

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 27, 2026

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. Peter's second sermon announces that God has made a way for new life through the execution and resurrection of Jesus.

Holy Communion (ELW Setting 4, page 147)
Evangelical Lutheran Worship

† *Congregation stands as able*

GATHERING

Prelude

Sandra Nearhoof



P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, +one God, who forgives
us all our sins, whose mercy endures forever.

C: Amen.

P: Gracious God,

**C: have mercy on us. We confess that we have
turned from you and given ourselves into the
power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly
repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins,
known and unknown, things we have done and
things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you,
and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live
and serve you in newness of life through Jesus
Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

P: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we
were dead in sin, and made us alive together with
Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of
+Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God
strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit,
that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn

"Praise the Lord! O Heavens"

ELW #823

Kyrie

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Prayer of the Day:

P. Let us pray,

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.

C. Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Children's Message

Wanda Ebright

First Reading

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

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.

L: The word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 25:1-9

Tone 1

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 compas- | sion 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 good- | ness, O LORD.

⁸ **You are gracious and up- | right, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners | in your way.**

⁹ You lead the low- | ly in justice
and teach the low- | ly your way.

Second Reading

Acts 3:11-13a, 15b-19

¹¹ While he clung to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's Portico, utterly astonished. ¹² When Peter saw it, he addressed the people, "Fellow Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk?" ¹³ The God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, has glorified his servant Jesus ¹⁵ whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. ¹⁶ And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you. ¹⁷ "And now, brothers and sisters, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸ In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. ¹⁹ Repent, therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.

L: The word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

† Gospel Acclamation

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Gospel

Matthew 21:23-32

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

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."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

The Rev Dr. Sandra McCann

† Hymn of the Day

"I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say"

ELW #611

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**

You may sit, stand or kneel for the prayers.

Prayers of Intercession

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

A brief silence.

A: Center your church in humility as we strive to follow
in your way. Help us listen to the cries of those who
have been unfairly hurt by the church and dare to
name difficult truths. Show all your love.

Hear us, O God,

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You call us to care for your creation. Lead us into your promise of a better world through sustainable practices and respect for your handiwork.
Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Inspire all in positions of authority to act honorably. Remind them of their call to use their authority for the sake of the common good. Give them the gift of humility. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Comfort those who come before you in fear and trembling. Calm troubled hearts with your forgiveness. Help all those in need. Grant us your salvation. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Change this congregation's heart when we say no to your call. Open us to courageous learning and service in our community, especially in new or challenging places. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: For all those who have asked us to pray for them....Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Your steadfast love holds all who have finished their work and are at rest, especially Mario Mion. As we grieve, remind us of your mercy so we may also give thanks. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Grant the prayers that we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

C: Amen.

The Peace

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MEAL

Anthem "*Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word*" Choir

The gifts may be brought forward.

Offering Prayer

A: 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.

C: Amen.

✝ Great Thanksgiving

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Holy, Holy, Holy

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Lord's Prayer "Our Father, who..."

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Lamb of God

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Communion

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Each person may respond, Amen.

† Table Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

Prayer after Communion

A: 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.

C: Amen.

SENDING

Blessing

Sending Hymn

"The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve"

ELW #551

Dismissal

A: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.



The Memorial Book is open today to the Glory of God

In Memory of:

Reverend Charles Macmurphy, 2008





Are you willing to learn something new? The Live Streaming committee has an opportunity for you! Cecil McGouirk is going to have a training session or two if you would like to help out once a month to record our Sunday worship service. See Cecil for more details.

READINGS AND PSALM SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2026

Isaiah 5:1-7
Psalm 80:7-15
Acts 4:5-12
Matthew 21:33-46



"The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of me." —Martin Luther

**Memorial gifts will be acknowledged quarterly.*

September 20, 2026 Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

ATTENDANCE - 59

(IN-PERSON— 50, YOUTUBE - 9

2026 BUDGET-\$185,981

OFFERING

Benevolence	\$ 1,585.00
Building	\$ 130.00
Other	\$ 250.00
70 for 70	\$ 140.00
Memorial*	\$ 100.00
Total	\$ 2,205.00



If you have any photos you have taken from events that have happened at the church, please email those to the church office at office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com. We need these for our archives and our newsletter!

Serving September 27, 2026

Opener/Closer	Nancy & Jeff Gates
Worship Assistant	Rose Johnson
Communion Assistant	Terri Niederhammer
Lector	Shannon Gardner
Communion Ushers	Jim Sperry & Ron Ullman
Altar Guild	Debby Ullman
	Lane Brown/Jaxson Gardner
Greeter	Isabelle Clark
Live Streaming	Matt Pettit

Serving October 4, 2026

Opener/Closer	Katherine Kelly
Worship Assistant	Shannon Gardner
Communion Assistant	Allena Sperry
Lector	Amy Hoag
Communion Ushers	Randy & Sandy Craven
Altar Guild	Terri Niederhammer
	Catherine Sayers/Jaxson Gardner
Greeter	Isabelle Clark
Live Streaming	Jaxson Gardner

Pray Without Ceasing



"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

5:16-18

—1 Thessalonians

The Armed Forces,
their families,
and victims of war

The ministries of
St. Matthew

Bishop Yehiel Curry

Bishop Kevin
Strickland

Southeastern Synod
Staff

Pastor Taylor Burton
Edwards

Pastor Rachel Zarnke

St Matthew

Congregational
Council

Laura Alexander

Carol Bingemann

Isabelle Clark

Randy Craven

Myrna & Ken Hoag

Marga Miller

Charlotte Moore

Traudel Mosely

Debby Owen

Dorothy Redden

Eric & Tinisha Bryant

Jean Clemmons

Nancy Edmundson

Lynne Funck

Brandy Garnett

Sandy Gibbs

Moses Glidden

Estrella Gonzales

Doris Grier

Frank Henderson

Petra Henderson

Laura Jett

Norma Kilby

Ken Korn

Emma Kump

Robert Lowe

David & John Lucas

Michelle Matthias

Brady Meeks

Lynne Meinhold

Tim Moore

Debi Nelson

Vincent Pawlowski

Beth Price

Mark Purushotham

Tiffany Richardson

Phyllis Roan

Dayna Ryan

Shirley Scott

Dou Shizhen

Anne Sims

Ricky Skinner

Fred Turpin

Charlie VanHousen

Dawn VanHousen

Eric Young

Martha Zimmerman

Hicks Family

Mion Family

Wandersee/Mackenzie
Families

People of Nepal

People of Tibet

People of Lebanon

People of Iran

Gaza

Palestinian People

Israel

Ukraine

People of Russia

Eastern Congo

People of Venezuela

People of Columbia

Menzie Dance Company

Frankie's Hair Design

AMG Financial

Sunset Finance

Diamond Kutz

Kee J's

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to St. Matthew: Jesus Christ offers himself to all. All baptized Christians are invited to feast with us at the Lord's Table.

We invite you to join our congregation if you have not yet found a church home. We are people of God that share a living, daring, confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person, questions, complexities and all. Join us, as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

Nursery: St. Matthew provides nursery service for children ages 6 and younger. All children are welcome to attend worship with their families. If a child needs a break during the service, they may sit with a parent/guardian in the Narthex. Changing table available there if needed.

Love in Action Opportunities:

- All unused all occasion and holiday cards
- Lion's Club: Glasses, sunglasses and old cell phones
- Family House of West GA: Pop tabs
- Flags to Retire: Used flags to dispose of properly
- MCSD Hygiene Closet: Any size toiletries
- SafeHouse/St. Benedict's Sealed plastic utensils (take-out meals)
- WNN Non-perishable foods

Leave donations in the labeled containers in the Narthex.

Bible Study: Please join us on Tuesdays at 10:15 in the Church House to review & discuss scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday.

Craf-Tea: This group will meet on the 3rd Friday of each month at 10:00AM-12:00 PM in Luther Hall. If you enjoy crafts and tea, this group is for you! Please see Linnea Grosse for more information.

Chair Yoga: Meets every Monday at 11:00 AM in Luther Hall. Wear comfortable clothing and sneakers.

Save the Date

- September 28th - **CHAIR YOGA CANCELLED FOR THIS DAY**
- September 29th - 10:15 AM - Bible Study - Church House-Back Room
- October 3rd - 9:00-12:00 - Garden Refresh
- October 8th - 9:00 - WNN Care Packing
- October 15th - 5:00 - Council Meeting - Fellowship Hall
- October 18th - 10:00 - Craf-Tea - Luther Hall



Bring your own
garden tools!

YARD SALE 2027

If you have donations,
please contact Allena
Sperry at 706-563-3107
or asperry@bellsouth.net
to coordinate drop off at
your earliest
convenience.

Happy September Birthday!

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1 Elaine Hoag | 23 Sonja Metcalf |
| 2 Michael Ingram | 27 Connie Sieg |
| 4 Jim Sperry | 27 Fabio Vargas |
| 23 Rose Johnson | 28 Marga Miller |

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Mission Statement



Reach in to grow in Christ

Reach up to worship God

Reach out to welcome and witness



To give online, please scan the QR code to the left to be taken to the give.tithe.ly website form. You can just fill out the form and click the Give button. You can also go to our website and click on the ONLINE GIVING button.

ST. MATTHEW EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

4026 Macon Road, Columbus, Georgia 31907

(706) 561-3406 - Office Hours - Tues & Thurs 2:30-5:00 PM, Friday 9:00-1:00 PM

Pastor Taylor Burton Edwards Email: twbe@liturgyfolks.com

Phone: (765) 602-1426

Office email : office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com

A member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

Southeastern Synod

www.stmatthewcolumbusga.com

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@st.matthewlutheranchurch4457/streams>

The Rev. Taylor Burton Edwards, Pastor

Sonja Metcalf, Parish Administrator

Obra Williams, Sexton

Sandra Nearhoof, Minister of Music

Penny Davis, Nursery Director