

Wednesday, September 16, 2026

Seventeenth Week After Pentecost



Faith Lutheran Church

Mission Statement

*"Building a welcoming, nurturing faith community that
is guided by Jesus and shares the Gospel."*

MINISTERS

SENIOR PASTOR

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Every Member

Derek Harkins

Sylvia Bull

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ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS & WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

OPENING SONG: "Light of the World"

READING: see next page

SERMON

SONG: ELW 720 "We Are Called" *

GIVING OF BIBLES

OFFERING

HOLY COMMUNION

BENEDICTION

SENDING SONG: ELW 538 "The Lord Now Sends Us Forth" *

DISMISSAL

**ELW = Red Hymnal; ACS = Purple Hymnal*

READING(S)

Reading: *Matthew 20:1-16*

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 20th Chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord!**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] “The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received a denarius. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ!**

BRINGING IT HOME

This section provides guidance on how to discuss a passage from the Revised Common Lectionary for the week as a family! The devotions for this week are for Matthew 20:1-16.

Reflection Questions

- During this season after Pentecost, we learn how to live together as followers of Jesus. What do you notice about the workers' feelings at the end of the story?
- The landowner gave even the workers who came late a full day's pay, causing other workers to grumble. What made them unhappy?
- Have you been in a situation where being generous and including everyone felt unfair to some? Share about it. What happens when people start comparing themselves to one another?
- What helps us remember that every person matters, even when people have different jobs, gifts, or opportunities?
- How can we help build a community where everyone has what they need and everyone belongs?

Activity

Jesus told a story that challenges our understanding of how the world works. Instead of the workers being paid for how long they worked, they were all paid the same amount due to the landowner's generosity.

It felt unfair to those who worked the full day, but they still got what they were promised. When Jesus says, "the last shall be first and the first shall be last," he shows us how people's value and worth isn't based on their rank or power. We are all equally valuable and worthy of love. This may feel "unfair" because people in power have taught us differently. Jesus invites us to see ourselves and others through God's eyes.

Give everyone a sheet of paper, and encourage them to design it as an award. Instead of celebrating an achievement, the award will celebrate that the person is

tis beloved by God and has gifts to help their community. Participants can make the award for themselves or to give to someone else in the group. If participants are making awards for one another, make sure everyone both gives and receives an award.

After everyone is done, have them share their awards. Talk about how it feels to celebrate people simply because God loves and values them. Discuss how the world would be different if everyone was treated with the same dignity and care, instead of it being based on their power, talent, or accomplishments.

Prayer

Generous God, sometimes your way of doing things feels backward or confusing. When we compare ourselves to others, you surprise us with belonging and love, just as we are. May we, like you, choose compassion over competition and celebration over comparison. Amen.

Look it Up!

Did you know that some images reveal different objects or colors depending on how you look at them—like the well-known “rabbit or duck” image?

Look up “ambiguous images” or “reversible figures.” How do statements by Jesus, such as “the last shall be first,” affect how we see the world?





Thank you for your offering of **\$11,677.44** for the week of **September 13th!**

Altar Flowers for the week are provided by Mary and Paul Verlinde for their 35th Anniversary. **Thank you!**

Don't forget to **sign-up** to cook Rice Pudding, drive batches or work our booth during **this year's Street Fair from Friday, September 18th-Saturday, September 19th.** Sign-ups can be found in the Gathering Place, next to the Coffee Hour table. Check out the September newsletter for a brief history of this fun tradition!

Faith Lutheran will be putting together **Baby Kits and School Kits** on **Monday, September 21st at 6:30pm!** We are especially in need of donations for our Baby Kits, including **shirts and T-shirts, jackets, and sweatshirts in sizes 6 to 24 months.** Thank you for your generosity and support!

Attention **8th-12th grade parents!** If your student is interested **in attending the 2027 ELCA National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis next summer**, please let Kenny know **by September 30th.** Don't miss out on this incredible opportunity!

Join us in giving thanks for Pastor Sylvia's ministry at FLC!! We will be hosting a potluck and celebration for Pastor Sylvia on her last Sunday with us, **September 27th at 12:15pm** directly following the 11am worship service in the Fellowship Hall. Please come and wish her well as she enters into the new calling of parenthood with her spouse, Seth. **Bring a dish to share as well as a favorite memory or words of what Pastor Sylvia has meant to you** over her almost 10 years of service to Faith Lutheran Church!

Church School and Confirmation Registration is now available! Go to our Forms page at faithbismarck.com/forms to fill out our Google Forms for your Church School Age (3 Year Old-5th Grade) and Confirmation Age (6th Grade - 9th Grade) children! **We appreciate parents filling these out each year to help keep our records up to date.** If you have any questions about our programs, you can always talk to Kenny or one of the pastors!

Want to learn how to be a more engaged citizen in your community? Interfaith Alliance of North Dakota is partnering with the Palm Sunday Path to offer a series of workshops to help you feel equipped to speak about your values - with friends and family, policymakers, and at the upcoming North Dakota legislative session. This **Voicing Your Values** series will be offered Sept-Dec on the 3rd Thursday of the month from 6-8pm at Lord of Life Lutheran Church (1143 N. 26th St). Join for any or all of these sessions as you learn not *what* to say, but how to share effectively about the issues and concerns that are important to you! Questions? Talk to Pastor Sylvia or email wndpalmsundaypath@gmail.com.

September 17 - Voicing Your Values in an Age of Partisanship

Pastor Sylvia leads this session on the challenges of speaking about your values in a partisan environment and shares practical tips for engaging about the things that are important to you in a positive way.

October 15 - Voicing Your Values: Speaking with Policymakers

Ross Keys and Sonda Sauers lead this session to help you build skills for speaking about your values with policymakers at all levels.

November 19 - Voicing Your Values: Letters to the Editor and Written Testimony

Steve Andrist leads this session on how to communicate your values effectively through letters to the editor and written legislative testimony.

December 17 - Voicing Your Values: Testifying at the ND State Legislature

Rudie Martinson leads this session on the process for testifying in person or online at the ND Legislature.

Message: Pastor Derek Harkins

Liturgy: Pastor Sylvia Bull

Music: Sounds of Faith

CALENDAR

Thursday, September 17

6:00 Voicing Your Values Workshop
(Lord of Life Lutheran)

Friday, September 18

Downtowner's Street Fair

8:00 NA

Saturday, September 19

Downtowner's Street Fair

Sunday, September 20

3rd Grade Acolyte Training

Giving of Bibles

8:30 Worship

9:45 Church School

11:00 Worship

Monday, September 21

7:00 AA

Tuesday, September 22

9:00 Quilting

2:00 Crafts

6:00 Compass Group

7:00 Executive Comm.

7:00 Scouts

Wednesday, September 23

10:00 Bible Study

5:30 Handbells

6:00 3rd Grade P/S

6:00 Church School &
Confirmation

7:00 Worship

MISSION Focus



SEPTEMBER: LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF KITS

Throughout the year, our Quilters collect items to put in Personal Care, School, and Baby Kits, sent to people in need around the world through Lutheran World Relief. Full lists are available on the Concierge Table and under our Serve tab on our website, but they are currently in need of shirts and T-shirts (sizes 6 to 24 months), jackets, and hooded sweatshirts for their baby kits. For their personal care kits, they are looking for towels (no larger than 27" x 52") and metal nail clippers. Thank you for your generosity!

If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the Lord your God is giving you... you should open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be. Deut. 15:7-8