

Rally Day
September 20, 2026



Divine Service 9am

St. James Lutheran Church
1213 US Hwy 22
Phillipsburg, NJ

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Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Welcome to St. James!

Founded in 1750, the year 2025 celebrated our 275th anniversary of being God's church. We're so glad you're here! We pray you feel warmly welcomed as we gather to celebrate God's unconditional love in Jesus Christ. He who is the same, yesterday, today, and forever!

If you are visiting today: Thank you for joining us today! If you have any questions, please ask! Pastor Levi and the members of our church-community would be glad to help you out. Please sign the guest book or complete a hospitality card located in the pew racks.

Following along in the bulletin: *indicates the congregation stands. In our liturgical worship, **bold words** are spoken by the congregation. LBW refers to content found in the green hymnbook *Lutheran Book of Worship*. WOV refers to content found in the blue hymnbook *With One Voice*.

Presiding Minister
Assisting Minister
Musician

The Rev. Levi Q. Powers
Dan Gulick
Dave Miller

I. GATHERING

*CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

In the name of the Father,
and of the ✝ Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Most merciful God,

We confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. 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. 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.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake God forgives you all our sins. As a called and ordained servant of the church of Christ, and by Christ's authority alone, I forgive you, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN: WOV 777 – Give Me Jesus**

***GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE: Glory to God



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



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.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

II. WORD

FIRST READING: Jonah 3:10-4:11

A reading from Jonah.

¹⁰ When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

^{4:1} But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. ³ And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴ And the Lord said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵ Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶ The Lord God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." ¹⁰ Then the Lord said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?"

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 145:1-8

¹ I will exalt you, my God and king,
and bless your name forever and ever.

² **Every day will I bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.**

³ Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised!

There is no end to your greatness.

⁴ **One generation shall praise your works to another
and shall declare your power.**

⁵ I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty
and all your marvelous works.

⁶ **They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts,
and I will recount your greatness.**

⁷ They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.

⁸ **The Lord is gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

SECOND READING: Philippians 1:21-30

A reading from Philippians.

²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, ²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.

²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ and in no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹ For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



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



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

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 20:1-16

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ ⁹When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, ‘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.’ ¹³But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY: LBW 290 – There is a Wideness in God’s Mercy**

APOSTLES’ CREED

**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 into hell.
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.**

*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends: “...Hear us O God, **your mercy is great.**”

The presiding minister concludes the prayers: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

*Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

*The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ’s peace, and may say,
“Peace be with you,” or similar words.*

The assembly is seated.

III. THE LORD'S SUPPER

OFFERTORY



*Scan the QR Code to give electronically.
An offering plate is in the back of the
sanctuary if you wish to give check or
cash. You are welcome to give to the
ministry of St. James Lutheran Church
freely and spontaneously. There is no
guilt or shame. If you do give, give with
a cheerful heart.*

*OFFERING VERSE: ELW 184 – Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful

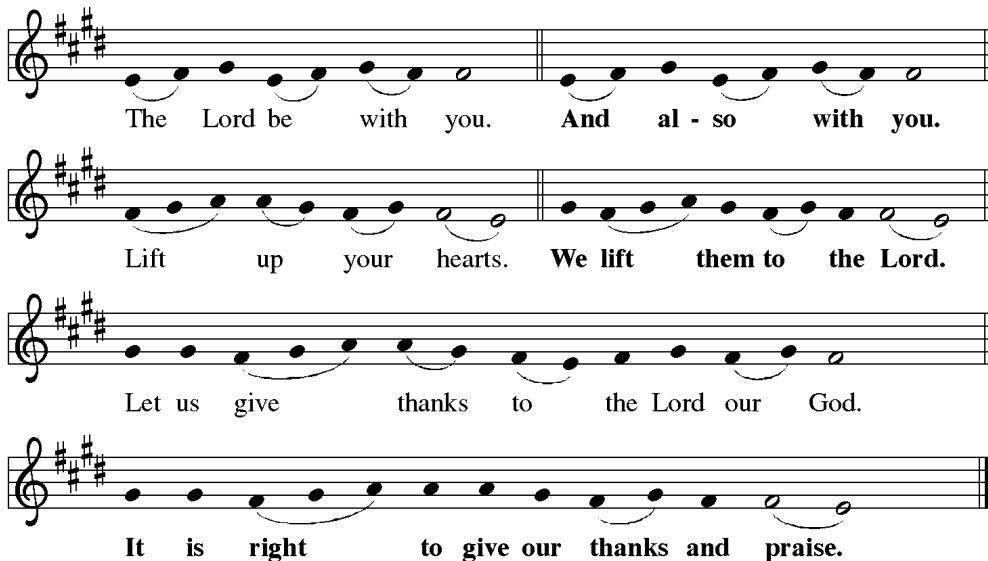
Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of
all; u - nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble
with your pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

*OFFERING PRAYER

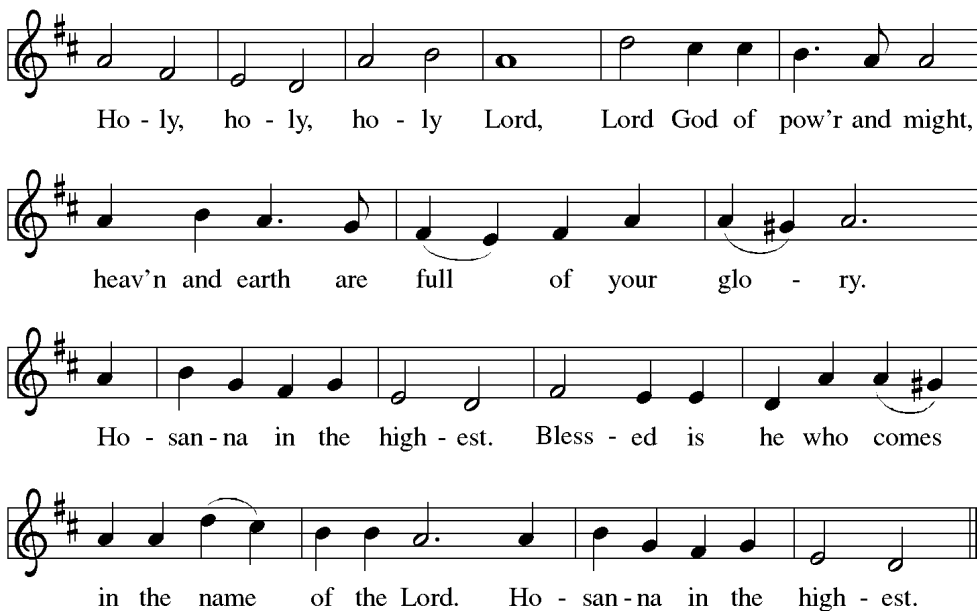
Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

Together with the bread and the cup we receive the body and the blood of Christ. All who are baptized into Christ and believe that he is really present in, with, and under the bread and wine for the forgiveness of their sins are welcome to join us at the altar. Pastor will distribute the wafer for you to eat. An assistant will hand you a plastic cup to drink from. The first chalice offered has grape juice. The second chalice has wine. If you need communion brought to you, please let an usher know. Adults and children not yet communing are welcome to come forward with their arms crossed for a blessing.



It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...**Here the minister continues with the preface for the day, concluding:** ...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
 heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 Ho - san-na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san-na in the high - est.

***THE WORDS OF GIFT**

In the night in which he was betrayed,
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
 and gave it for all to drink, saying:
 This cup is the new testament in my blood,
 shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

***THE LORD'S PRAYER**

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.**

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

COMMUNION

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say
The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
and each person may respond
Amen.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on

us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have

mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the

sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

***POST COMMUNION SONG: ELW 205 – Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise**



Thank-ful hearts and voic-es raise; tell ev-'ry-one what God has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re-joyce and bear Christ's ho - ly name.



Send us with your prom - is - es, O God, and lead us forth in



joy with shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia.

***POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

IV. SENDING

***BLESSING**

Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN: * LBW 406 – Take My Life, that I May Be

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Sunday, September 20: Rally Day** – Join us for fun for *all ages*. Truly an all-congregation event. We will have tabletop activities, marshmallow & pretzel stick hammers dipped in chocolate and sprinkles, read a children's book about Martin Luther, and have a pop quiz about Martin Luther with fabulous prizes. We will be partnering with the Social Ministry Committee and collecting sweatpants for the Phillipsburg High and Middle schools during this time.
- **Wednesday, September 24:** Fellowship at Sharky's 4pm-6pm
- **NO** Bible Study, there will be a bible study hiatus. Keep an eye out for other Bible study opportunities in the future.

UPCOMING

- Pastor Levi is on vacation from September 21st through the 27th. If any pastoral care needs arise while he is away, please contact Bob Agans at 908-295-1196 and he will connect you with the on call pastor.
- **Tuesday, October 6:** "Faith, Family, & Food," 5:30-7pm. A time for families of elementary and preschool children to grow in faith together. Eat 5:30-6. Read a book together, sing together, learn and play together at 6-7pm. Invite anyone with kiddos.
- Social Ministry Donation Collections for September: Simmer and Share
Focus items: Soups with meat, Chili, Stew.
 - Also collecting sweatpants for the Phillipsburg High School and Middle school students until October 11th.

THIS WEEK'S WORSHIP HELPERS(9/20)

Usher/Greeter: Bob Agans

Lector: Jamie McRoberts

Altar Guild: Barbara & Jim Sikra

Tellers: Carol & Lois Steible

NEXT SUNDAY'S WORSHIP HELPERS(9/27)

Usher/Greeter: Doris Lauer

Lector: Harvey Walters

Altar Guild: Steve Stocker

Tellers: Sandy Wismer & Jon Slaton

Let us remember in prayer: Jake, Nikki, Bruce, Barry, Debbie, Barbara, Rose, Kelly, Nancy, Kevin, Jerry, Wonda, Keith, Patrick, John, Sara, Gary and those unable to attend church service; Mae, Janet, Janice, Alayne, Esther and Elsie.