the cup of salvation and will call on the name of the Lord.

I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people,

In the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

Offering *(Greet those seated near you. You may say, "The peace of the Lord be with you.")*

[If you are a guest, please feel under no obligation to give anything, but receive this worship service as our gift to you. For the members and friends of this congregation, our mission and ministry is dependent upon your generous giving, a significant act of our worship.]

Offering Prayer

[LSB 781 (v.1-2)]

P: We give Thee but Thine own, whatever the gift may be. All that we have is Thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from Thee.

C: **May we Thy bounties thus, as stewards true receive. And gladly, as Thou blessest us, to Thee our first-fruits give! Amen.**

Prayers

✝ THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION ✝

VISITORS and MEMBERS

Please read the message inside the first page of this bulletin re: participation in the Lord's Supper.

P: The Lord be with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

C: *(sung)* **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

Colossians 3:1

C: *(sung)* **We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Psalms 136

C: *(sung)* **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

P: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who on this day overcame death and the grave and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify your glorious name, evermore praising you and saying:

Sanctus *(sung)*

Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of pow'r and might. Heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

ALL: 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.

Words of Our Lord

Mt. 26:26-28; Mk. 14:22-24; Lk. 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-25

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread . . .

In the same way also he took the cup after supper . . .

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

John 20:19

C: *(sung)* A - men.

Agnus Dei *(sung)*

John 1:29

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world. Have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world. Have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world. Grant us peace.

Distribution Hymns

"Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me"

LSB 761

Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee.
Let the water and the blood, from Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure: Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.

Not the labors of my hands, can fulfill Thy Law's demands.
Could my zeal no respite know. Could my tears forever flow.
All for sin could not atone. Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring. Simply to Thy cross I cling.
Naked, come to Thee for dress. Helpless, look to thee for grace.
Foul, I to the fountain fly. Wash me, Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath. When mine eyelids close in death.
When I soar to worlds unknown. See Thee on Thy judgment throne.
Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee.

**Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness, my beauty are, my glorious dress.
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed, with joy shall I lift up my head.**

**Bold shall I stand in that great day, cleansed and redeemed, no debt to pay.
Fully absolved through these I am, from sin and fear, from guilt and shame.**

**Lord, I believe Thy precious blood, which at the mercy seat of God,
Pleads for the captives liberty, was also shed in love for me.**

**Lord, I believe, were sinners more, than sands upon the ocean shore.
Thou hast for all a ransom paid, for all a full atonement made.**

**When from the dust of death I rise, to claim my mansion in the skies,
This then shall be my only plea: Jesus hath lived and died for me.**

**Jesus, be endless praise to Thee, whose boundless mercy hath for me,
For me, and all Thy hands have made, an everlasting ransom paid.**

**The Gospel shows the Father’s grace, who sent His Son to save our race.
Proclaims how Jesus lived and died, that we might thus be justified.**

**It sets the Lamb before our eyes, who made the atoning sacrifice,
And calls the souls with guilt oppressed, to come and find eternal rest.**

**It brings the Savior’s righteousness, to robe our souls in royal dress.
From all our guilt it brings release, and gives the troubled conscience peace.**

**It is the pow’r of God to save, from sin and Satan and the grave.
It works the faith which firmly clings, to all the treasures which it brings.**

**It bears to all the tidings glad, and bids their hearts no more be sad.
The weary, burdened souls it cheers, and banishes their guilty fears.**

**May we in faith its message learn, nor thanklessly its blessings spurn.
May we in faith its truth confess, and praise the Lord, our righteousness.**

“By Grace I’m Saved”

LSB 566

**By grace I’m saved, grace free and boundless. My soul, believe and doubt it not.
Why stagger at this word of promise? Has Scripture ever falsehood taught?
No! Then this word must true remain: By grace you too will life obtain.**

**By grace! None dare lay claim to merit. Our works and conduct have no worth.
God in His love sent our Redeemer, Christ Jesus, to this sinful earth.
His death did for our sins atone, and we are saved by grace alone.**

**By grace God’s Son, our only Savior, came down to earth to bear our sin.
Was it because of your own merit, that Jesus died your soul to win?
No, it was grace and grace alone, that brought Him from His heav’nly throne.**

**By grace! This ground of faith is certain. As long as God is true, it stands.
What saints have penned by inspiration, what in His Word our God commands.
Our faith in what our God has done, depends on grace – grace through His Son.**

**By grace to timid hearts that tremble, in tribulation’s furnace tried,
By grace, in spite of fear and trouble, the Father’s heart is open wide.
Where could I help and strength secure, if grace were not my anchor sure?**

**By grace! On this I’ll rest when dying. In Jesus’ promise I rejoice.
For though I know my heart’s condition, I also know my Savior’s voice.
My heart is glad, all grief has flown, since I am saved by grace alone.**

Song of Thanksgiving

“Thank the Lord”

Psalm 100

**Thank the Lord and sing His praise. Tell everyone what He has done. Let all
who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear His name. He recalls His promises
and leads His people forth in joy with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

ALL: We give thanks to you, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore you that of your mercy you would strengthen us through the same in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Benediction

Numbers 6:24-26

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

C: *(sung)* A - men, A - men, A - - men.

Closing Hymn

“Amazing Grace”

LSB 744

**Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found. Was blind but now I see!**

**The Lord has promised good to me. His Word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be, as long as life endures.**

**Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come.
His grace has brought me safe thus far. His grace will lead me home.**

**Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail, and mortal life shall cease,
Amazing grace shall then prevail, in heaven's joy and peace.**

**When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise, than when we'd first begun.**

WELCOME TO CHRIST LUTHERAN! We are a FAMILY LIVING and GROWING in God's Word, sharing God's love by TELLING others about Christ and SERVING them in His name.
