

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 13, 2026



PRELUDE

We arrive from many places as music gathers us into one shared moment in the Spirit.

WELCOME STATEMENT

Everyone is invited into God's story and the life of this community.

TEMPLE TALK

Partners in Pride

Jameson Pagano

PROCESSIONAL/SPECIAL MUSIC

"The Church Song"

Jay Beech

Youth Chorus

We are the Church
The Body of our Lord
We are all God's children and we have been restored

Congregation

The church is not a building where people go to pray
It's not made out of sticks and stones and it's not made out of clay.
(Youth Chorus)

The church is not a business a committee or a board
It's not a corporation for the business of our Lord
(Youth Chorus)

Well you can go to worship but you cannot go to church
You can't find a building that's alive no matter how you search
(Youth Chorus)

The church it is the people living their lives
Called! Enlightened! Sanctified! For the work of Jesus Christ!
(Youth Chorus)

GREETING

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

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

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.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

FIRST READING

Genesis 50: 15-21

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

A reading from Genesis.

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?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, '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. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? 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. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Holy wisdom, holy word.

Thanks be to God.

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all God's benefits—

who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases;

who redeems your life from the grave and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;

who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

O LORD, you provide vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.

You made known your ways to Moses and your works to the children of Israel.

LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;

you will not always accuse us, nor will you keep your anger forever.

You have not dealt with us according to our sins, nor repaid us according to our iniquities.

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

As far as the east is from the west, so far have you removed our transgressions from us.

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

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

A reading from Romans.

Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. 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. 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.

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. 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.

For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. 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. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

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. For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

Holy wisdom, holy word.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

"Celtic Alleluia"

ELW 174

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 18: 21-35

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

The gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Peter came and said to Jesus, “Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, 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. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. 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.’ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. 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. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

SERMON

Rev. Phillip Potaczek

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Forgive Our Sins As We Forgive”

ELW 605

PROFESSION OF FAITH: THE APOSTLES’ 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.

SING A NEW SONG:

A FAMILY RALLY DAY LITANY OF BLESSING FOR OUR MINISTRY TOGETHER

Gracious God, you call us together as one community, many voices, and many gifts. As we begin a new year of ministry, we give thanks for all who share their time, talents, and hearts in this place.

God of grace, bless our life together and guide us in your ways.

Bless our children, youth, and adults who gather here to learn, grow, and explore their faith in your presence with us and your love for us. Bless our Sunday Session students, guest teachers, Bible Study participants, Book Club members, and all who nurture faith across generations.

God of wisdom, help us grow in faith and love.

Bless all who serve in worship and ministry: musicians, singers, lectors, acolytes, altar guild, communion servers, ushers, greeters, and all who offer their time and energy to help create a welcoming place for all people.

God of love, bless our service and our song.

Bless our council, elected officers, committees, committee chairs, volunteers, staff, and leaders in our parish community. Grant them courage, creativity, and compassion as they help shape the mission of this congregation.

God of calling, lead us in faithful service.

We pray for all here who provide care, teaching, and spiritual leadership among us. Renew us with your Spirit and surround us with your grace.

God of hope, strengthen those who lead and serve.

Bless this church family in the year ahead. Open our hearts to new possibilities, deepen our welcome, and send us into the world as people of justice, mercy, peace, and love.

God of the journey, walk with us and make us one.

Holy God, receive our gifts, our hopes, and our prayers. May all that we do together proclaim your love and bring healing to your world.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen. Thanks be to God!

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*After each prayer petition, please respond: Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.***

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.**

PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The peace of Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

From the goodness of the earth and the work of many hands, we have received much. Let us return our gifts in gratitude, joining God's renewing work in the world.

We offer ourselves and our gifts with joy, that all creation may know justice, peace, and abundant life.



OFFERING / OFFERING HYMN

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.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. **And also 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.**

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY

Brenton Brown

Verse

Holy holy God Almighty
Who was and is to come
God of glory You're so worthy
All the saints bow down

Chorus

Holy is Your name in all the earth
Righteous are Your ways so merciful
Everything You've done is just and true
Holy holy God are You (x2)

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EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy, mighty and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory...to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Modern Version

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. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

All are welcome to God's table of grace, receiving Christ's presence as nourishment for the journey.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

All who wish to know the love of God in Jesus Christ are invited to Holy Communion. Inform a communion assistant if you need a gluten-free host. Grape juice is located in the center ring of the tray. If you are not receiving the sacrament today, please come forward with your arms crossed over your chest for a blessing.

COMMUNION HYMN

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of our salvation,...through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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 - Creator, ✠ Christ, and Spirit - bless you now and forever.
Amen.

RECESSIONAL

SENDING

Our Eucharist has ended. **Now it must be lived.**
Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

*****Trinity at a Glance*****

September 13, 2026

- Open Table will be serving a **free community meal today, Sunday, September 13th at noon**. There will be BLTs, watermelon, baked beans, sides and desserts.
- As announced, **Church Council and Pastor Phil are prayerfully exploring a potential partnership with Open Table United Church of Christ**. Open Table's leadership has approached Trinity about using available space on the main floor of the Education Building as they consider their future facility needs.

No decision has been made. If an agreement is reached, the arrangement could provide additional opportunities for shared worship, fellowship, and community ministry, while generating at least \$1,000 per month in additional income for Trinity. The Council recognizes that there are practical questions to consider, including scheduling, building use, responsibilities, liability, and finances. Just as importantly, the congregation is invited to consider what sharing its building might say about Trinity's commitment to hospitality, welcome, and making room for its neighbors.

Congregational conversations will be scheduled for after worship today, Sunday, September 13th (Rally Day). This will be an opportunity for Trinity members to ask questions, share concerns, and listen together. Questions may be submitted in advance to Pastor Phil or Council Officers Mike Matteson and Carol Wahlstrom. Please join the Council in prayerful discernment as Trinity considers how God may be calling our congregation to use the space entrusted to it. Thank you!

- **SHARE YOUR LOVE FOR JESUS TO THE NEXT GENERATION**

Teach a Sunday Session lesson! You can lead on already designed and prepared for you or you may create your own. Session themes are listed next to each date on the sign up sheet on the information Kiosk. Put your name on the line next to the date you want to lead a lesson, and the Christian Education Committee will prepare everything you need (a member of the Committee will accompany you, also). Thank you for helping to speak the good news of God's love for all people to our youth. Sharing your faith makes a difference!

- **Help Us Open the Community Clothing Closet!**

In collaboration with **Partners in Pride**, Trinity is creating a **free, gender-affirming community clothing closet** in the former Rummage Sale room off Fellowship Hall. We have lots of great clothing ready to go-and we're hoping to open the closet by October! Now we just need a few volunteers to help organize the space, arrange the clothing, and make it welcoming and easy to use. Would you be willing to lend a hand one **Sunday morning after worship or sometime during the week?** Even a few hours would make a big difference. **Sign up at the back of the church with a day and time that works for you.** With a little help, we can get this important ministry and community outreach up and running!

- **Fall Book Club: The Divine Art of Dying**

This Fall, TLC Book Club invites you into a thoughtful and compassionate conversation as we read *The Divine Art of Dying* by Herbert Anderson and Karen Speerstra. Written by a pastoral theologian and a hospice patient, the book explores the spiritual journey of preparing for our own deaths-not with fear, but with honesty, faith, and grace. Pick up your copy from

<https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/9781506478876/The-Divine-Art-of-Dying-Second-Edition>

Please note: this is not a class about dying; it is a conversation about living faithfully in light of God's promise. This will be a welcoming space for conversation, reflection, and prayer. *All are welcome!*

We will meet on **Tuesdays at 6pm, in the Education Building Community Room:**

September 8: Read Part 1

September 22: Read Part 3

September 15: Ready Part 2

September 29: Read Part 4

- **Rotary Club** will be hosting a **Culver's Night on Wednesday, September 16th, 5-8pm**. *Come out and join the fun!*
- The next **Trinity Lutheran Blood Drive** is happening **Wednesday, September 16th, 12pm to 5pm**. For an appointment call 1-800-733-2767 or visit RedCrossBlood.org. Appointments are preferred but not necessary. Contact Carol Wahlstrom for more information, carolwahlstrom@gmail.com , and to volunteer. Thank you Trinity Lutheran for giving your time, your generosity and the gift of life!

- **Affirmation class and first Sunday Session** will begin at **9am September 20th**.
- **Sunday, September 20th is Quilt Sunday** this year. Quilt Sunday is a beautiful display of the Trinity Stitchers' work laid out on the pews in the Sanctuary. You don't want to miss this!
- **German Dinner Tickets are on sale now** at \$20 each. Tickets can be purchased at the Office during regular business hours, from any Rotary member or by calling 815-343-7655. Save the date in your calendar; **Friday, September 25th 5-7pm** at Trinity Lutheran Church. Proceeds support Rotary's scholarships for Marquette Academy, Ottawa High School Opportunity School, IVCC, and Trinity Rose Montessori School.
- **Save the Date! Saturday, October 10th, 6pm**, in collaboration with Partners In Pride, Trinity will be showing "**1946: The Mistranslation That Shifted Culture**." This **free showing** is of a feature documentary that follows the story of tireless researchers who trace the origins of the anti-gay movement among Christians to a grave mistranslation of the Bible in 1946. It chronicles the discovery of never-before-seen archives at Yale University which unveil astonishing new revelations, and casts significant doubt on any biblical basis for LGBTQIA+ prejudice. Featuring commentary from prominent scholars as well as opposing pastors, including the personal stories of the film's creators. 1946 is at once challenging, enlightening, and inspiring.
- **Partners in Pride are in need of hangers for their Community Closet.** If you have any extras please bring them to the Church Office in the Education Building, Mon-Thurs, 9-2 pm.
- **The 2027 calendars are in!** The suggested donation is \$25. However, people are asked to give as their heart leads. Calendars are available by contacting either Kate Reed (815) 830-2061 or Marj Nelson (815) 973-1286 by phone or text. There are also a few in the Office for purchase. Profits from the sale of the calendar will go towards funding the Growing Hope Globally Project.
- **The Growing Hope Globally Project** is working to transform community and school spaces into environments that promote healthy diets through local policies, bilingual food education (K'iche-Spanish), the revival of ancestral cuisine, the reduction of ultra-processed foods, and the availability of safe water. **Please consider donating to this worthy cause!**



- **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

Please pray for Kim Wahl's ongoing health issues.

- **CURRENT FINANCIAL REPORT:**

◦ Aug Income = \$20,666.62	(Income YTD = \$157,804.29)
◦ Aug Expense = \$18,115.66	(Expense YTD = \$157,297.15)
◦ Income Less Expense = \$2,550.96	(Income Less Expense YTD = \$507.14)

● **THIS WEEK @ TRINITY:**

- **Monday (9/14):**
 - 9a Tai Chi (Fellowship Hall)
 - 10a Drum Fit (Education Building)
 - 10a Staff Meeting
 - 6p Christian Ed Meeting (Board Room)
- **Tuesday (9/15):**
 - 10a Sit Fit (Community Room)
 - 11:30 LEASE Screening (Education Building)
 - 4:30 Property Committee (Board Room)
 - 6p Book Club (Community Room)
 - 7p TRMS Board Meeting (Community Room)
- **Wednesday (9/16)**
 - Noon Blood Drive
 - 1p Bible Study (Community Room)
 - 6:30 Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)
- **Thursday (9/17):**
 - 10a Sit Fit (Community Room)
 - 7p Church Council Meeting
- **Friday (9/18):**
 - 7a Sunrise Rotary (Fellowship Hall)
- **Saturday (9/19):**
 - Talk Like a Pirate Day!* 
- **Sunday (9/20):**
 - Quilt Sunday!*
 - 9a Affirmation Class / Sunday Session
 - 10a Holy Communion (Sanctuary)

WORSHIP ASSISTANT SCHEDULE -

Please sign up using the binder at the back of the aisle.

<u>Sunday, September 13, 2026</u> Crucifer/Acolyte: Ushers: Lector: <i>Shannon Matteson</i> Communion Assistants: <i>Shannon Matteson, Mike Matteson, Ann Enke</i> Altar Guild: <i>Anne Enke</i> Video Tech: <i>Anne Lauterjung</i> Music Directors: <i>Matt Makeever & Mary Heider</i> Altar Flowers:	<u>Sunday, September 20, 2026</u> Crucifer/Acolyte: Ushers: Lector: Communion Assistants: Altar Guild: <i>Debbie Guenther, Becky Glaser</i> Video Tech: <i>Anne Lauterjung</i> Music Directors: <i>Matt Makeever & Mary Heider</i> Altar Flowers: