



"Whoever humbles himself like this child  
is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

THE 15<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2023

---

***SAINT PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH***

4660 West 94<sup>th</sup> Street, Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453

(708) 423-1040

Guest Pastor Rev. Dan Gensch

[www.stpauloaklawn.org](http://www.stpauloaklawn.org)

Director of Music Ruth Sievers

---

## As We Gather

Jesus' disciples asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Our Lord called a child into their midst and said, "*Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*" Children are highly valued by our loving God because they are completely dependent. On their own, they have nothing, and yet they need everything. But the same is true for all of us! On our own, we have only sinful, broken lives, and we are unable to please God and fulfill His commands. Yet, in Jesus Christ, we have everything we need! Forgiveness of sins and the guarantee of life with God forever are His gift to all who turn from their sin and receive the forgiveness earned by our crucified and risen Savior. Though we have nothing of our own to offer, we have already received everything we need from the gracious hands of our Lord.

## Prelude

"Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now"

J. Walther

## Opening Hymn

"Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now"

#902

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 Lord Jesus Christ, be present now;<br>Our hearts in true devotion bow.<br>Your Spirit send with light divine,<br>And let Your truth within us shine.                | 3 Then shall we join the hosts that cry,<br>"O holy, holy Lord Most High!"<br>And in the light of that blest place<br>We then shall see You face to face. |
| 2 Unseal our lips to sing Your praise<br>In endless hymns through all our days.<br>Increase our faith and light our minds;<br>And set us free from doubt that blinds. | △4 All glory to the Father, Son,<br>And Holy Spirit, Three in One!<br>To You, O blessed Trinity,<br>Be praise throughout eternity!                        |

*Text: Public domain*

## Invocation

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## Opening Sentences

**P** It is good to give thanks to the Lord,

**C** to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;

**P** to declare Your steadfast love in the morning,

**C** and Your faithfulness by night.

**P** The Most High God gathers us to praise His name and declare His love together!

## Confession and Absolution

**P** Lord God, You promise grace and every blessing to all who come before You and repent of their sins. Hear us now as we, Your humble children, confess our sins before You.

*We pause in humble silence to acknowledge our sin before our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ...*

**P** Most merciful God,  
**C** we humbly come before You to admit our sinfulness. In our thoughts, words, and actions, we have failed to do what Your Word demands. We have not honored You fully with our lives, nor have we loved one another as You first loved us. In the name of our gracious Savior Jesus Christ, we ask for Your forgiveness.

**Because He has humbled Himself for our sake upon the cross, bless us to receive the forgiveness He won for all who repent. Amen.**

**P** “Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.” God the Father has taken your sins and laid them upon our humble Savior Jesus Christ. Because of His sacrifice, God no longer counts your sins against you. He remembers them no more, and He preserves and delivers you as His child forever! As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## ✠ WORD ✠

### Introit

Psalm 92:1–4; antiphon: v. 5

**P** How great are Your works, O Lord! Your thoughts are very deep!

**C** It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;

**P** to declare Your steadfast love in the morning, and Your faithfulness by night,

**C** to the music of the lute and the harp, to the melody of the lyre.

**P** For You, O Lord, have made me glad by Your work; at the works of Your hands I sing for joy.

**C** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

**How great are Your works, O Lord! Your thoughts are very deep!**

### Prayer of the Day

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

**P** Let us pray together.

**C** O God, our gracious and loving Father, we are Your dependent children. Although we in no way deserve Your goodness, You freely offer Your grace to all who turn to You. Grant us faith to trust in Your Son, who humbled Himself for our salvation. We pray this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

### Old Testament Reading

✠ Israel’s Watchman ✠

*Ezekiel 33:7-9*

<sup>7</sup>“So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. <sup>8</sup>If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. <sup>9</sup>But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.”

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**Epistle**

✠ Submission to the Authorities ✠

*Romans 13:1-10*

<sup>1</sup>Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. <sup>2</sup>Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. <sup>3</sup>For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, <sup>4</sup>for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. <sup>5</sup>Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. <sup>6</sup>For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. <sup>7</sup>Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed. <sup>8</sup>Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup>The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>10</sup>Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**Holy Gospel**

✠ Who is the Greatest? ✠

*Matthew 18:1-14*

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eighteenth chapter.

**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

<sup>1</sup>At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" <sup>2</sup>And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them <sup>3</sup>and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup>Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>5</sup>"Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, <sup>6</sup>but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. <sup>7</sup>"Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! <sup>8</sup>And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. <sup>9</sup>And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire. <sup>10</sup>"See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>11</sup>For the Son of Man came to save the lost.

<sup>12</sup>What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? <sup>13</sup>And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. <sup>14</sup>So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

<sup>15</sup>"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup>But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

<sup>17</sup>If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. <sup>18</sup>Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** Praise to You, O Christ.

## ✠ Confession of Faith ✠

*Nicene Creed*

I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.  
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came  
down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the  
virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius  
Pilate. He suffered and was buried.

And the third day He rose again according  
to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory to judge  
both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.  
And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together  
is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.  
And I believe in one holy Christian and  
apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the  
remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life ✠ of the world to come. Amen.

### Sermon Hymn

“Renew Me, O Eternal Light”

#704

1 Renew me, O eternal Light,  
And let my heart and soul be bright,  
Illumined with the light of grace  
That issues from Your holy face.

2 Remove the pow’r of sin from me  
And cleanse all my impurity  
That I may have the strength and will  
Temptations of the flesh to still.

3 Create in me a new heart, Lord,  
That gladly I obey Your Word.  
Let what You will be my desire,  
And with new life my soul inspire.

4 Grant that I only You may love  
And seek those things which are above  
Till I behold You face to face,  
O Light eternal, through Your grace.

*Text: Public domain*

Sermon

Prayer of the Church

**Offering**—may be left in the offering plates near the doors as you leave. Those worshipping at home may continue to mail or drop off offerings at the church office, and on-line giving is available to everyone on our website at [www.stpauloaklawn.org](http://www.stpauloaklawn.org). For information about regular electronic giving, please contact the church office.

## Offertory Meditation

### A word about the Sacrament of the Altar...

We believe Jesus' own words that the bread and wine we receive in Holy Communion is indeed His true Body and Blood and not just a representation of it. We also acknowledge St. Paul's instruction to the Church at Corinth that it is harmful for anyone to receive the Sacrament without recognizing the real presence of His Body and Blood. Because of this, in Christian love we ask anyone who does not understand these truths to please refrain from receiving the Sacrament until you've spoken with the pastor. (*Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-30*)

## ✠ The Sacrament of the Altar ✠

### Preface

- P** The Lord be with you.  
**C** **And also with you.**  
**P** Lift up your hearts.  
**C** **We lift them to the Lord.**  
**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**C** **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**  
**P** It is truly good, right, and salutary...

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

#### The Lord's Prayer

#### Words of Our Lord

### Pax Domini

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**C** **Amen.**

## ✠ Distribution of the Sacrament ✠

"Blest Be the Tie That Binds"

#649

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Blest be the tie that binds<br>Our hearts in Christian love;<br>The fellowship of kindred minds<br>Is like to that above. | Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,<br>Our comforts and our cares.  |
| 2 | Before our Father's throne<br>We pour our ardent prayers;   | 3 We share our mutual woes,<br>Our mutual burdens bear,<br>And often for each other flows<br>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.

*Text: Public domain*

“Here, O My Lord, I See Thee Face to Face”

#631 sts. 1-4

1 Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face;  
Here would I touch and handle things  
unseen;  
Here grasp with firmer hand the\_ eternal grace,  
And all my weariness upon Thee lean.

3 This is the hour of banquet and of song;  
This is the heav’nly table spread for me;  
Here let me feast and, feasting, still prolong  
The brief bright hour of fellowship with  
Thee.

2 Here would I feed upon the bread of God,  
Here drink with Thee the royal wine of  
heav’n;  
Here would I lay aside each earthly load,  
Here taste afresh the calm of sin forgiv’n.

4 I have no help but Thine; nor do I need  
Another arm but Thine to lean upon.  
It is enough, my Lord, enough indeed;  
My strength is in Thy might, Thy might  
alone.

*Text: Public domain*

“O God of Mercy, God of Might”

#852

1 O God of mercy, God of might,  
In love and pity infinite,  
Teach us, as ever in Thy sight,  
To live our lives in Thee.

4 All are redeemed, both far and wide,  
Since Thou, O Lord, for all hast died.  
Grant us the will and grace provide  
To love them all in Thee!

2 And Thou, who cam’st on earth to die  
That our lost world might live thereby,  
O hear us; for to Thee we cry,  
In hope, O Lord, to Thee.

5 In sickness, sorrow, want, or care,  
May we each other’s burdens share;  
May we, where help is needed, there  
Give help as unto Thee!

3 Teach us the lesson Thou hast taught:  
To feel for those Thy blood hath bought,  
That ev’ry word and deed and thought  
May work a work for Thee.

6 And may Thy Holy Spirit move  
All those who live to live in love  
Till Thou shalt greet in heav’n above  
All those who live in Thee.

*Text: Public domain*

**Communion Blessing**

**Closing Prayer**

**Benediction**

**P** Our Heavenly Father now sends us out to praise His name and declare His love wherever we go!  
The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

**C** Amen.

**Closing Hymn**

“May We Thy Precepts, Lord, Fulfill”

#698

1 May we Thy precepts, Lord, fulfill  
 And do on earth our Father’s will  
 As angels do above;  
 Still walk in Christ, the living way,  
 With all Thy children and obey  
 The law of Christian love.

2 So may we join Thy name to bless,  
 Thy grace adore, Thy pow’r confess,  
 From sin and strife to flee.  
 One is our calling, one our name,

The end of all our hopes the same,  
 A crown of life with Thee.

3 Spirit of life, of love and peace,  
 Unite our hearts, our joy increase,  
 Thy gracious help supply.  
 To each of us the blessing give  
 In Christian fellowship to live,  
 In joyful hope to die.

*Text: Public domain*

**Postlude**

“Postlude in D Major”

J. Dandrieu



**Acknowledgments & Thanks**

**Organist:** Ruth Sievers

**Vocalist:** Jan Gensch

**Lector:** Sunday: Ruth Diver

**Altar Care:** Sunday: Cathy Kumke and Denise Murray; Wednesday: Sandy Barry

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series A, Quarter 4. Copyright © 2023 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Created by Lutheran Service Builder © 2022 Concordia Publishing House.





### **Announcements & Notes:**

**Bible Class This Morning:** Bill Leise – our circuit’s delegate to this year’s LCMS Convention – will share some of the happenings of the convention during our Bible Study time. Please come for an interesting look at the workings of our synod.

**The Ladies Guild Bake Sale is TODAY** after the 9am service in the school hall! Please stop by and purchase a delicious treat or two from our talented bakers. Thank you also to all those who baked!

**The St. Paul Adult Choir** will begin weekly rehearsals after the Wednesday church service on Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:15 p.m. in the Timothy Room. Singers of all voice parts are welcome!

**The Ladies Guild’s September meeting** is a free “Welcome Luncheon” served at 1pm on Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup> in the Timothy Room. All women are invited for food, fellowship, and to hear the Guild’s plans for the coming year. So that the Board can provide enough food, please sign the attendance sheet on the clipboard outside the church office or call the office at (708) 423-1040. Please come and bring a friend!

**The Letter of St. Paul** has been posted to our website. If you prefer a printed copy, they are available on the counters in the narthex and in the wings.

**Thursday Evening Bible Study** is held at 6:30pm in the Timothy Room led by Curtis Simonson. You can join any time and everyone is invited!

**Wednesday Evening Communion Services** are currently being held in the air-conditioned Timothy Room. Service begins at 6pm.

**Walcamp** will host an adult only event, “An Evening Under the Stars” to celebrate 60 years of Outdoor Ministry on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>. Tickets are available online: \$30 per person – Meals Only is \$15 per person. Enjoy live music provided by Voice Among Thee, food, and fellowship throughout the night. Early arrival activities such as archery and hatchet throwing begin at 4pm. Caricature artist begins at 4:30pm. A Wine-Pull with additional chance for prizes, a basket raffle will be held (tickets 3/\$20). Hayrides leave the lodge every 30 minutes from 4:30-6:30pm. Enjoy canoeing, corn hole, and games by the lake. Gourmet dinner options include: Artisan Cheeseburger, Grilled Chicken Breast or Grilled Portabella Mushroom. Water, soda, coffee, and dessert are included. You may also bring your own food, beer or wine. For information, call (815) 784-5141 or visit [www.WALCAMP.org/STARS](http://www.WALCAMP.org/STARS). Walcamp is located at 32653 Five Points Road in Kingston, IL 60145. Flyers are on the table in the narthex.

**Remembering our homebound friends** is a caring ministry of St. Paul meant to help us stay in touch with our members who aren’t able to be with us for worship. Please remember them in your prayers. You may also like to send a note or a card. This week our homebound friend is Doris Cyga, 11108 Heritage Drive, Unit 2B, Palos Hills, IL 60465.

**Please pray for these members of our St. Paul family**

Rev. George Mrochen  
Rich & Jan Przybycien  
Rev. and Judy Anderson  
Sue & Bill Volk  
Arthur Gerth  
Ingrid Lesko  
Patricia Murdoch  
Jan Briede  
Roy Hodgeman  
Katherine Hice  
Kurt Seehofer  
Flora Jones  
Graham Jackson  
Kevin Hickey  
Gloria Meyer  
Mary Ann Colander  
Elaine Lebron  
Melva Smith  
Delores Stegemann  
Carol Small  
Mike Degidio  
Norma Silinski  
Beverly Sellers  
Betty Beegle  
Warren Miller  
Delphine Cherry  
Ron Klingensmith  
Louis Frank  
Betty Kruckow  
Herta Iversen  
Loretta Frank  
George Dodaro, Sr.  
Bob Marcinkowski

Barbara Prendergast  
Nancy Bundley  
Rosa Richardson  
Evelyn Leise

**Please pray for these friends and family of our members:**

*Roberta & Carlos Owens*

Roy Strassner  
Dee DeLaurentis  
Dorothy Kroll  
Emily Feehan  
LeRoy Bitner  
Bob Hessert  
Georgiana Easton  
Jackie Plichta  
Patricia Paulsen  
Ken Kruckow  
Janet Trierweiler  
Vicki Warren  
Rhonda Scott  
Michelle Mitchell  
Al Silinski  
Pam Palhegyi  
Carol Milazzo  
Rich Huscher  
The Lamberth Family  
Jerry Gross  
Louise Hrynkow  
Gloria Folsom  
Mary Beth Pasqua  
Shirley Fairchild  
Simeon Hoppe  
Ron Lunt  
Christopher Kosary

Sandy Plath  
Iris McCoy  
Shirley Demyres  
Raquel Rameriz  
Nick & Bridget DeAngelo  
Henry Bonder  
*Kim & Shawn Skelton, Sr.*  
Kyle Hughes  
Elaine Hoffstetter  
Fred Raddatz  
Allyson Seehofer  
Selma Carmichael  
*Bernadette & Rich Trusk*  
Dana Kahn  
Donald Hakanson  
Guillermo Ramirez  
Paul Noffke  
Vern Howe  
Pam Brown  
Shawn Harland  
Ann Herold  
Barb Potter  
Wayne Volk  
Lance Barrientos  
Linda Shuman  
Doris Potts  
Doreen Holford  
Judy Collins  
Luke Pajowski  
Phyllis Hicks  
Jimmy Kennedy, Jr.  
Monica Iversen  
Cathy Becker  
Ken Matz  
Jean & Al Zirbel  
Diane Johannes  
Carol Loecherbach

Miguel Hernandez  
Carl Hoppe  
Charley Heitz  
Sophia Salus  
Justin & Ashley Fasel  
Frank Coglinase  
Gene Wawrzynikowski  
Kimberly Rooney  
Helena Hoffman  
Evelyn & Ron Konieski  
Audrey Metes  
Richard DeSaga  
Ken Wentz  
Herbert Kleeman  
Margaret Lundgreen  
Julie King  
Debby Cabera  
Sharon Bryant  
Anika Seger  
Monica Kato  
Brian Anderson  
Herb Kleeman  
Debra Kleeman  
Nora Beth Will DeMottes  
Sarah Skelton  
Barbara Apt  
Bob & Gloria Freeman  
Carrie Aspan  
Lisa Anglin  
Devon Apt  
Tristan Ferry  
Naomi Mauler  
LaNell Mauler Koenig  
Todd, Sofia & Grace Lynum  
Terry Hepton  
Hillary Pittelko  
Marge Schmidt

***We pray:***

*For Terry Hepton (mother of Martha Moeller)*

*For Hillary Pittelko (daughter of Dean Pittelko who is the pastor at Faith Lutheran in Oak Lawn)*

*For Marge Schmidt (mother of Sara Schmidt)*

**Please let the church office know when your need for our congregational prayers is over.**

**(708) 423-1040**