



“For I take no
pleasure in the
death of
anyone,
declares the
Sovereign
LORD.

Repent and
live!” EZEKIEL 18:32

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SEPTEMBER 26 / 27, 2026

St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church

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 facebook.com/stjohnsnewulm
507-354-6744

Today's service is televised locally

Channel 14 - Comcast: Monday at 6:00 p.m. & Tuesday at 1:00 p.m. & Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.
Channel 3 - Nuvera: Mondays at 6:00 p.m. & Tuesday at 1:00 p.m. & Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 26/27, 2026

*Welcome, Visitors! Please scan the QR code to sign our guest register.
Visitors and members alike, use the same QR code for prayer requests.*



PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP: Almighty and just God, we come before you as beggars who have nothing to offer you for our salvation. We come before you admitting that we deserve death and punishment. We come before you with no one to blame but ourselves for our demise and condemnation. But for the sake of your promise to give us a new heart and a new spirit, to pardon us, and grant us a right relationship with you through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, please take away our sin and guilt. Put joy in our hearts and give us true peace of mind that focuses on your grace and mercy so that we may worship and serve you without distraction. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Service Setting 4

HANDBELLS *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* arr. Kevin McChesney

OPENING HYMN

At the Name of Jesus

CW 547

- 1 At the name of Jesus ev'ry knee shall bow,
ev'ry tongue confess him King of glory now;
'tis the Father's pleasure we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning was the mighty Word.
- 2 At his voice creation sprang at once to sight,
all the angel faces, all the hosts of light,
cherubim in heaven, stars upon their way,
all the heav'nly orders in their great array.
- 3 Humbled for a season to receive a name
from the lips of sinners unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious when from death he passed;

- 4 Bore it up triumphant with its human light,
thro' all ranks of creatures to the central height,
to the throne of Godhead, to the Father's breast,
filled it with the glory of that perfect rest.
- 5 In your hearts enthrone him; there let him subdue
all that is not holy, all that is not true.
Crown him as your captain in temptation's hour;
let his will enfold you in its light and pow'r.
- 6 Christians, this Lord Jesus shall return again
in his Father's glory, with his angel train;
for all wreaths of empire meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him King of glory now.

Stand

In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

CONFESSION OF SINS

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.
Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Almighty and merciful Father, we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts. We have offended you and sinned against your holy law. We have done those things that we should not have done, and we have not done those things that we should have done. Have mercy on us, Lord! Spare us, forgive us, and restore us, according to your promises in Christ Jesus.

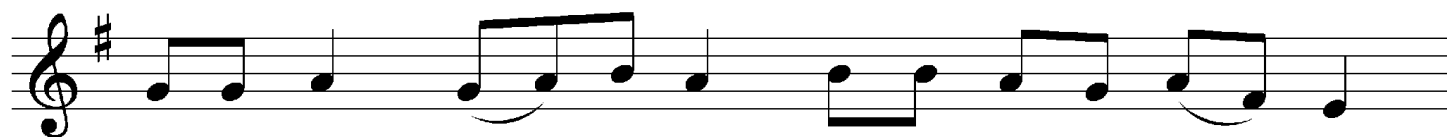
Silence for meditation and reflection

God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by his death on the cross and freed us from death by his resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever.
Amen.

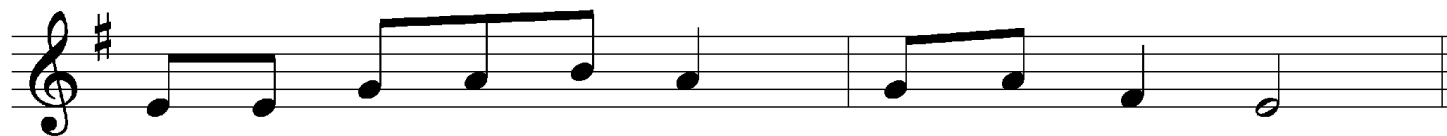
LORD HAVE MERCY



In peace let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



For the peace from a - bove and for our sal - va - tion,



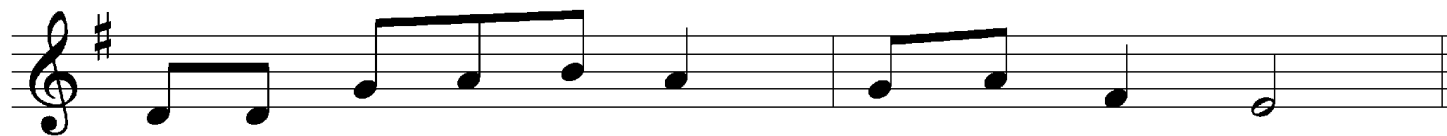
let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



For the peace of the whole world, for the well - be - ing



of the Church of God, and for the un - i - ty of all,



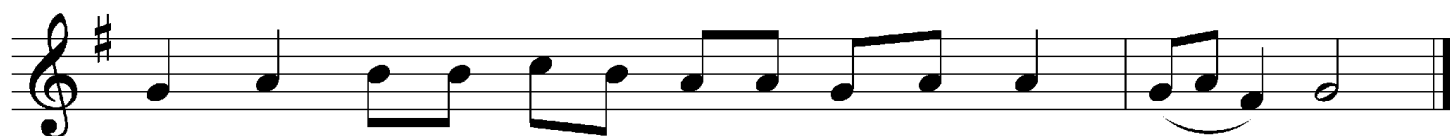
let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



For this ho - ly house and for all who of - fer here their

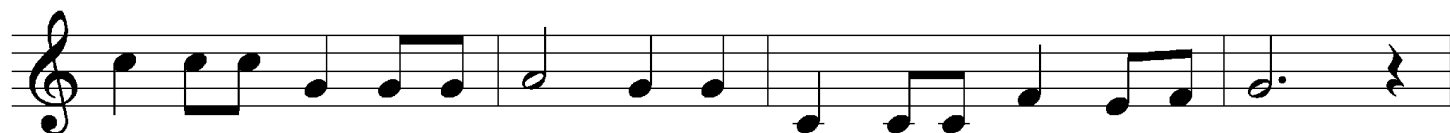


wor - ship and praise, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**

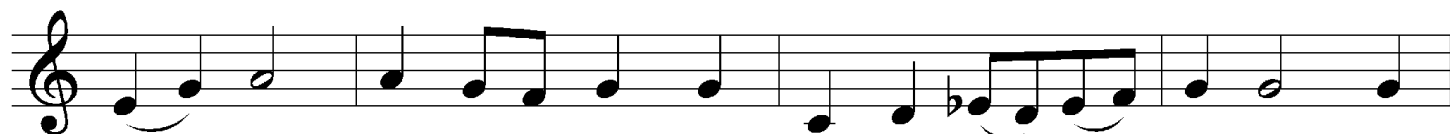


Help, save, com-fort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. **A - men.**

GLORY TO GOD



Glo-ry to God in the high - est and peace to his peo - ple on earth.



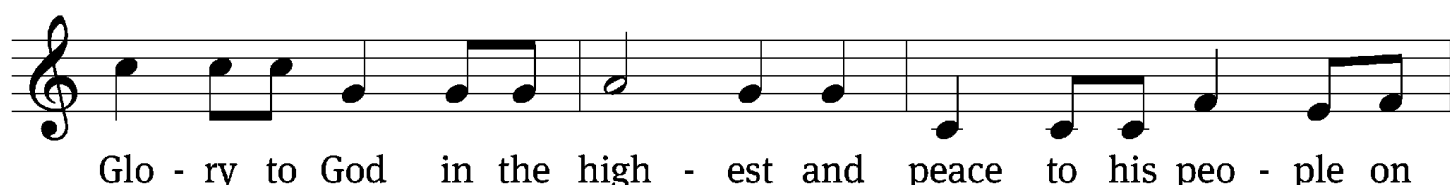
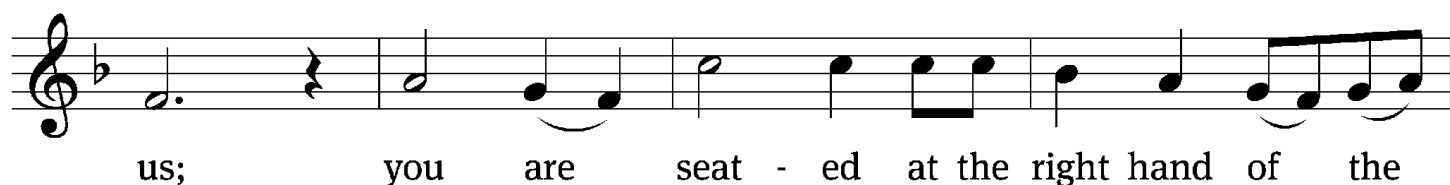
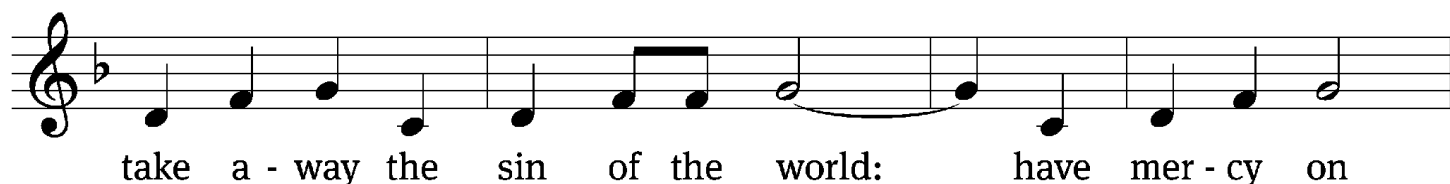
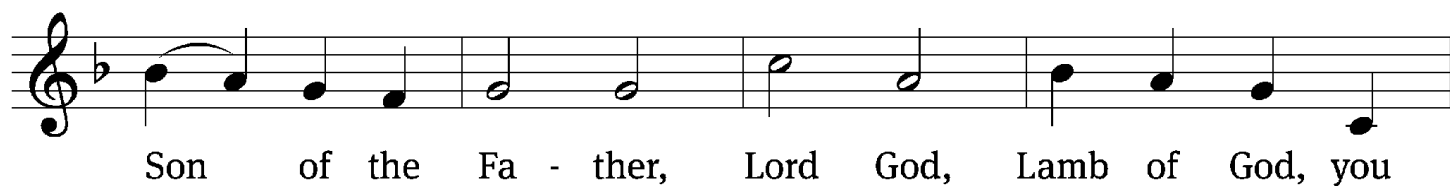
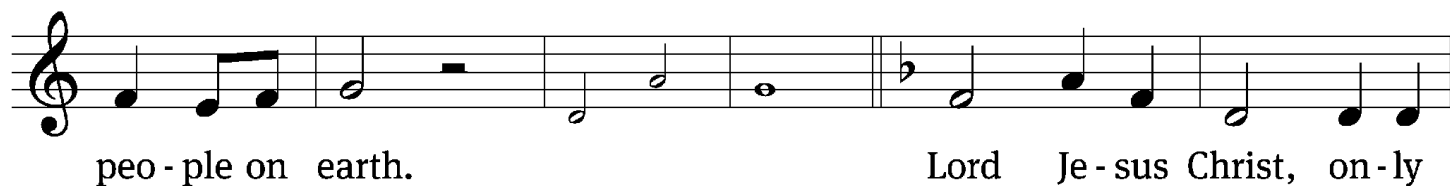
Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - might - y God and Fa-ther. We



wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your



glo - ry. Glo - ry to God in the high - est and peace to his





The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Mercifully grant, O God, that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, for without your help we are unable to please you; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Be seated

FIRST LESSON

Ezekiel 18:1-4,25-32

¹ The word of the LORD came to me: ² “What do you people mean by quoting this proverb about the land of Israel:

“ ‘The parents eat sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge’?”

³ “As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, you will no longer quote this proverb in Israel. ⁴ For everyone belongs to me, the parent as well as the child—both alike belong to me. The one who sins is the one who will die.

²⁵ “Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Hear, you Israelites: Is my way unjust? Is it not your ways that are unjust? ²⁶ If a righteous person turns from their righteousness and commits sin, they will die for it; because of the sin

they have committed they will die. ²⁷ But if a wicked person turns away from the wickedness they have committed and does what is just and right, they will save their life. ²⁸ Because they consider all the offenses they have committed and turn away from them, that person will surely live; they will not die. ²⁹ Yet the Israelites say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Are my ways unjust, people of Israel? Is it not your ways that are unjust?

³⁰ “Therefore, you Israelites, I will judge each of you according to your own ways, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. ³¹ Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, people of Israel? ³² For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent and live!”

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM OF THE DAY

I Lift My Soul to You

Psalm 25B



1 I lift my soul to you, LORD, I trust, O God, in you.
 2 Your cov - e - nant and mer - cy are with me all my days



Send forth your truth to guide me, and teach me what to do.
 to com - fort and to bless me, to keep me in your ways.



Re - mem - ber your great mer - cy, your ev - er - last - ing love;
 When - ev - er I look up - ward, I find you wait - ing there,



for - give me, God, my Sav - ior, my guilt and sin re - move.
 to bear me and to keep me all safe be - neath your care.

SECOND LESSON

Philippians 2:1-11

¹ Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Psalm 51:17



Refrain



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Tone



My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spir - it;



a broken and contrite heart you will not de - spise.

²³ Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him. “By what authority are you doing these things?” they asked. “And who gave you this authority?”

²⁴ Jesus replied, “I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ²⁵ John’s baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or of human origin?”

They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ ²⁶ But if we say, ‘Of human origin’—we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet.”

²⁷ So they answered Jesus, “We don’t know.”

Then he said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸ “What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’

²⁹ “ ‘I will not,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

³⁰ “Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but he did not go.

³¹ “Which of the two did what his father wanted?”

“The first,” they answered.

Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

- 1 “As surely as I live,” God said, “I would not see the sinner dead,
but that he turn from error’s ways, repent, and live through endless days.”
- 2 And so our Lord gave this command: “Go forth and preach in ev’ry land;
bestow on all my pard’ning grace who will repent of sinful ways.
- 3 “All those whose sins you thus remit I truly pardon and acquit,
and those whose sins you do retain condemned and guilty shall remain.
- 4 “What you will bind, that bound shall be; what you will loose, that shall be free;
unto my Church the keys are giv’n to op’n and close the gates of heav’n.”
- 5 The words which absolution give are his who died that we might live;
the minister whom Christ has sent is but his humble instrument.
- 6 When ministers lay on their hands, absolved by Christ the sinner stands;
he who by grace the Word believes forgiveness, sure and sweet, receives.
- 7 Praise God the Father and the Son and Holy Spirit, Three in One,
as was, is now, and so shall be forever and eternally!

SERMON God does not Rejoice in Punishment Ezekiel 18:1-14, 25-32

Stand

APOSTLES’ CREED

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

I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there 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.

Be seated

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Almighty God and Father, we thank you for all your mercies, especially for the gift of your Son, through whom you have revealed your gracious will. We praise you for the Holy Spirit and his working through the means of grace.
Plant your Word in our hearts, and cause it to produce fruit in our lives.

Strengthen and defend your Church, that by your Word and sacraments faith may grow and love toward all may increase.
Support all who spread the light of your truth throughout the world.

Keep our children in the grace of their baptisms. Enable their parents to train them in lives of faith.
Raise up Christians to serve you in the ministry of the Word and in all godly walks of life.

Preserve our nation in justice and honor. Guide and bless all who make, administer, and judge our laws.
Give them wisdom that they may promote justice and hinder evil.

Let your blessing rest on planting and harvest, commerce and industry, medicine and science, the arts and culture. Protect all who travel, and care for those whose work is difficult or dangerous.
Be with all who devote themselves to any useful task.

Comfort all who are in sorrow or need, sickness or adversity. Remember those who suffer persecution for the faith. Have mercy on those for whom death draws near.
Grant them your love, and take them into your tender care.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

We remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served you, who now rest from their labors. Console those who are mourning or living with sadness.

Keep us in the true faith, and bring us at last to the joys of heaven.

Grant us these things, Father, for the sake of Jesus, who died and rose again.
Amen.

OFFERING

HYMN

God Loved the World So That He Gave

CW 570

- 1 God loved the world so that he gave his only Son the lost to save
that all who would in him believe should everlasting life receive.
- 2 Christ is the solid rock of faith, who was made flesh and suffered death.
All who confide in him alone are built on this chief cornerstone.
- 3 God would not have the sinner die; his Son with saving grace is nigh.
His Spirit in the Word declares that we in Christ are heaven's heirs.
- 4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son forgives the sins that you have done.
You're justified by Jesus' blood; baptized, you are a child of God.
- 5 If you are sick, if death is near, this truth your troubled heart can cheer:
Christ Jesus saves my soul from death; this is the anchor of my faith!
- 6 Glory to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To you, O blessèd Trinity, be praise now and eternally!

Stand

Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Amen.

Be seated

CLOSING HYMN

Blest Be the Tie That Binds

CW 730

- 1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.
- 2 Before our Father's throne we pour our ardent prayers;
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.
- 3 We share our mutual woes, our mutual burdens bear,
and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear.
- 4 When here our pathways part, we suffer bitter pain;
yet, one in Christ and one in heart, we hope to meet again.
- 5 From sorrow, toil, and pain, and sin we shall be free
and perfect love and friendship reign through all eternity.

PREACHER

PRESIDING MINISTER

ORGANIST

HANDBELLS 8 & 9:30am

Pastor Jeff Bovee

Pastor Rob Guenther

Jacob Behnken

Becky Berg

MLC LECTORS ~ Throughout the year, St. John's asks men who are studying for the pastoral ministry to read for a service. We are in a privileged position to see our Lord's answer to our prayers for future called workers.

6:30 pm	Nicholas Ross	Refuge Lutheran Church, Raleigh, NC
8 am	Grant Klas	St. John's Lutheran Church, Fox Lake, WI
9:30 am	Owen Prah	Foundation Lutheran Church, Falcon, CO
11am	Joel Kluz	St. John's Lutheran Church, Juneau, WI

Acknowledgments
Setting Four from Christian Worship
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THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

Sunday	8, 9:30 & 11 am	Worship
	9:30 am	Bible Class: Ruth
	9:30 am	Sunday School
Monday	6:30 pm	Worship Committee
Wednesday	6 pm	Handbells
	6:15 pm	Public School Catechism
	7 pm	Choir
Thursday	10 am	Bible Class: Isms
	7 pm	Bible Class: Bible Information Class
Saturday	6:30 pm	Worship

NEXT WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

Sunday, Oct. 4	8, 9:30 & 11 am	Worship
	9:30 am	Bible Class: Ruth
	9:30 am	Sunday School
Wednesday, Oct. 7	6:15 pm	Public School Catechism
	7 pm	Choir
Thursday, Oct. 8	10 am	Bible Class: Isms
	7 pm	Bible Class: Bible Information Class
Saturday, Oct. 10	6:30 pm	Worship

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attendance last weekend was 623 with 486 receiving the Lord's Supper.

Fruits of Faith:

\$10,938 Home Operations ~ YTD: \$649,397 / Needed: \$654,717

\$1,205 WELS Missions ~ YTD: \$64,077 (2026 Goal: \$100,701)

\$1,070 MVL ~ YTD: \$41,899 (2026 Goal: \$62,278)

\$180 Building Fund

\$210 St. Paul's School Building Fund

\$515 K-12 Tuition Assistance Fund

\$5 Food and Fellowship

\$225 MLC/WLS Ministerial Student Assistance

\$5 St. John's Endowment

\$5 Christian Family Solutions



Givelify Scan the QR code to use the Givelify app and donate your offering.

AREA ANNOUNCEMENTS

MLC Wind Symphony Concert ~ This is a special year for the United States of America. With joy, we're commemorating our 250th birthday, and with sorrow we're remembering the 25th anniversary of the September 11 attacks. Two very different events. Two very different kinds of reflection. Please join the Martin Luther College Wind Symphony for "Reflections," a concert program commemorating our country's history through patriotic selections and both solemn and joyful remembrances. The free concert will be held in the MLC Auditorium on Sunday, October 4, at 1:00 pm. (Note the earlier start time!) Can't make it in person? Stream the live performance on MLC's YouTube channel.

Job Openings at MLC ~ Director of Finance: Plays a vital role in advancing MLC's mission of preparing future leaders for public ministry by providing strategic financial leadership, strengthening long-term sustainability, and partnering with college and synod leaders. Female Dormitory Custodian: Helps care for the place that our female students call home during their time at MLC. Assistant Baseball Coach: Promotes excellence in competition while supporting the formation of student-athletes for lives of Christian service. Interested individuals should apply online at mlc-wels.edu/hr/.

FREE Fun for ALL at MLC Homecoming ~ On Saturday, October 3, the MLC Alumni Association invites you to campus for Homecoming. The events begin with the 16th annual Sprinter Fun Run/Walk at 9 AM. This 1-mile course (stroller-accessible) meanders through the MLC campus. Register here: <https://bit.ly/4dxcKts>. Walk-ins are welcome, too!

MLC Alumni - This year's Homecoming theme is The Late Knight Show, and we want you to be part of the cast! Check out www.mlc-wels.edu/events/homecoming for the full slate of events and to register.

Join us for the Point 5k Family Fun-raiser ~ on Sunday, September 27, at Kegel Klub, open-house style, from 12-2pm. There will be a .5k "race" with an emphasis on fun and farce, rather than fitness. This is a family-friendly event, and all proceeds will go to the School Building Project. Beanbag tournament with cash prize for the winners, taco in a bag meal, and an opportunity to give while you bowl will be part of the fun. Kegel Klub will make a donation back to our school campaign of \$2 for each game of bowling played and will donate \$1 for each drink sold, too! Point 5K Race: any time from 12-2 - \$5 per person for unlimited "racing" Bean bag tourney: starts at 12:30 - \$30 per team in advance, \$50 at the door. WINNERS receives their registration fee back! Bowling: any time from 12-2 - Kegel Klub pricing Meal: Taco in a Bag Meal - FREEWILL donation Register your team for the bean bag tournament at <https://buytickets.at/point5k2026/2421971>, and pay for other activities at the door. Would you like to volunteer to help at the event? Please contact Amy Rich at stampinnut@me.com.

About the Cover ~ The prophet Ezekiel was sent by God to call the people of Israel to repentance. Although the Israelites, like us and every sinner who ever lived or ever shall, wanted to blame someone else for their sin, including God himself, the LORD made it clear to them that they were accountable for their own sin. They needed to confess it. They needed to repent of it. But in the end, even their best efforts to be good and to make atonement for their own sin fell short of satisfying God's perfect demands. They needed a Savior, just as we do. That Savior is God, the one who sent his Son Jesus Christ to take the punishment we deserved and who put his own perfection to our credit through faith in him. We are made new in Jesus.