

APOSTLES' CREED

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**
... In the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

THE OFFERING

ZION CHOIR — *The Blessing Riddle* [10:30 AM]

COMMUNION

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER [TRADITIONAL]

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.**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

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.

SENDING

BENEDICTION

HYMN #537 — *On Our Way Rejoicing*

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE — Jill Sousek



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A member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



18th Sunday after Pentecost

SEPTEMBER 27, 2026

WELCOME TO ZION

PRELUDE — Jill Sousek

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING OF THE QUILTS [SEE INSERT]

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

The sign of the cross ☩ may be made in remembrance of Baptism.

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 for reflection and self-examination.

Compassionate God, we confess we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show love to others. Turn our hearts 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.**

HYMN #836 — *Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee*

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

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

FIRST READING — *Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32*

The word of the Lord came to me: What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

SECOND READING — *Philippians 2:1-13*

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, although being in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but relinquished it all, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every

name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father. Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for God’s good pleasure.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL — *Matthew 21:23-32*

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.” So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. “What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the dominion of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

THE SERMON — Rev. Gary Froseth

HYMN #818 — O Master, Let Me Walk With You