

16th Sunday after Pentecost
September 13, 2026



First Lutheran Church
116 Inner Drive
Le Sueur, MN 56058
507-665-2615
Rev. Samuel Mailleue

office@firstlutheranlesueur.org
www.firstlutheranlesueur.org

UNITED by Christ, God calls us to LOVE one another
As we RECEIVE, DISCOVER and PROCLAIM God's Word.

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.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING REFLECTION

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.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

OPENING HYMN

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise ELW #834
(Vs. 1, 3 & 4)
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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.

KYRIE- *spoken*

ELW page 138

CANTICLE

Holy God, We Praise Your Name ELW #414
(Vs. 1)
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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.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

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.

¹⁵ 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.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God!

PSALM— Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13

[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;**

- 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 children of Israel.]
- ⁸ **LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**
- ⁹ you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger 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 above 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 transgressions from us.**
- ¹³ As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

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.

¹ 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.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God!

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION—*Alleluia*

ELW #142

The Holy Gospel according to the eighteenth chapter of Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

²¹ 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

MESSAGE

Rev. Sam Mailleue

HYMN OF THE DAY

Our Father, We Have Wandered **ELW #606**
(Vs. 1 & 3)

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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**

THE PRAYERS

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 especially those on our prayer list and in our hearts.

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

Ground this congregation 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.**

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.

OFFERING

Gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

WE OFFER OUR GIFTS AND TITHES

OFFERTORY HYMN

Create in Me a Clean Heart **ELW #186**

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OFFERTORY PRAYER

God of creation,
you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly.
All blessings are from you;
make us generous with what we have.
Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts
in service to you and in love to our neighbors,
today and always.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

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

Amen.

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

Amen.

The God of grace
✠ bless you now and forever.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

God's Work, Our Hands ACS #1000
(Vs. 1 & 2)

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DISMISSAL

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Welcome to First Lutheran Church

*Whether you are looking for a place of worship
or are just passing through, we hope our service has blessed you
on your journey as your presence has been a blessing to us.*



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Sharefaith—Membership

Expires 6/2027

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

September Ministry Focus: God's Work, Our Hands

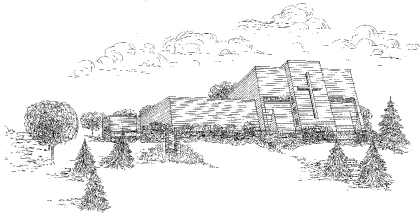
Sunday, September 13

Please join us today for God's Work. Our Hands., the ELCA's annual day of service! Following worship, we'll come together as the hands and feet of Christ to serve our neighbors through meaningful projects that make a difference in our community and beyond.

One of our featured projects will be assembling Global Health Ministries Newborn Kits, along with other opportunities for all ages to participate. Whether you're young or young at heart, there will be a way for everyone to share God's love through service.

Sound of Faith – Join us next Sunday, September 20 for a special worship service centered on the Sound of Faith.

Financial Update		
Week of	Amount Received	Amount Needed
9-6-2026	\$4,170	\$4,523
YTD	\$152,684	\$167,348



Weekly Schedule

Sunday, September 13	9:00a	Worship God's Work, Our Hands
Monday, September 14	10:00a 5:00p	Nursing Home Service Social Ministry Meeting
Tuesday, September 15	10:00a 10:15a	Coffee/Mary Unit Bible Study/Mary Unit
Wednesday, September 16	9:00a	Staff Meeting
Thursday, September 17		Newsletter Deadline
Sunday, September 20	9:00a	Worship w/Holy Communion The Sound of Faith

Worship Assistants

September 13, 2026

Organist/Pianist: Virginia Miller
 First Choir Director: Jennifer Weick
 Acolytes: LeRoy Haaland
 Reader: Lynnea Libra
 Usher: Vic Pengilly
 Greeters: Roz Neal
 Council Member: Callie Greisen
 Fellowship:
 Projection: Tech Team
 Audio: Tech Team
 Videographer: Becky Pollack
 Offering Counters: Bob Bartle
 Joanne Graff
 Altar Guild: Stefanie Eischens
 Marie Walker

September 20, 2026

Organist/Pianist: Virginia Miller
 First Choir Director: Jennifer Weick
 Acolytes: Reece St. Pierre
 Reader: Melissa Schwartz
 Usher: Steve Olson
 Greeters: Melissa Schwartz
 Communion Asst: LeRoy & Joan May
 Council Member: Joan May
 Fellowship: First Choir – NY Trip
 Projection: Tech Team
 Audio: Tech Team
 Videographer: Becky Pollack
 Offering Counters: Dave Johnson
 John Miller
 Altar Guild: Stefanie Eischens
 Marie Walker