



Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, October 11, 2026

Esther Lutheran Church, ELCA

Knowing Christ ~ Making Christ Known Through Faith, Hope & Love

Introduction:

In Isaiah we are given a vision of the great feast to come, when God will wipe away death forever. In Jesus' parable about a great banquet, those invited do not come, so the invitation is extended to others. In our liturgy God spreads a table before us. Even amid anxiety and hardship we rejoice in the peace of God which surpasses all understanding. With great joy we feast at the table of the Lord, and we go forth to share the wonderful invitation with others hungering and thirsting for the abundant life of God.

PRELUDE

BELL

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BEHOLD WEEKLY CHALLENGE QUESTION

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

Please stand as you are able

*CALL TO WORSHIP:

P: Your royal scepter is one of equity.

C: **Your throne, O God, endures forever.**

P: You love righteousness and hate wickedness.

C: **Your throne, O God, endures forever.**

P: Many are called, but few are chosen.

C: **Your throne, O God, endures forever.**

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, whose compassion endures forever.

C: Amen.

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:**

P: We confess our sins before God and one another.

Pause for silence and reflection.

P: Merciful God,

C: You show us how to live as your servants, yet we act as though your teaching applies to everyone else but us. We pass judgment on others, devalue ourselves and disrespect your creation. Show us the way back to the path which leads to life, and help us repair the damage we have caused to our relationships, ourselves and this earth, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

P: Through God's love we are forgiven, and all things are being made new through Christ. God's grace is enough to cover us and make us whole again, to live and serve another day. Let us rejoice that our God is full of mercy!

C: Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN: "We Are Called" (ELW 720)**

**1 Come! live in the light!
Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord!
We are called to be light for the kingdom,
to live in the freedom of the city of God!**

Refrain

**We are called to act with justice.
We are called to love tenderly.
We are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.**

**2 Come! Open your heart!
Show your mercy to all those in fear!**

**We are called to be hope for the hopeless,
so all hatred and blindness will be no more!**

Refrain

We are called to act with justice.

We are called to love tenderly.

We are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.

- 3 Sing! Sing a new song!
Sing of that great day when all will be one!
God will reign and we'll walk with each other as sisters and brothers
united in love!**

Refrain

We are called to act with justice.

We are called to love tenderly.

We are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.

Text: David Haas, b. 1957

***GREETING:**

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

C: And also with you.

***KYRIE: *sung* (ELW pg. 213)**

Kyrie eleison: Lord, have mercy.

Christe eleison: Christ, have mercy.

Kyrie eleison: Lord, have mercy.

***CANTICLE OF PRAISE “*Glory to God*” (ELW pg. 213)**

**Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest;
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God’s people on earth.**

Lord God, heavenly King,

almighty God and Father,
we worship you,
we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest;
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on earth.
Lord Jesus Christ,
only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest;
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on earth.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest;
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on earth,
and peace to God's people on earth.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

P: God of hosts,

C: You constantly expand the boundaries of your kingdom. Make us joyful participants in your plan to redeem the world, that all people would be one in you. For the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Please be seated

WORD

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

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 25:1-9

After a hymn of praise acknowledging God as a shelter for the poor, the prophet portrays a wonderful victory banquet at which death—which in ancient Canaan was depicted as a monster swallowing up everyone—will be swallowed up forever. The prophet urges celebration of this victory of salvation.

¹O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you; I will praise your name, for you have done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure. ²For you have made the city a heap, the fortified city a ruin; the palace of foreigners is a city no more; it will never be rebuilt. ³Therefore strong peoples will glorify you; cities of ruthless nations will fear you. ⁴For you have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat. When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm, ⁵the noise of foreigners like heat in a dry place, you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds; the song of the ruthless was stilled. ⁶On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear. ⁷And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the covering that is spread over all nations; ⁸he will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. ⁹It will be said on that day, “See, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” Here ends the first reading.

PSALM 23 ~ Congregation reads the *bold*

You prepare a table before me, and my cup is running over. (Ps. 23:5)

¹The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

²The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.

³You restore my soul, O Lord, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

SECOND READING: PHILIPPIANS 4:1-9

Though writing from prison and facing an uncertain future, Paul calls on the Philippians to rejoice and give thanks to God no matter what the circumstance. God's peace is with us and binds together our hearts and minds in Jesus Christ, especially when things around us do not seem peaceful.

¹My brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. ²I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my coworkers, whose names are in the book of life. ⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹As for the things that you have learned and received and heard and noticed in me, do them, and the God of peace will be with you. Here ends the second reading.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: (ELW pg. 216)

Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?

Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life.

Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL READING: MATTHEW 22:1-14

Jesus tells a parable indicating that the blessings of God's kingdom are available to all, but the invitation is not to be taken lightly.

¹Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: ²"The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. ³He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. ⁴Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.' ⁵But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. ⁷The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. ⁸Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' ¹⁰Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad, so the wedding hall was filled with guests. ¹¹"But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, ¹²and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?' And he was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen." The Gospel of the Lord...**Thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN'S TIME & SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: "Now We Join in Celebration" (ELW 462)

1 Now we join in celebration
 at our Savior's invitation,
 dressed no more in spirit somber,

clothed instead in joy and wonder;
for the Lord of all existence,
putting off divine transcendence,
stoops again in love to meet us,
with his very life to feed us.

2 Lord, as round this feast we gather,
fill our hearts with holy rapture!
For this bread and cup of blessing
are for us the sure possessing
of your loving deed on Calv'ry,
of your living self, our vict'ry,
pledge of your unfailing presence,
foretaste here of heav'nly gladness.

3 Lord, we share in this communion
as one fam'ly of God's children,
reconciled through you, our brother,
one in you with God our Father.
Give us grace to live for others,
serving all, both friends and strangers,
seeking justice, love, and mercy
till you come in final glory.

Text: Joel W. Lundeen

Text © Joel W. Lundeen, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

L: We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

L: You pour your gifts at our feet, and yet we so often refuse your invitation to participate in the wondrous kingdom you are creating on this earth. We hoard our time, our energy and our good will when we would benefit so much more from sharing it. Renew our enthusiasm for service and our joy in opening ourselves to others for your sake. God of all,

C: **Hear our prayer.**

L: We imagine that what we have is our own, but all has been given to us on loan from you, heavenly creator. Make us wise and faithful stewards of the land, wildlife and resources of this earth, that we might prove worthy to be called your children. God of all,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: As the season changes, we rejoice that one always gives way to another: that our winters are not forever, nor are the days of scorching sun. May we wisely use the time you give us, while not failing to pause and celebrate the days we have on this earth to enjoy your blessings and revel in the beauty of your creation. God of all,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: In a world where you love all equally, so many feel disenfranchised and forgotten. Open our eyes to those in need right in front of us and make us bearers of light and love to them. We pray today for especially Jerry, Bruce, Cheryl, Kristy, Ricky, Larry, Joan, Dennis, Lois, Bev, Gary, Shirley, Joyce, Allison, Becky, Kim, Sara, Marg, Karen, Pete, Lynnsy, Barb, Wes, Audrey, and Dirk. God of all,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: We remember on this day Saint Philip, who followed Jesus faithfully. Give us even a fraction of his courage and steadfastness, that we might be found faithful to your calling. God of all, C: Hear our prayer. L: Take these things into your hands, O God, and grant us your promised peace. In Jesus' holy name.

C: Amen.

Please stand as you are able

***APOSTLES' CREED: (ELW pg. 217)**

**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.**

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Please be seated

OFFERING

We thank you for our gifts of time, talent, and treasure that help this congregation, to
continue our ministry together, and to make Christ known in our communities and the
world.

OFFERING HYMN: “Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart” vs. 1 (ELW 800)

**1 Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
wean it from earth, through all its pulses move;
stoop to my weakness, strength to me impart,
and make me love you as I ought to love.**

Text: George Croly, 1780-1860

Please stand as you are able

***OFFERTORY PRAYER:**

P: God of creation,

C: **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: *sung* (CLH 632)**

**Our Father, which 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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

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

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to our neighbor in need

***BLESSING:**

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

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

The God of grace

✠ bless you now and forever.

THREE FOLD AMEN

***SENDING HYMN: "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!" (ELW 634)**

1 All hail the pow'r of Jesus' name!

**Let angels prostrate fall;
bring forth the royal diadem
and crown him Lord of all.
Bring forth the royal diadem
and crown him Lord of all.**

**2 O seed of Israel's chosen race
now ransomed from the fall,
hail him who saves you by his grace
and crown him Lord of all.
Hail him who saves you by his grace
and crown him Lord of all.**

**3 Hail him, you heirs of David's line,
whom David Lord did call
the God incarnate, man divine
and crown him Lord of all.
The God Incarnate, man divine
and crown him Lord of all.**

**4 Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget
the wormwood and the gall,
go spread your trophies at his feet
and crown him Lord of all.
Go spread your trophies at his feet
and crown him Lord of all.**

**5 Let ev'ry kindred, ev'ry tribe
on this terrestrial ball
to him all majesty ascribe
and crown him Lord of all.**

**6 Oh, that with yonder sacred throng
we at his feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song
and crown him Lord of all.**

***DISMISSAL:**

P: Go in peace, serve the Lord, and may his blessings be upon you this week.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

IN OUR PRAYERS

Jerry Anderson Kristy Fyhrie
Larry Sather Joan Burquest
Dennis Rosenquist Lois Rosenquist
Ricky Hart Sara Skoglund
Cheryl Farber – mother of Melissa Schlosser
Rev. Bruce Miller- father of Karin Wagner
Marg Peterson -friend of the Thoms
Gary Borst – friend of the Andersons
Shirley Nesges – friend of the Thoms
Bev Lorine – mother of Mandy Arvidson
Joyce Muyres – friend of the Thoms
Bev Guse-Ohlrech – friend of the Pedersons
Allison Dotzler – friend of Kathy Mittag
Becky Yttrie – friend of the Townsends
Kim Casavan – friend of Mandy Arvidson
Karen Schlosser – mother of Justin Schlosser
Pete Baugh – brother-in-law of Pr. Ken Bowman
Wes & Barb Hoyhtya – friends of the Thoms
Audrey Plessner - sister of Kathy Mittag
Dirk Bergquist – friend of Esther members
Family and Friends of: Katie Jahnke, Colleen Burquest, Doug Tvedt,
Jerry Pogose, Terry Burns, Bruce Carter, Gary Willie, Connie Pesta,
Kathy Wilkins, Ivy Christensen, Jim Schlosser, Leroy Olson, Dale
Flemming, Wally Schlosser, Carter Stockert, Woodrow Peery, and Elaine Salvog.

THIS WEEK AT ESTHER

Sunday, October 11th – Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday Fellowship Before and After Worship

8:30 am – WELCA

9 am - Sunday School

9:15 am – Behold Connect & Reflect: Coffee & Conversation
10 am – Worship led by Pastor Dennis Preston
11 am – Choir Practice
2 pm – Worship at St. William's
4:30 pm – Youth Annual Hayride & Campfire at Tom & Joan Burquest's

Wednesday, October 14th

NO CONFIRMATION

6 pm – Council

Sunday, October 18th – Twenty First Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday Fellowship Before and After Worship

9 am – All People Sunday School
9:15 am – Behold Connect & Reflect: Coffee & Conversation
10 am – Worship with Holy Communion led by SAM Jewel Townsend
2 pm – Worship at St. William's

SERVING IN OCTOBER

Pastor: Oct 11-Pastor Dennis Preston, Oct 18- SAM Jewel Townsend, Oct 25- SAM Jewel Townsend

Organists: Marcia Guenther

Altar Care: Deb Koep

Usher: Dave & Elliott Arvidson

Acolyte: Emma & Elliott Arvidson

Lay Reader: Deb Koep

Communion Assistant: Christy Hart

Birthday Card Sender: Deb Koep

NEWS AND NOTES

Check out the Esther Calendar on our website to stay up to date on everything happening! Go to estherlutheran.com and click on "Esther Calendar."

Choir Practice TODAY after worship.

Youth Annual Hayride & Campfire is planned for TODAY at 4:30 pm at Tom & Joan Burquest's. We'll have hot dogs, s'mores & snacks. Friends are welcome! Let Anna or Joan know if you have questions.

Widows & Singles Share & Care Day is October 16th. They will be visiting Cherry Grove followed by lunch at the Farm House. Meet at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Parkers Prairie at 10:45 am to carpool. Call Cheryl Scott at 320-815-3230 to sign up.

WELCA Fall Conference Gathering: Conference 8: October 24th at Grace Lutheran in Brandon, MN. Speaker will be a mother and son from Health Partners from Tanzania. Grace Lutheran supports this mission regularly. Contact Luella Thom for details.



The Bell Tower is leaking and needs to be repaired. Because of the high reach and difficult area to work with, we do not have an exact idea of cost, but it could surpass \$50,000. Please consider helping with this important and much needed repair. Help keep the bell ringing! Please send your donation to the church: 11019 625th Ave Parkers Prairie, MN 56361 or scan the QR code.



Vanco online giving platform is a great way to set up a scheduled giving plan for even when you cannot make it to church. Scan the QR code, go online to estherlutheran.com, go to the tab "Give to Esther Lutheran Church" and click on the link <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZP4R> or download the app Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement. Any questions please ask Mandy Arvidson.



We welcome you to join in the weekly "Behold the New Has Come" devotions available on our website estherlutheran.com on the "Behold" tab. Devotions are posted to the website and emailed out each Monday. If you are not currently on the email list and want to be, please notify Mandy in the office. Each weekly devotion includes a challenge for the week. This past week's challenge is:

What if our actions were God-breathed just as all scripture is God breathed? Before moving ahead in the moment without a thought, take a moment to breathe in and remember that our lives are a gift from God. Look for inspiration in each moment from the breath of God living inside each of us. The challenge for this week? Breathe first, then take action. Practice living a life that is God breathed, finding hope and confidence in allowing God to have control. Giving up control can be a little scary, but giving ourselves permission to NOT be responsible for everything can also be freeing and rewarding.

We hope these devotions and weekly challenges will inspire conversations and stories that we can share with one another as, together, we grow in faith through this initiative.

You belong here. We believe that each person has unique gifts, are created in God's image, and is a beloved child of God. We welcome you to join us each week to share in the community of faith at Esther - "Knowing Christ - making Christ known through faith, hope and love". If you would like to become a member of Esther, please contact Mandy in the church office at 218-338-2171 or secretary@estherlutheran.net or Jewel Townsend at 320-760-2503 or jewellht17@gmail.com.

Esther Lutheran Church, ELCA
11019 625th Ave, Parkers Prairie, MN 56361 - Telephone: 218-338-2171
Website: estherlutheran.com
Email: secretary@estherlutheran.net
Facebook: facebook.com/estherlutheran/
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