

September 27, 2026

Pentecost 18



Grace Lutheran Church

11 East Dawes Avenue, Somers Point, NJ 08244

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Reverend † Elizabeth Frey, Pastor, Scott J. Breiner, Music Director
Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant

*Note that all text written in bold is for congregation participation.
Most of our hymn songs are found in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship
red hymnal found in the pews.*

S=service music in the front part of the hymnal.

GATHERING

Thank you for joining us as we worship our Lord together!
Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

WELCOME

Rev. Elizabeth Frey

PRELUDE *Whatever My God Ordains is Right* by Johann Gottfried Walther
 (Variations 2 and 2)

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin to God. *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.**

OPENING HYMN

At the Name of Jesus

ELW #416

Verses 1, 3, 5 ALL, Verse 2 WOMEN, Verse 4 MEN

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

ELW S138

HYMN OF PRAISE*This is the Feast*

ELW S140

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.**

PEACE The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

GREET YOUR NEIGHBOR**CHILDREN'S SERMON****CHILDREN ARE DISMISSED FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL***Please be seated.***WORD****FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32**

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

¹ The word of the LORD came to me: ² 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"?

³ As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴ 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 who shall die.

²⁵ 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? ²⁶ 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. ²⁷ Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸ Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹ 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?

³⁰ 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.

³¹ 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? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 25:1-9



¹ To | you, O LORD,
I lift | up my soul.

² **My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be | put to shame,**

nor let my enemies triumph | over me.

³ Let none who look to you be | put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame | who are treacherous.

⁴ **Show me your | ways, O LORD,**
and teach | me your paths.

⁵ Lead me in your | truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all

the day long.

**⁶ Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.**

⁷ Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the
sake of your goodness, O LORD.

**⁸ You are gracious and upright, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

⁹ You lead the lowly in justice
and teach the lowly your way.

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1-13

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

¹ If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be grasped,

⁷ but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
assuming human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a human,

⁸ he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—

even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly
and gave him the name

that is above every other name,

¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus

every knee should bend,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue should confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me,
not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work
on your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God
who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for
his good pleasure.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 21st chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel: Matthew 21:23-32

After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

²³ 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?” ²⁴ 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. ²⁵ 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?’ ²⁶ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷ 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.

²⁸ “What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. ³¹ 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 kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² 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.**

Please be seated.

SERMON

Rev. Elizabeth Frey

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY Oh, That the Lord would Guide My Ways ELW #772

THE APOSTLE’S 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.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY *Let This Mind be in You* by Craig Courtney
Please stand as you are able.

OFFERTORY RESPONSE *Create in Me a Clean Heart O God* [WOV #732](#)

OFFERING 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.

Please be seated.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

When the pastor or worship assistant says, “Hear us O God”, please respond with, “**Hear our prayer.**”

P: 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.**

HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

[ELW S144](#)

PREFACE

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

[ELW S144](#)

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

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

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

EVERYONE IS INVITED to receive Holy Communion. The ushers will invite worshippers forward to receive communion in front of the altar steps. Once you have received the wafer and the red wine/white grape juice, place your empty cup in the tray and return to your pew via the side aisles. If you do not wish to receive communion, or are worshipping with children who have not had First Communion, we welcome you to come forward for a blessing and cross your arms over your chest to show your preference to the pastor.

MUSIC *Whatever My God Ordains is Right* by Johan Ludwig Krebs

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

BLESSING

The God of grace + bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN *What God Ordains Is Good Indeed* **ELW #776**

*Please be seated. Enjoy the postlude music.
and meditate on how God spoke to your heart today.*

POSTLUDE *Postlude in D Major* by C. Armstrong Gibbs

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

We are glad for your presence today.

We hope you come again soon!

We thank all those serving in worship today:

Worship Assistant: Ruth Bowden

The flowers sponsor this week is: Kathy Nigsch

ANNOUNCEMENTS:**ATTENTION ALL WORSHIP ASSISTANTS AND ANYONE WHO WOULD LIKE TO BE A WORSHIP ASSISTANT:**

If you did not attend the Worship Assistant Training last Sunday, please attend the training today following 10:15 AM worship in the sanctuary.

Please mark your calendars!

FEED THE NORTHEAST: October 1-31

We are excited to once again participate in Feed the Northeast Food Drive to help combat food insecurity for local families with Thrivent Member Network-Northeast Region! If we are one of the first 100 to collect 500 items for our Grace Place Food Pantry, Thrivent will give a \$500 check to our food pantry in addition to the items collected. This is a great way to help them keep their shelves stocked for those in need, especially through the holiday season!

Seaman's Institute-Christmas at Sea

The Grace Stitchers are working hard to make essential items for the men & women working at sea during Christmas. This Christmas at Sea Donation Drive will take place during the month of October, and your donations are very much needed and appreciated! Please place your items in the labeled bin in the narthex.

Items Needed for Seafarers:

Warm hats & scarves	Shaving Cream	Shampoo
Work socks, work gloves	Playing cards	Combs
ChapStick	Hand lotion	Pens & small notebooks
Nail clippers	Toothbrush, toothpaste	Mini-sewing kits
Puzzle books	Deodorant, bar soap	Hard/boxed candy,
gum, Razors	Hand warmers	cough drops

The Installation for Pastor Liz

This will be on October 11 at our 10:15 worship service with Bishop Compton. We will have a special luncheon for Pastor Liz following that worship service at 11:30. We are asking all who attend to please RSVP so we know how much food to order and please bring a can of soup for our food pantry in honor of our SOUPer pastor!

4th Annual Oktoberfest

Tickets are now on sale: \$30 for adults and \$15 for children under 12

Friday October 16 from 5:00-7:00 PM.

Volunteers are needed to prepare German potato salad, German honey cookies and apple strudel for Oktoberfest! A sign-up sheet, recipes and containers are in the church office. Please stop by during office hours to sign up and pick up what you need for what you wish to prepare.

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

September 27, 2026-October 4, 2026

18th Sunday of Pentecost

9/27/26

8:00AM Spoken Worship

10:15AM Traditional Worship

**Worship Assistant Training
following worship**

MONDAY 9/28/26

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry

7:00PM Alcoholics

Anonymous

TUESDAY 9/29/26

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry

6:30PM Narcotics Anonymous

7:00PM Alcoholics

Anonymous

WEDNESDAY 9/30/26

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry

11:30AM Bayside Duplicate
Bridge

6:00PM AA Book Study

7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

THURSDAY 10/1/26

9:00AM-11:30AM Food
Pantry

9:30AM Bible Study

12:00PM Alcoholics

Anonymous

5:00PM Choir Rehearsal

5:30PM AA 12-Step

7:00PM Al-Anon

FRIDAY 10/2/26

10:30AM Grace Stitchers

7:30PM Alcoholics

Anonymous

SATURDAY 10/3/26

7:30AM & 8:30AM Weight
Watchers

19th Sunday of Pentecost

10/4/26

8:00AM Spoken Worship

10:15AM Traditional Worship

Joyful Noise Offering-

Somers Point Police

Sunshine Fund

Office Hours This Week:

Mon-Tues 10:00-3:00

Thurs-Fri 10:00-3:00

SHORE DINER

Present this bulletin on a Sunday
and Shore Diner will donate 20% to Grace
Lutheran Church. Present this on
any other day, and we will donate 10%.

Shore Diner
6710 Tilton Road
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234
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