



God's work. Our hands.



September 13, 2026

Saint Peter's Lutheran Church

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2570 St. Peter's Church Road, Salisbury, NC 28146

Church Website: <https://www.saintpeterslc.org/>

Church Email: saintpetersnc@gmail.com

Pastor Sue Lynn White

(cell 770-833-1922) (pastorsuelynn@gmail.com)

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost September 13, 2026

* Indicates to stand as you are able. P=Pastor, C=Congregation, A=Assisting Minister, L=Lector

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prelude

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

*P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation.

*C: **Amen.**

*P: Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all. We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

*C: **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

Will You Come and Follow Me

ELW 798

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

*C: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

*P: Let us pray. Holy One, you stretch wide your tent that all may be welcomed in, and in Jesus you stretched out your hands in expansive love for a weary and wounded world. Help us to reach out with your own wounded hands of love, that through us your life may be known in the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

*C: Amen.

GOD SPEAKS TO US

First Reading

Genesis 50:15-21

L: A reading from Genesis the 50th chapter.

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.

L: The word of the Lord. C: **Thanks be to God.**

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

L: A reading from Romans the 14th chapter

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.

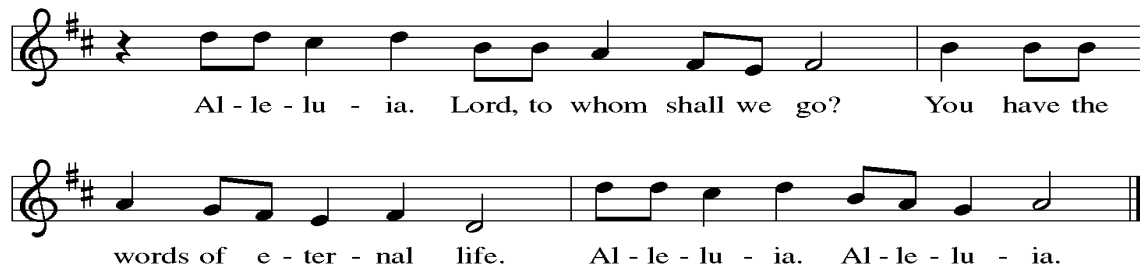
¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written,

"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.

L: The word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



*P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 18th chapter.

***C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

*The Holy Gospel

Matthew 18:21-35

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.”

*P: The Gospel of our Lord.

***C: Praise to you, O Christ**

Children’s Sermon

The Sermon

Pastor Thomas Johnston

***HYMN OF THE DAY** Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service ELW 712

***APOSTLES' CREED**

***A:** Let us profess our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed.

***C:** 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

***A:** Trusting God at work in and among us, we raise our hearts and voices in prayer for the needs of the world.

A brief silence.

***A:** For your work in the church, we give thanks. Plant and tend relationships among faith communities, both ecumenical and interfaith, that in faithful listening, speech, and action, our hands work to bear fruit for the sake of all in need. God of grace, we pray,

***C: hear us when we call.**

***A:** For your work in creation, we give thanks. Sustain peoples and places affected by climate change, ecological devastation and natural disasters. Prosper the work of creation-care ministries locally and globally, that with our minds and hearts opened, our hands work to lovingly care for the earth. God of life, we pray,

***C: hear us when we call.**

***A:** For your work among the nations, we give thanks. Direct leaders

in paths of honest service, that both their words and actions are carried out on behalf of those whom they serve. God of righteousness, we pray,

***C: hear us when we call.**

*A: For your work in places of need, we give thanks. Sustain all who are wearied by unemployment or lack of adequate food or housing, that we advocate for relief and just policy. Bring healing to all who are sick through the skillful hands and compassionate hearts of physicians, nurses, therapists and caregivers. We especially pray for those on the prayer lists of St. James, St. Peter's and those we hold in our hearts or speak aloud now...

(pause). God of restoration, we pray,

***C: hear us when we call.**

*A: For your work in our neighborhoods, towns and cities, we give thanks. Guide our common life together so that children, youth and adults of all ages flourish. Teach us to listen attentively to our neighbors, that any new endeavors consider those who may be left out or underserved. God of wisdom, we pray,

***C: hear us when we call.**

*A: For your work among those who came before us, we give thanks. We remember those who have died and are held forever in your loving hands (especially). Hold us in your presence now and always. God of heaven and earth,

***C: hear us when we call.**

*P: Receive these and all our prayers, gracious God. We pray in the name of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

***C: Amen.**

PEACE

*P: The peace of Christ be with you always. ***C: And also with you.**

*P: Let us share the peace with one another.

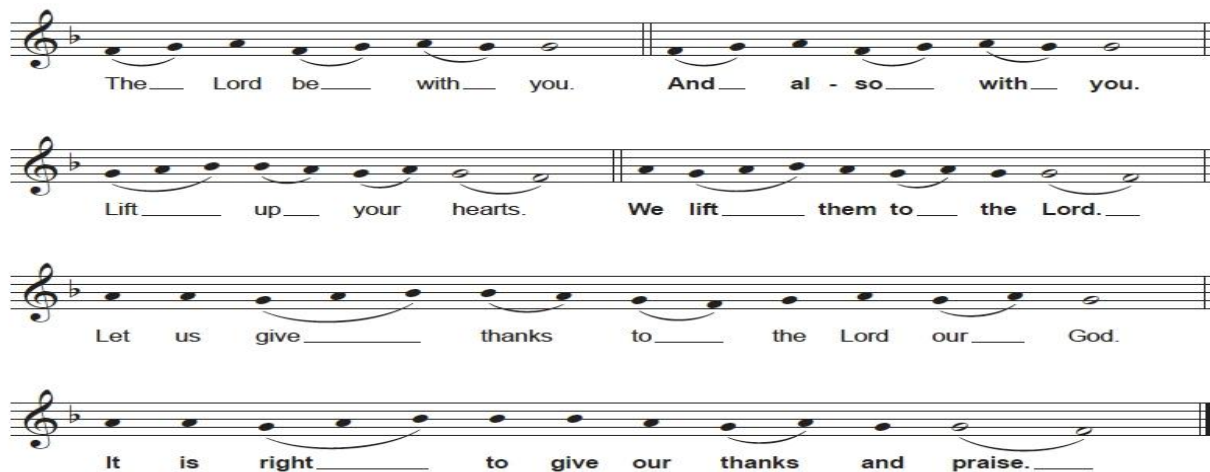
THE OFFERING

Anthem

OFFERING PRAYER

*A: Let us pray. Holy God, giver of all good things, receive the gifts we bring, fruit of the earth and the work of human hands, that they may be used to your purposes for life and love in the world.

*C: Amen.

MEAL**PREFACE DIALOGUE**

The___ Lord be___ with___ you. And___ al - so___ with___ you.

Lift___ up___ your hearts. We lift___ them to___ the Lord.____

Let us give_____ thanks to___ the Lord our___ God.

It is right_____ to give our thanks and praise.____

*P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*C: Holy, Holy, Holy



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Honor, praise, glory and thanksgiving to you, God, our loving Creator.

In the beginning you reached your hands into the earth and formed humanity in your own image. You breathed into us your own breath of love and gave us hearts and hands and voices to live your loving purpose in the world.

Seeing the lonely creature of earth, you created a partner that we would know the joy of community. Throughout the history of your people, you never abandoned us, but brought us into community with one another and with you, and guided us through your prophets. With endless patience and love, you called us time and again to return to life with you.

In the fulfillment of all things, you came to us in Jesus, born into a human family, raised in a hometown, who gathered around himself a community formed by your love, and yearned to gather all people under the loving wings of a mother hen. Sitting at dinner with friends and knowing one among them would break the bonds of love, our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying: Take and eat; this is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Trusting in his promise to be among us whenever we gather in his name, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

***C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Gathered as your people, meeting in Jesus' name, and preparing ourselves to feast upon Jesus' very body and blood, we plead with all creation:

***C: Come, Lord Jesus.**

Send your Spirit upon this meal, the body and blood of Jesus, that we overflow with your selfless love. Turn us to face our neighbors, that by us and through us your love may be known in the world. Again, we beg:

***C: Come, Holy Spirit.**

All honor and praise and glory to you, God of creative, dirty hands, God of holy, wounded hands, God who strengthens and guides our hands, now and forever.

***C: Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

*P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught.

***C: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

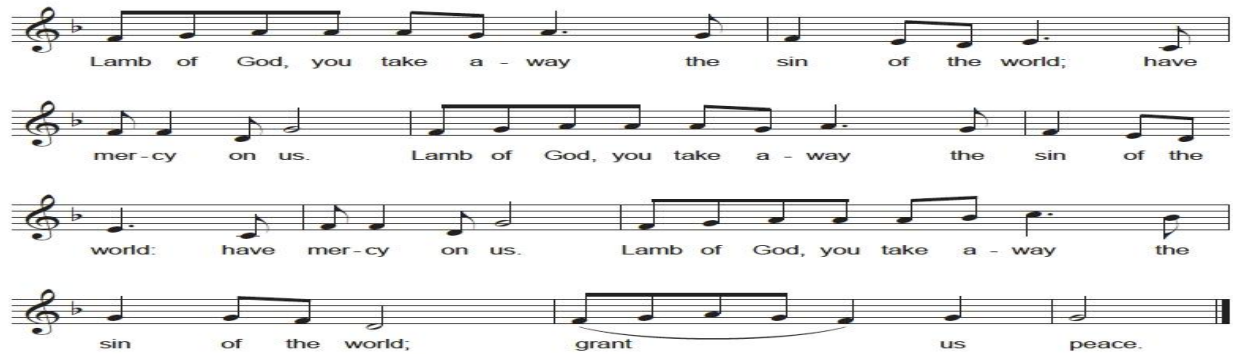
**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

*P: Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

LAMB OF GOD



DISTRIBUTION

COMMUNION BLESSING

*P: The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*A: Let us pray. Holy Jesus, in this meal you have fed and nourished us to work in your beloved world. Send us now, filled with yourself and strengthened by your Spirit to live your love for others.

*C: Amen.

SENDING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

BLESSING

*P: Friends in Christ: Today we give thanks to God and seek God's blessing as we send your disciples into the world.

Let us pray. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. You made the whole earth for your glory; all creation praises you. We lift our voices to join the songs of heaven and earth in thanksgiving for the many blessings you have given us.

Renew in us the commitment to use our gifts in the service of others, especially of those in need. Let us be your hands to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, comfort the weary and outcast, welcome the stranger, care for creation, and be loving neighbors to all people.

Bless those who go out from here to labor in the community. Prosper the work of their hands. Bless those who receive them and the fruits of their labor, and may those who are sent receive blessing in return. May the gifts they use and share be signs of your love to all people.

To you, O God, be glory and honor through your Son, Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, in your church and in the world, now and forever.

***C: Amen.**

***SENDING HYMN**

Take My Life, That I May Be

ELW 583

THE DISMISSAL

***A:** Rooted in the love of Christ;

***C: We grow in grace and joyfully branch into a broken world!**

***P:** Go in peace. You are God's hands at work in the world!

***C: Thanks be to God.**