FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 6 & 9, 2026

As We Gather

What does it mean to belong to the family of the King? In Matthew 18, Jesus overturns our instinct to measure greatness by rank, recognition, or achievement. He places a child in the midst of His disciples, seeks the wandering sheep, and teaches His people to pursue a sinning brother for the sake of restoration. We enter Christ's kingdom with empty hands, receiving forgiveness, righteousness, life, and salvation as gifts. Because the Shepherd has sought us, carried us home, and made us His own, we are freed to follow Him in humility, repentance, patience, forgiveness, and mercy.

✠ WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP ✠

Hymn God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It (LSB 594) *sts. 1, 5*

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. 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. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. 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.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins.

As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P He who began this good work within you will bring it to completion on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C **Amen.**

WORD

Introit for Pentecost 15

Psalm 92:1–4; antiphon: v. 5

C **How great are Your works, O LORD! Your thoughts are very deep!**

P It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;
to declare Your steadfast love in the morning,
and Your faithfulness by night,
to the music of the lute and the harp,
to the melody of the lyre.
For You, O LORD, have made me glad by Your work;
at the works of Your hands I sing for joy.

C **Glory be to the Father and to the Son**
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

How great are Your works, O LORD! Your thoughts are very deep!

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Kyrie

LSB 186

C **Lord, have mercy upon us.**
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray.

O God, from whom all good proceeds, grant to us, Your humble servants, Your holy inspiration, that we may set our minds on the things that are right and, by Your merciful guiding, accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading *Ezekiel 33:7–9*

"So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul."

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle *Romans 13:1–10*

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.

For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

L This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Gospel

Matthew 18:1–20

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eighteenth chapter.
C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

"Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

"Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in

heaven. For the Son of Man came to save the lost. What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.
C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Hymn Father Welcomes (LSB 605) *sts. ref–1, 3*

Series: The Cross and the Crown

Sermon: How Do We Follow Him? *Matthew 18:1–20*

Apostles Creed

Apostles' Creed

C **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,**
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ✝ everlasting. Amen.

Prayer of the Church (Lord Have Mercy)

P ... let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord have mercy.**

Offering/ Offertory *LSB 192*

C **Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.**
Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.

✠ THE LORD'S SUPPER ✠

We follow the liturgy on Pages 194-202 in the hymnal.

Preface *LSB 194*

Proper Preface

Sanctus *LSB 195*

Lord's Prayer

The Words of Our Lord

Pax Domini

Agnus Dei *LSB 198*

Distribution Hymns

O Blessed Spring (LSB 595)
All Who Believe and Are Baptized (LSB 601)
I Lay My Sins on Jesus (LSB 606)
Come unto Me, Ye Weary (LSB 684)

Sit

Lord's Supper Dismissal

P Now may this eating and drinking, of our Savior's precious body and blood, Strengthen you, preserve you, and keep you in the one true Christian faith that leads you to eternal life. Know in peace, and joy, that your sins are T forgiven you.

C **Amen.**

Stand

Nunc Dimittis *LSB 199*

Post-Communion Thanksgiving

Salutation *LSB 201*

Benedicamus *LSB 202*

Benediction *LSB 202*

Closing Hymn

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing (LSB 686) *sts. 1, 4*

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