

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

17th Sunday after Pentecost

September 20th, 2026

Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

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.

Take My Life, That I May Be

Toma, oh Dios, mi voluntad

Refrain/Estribillo



To - ma, oh Dios, mi vo - lun - tad, y haz - la tu - ya, na -
Take my life, that I may be con - se - crat - ed, Lord,



da más; to - ma, sí, mi co - ra - zón
to thee; take my mo - ments and my days;



y tu tro - no en él ten - drás. ten - drás.
let them flow in cease - less praise. less praise.



1 Que mi vi - da en - te - ra es - té
1 Take my hands and let them move
2 Take my sil - ver and my gold,
3 Take my voice and let me sing
4 Take my will and make it thine;



con - sa - gra - da a ti, Se - ñor;
at the im - pulse of thy love;
not a mite would I with - hold;
al - ways, on - ly for my King;
it shall be no lon - ger mine;



que a mis ma - nos pue - da guiar el im -
take my feet and let them be swift and
take my in - tel - lect and use ev - 'ry
take my lips and let them be filled with
take my heart, it is thine own; it shall



pul - so de tu a - mor.
beau - ti - ful for thee.
pow'r as thou shalt choose.
mes - sag - es from thee.
be thy roy - al throne.

2 Que mis pies tan sólo en pos
de lo santo puedan ir,
y que a ti, Señor, mi voz,
se complazca en bendecir. Estribillo

3 Que mis labios al hablar
hablen sólo de tu amor;
que mis bienes dedicar
yo los quiera a ti, Señor. Estribillo

4 Que mi tiempo todo esté
consagrado a tu loor;
que mi mente y su poder
sean usados en tu honor. Estribillo

***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.

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants.

Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

FIRST READING: Jonah 3:10 – 4:11

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?

A reading from Jonah:

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?" A Word for God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 145:1-8

The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. (Ps. 145:8)

- ¹ I will exalt you, my ¹ God and king,
and bless your name forev- ¹ er and ever.
- ² **Every day ¹ will I bless you
and praise your name forev- ¹ er and ever.**
- ³ Great is the Lord and greatly ¹ to be praised!
There is no end ¹ to your greatness.
- ⁴ **One generation shall praise your works ¹ to another
and shall de- ¹ clare your power. R**
- ⁵ I will speak of the glorious splendor ¹ of your majesty
and all your ¹ marvelous works.
- ⁶ **They shall tell of the might of your ¹ wondrous acts,
and I will re- ¹ count your greatness.**
- ⁷ They shall publish the remembrance of ¹ your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully ¹ of your righteousness.
- ⁸ **The Lord is gracious and full ¹ of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in ¹ steadfast love. R**

SECOND READING: Philippians 1:21-30

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

A reading from Philippians:

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.

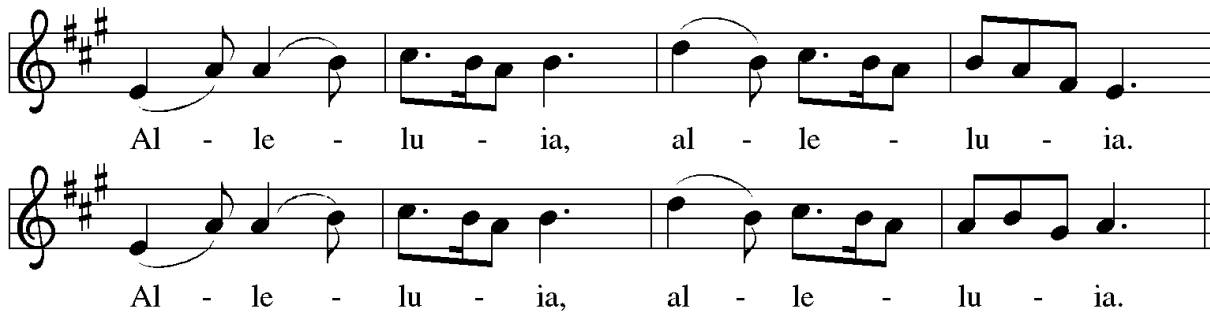
²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ and in no way frightened by those opposing 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.

A Word for God's people.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Gospel Acclamation *Celtic Alleluia*



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

Music: Fintan O'Carroll and Christopher Walker

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*GOSPEL – Matthew 20:1-16

Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

The Holy Gospel according to 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. ² After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶ 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?’ ⁷ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸ 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.’ ⁹ When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² 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.’ ¹³ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to

you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy



- 1 There's a wide-ness
- 2 There is wel-come
- 3 For the love of
- 4 'Tis not all we



in God's mer - cy, like the wide - ness of the sea;
 for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;
 God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;
 owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice which is more than
 there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing
 and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der -
 great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy



lib - er - ty. There is no place where earth's sor - rows
 in his blood. There is grace e - nough for thou - sands
 ful - ly kind. But we make this love too nar - row
 through the fall. Make our love, O God, more faith - ful;



are more felt than up in heav'n. There is no place
 of new worlds as great as this; there is room for
 by false lim - its of our own; and we mag - ni -
 let us take you at your word, and our lives will



where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
 fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.
 fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.
 be thanks-giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, alt.

Music: ST. HELENA, Calvin Hampton, 1938–1984

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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.

Hold your church accountable for our unwillingness to share your good news and our anger at your generosity to others. Nourish us by your grace to be witnesses to your love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Guide scientists and researchers studying responses to the climate crisis so that all your creation may inspire us to give thanks for your great goodness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Show employers the benefits of equal pay standards for all their employees. Reconcile conflicts between employees. Fill places of employment with camaraderie, and bring an end to employment disparity. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Encourage any who cannot work or who cannot work a full day with the truth that their value comes from your everlasting love for them. Provide for those who are injured, ill, and for all in any need. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Strengthen all those in this congregation, in our sister congregation Feast of Victory Lutheran in Acme with their pastor Rev. Haley VayBeaman, in FCC and all whose labor serves the needs of others in the community. Inspire all in these congregations to support community endeavors with our time and talents. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Comfort us with the promise of the resurrection as we remember all our loved ones whose desire to be with Jesus is fulfilled. 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.**

You are invited to share your offering as you enter the sanctuary. An offering plate is located in the center aisle near the back the sanctuary.

OFFERING PERFORMANCE: "Lord Jesus Be Near Me" by Natalie Sleeth performed by Trinity Choir

God Bless to Us Our Bread

Ben - di - ce, Se-ñor, nues - tro pan, y da pan a los que tien - en
 God bless to . . us our . . bread, and give bread . . to all those who are

ham - bre y ham - bre de jus - ti - cia a los que tien - en
 hun - gry, and hun - ger for jus - tice to those who are

pan. Ben - di - ce, Se - ñor, nues - tro pan.
 fed. God bless to . . . us our . . . bread.

Text: Argentine traditional, collected by Federico Pagura, 1923–2016; tr. John L. Bell, b. 1949

Music: BENDICE NUESTRO PAN, Argentine melody, collected by Federico Pagura; arr. John L. Bell

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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**

Where God's People Gather

The essence of CHURCH is your Christian family – those people around the world who follow Christ and commit themselves to Him and to each other. For Paul, the expression of the church meant a personal relationship among Christians. He most often compared the church to a human body. In a body, all the parts and details are important, and they usually function in harmony:

If one member is injured or sick, then the entire body suffers.

The members must operate in unison because if they try to go in opposite directions they won't get anywhere. Some members are more visible, while others play a vital role on the inside, but both types are necessary. There are no small parts in the body of Christ. If every member were the same, the body would look really weird and it wouldn't function very well.

Think about yourself: What is your role in the church? How do you fit in the body? Are you contributing to the health and fitness of the body? Being part of a church is a lot more than just attending a service on Sunday morning and tossing a few coins in the basket. Being part of a church involves an interactive relationship between people with Christ as their common bond. You can't walk out of the church on Sunday morning. You are part of the body all week long. The measure of a good sermon is the listener's response, not the pastor's speech! Don't leave the sermon at church!

Authors: Bruce and Stan

***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.
The God of hope
grant you strength and joy in all circumstances
through the interceding of the Spirit.

The God of grace
✠ bless you now and forever.

Amen

Rise Up, O Saints of God!

1 Rise up, O saints of God! From vain am - bi - tions turn;
2 Speak out, O saints of God! De - spair en - gulf's earth's frame;
3 Rise up, O saints of God! The king - dom's task em - brace;
4 Give heed, O saints of God! Cre - a - tion cries in pain;
5 Com - mit your hearts to seek the paths which Christ has trod;

Christ rose tri - um - phant that your hearts with no - bler zeal might burn.
as heirs of God's bap - tis - mal grace, the word of hope pro - claim.
re - dress sin's cru - el con - se - quence; give jus - tice larg - er place.
stretch forth your hand of heal - ing now, with love the weak sus - tain.
and, quick - ened by the Spir - it's pow'r, rise up, O saints of God!

Text: Norman O. Forness, b. 1936

Music: FESTAL SONG, William H. Walter, 1825–1893

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*DISMISSAL

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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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 Sunday is **TODAY**. Please join us after the service for a light lunch followed by card making and rock painting. The cards will be delivered to a nursing home to be given to folks who may otherwise not get mail. The rocks will go in our memorial garden and shared with our neighbors. We also delivered sack lunches to The Haven yesterday.



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: Ronnie Cung

Lay Assistant: Scott Schindehette

Sound Board: John Kolodiziezyck

Streaming: Doug Martens

Music Director: Ronnie Cung

THIS WEEK AT TRINITY

September 20 – September 27, 2026

TODAY: 11:00 am Worship, Lunch, God's Work, Our Hands Activity

MONDAY: 10:30 Yoga

TUESDAY: 10:30 Yoga; 7 Council

WEDNESDAY: 12 AA, 6:30 Choir

THURSDAY:

FRIDAY: 10:30 Yoga

SATURDAY:

NEXT SUNDAY: 11:00 am, Worship, Coffee Hour, Crop Walk

Readings for next Sunday: Ezekiel 18: 1 - 4, 25 - 32; Psalm 25: 1 - 9; Philippians 2: 1 - 13; Matthew 21: 23 - 32

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 13: The Family of Ellis Cutler; **Janelle:** Anthony Case, Chelsea & Baby, Linda, John, Wayne; **Eric:** Brenon; **Eileen:** Melissa, Jennifer, Butch, Les; **Connie:** Todd; **Kathy:** Folks impacted by flooding.

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!!