

The 9th Sunday after Pentecost

July 26th, 2026 ~ 8:30am



+ Friedens Evangelical Lutheran Church +
2451 Saucon Valley Rd. Center Valley, PA 18034
Office: 610-865-4144

The Rev. Lisa K. Borrell, Pastor ~ 610-762-2139
Quinette Brucker, Dir. of Music/Organist
610-428-3838

WELCOME

() Please stand as you are comfortable and able*

Prelude Music

Welcome & Announcements

*Opening Litany (from the Church of Scotland)

P: Lord, we give You thanks for the Word that You hide like a treasure in our hearts, for the leaven which is able to infuse every area of our lives, for the seed that is able to grow into a mighty plant.

C: Help us to value that which You have given us to make following Christ the most important thing in our daily lives, to concentrate above all upon doing your will and sharing your love and the good news You have proclaimed through Jesus.

P: We give You thanks for the new things that You continue to do in our midst.

C: May the coming of your kingdom be like the mustard seed that grows into greatness, and like the leaven that mixes with the grain until the whole becomes greater, to the praise of the triune God, who lives forevermore. Amen.

*Opening Hymn #533 “Open Now Thy Gates ...”

*The Greeting and Prayer of the Day

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. ~ 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.**

The First Reading ~ 1 Kings 3: 5-12

Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people well.

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.

Psalms 119 (selective verses, read responsively)

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.**

The Second Reading ~ Romans 8: 26-39

These words celebrate the depth of God's actions for us. Through Christ's death for us and the activity of the Spirit praying for us, we are fused to God's love poured out in Jesus Christ. Nothing, not even death itself, is able to separate us from such incredible divine love.

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 God 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 God predestined he also called, and those whom God called he also justified, and those whom God justified he also glorified.

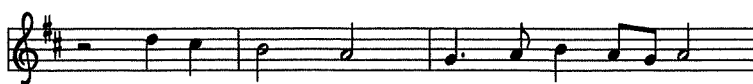
³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn?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

*The Gospel Acclamation (sung by all)



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

*The Holy Gospel ~ Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52

Throughout Matthew's Gospel, Jesus and His disciples proclaim the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near!" Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people's lives.

The Holy Gospel according to the 13th chapter of St. Matthew.

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 Jesus 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 Jesus 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

***Hymn #793**

“Be Thou My Vision”

***The Apostles’ Creed (professed together)**

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

***The Prayers of Intercession**

God of grace ... Hear our prayer.

Blessing of the Communion Elements

The Lord’s Prayer (traditional ~ prayed by all)

+ Communal Reception of the Sacrament +

This morning, the sacrament will be distributed by method of intinction; that is, the Pastor will dip the wafer into the chalice, hand it to the recipient so that they may place it in their own mouth.

Post-Communion Blessing and Benediction

P: Beloved of God, as you leave this place to live out your faith, may you sow seeds of love, mercy, and truth, trusting that the Spirit strengthens your roots in Christ. Amen.

*Closing Hymn #574

“Here I Am, Lord”

*Dismissal

Go in peace and serve the Lord in love. ♥

Thanks be to God!

Postlude Music

No formal offering is taking during the worship service. Two plates are located out in the narthex hallway to receive your financial gifts to Friedens. Thank you.

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Special thanks to Kay Sheerer for serving as our lector and to Drew Wagner for serving as our live stream tech.



To remember in prayer ... Ronald Black, Bob Brown, Shauna and Dan Brucker, Richard Eisenhart, Faye, Hope Geary, Harlan, Jeanne Logan, Lori Remaly, Barb Shaneberger, Kathleen Tuomela May, Darrell Tuomela, Joe Ulmer, Leon Warmkessel, George Weiser, people living in war-torn countries, victims of oppression, injustice, violence, and natural disasters, and other dear ones we name before God. ☩



The altar flowers have been sponsored by Carolyn Tuomela Wallace in memory of loved ones.



Longtime member, George Weiser, is currently undergoing chemo treatments. Please consider sending him a “thinking about you” card in care of his daughter, Suzanne Gausman, 618 Deatrich Ave., Middletown, PA 17057. Many thanks!



Please note ... that even if you go on vacation this summer, the church does not. Our financial commitments to staff, building, outreach, and mission continue. Please remember Friedens with your regular offerings. ☩