



GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

7800 W. McCarthy Rd,
Palos Heights, IL 60463
708-448-4170

**September 13,
2026**

**Sixteenth
Sunday after
Pentecost**

**9:00 am
Service of
the Word**

**11:00 am
Service of
Holy
Communion**

**The Pastor:
Rev. Chris
Buresh**

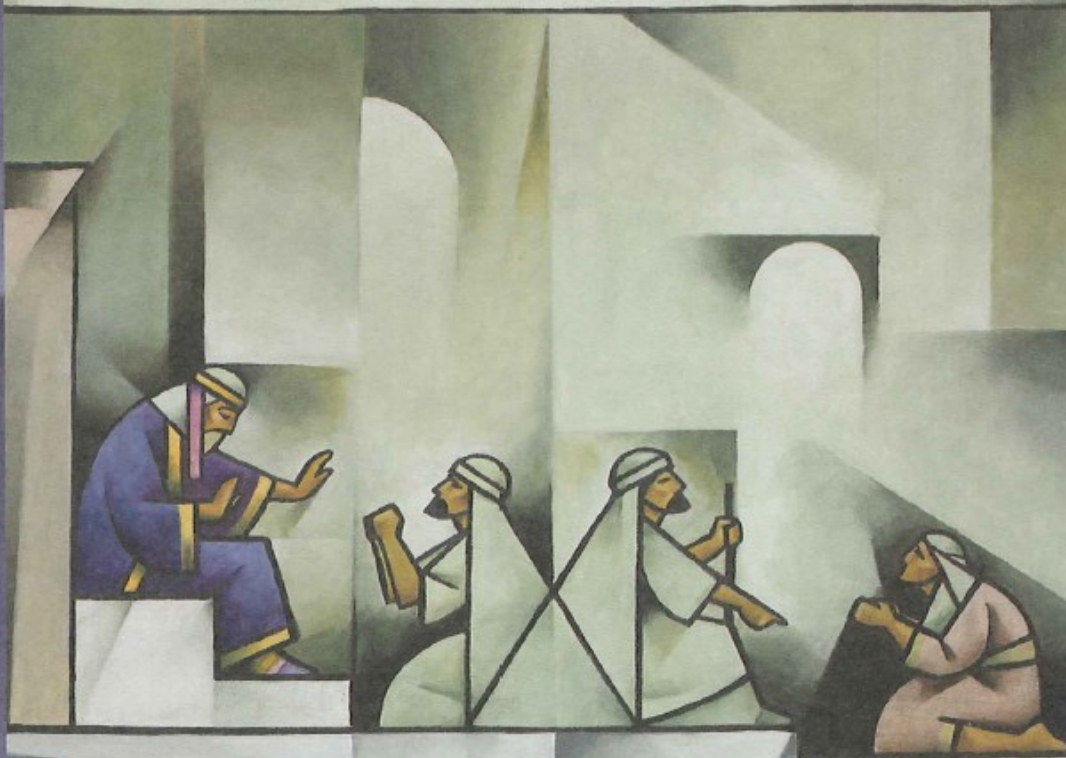
**The Associate
Pastor:
Rev. Andrew
Bell**

**The Director of
Children's &
Family Ministry:
Lori
Puttkammer**

**The Pastor
Emeritus:
Rev. Dr. Wayne
A. Basch**

Lord, how often should I forgive?

MATTHEW 18:21



Welcome

Welcome to worship, Christian education and fellowship this morning! We rejoice to gather with long-term friends and to meet new ones.



HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH

For people, the word *church* means different things. To some, it is simply a building. For others, it is a particular “religion” or denomination. For us, the Church is a congregation of believers. The Lutheran Confessions briefly define the Church as a body of people where the Word is taught in its purity and the Sacraments are administered rightly.

Paul, in his Letter to the Galatians, calls the Church “the household of faith” (6:10). This is a good descriptive name for the gathering of God’s saints. The word *household* denotes a family, and we are, as believers, brothers and sisters in the faith. We are called on to love one another as Christ loved us. We assist one another and carry others’ burdens.

As the family is the core building block of society, the congregation is for the Christian the core of the community in which they live. Together, we hear and learn God’s Word, are strengthened in our faith, and are exhorted to care and pray for one another as we join together our efforts to share Christ with the world. Gathered together around the Word and Sacraments, the household of faith is you and me.

Lessons That Last

Most of us can remember a Sunday school teacher who made a lasting difference in our lives. Sometimes the simplest lessons become the ones we carry with us the longest.

One man recalled his high school Sunday school teacher, a businessman named Mr. Homan, who shared this advice with the boys in his class: “Don’t ever go anywhere you would not want your mother or sister to go. Don’t ever do anything you would not want your mother or sister to do.”

Years later, the man reflected on those words and said, “That advice has served me well. I have always remembered it.”

God often uses faithful teachers to plant seeds of wisdom, character and integrity in young hearts. Their influence may not always be seen right away, but the lessons they share can guide lives for years to come.

Never underestimate the power of a few thoughtful words spoken with love and conviction.

GATHERING

The Prelude: *"Joyful, Joyful!"* Smith

The Musical Call to Worship: *"I Sing the Mighty Power of God"* Senn

The Service of the Word - 9:00 am

The Service of Holy Communion - 11:00 am

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.**

+ The Call to Worship:

Leader: God, the darkest night can still have hope

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: The coldest winter can still have warmth

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: Standing by ourselves, we don't feel alone

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: Finding our way in the dark isn't as hard as we thought

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: There's help for the lost

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: There's a bed for the tired

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: There's food for the hungry

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: There's shelter for the homeless

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: There's relief for the sick

Congregation: When there is love.

+ The Call to Worship - continued

Leader: There's time together

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: We can accomplish anything

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: We can stop the fighting

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: We can hear the cries of the helpless

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: We find that one special person

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: We can choose the right path every time

Congregation: When there is love.

Leader: We are your children

Congregation: Because there is love.

ALL: Amen

The Children's Message (11:00 am): **"The Sound of the Call"**

The Introduction & Installation of Sunday School Staff (11:00 am)

+The Opening Hymn: "SHALL WE GATHER AT THE RIVER" No. 423

+ The Prayer of the Day

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Inspire us to be the community you desire, one that delights in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

+ The Readings for the Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Romans 14:1-12

¹ Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ 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. ⁴ 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.

⁵ 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. ⁶ 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.

⁷ For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ 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. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹² So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

The Anthem: ***"It Is Well" Braswell***

(This piece was arranged by Ray Braswell
specifically for the Good Shepherd Flute Choir.)



WORD

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

²¹ 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?”

²² Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³ “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵ 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. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ 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.’ ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ 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. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

L: This is the Word of God, the Word of life.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon: **“The REAL Homework”**

+The Hymn of the Day: “WHERE CHARITY AND LOVE PREVAIL”

No. 359

+ The Affirmation of Faith

We believe in God, in Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, and in you and in me.

We believe the Holy Spirit has freed us to worship as a community.

We believe the Holy Spirit works through
balloons and ministers, daisies and wiggly children,
clanging cymbals and silence, drama and the unexpected,
choirs and banners, touching and praying,
spontaneity and planning, faith and doubt,
tears and laughter, leading and supporting,
hugging and kneeling, dancing and stillness,
applauding and giving, creativity and plodding,
words and listening, holding and letting go,
thank you and help me, Scripture and alleluias,
agonizing and celebrating, accepting and caring,
through you and through me
through Love.

We believe God's Holy Spirit lives in this community of dancing,
hand-holding people where lines of age, politics and lifestyles
are crossed.

We believe in praising God for Life.

We believe in responding to God's grace and love and justice for all
people.

We believe in the poetry within each of us.

We believe in dreams and visions.

We believe in old people running and children leading.

We believe in the Kingdom of God within us.

We believe in Love.



+The Prayers

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

A brief silence.

Move your church here, at our partner parish in Coronationville and the church throughout the world away from judging and despising others. Lead us to embody the forgiveness you have given us in Jesus. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

The endless beauty of your creation reminds us of your mercy. Guide those who lead us to wonder at your creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Raise up leaders to hold all in authority accountable for any misuse of the power entrusted to them. Open the hearts of those who serve our country and community to do so guided by your Spirit. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Calm the fears of all in need with your promises. Compassionately free the lives of any who feel bound by their failures. Remember your children in need (*especially*). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Ground the Good Shepherd community in the welcome you show us in forgiving our sin. Inspire each of us to welcome others for your honor and glory. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

With you is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember all those who have gone before us. 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.**

+ Sharing the Peace of Christ

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

The Voluntary: *"Amazing Grace" Labenske*

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Service of Holy Communion - 11:00 am
MEAL

In the awesome Name of God, in the victorious name of Jesus,
in the mysterious name of the Spirit:

We acknowledge our God

We summon our God

And we wait

We are still

And we wait

We are silent

And we wait

(a brief silence)

We wait for the sounds of God

**And the sounds of the
sacrament**

The breaking of bread

And the gushing of wine

The pain of sorrow

And the pulse of hope

The strain of kneeling

And the trauma of prayer

The echo of our name

And bread in our teeth

A cup on our lips

And breathing at our side

The shiver of pregnant mothers

**And the scream of a motherless
child**

The trickle of goat's milk

And the sigh of rich tourists

The growl of empty bodies

And the splash of spent blood

The breaking of bread

And the gushing of wine

(a brief silence)

The bleeding of a lamb

And the breaking of a womb

The death of a lamb

And the breaking of a tomb

The beginning of an end

And a word that has healing

A voice in our face

"The body of your Lord"

A power in our ears

"The Blood of your Lord"

As we wait for the sounds of God
The sounds of the sacrament
The breaking of bread
And the gushing of wine
(a brief silence)

Sounds in the distance
And the vibration of human lives
The crackle of fear
And the murmur of distrust
The scramble for rice
And the tearing of garbage
The shuffle of withered limbs
And the breaking of brittle bones
The taste of a mystery
And a God who has feeling
In the breaking of bread
And the gushing of wine
(a brief silence)

The bursting of joy
And the bubble of children's faces
The dancing of willows
And the surprise of open lives
The shout of mountains
And the laughter of a second birth
The leap of our spirit
And the swirl of celebration
We will listen to God
And the celebration of God
In the breaking of bread
And the gushing of wine



+ The Words of Institution
After the words of institution have been spoken, the people respond:
We open ourselves, our hearts and our minds to the mystery of this meal that unites us with all our brothers and sisters, so that through the life God offers us in Christ, we may live our lives for others.

+ The Lord's Prayer

THE COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION:

Please use this time for quiet reflection on the tremendous gifts of love and forgiveness that Jesus offers to all.

+ The Closing Liturgy

Leader: May this body and blood given and shed for us strengthen us in
God's grace. Give thanks to the Lord for He is good!

Congregation: His love endures forever!

Service of the Word - 9:00 am

+The Canticle of Thanksgiving:

Refrain

Sal - va - tion be - longs to our God and to Christ the Lamb for -

ev - er and ev - er. | Great and won - der - ful are your deeds, O

God of the u - ni - verse; just and true are your ways, O

Rul - er of all the na - tions. Who can fail to hon - or you, Lord, and

sing the glo - ry of your name? *Refrain* Sal - va - tion be - longs to our

God and to Christ the Lamb for - ev - er and ev - er.

2 For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, and

bless-ed is the one whose name is the Word of God. All

Refrain

praise and thanks to you, ho - ly God! Sal - va-tion be-longs to our

God and to Christ the Lamb for - ev - er and ev - er.

+ The Prayer of Thanksgiving for the Word

+ The Lord's Prayer

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SENDING

+The Benediction:

L: Children of God, affirm your childlikeness, your spontaneity, your wonder, your inquisitiveness, your joy in the abundant life, your humbleness, and your unshamed love of the Lord. Each of you is a child of God, and God knows your name. God knows when you skin your knees or your heart. God knows when you catch a butterfly or cry in the darkness. Go, children, out where the sun shines on your faces. Go out into God's abundance and tell the story of a Christ who would claim each person as His own. Go and kiss the hurts of this world. Go and laugh in the fields of God, for you are Christian children, inheritors and expressions of God's grace and love. May your celebration of life and love continue forever.

C: Amen

+The Dismissal is spoken by the pastor.

Response: **Thanks be to God**

+SENDING HYMN: "IN THEE IS GLADNESS"

No. 867

The Postlude: "*Psalm of Glory*" Smith

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SERVING TODAY:

The Organist - *Beth Ridderhoff*

The Flute Choir Director - *Joy Ausec*

The Readers -9:00 - *Susan Mish*

11:00 - *Suellen Spooner*

The Acolytes - 9:00 - *Ron Krapf and Walter Jacobek*

11:00 - *Ben Schmitt and Grace Wolcott*



Today's chancel flowers are given by CJ Muller in loving memory of Franky on the occasion of his birthday.

Our Mission Statement

A caring fellowship of all God's people empowered by grace to proclaim the gospel and lovingly serve as Jesus teaches.

Our Vision Statement

Transforming lives by making the hope of God real through bold faith, service, outreach, discipleship and helping all people discover their God-given value.

Core Values

Encouraging each other in our lifelong journey of faith through our core values of:

-Drawing nearer to God

-Prioritizing Love over Judgment

-Practicing Grace

-Welcoming All

-Generously Serving

-Fostering Community

Our Intercessions Include:

The hospitalized: Barb Bergamo, Ed Schussler (Palos),
Ray Koehne (Loyola)

The bereaved: The Montecki family upon the passing of their friend, Tish Loren; Grant and Suellen Spooner upon the passing of their friend, Steve Richardson.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today our church family rallies together as we begin the new program year. Consider how God is inviting you to live out your faith in the life of the church.

Rudolph's BIG BUILD is scheduled for Fri., Sept. 25 at 5:00 pm and Sat., Sept. 26 beginning at 8:00 am. Come join this all church mission project to help a family in need! Sign-up in the narthex today through Sept. 20.

You should have received your annual printed phone directory in the mail. PLEASE CHECK YOUR LISTING (especially the phone number), and let Donna know of any changes. If you did not receive a directory, stop by the office to pick one up. Thank you!

Bible Studies start up this week on Tuesday. Check the newsletter for times and more information.

The "OFF Club," our joyful group for seniors, usually meets the third Wednesday of the month at 11:00 am. Everyone "Over Fifty-Five" is encouraged to join us for fun & fellowship! The next meeting is this Wed., Sept. 16.

MOST CHOIRS begin this week. . . Now is a great time to join! Our Cherub choir begins today, while Adult, Carillon and Flute choirs begin this week. Jr. choir begins on Mon., Sept. 21. If you're aged 3 through adult, there is a choir for you! Please consider joining. ***Our choirs are a great source of pride for Good Shepherd*** and joining them is a great way to share your gift and meet some amazing friends. Call the church office for more information.

6th and 7th Grade Confirmation instruction begins tomorrow at 7 pm while 8th grade begins on September 20 at 10:10 am. If you know of any 6th – 8th grader eligible for this adventure, please see Pastor Chris, Pastor Bell or Mrs. Lori.

MORE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attention College Students (or their Parents)! We need your new campus address and name of school so we can keep you updated with church news and send a care package. Complete the form out in the narthex today or call/email the office during the week. Thank you!

Pastor Bell is contacting 8th - 12th grade youth regarding the 2027 Youth Gathering in Minneapolis (June 28 - July 2). Come to the "info" luncheon meeting next Sun., Sept. 20 after the 11 am service. Please RSVP to Pr. Bell.

Sunday School is looking for Jr. High and High School students to join the Kid's Ministry Team as class assistants for the new program year which begins today. Please sign up on the bulletin board, email or call Mrs. Lori. Service hours can be earned. **We have a brief orientation meeting for the class assistants this morning at 10:15 am in Bethany Hall.**

Attention Junior Choir Members! Save the date! Our second annual kickoff pool party will be this Sat., Sept. 19 at 3 pm. Siblings/parents are welcome too! More details to follow; text Joanna Bergmann with questions.

The calendar for the week of September 13

MON	1:00 pm 4:00 pm 7:00 pm 8:00 pm	"OFF" Club Board Meeting "Just a Quick Word" - YouTube/FB 6 th & 7 th Grade Confirmation "Body & Soul"
TUE	9:30 am 10:30 am 6:30 pm 7:30 pm	Faith, Prayer & Joy Group Bible Study Discovering the Bible Church Council
WED	11:00 am 6:00 pm	"OFF" Club Adult Choir
THU	6:30 pm 9:00 pm	Carillon Choir Prayer Walk
SUN	9:00 am 9:00 am 10:10 am 10:30 am 11:00 am 11:00 am 12:00 pm	Service of Holy Communion <i>Online Service</i> 8 th Grade Confirmation Cherub Choir Service of the Word Sunday School Youth Gathering Meeting & Luncheon

PRAYER LIST

Members of the Congregation

Ray Koehne	Shirley Hulse
Barb Bergamo	Lori Cronin
Matt Brett	Barry Garr Jr.
Ed Schussler	Gerhard Haigis
Beth Wetzig	Jim Srbeny
Gail Kendall	Bill Innocenti

Friends of the Congregation

Donna Herpich	Marilyn Veselack
Natalya Villa	Walter Kroll
Sylvia Rodriguez	Dolores Wrzesinski
Steve Hayward	Kaylee Wynn
John Ledwitch	Andre Swanson
Nicholas Lyon	Chuck Singleton
Matt Mansfield	Laura Nicholson
Donna O'Malley	Tom Elsner
Pattie Hayes	Debra Casey
Ray Doerrer	Laura Reynolds
Linda D'Oyley	Joe Kaderabek
Kathleen Cantillon	Louise Sims
Linda Celesia	Jason Randall Glugla
Kim Heck	Tim Hennessey
Robbie Glocker	Katy Peterman
Christina Carroll	Dale Koch
Adrienne Manley	Maryanne Campbell
Ron Warnke	Alex Gersic
Craig Chismarick	Silvia Guijarro

Please let us know if there is someone you need added or removed from the prayer list by contacting the church office by 9 am on Friday. Thank You!

Pictures may be taken at our service to use on our updated website. Please contact us if you desire we not use any photograph including your image.