

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

16th Sunday after Pentecost

September 13th, 2026

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

PRELUDE

WELCOME

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
who pours love into our hearts
and healing upon the earth.

Amen.

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,
**we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.**

Creation groans from overuse.

Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.

Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.

**Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love
to others.**

Turn our hearts back to you.

Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.

**Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.**

Amen.

Hear this good news:

We have peace with God through ✠ Jesus Christ,
in whom there is no condemnation,
but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.
Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

Amen.

In Thee Is Gladness



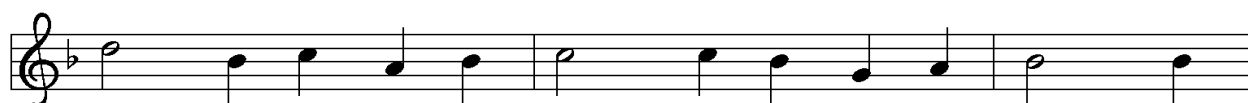
1 In thee is glad-ness a-mid all sad-ness, Je-sus, sun-shine of my
 2 Je-sus is ours! . . We fear no pow-ers, not of earth or sin or



heart. By thee are giv-en the gifts of heav-en, thou the
 death. He sees and bless-es in worst dis-tress-es; he can



true re-deem-er art. Our souls thou wak-est; our bonds thou
 change them with a breath. Where-fore the sto-ry tell of his



break-est. Who trusts thee sure-ly has built se-cure-ly
 glo-ry with heart and voic-es; all heav'n re-joic-es



and stands for-ev-er: Al-le-lu-ia! Our hearts are
 in him for-ev-er: Al-le-lu-ia! We shout for



pin-ing to see thy shin-ing, dy-ing or liv-ing,
 glad-ness, tri-umph o'er sad-ness, love him and praise him



to thee are cleav-ing; naught can us sev-er: Al-le-lu-ia!
 and still shall raise him glad hymns for-ev-er: Al-le-lu-ia!

***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**

Let us pray.

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

A reading from Genesis:

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

A Word for God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 103:[1-7]8-13

Lord, you are full of compassion and mercy. (Ps. 103:8)

¹ Bless the Lord, | O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's | holy name.

² **Bless the Lord, | O my soul,**
and forget not | all God's benefits—

³ who forgives | all your sins
and heals all | your diseases;

⁴ **who redeems your life | from the grave**
and crowns you with steadfast | love and mercy; R

⁵ who satisfies your desires | with good things
 so that your youth is renewed | like an eagle's.

⁶ **O Lord, you provide | vindication
 and justice for all who | are oppressed.**

⁷ You made known your | ways to Moses
 and your works to the chil- | dren of Israel.

] ⁸ **Lord, you are full of compas- | sion and mercy,
 slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love; R**

⁹ you will not al- | ways accuse us,
 nor will you keep your an- | ger forever.

¹⁰ **You have not dealt with us according | to our sins,
 nor repaid us according to | our iniquities.**

¹¹ For as the heavens are high a- | bove the earth,
 so great is your steadfast love for | those who fear you.

¹² **As far as the east is | from the west,
 so far have you removed our transgres- | sions from us.**

¹³ As a father has compassion | for his children,
 so you have compassion for those who fear | you, O Lord. **R**

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

A reading from Romans:

Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷ For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your

brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

¹² So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

A Word for God’s people.

Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Gospel Acclamation

Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Verses may be sung by a leader. Then the alleluia is repeated.

Music: “Alleluia 7,” Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994, and the Taizé Community
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***GOSPEL – Matthew 18:21-35**

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Peter came and said to [Jesus,] “Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²² Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³ “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

Here I Am, Lord



1 "I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.
 2 "I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo - ple's pain.
 3 "I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.



All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
 I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way.
 I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.



I, who made the stars of night, I will make their dark-ness bright.
 I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.
 Fin-est bread I will pro-vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?"
 I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?"
 I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?"

Refrain

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you



call-ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you



lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

Text: Daniel L. Schutte, b. 1946

Music: HERE I AM, LORD, Daniel L. Schutte

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***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.**

PRAYER REQUESTS

Calm to the Waves

Calm to the waves. Calm to the wind. Je - sus whis - pers, "Peace, be still."

Balm to our hearts. Fears at an end. In still - ness, hear his voice.

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953

Music: CALM SEAS, Thomas Pavlechko, b. 1962

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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

A brief silence.

Move your church throughout the world away from judging and despising others. Lead us to embody the forgiveness you have given us in Jesus. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

The endless beauty of your creation reminds us of your mercy. Protect those who care for farms and ranches. Guide those who lead us to wonder at your creation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Raise up leaders to hold all in authority accountable for any misuse of the power entrusted to them. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Calm the fears of all in need with your promises. Compassionately free the lives of any who feel bound by their failures. Remember your children in need. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Ground this congregation, our sister congregation Covenant Hospital Pastoral Care Department in Saginaw with Deacon Kathy Bonn and FCC in the welcome you show us in forgiving our sin. Inspire each of us to welcome others for your honor and glory. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

With you is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember all those who have gone before us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PEACE The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING PERFORMANCE: "A Round of Praise" by Doulgas Wagner performed by Trinity Choir

Eat This Bread
Jesus Christ, Bread of Life

Refrain

“Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and nev - er be hun - gry.
OR Je - sus Christ, bread of life, those who come to you will not hun - ger.

Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst.”
Je - sus Christ, ris - en Lord, those who trust in you will not thirst.

Text: Taizé Community

Music: BERTHIER, Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994

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***OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray:

Sustaining God,

with this bread and cup,

you nourish us with mercy and abundant life.

By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world.

Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love,

following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.

Amen.

*** WORDS TO LOVE BY**

Canticle of the Sun

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor, and all blessings.
To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no man is worthy to mention Your name.

Praised be You, my Lord, with all your creatures;
especially Brother Sun, who is the day, and through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor,
and bears a likeness to You, Most High One.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars;
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene,
and every kind of weather through which You give sustenance to Your creatures.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,
which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night;
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth,
who sustains us and governs us and who produces
varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Praised be You, my Lord,
through those who give pardon for Your love,
and bear infirmity and tribulation.

Blessed are those who endure in peace
for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.

Praised be You, my Lord,
through our Sister Bodily Death,
from whom no living man can escape.

Woe to those who die in mortal sin.
Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will,
for the second death shall do them no harm.

Praise and bless my Lord,
and give Him thanks,
and serve Him with great humility.

Amen.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray...

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the Kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

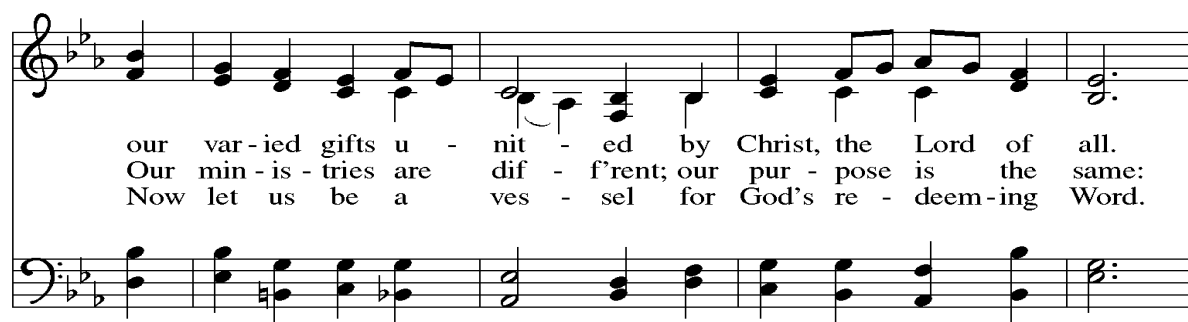
***BLESSING**

The God of love
draw you into full accord and one mind,
in the body of Christ Jesus.
Amen.

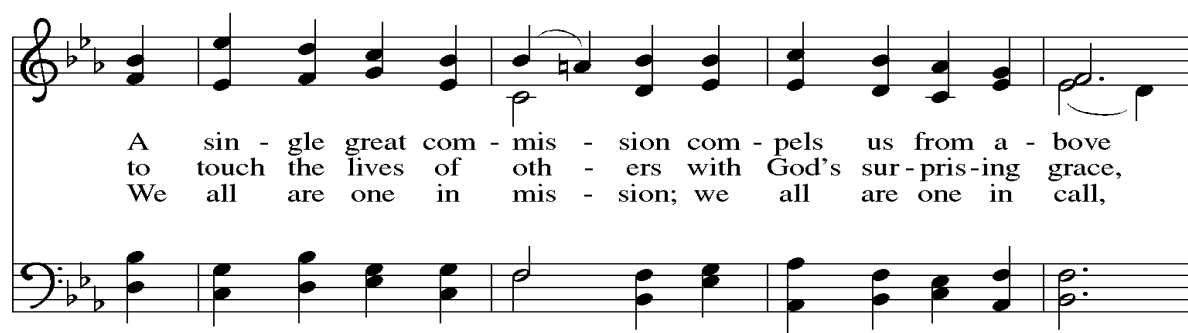
***SENDING HYMN We All Are One in Mission v 1,2,3 ELW 576**



1 We all are one in mis - sion; we all are one in call,
 2 We all are called for ser - vice, to wit - ness in God's name.
 3 Now let us be u - nit - ed, and let our song be heard.



our var - ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.
 Our min - is - tries are dif - f'rent; our pur - pose is the same:
 Now let us be a ves - sel for God's re - deem - ing Word.



A sin - gle great com - mis - sion com - pels us from a - bove
 to touch the lives of oth - ers with God's sur - pris - ing grace,
 We all are one in mis - sion; we all are one in call,



to plan and work to - geth - er that all may know Christ's love.
 so ev - 'ry folk and na - tion may feel God's warm em - brace.
 our var - ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.

Text: Rusty Edwards, b. 1955

Music: KUORTANE, Finnish folk tune; arr. hymnal version

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***DISMISSAL**

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

2055 E. Columbia Avenue

Battle Creek, MI 49014

269-963-5356

tlcbattlecreek.org

Welcome! We believe God created all of humanity in God's image. Since every person is made in the image of God, every person is part of God's family. Whatever your gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, race, income, mental or physical ability, age, religious background, nationality, or political ideology, you are welcome here. Diversity of skills, gifts, talents, opinions, and experiences are strengthened in the body of Christ. "For all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28b).

As we worship, you're invited to light a candle at the cross on the left wall at any time music is playing or we are singing. This is a way of praying with our bodies and the elements – as we light a flame, we lift up our concerns, gratitude, or whatever else we carry in our hearts.

God's Work, Our Hands: Next weekend is **God's Work, Our Hands Weekend**. On Saturday we will gather here at Trinity and assemble sack lunches to be delivered to The Haven of Rest later in the afternoon. After the service on Sunday, a light lunch will be served followed by creating cards to be delivered to nursing homes. We'll also be painting rocks to be added to our memorial garden or taken home to be shared with our neighbors.



The Council has a goal of better advertising Trinity and all the things going on in our congregation. One way to reach this goal is to increase our presence on Facebook by having more folks see our posts. If you are on Facebook and you have not already followed Trinity, please do so and then "Like", "Comment" and "Share" our weekly service and any other happenings. THANKS!!

Contact Info: For emergency pastoral care contact:

Pr. Ed Ruble, St. Peter Lutheran Church

Cell: 269-569-4721

Email: pastor@saintpeterbc.org

Our thanks to all those who give of their time, talent, and prayers for our church and God's work in the world.

Assisting in worship today:

Preaching: Rev. Ricky Perry

Lay Assistant: Gloria Kolodizieizyck

Sound Board: John Kolodizieizyck

Streaming: Doug Martens

Music Director: Ronnie Cung

THIS WEEK AT TRINITY

September 13 – September 20, 2026

TODAY: 11:00 am Worship, Coffee Hour

MONDAY: 10:30 Yoga

TUESDAY: 10:30 Yoga

WEDNESDAY: 12 AA, 6:30 Choir

THURSDAY: 11:30 Road Runners @ D’Nicio’s

FRIDAY: 10:30 Yoga

SATURDAY: God’s Work, Our Hands Saturday, Sack Lunches taken to Haven of Rest

NEXT SUNDAY: 11:00 am, Worship, God’s Work, Our Hands Sunday w/lunch

**Readings for next Sunday: Jonah 3:10 - 4:11; Psalm 145: 1 - 8;
Philippians: 1: 21 - 30; Matthew 20: 1 - 16**

PRAYER REQUESTS Prayer requests are gathered from the spoken prayer requests during worship and can also be added by calling or emailing to office@tlcbattlecreek.org. Prayer requests will stay on the list for three weeks and can be renewed:

September 6: Kathy: Hadley, Steven; **Tresa:** Angela; **Janelle:** Charles Rothwell & family; **Al:** Harold

August 30: Family of Ellis Cutler; **Janelle:** Linda Stacey, Ginesa; **Eric:** Brenon; **Connie:** Colin; **Tresa:** Angela, Jim

August 23: Janelle: Linda Stacey, Ginesa, Battle Creek Family whose child died in an accident; **Gloria:** 63rd Anniversary; **Eileen:** David, Jennifer, Melissa, James; **Tresa:** Angela, Alyssa; **Eric:** Brenon

The Franklin Food Pantry desperately needs to have its shelves restocked. The items needed are: Canned goods, soups, fruits, vegetables; also, cereal, juice, boxed milk, toilet paper and soap. Cash donations are also appreciated. Please drop off any donations at church placing them in the wagon in the narthex. Thanks!!