

The 18th Sunday after Pentecost

September 27th, 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

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+ WELCOME +

() Please stand as you are comfortable and able*

Prelude Music

Welcome and Announcements

***Opening Litany** (from Liturgy Alive)

P: We have heard Jesus' disturbing statement that notorious sinners may be ahead of us in entering the kingdom of God.

C: **Let these hard words wake us up from our self-contentment and make us aware that our life too is a mixture of "Yes" and "No".**

P: We all experience moments of honest seeking to do what is right, mixed together with moments of cowardice and reluctance.

C: **Lord, forgive us our hesitations in living up to the Gospel. Help us to serve You with generous love and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

***Opening Hymn #526**

"God is Here"

***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. ~ God of love, giver of life, You know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The 1st Reading ~ Ezekiel 18: 1-4, 25-32

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

¹ The word of the Lord came to me: ² What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? ³ As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴ Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins who shall die.

²⁵ Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶ When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed, they shall die. ²⁷ Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸ Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰ Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹ Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 25 (selective verses, read responsively)

¹ To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

² **My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

³ Let none who look to you be put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.



⁴ **Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.**

⁵ Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

⁶ **Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.**

⁷ Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your
goodness, O LORD.

⁸ **You are gracious and upright, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

⁹ You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.

The 2nd Reading ~ Philippians 2: 1-13

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

¹ If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, ⁸ he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name that is above every other name, ¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own

salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

***The Gospel Acclamation (sung by all)**



***The Holy Gospel ~ Matthew 21: 23-32**

After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

The Holy Gospel according to the 21st chapter of St. Matthew.

Glory to You, O Lord.

²³ When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴ Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’” ²⁶ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸ “What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’” ²⁹ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the

prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For 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 after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ.**

The Sermon

*Hymn #818 “O Master, Let Me Walk With You”

*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

Hear us, O God ... **Your mercy is great.**

Anthem “The Lord Now Sends Us Forth”

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: The God of all grace bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

***Closing Hymn #517**

“Lord, Keep Us Steadfast”

***Dismissal**

Go in peace and serve the Lord in love. ♥

Thanks be to God!

Postlude Music



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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.

*thank
you*

... to Alicia Baird for serving as our lector

... to Drew Wagner for serving as our live stream tech



The altar flowers have been sponsored by Carolyn Tuomela Wallace in loving memory of her dear grandparents, Aili and Toimi Tuomela.



To remember in prayer ... Ronald Black, Bob Brown, Shauna and Dan Brucker, Caitlin Carfagno, Richard Eisenhart, Faye, 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. ✝

Reminder to all Confirmation youth & parents ... a brief orientation will be held tonight in Friedens' sanctuary at 6:30pm. Important info & Class schedules will be shared!

Join us for 8:30am worship on Sunday, October 11th when the "Good News Traveling Band" (Gospel singers) will be sharing an uplifting musical message! ~ Please invite family members and friends to come with you that day as well.



Friedens will be having a coat collection throughout the month of October to benefit the clients of Betty Lou's Pantry. Please bring new or used coats (in good condition) to church & place in the bins.

Have you marked your calendars for the upcoming outdoor festivities on **Sat., October 3rd** from **10am-2:30pm** in our lower lot? Come & enjoy delicious apple crisp/dumplings, bake sale, other foods, Bingo, crafts, flea market, pumpkin decorating, and more!