Welcome to Christ Lutheran Church & Preschool

September 20, 2026

17th Sunday after Pentecost

Rev. Paul Pfeffer

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Member of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
(ELCA – www.elca.org*)*

All Are Welcome – All the Time!

You do not need to be a member of this church or Lutheran to participate in any part of worship. If you wish to take communion, we ask that you desire a relationship with Jesus. His body and blood were given and shed for you.

Christ Lutheran Church & PreSchool is a community committed to the work of equity and inclusion, bringing justice and support for all of God's beloveds. We welcome those who are seeking God's love and grace for the first time or as a life-long believer. We welcome because Jesus shows us how to welcome,
regardless of race, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, economic resources, relationship status, health challenges or anything else that too often divides us. It is in our welcome which we commit ourselves to being an anti-racist space, a space where we seek daily to deepen our work of inclusion in the life of our church. Our unity is in Christ. All are welcome here.

CHIMES

ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRAYER CONCERNS, THANKSGIVINGS

After chimes, Kathy Davis will take requests to add to the Prayers of Intercession,
and provide Pastor with the updated sheet.

INVOCATION

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

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you
and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

– Silence for reflection –

Most merciful God,

We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.
We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed,
by what we have done and 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.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin,
and made us alive together in Christ. By grace we have been saved.
In the name of + Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven.
Almighty God strengthen us with power through the Holy Spirit
that Christ may live in our hearts. **Amen.**

SONG: Kyrie Eleison, Setting 8 (“Lord, have mercy”)

Printed on bulletin insert or in hymnal
LINK: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIfuw0iMILA&t=1s

Kyrie eleison, on our world and on our way. Kyrie eleison every day.

For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the unity of all.
For this holy house, for all who worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord…
Let us pray to the Lord!
Kyrie eleison, on our world and on our way. Kyrie eleison every day.

That we may live out, your impassioned response,
to the hungry and the poor.
That we may live out, truth and justice and grace, let us pray to the Lord.
Let us pray to the Lord!
Kyrie eleison, on our world and on our way. Kyrie eleison every day.

For peace in our hearts, for peace in our homes, for friends and family.
For life and for love, for our work and our play, let us pray to the Lord.
Let us pray to the Lord!
Kyrie eleison, on our world and on our way. Kyrie eleison every day.

For your Spirit to guide, that you center our lives, in the water and the Word.
That you nourish our souls, with your body and blood, let us pray to the Lord.
Let us pray to the Lord!
Kyrie eleison, on our world and on our way. Kyrie eleison every day.

GREETING

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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own ability, grant us your merciful judgement, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

READING – Jonah 3:10 through 4:11

When God saw what (the people of Nineveh) 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.

But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. 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. And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.”

And the Lord said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” 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.

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. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered.

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.”

But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” 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. 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.**

RESPONSIVE READING – Psalm 145:1-8

I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.

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

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised;
his greatness is unsearchable.

One generation shall extol your works to another
and shall declare your mighty acts.

They will recount the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and on your wondrous works I will meditate.

They will proclaim the might of your awesome deeds,
and I will declare your greatness.

They shall celebrate the fame of your abundant goodness
and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.

The Lord is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

READING – Philippians 1:21-30

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. 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 for you. 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, so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.

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 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. For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, 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.**

– *Please stand as you are able* –

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (SUNG) – ELW 172

Halle, halle, halle – lujah. Halle, halle, halle – lujah.
Halle, halle, halle – lujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah!

THE GOSPEL – Matthew 20:1-16

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

(Jesus said:) “For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went.

When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. And 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?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’

When 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.’ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received a denarius.

Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, 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 the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

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

SERMON: Rev. Paul Pfeffer

SONG: Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound, #779

Printed on bulletin insert or in hymnal

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.

> 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
> how precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!

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

> The Lord has promised good to me; his word my hope secures;
> He will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.

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.

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 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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION *(on separate sheet)*

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

PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**
– *Please share a greeting or sign of peace –*

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks & praise.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION *(Presider's book on altar)*

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.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION AT THE FRONT

All are welcome to receive the Real Presence of Christ in the bread and wine of Holy Communion. You do not need to be a member of this church or Lutheran to receive the sacrament. We ask that you desire a relationship with Jesus Christ. Those who are interested will be invited by an usher to come up the center aisle to the front to select a single-serving Communion kit from the tray, or to receive a blessing. Then return to your seat via the side aisle to open the kit and partake in Communion. An usher will offer a basket to collect the container. *For those worshipping at home, please consider joining in Holy Communion by taking a bit of bread or cracker and a sip of wine or juice.* **All are welcome.**

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

BENEDICTION

May the Lord bless you and keep you.
May the Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you.
May the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

SONG: Shine, Jesus, Shine, #671

Printed on bulletin insert or in hymnal

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow, flood the nation with grace and mercy;
Send forth your Word, Lord, and let there by light!

1. Lord, the light of your love is shining,
in the midst of the darkness, shining;
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us.
Set us free by the truth you now bring us.
Shine on me. Shine on me. ***Shine, Jesus, shine…***

2. As we gaze on your kingly brightness,
so our faces display your likeness,
ever changing from glory to glory,
mirrored here, may our lives tell your story.
Shine on me. Shine on me. ***Shine, Jesus, shine…***

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Thank you for your presence!

Please enjoy refreshments and conversation.

Please take a moment to greet and introduce yourself to our worship partners of South Lake Chinese Christian Church.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **We Welcome South Lake Chinese Christian Church** – We continue to worship at 9:30 a.m. while South Lake offers education time; South Lake will worship after us. Please hold this partnership in your prayers that we may all worship, praise and serve as God intends.
- **PreSchool** – Keep the families and staff in your prayers. Programs starting at age 2.5. Learn more at PreSchool.ChristlutheranVH.org or email info@PreschoolChristLutheranVH.org
- **Meals in a Bag** – 2 gal ziplocks with all the nonperishable ingredients needed to make a hearty meal – bags and ingredient list/recipe cards available in the Narthex or on our website. We will provide these as needed and encourage everyone to have a couple to hand out.
- **Stock the Pantries! – Non-Perishables Needed.** Bring your donations of nonperishable food, paper goods, hygiene supplies, etc. and we will deliver to local pantries, which need all they help they can get. Also collecting fresh milk, eggs, meat, produce for specific families.Thanks!
- **Sue's Pantry** – Sue has moved her pantry to a space in Arlington Heights. We will continue to collect anything needed to keep a home and family clean. Special request for rice, pasta, Mac & cheese, tuna, canned chicken, and zip lock bags with after-school snacks.
- **Here to help.** Do you or someone you know need food or support, especially with the loss of benefits? Reach out to the church at ChristLutheranVH@aol.com or 847-367-5787**.**
- **Alert Whistles & Rights Cards** – On the bulletin table. To use or share as needed.
- **Donating to Victims of Flood, Earthquake, Fire, Drought, War** – ELCA's Lutheran Disaster Response is one of the oldest, most effective and most respected organizations for getting money where it can be put to good use. Donate at ELCA.org. There is also a link on our website under "WORK."
- **Scouting! – Keep our Scouts in Prayer** – Please keep the youth and adults in your prayers. Christ Lutheran is the Charter Organization for Pack 273 & Troop 273. Programs for girls and boys ages Kindergarten through high school, building skills, making connections and having fun. Younger kids: committee.chair@Pack273VH.org. For older kids, email committeechair@troop273vh.net. Thanks to Holly & Bill Jones and their volunteers for their efforts in leading the groups. Thanks for supporting our Pack/Troop 273!
- **Love INC** – Housewares, nonperishables and volunteers. Know a family in need of a bundle of clothes or housewares? Give the details to Natalie! (https://loveinclakecounty.org/)
- **COOL Ministries** – We support the COOL pantry in Waukegan with non-perishables. Collection bins in hallway or give online. (CoolMinistries.org)
- **Prayer concerns?** Consider reaching out so that our network of Prayer Warriors can pray. You may remain anonymous. Email ChristLutheranVH@aol.com with your request. Would you join with us in prayer? Send an email to be included on the prayer mailing list. The task is simple-but-powerful – when time permits, open the email and read/pray with us.
- **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.** Thank you for being part of this community of faith. If you would like to support our service, we welcome donations, which can be provided by credit card or Paypal through the link at the bottom of our webpage, ChristLutheranVH.org. Thank you!