

Community of Christ Lutheran Church
Ninth Sunday after Pentecost,
July 26, 2026 – 9:00 a.m.
Pastor Stephen C. Bond



THE GATHERING

Welcome

Pastor Stephen Bond

Musical Prelude

"Ombra mai fu" from (*Xerxes*) - G.F. Handel Natalie Downs

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, whose compassion endures forever.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God, **we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.**

Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn

"God of Grace and God of Glory"

ELW 705

Greeting

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. **C And also with you.**

The congregation will sing the refrain only

The words *Kyrie eleison* are Greek for “Lord, Have Mercy”

Refrain

Ky-ri-e e-lei-son, on our world and on our way.

Ky-ri-e e-lei-son, ev-ry day.

The Pastor will sing the verses

1 For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the
2 That we may live out your im-passioned re-sponse to the
3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . for
4 For your Spir-it to guide; that you cen-ter our lives in the

u - ni - ty of all; for
hun - gry and the poor; that
friends and fam - i - ly; for
wa - ter and the word; that you

this ho - ly house, for all who wor-ship and praise,
we may live out truth and jus-tice and grace,
life and for love, for our work and our play,
nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod - y and blood,

Refrain

let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

Prayer of the Day

P Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

Childrens Sermon

THE READINGS

The First Reading 1 Kings 3:5-12

⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I should give you.” ⁶ And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷ And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?”

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ God said to him, “Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you.”
L The Word of the Lord C Thanks be to God!

The Second Reading Romans 8:26-39

²⁶ The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also

glorified.

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ³⁶ As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us.

³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

L The Word of the Lord C Thanks be to God!

Al-le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the

words of e - ter - nal life. Al-le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The Holy Gospel Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

P The Holy Gospel according.... **C** Glory to you, O Lord!

³¹ [Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

³³ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴ “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹ “Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵² And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

P The Gospel of the Lord! **C** Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon

“How to Be a Nesting Ground”

Pastor Steve Bond

Hymn

“What Is The World Like”

ACS 1047



1 What is the world like when God's will is
2 What is the world like when God's will is
3 What is the world like when God's will is
4 What is the world like when God's will is
5 These are the sto - ries that Je - sus im -

done?
done?
done?
done?
parts,

Mus - tard
Wit - ness
No more
Read - y
filled with

seeds
the
is
for
the

grow
wan - der -
neigh - bor -
feast - ing,
Spir - it

more
than
ing
just
we
who

we can con - ceive: roots thread the
child com - ing home; watch as the
al - ly or friend; peace thrives in
watch through the night, tend - ing our
joins us as one. Born through our

soil; branch - es reach for the sun.
par - ent breaks in - to a run.
plac - es where once there was none.
lamps till the new day's be - gun.
voic - es, our hands, and our hearts,

This is how God moves us each to be - lieve.
This is how God longs for us when we roam.
This is how God works when ri - val - ries end.
This is how God read - ies us for the light.
this is a new world where God's will is done.

The Apostles' Creed

C 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.

WE DEDICATE OUR HEARTS IN PRAYER

Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

AM God our wisdom and our song, we pray for bishops, candidacy committees, those preparing for seminary, those awaiting call as deacons or pastors, and all who seek to lead your disciples in any way. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

AM God our breath and our heartbeat, help us to recognize signs of your presence among us. Protect and support diverse ecosystems, from national parks to family farms, from ranches to wild places. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

AM God our peace and our guide, help civic leaders hear all their peoples' stories with compassion and curiosity, and remind us of your love from which we can never be separated. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

AM God our intercessor and our lawgiver, dismantle the barriers to care and recognition of all who live with chronic illness, mobility struggles, pain, and uncertainty. *We especially pray for;* **Maurice Atkinson, Jan Basinger, Larry Battles, Jeff Bucher, Rusty Chambers, Donna Cochran, Jake Cope, Eric Dickey & Sarah Magoun, Virginia Dillon, Tom Druschel, Ryan Dunn, Baby Elliott, Sue & Jim Enk, Joan Glore, Ron Hetherwick, Luke Holtz, Matt Jurrus, Judy Mock, Frank O'Konski, Christal & Chad Pritchard, Evelyn Reilly, Rich Rison, Mariel Rolf, Carol Rummel, Joe Schiavone, Bob S., Phyllis Sturgeon, Vince Tavitian, Greg Urbanski, Molly Wachtmann, Kathryn Whitacre, Mike, Staci, Tom O....** and all others whom we remember in silence. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

AM God our redeemer, may we trust your love above and beyond all else that distracts, annoys, frightens, exhausts, or divides us. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

AM God who seeks, finds, and saves, for our community's part in the ongoing gift of creation, and for the riches of faith and hope which came before, we give you thanks. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

P Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

THE MEAL

We practice open communion, which means all baptized believers are welcome to receive the Sacrament. However, if you prefer to receive a blessing instead, please indicate by crossing your arms. Grape juice is available in the inner ring of glasses for those desiring it and gluten-free wafers if needed. Ushers will dismiss you by row.

Sharing of the Peace

P The Peace of the Lord be with you all! **C And also with you!**

Share an expression of peace with your neighbor, please.

Our Tithes and Offerings *Bring your gifts to the Altar, or you may offer gifts in the tray located in the rear of the sanctuary. Thank you.*

Offertory

"Peace in the Valley" - arr. J. Coleman

Offering Prayer

AM Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever.

Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

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.

****Eucharistic Prayer Continues**

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -
 san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
 est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
 san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

The Words of Institution

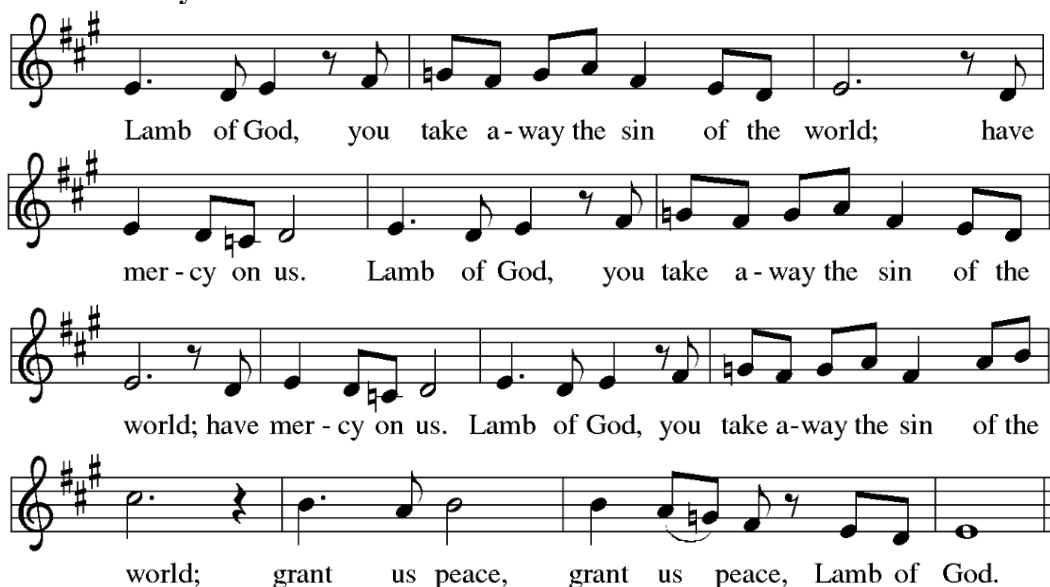
In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Jesus said, Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Jesus said, Do this for the remembrance of me.

The Lord's Prayer

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray... **C** **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Communion Hymns

"Lamb of God"



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

"Be Thou My Vision"

ELW 793

"The Reign of God Like Farmer's Field"

ACS 952



1 The reign of God, like farm - er's field, bears
2 The reign of God is like a pearl on
3 Though hid - den now, the reign of God may,
4 Like mus - tard tree, the reign of God from
5 The reign of God is come in Christ; the

weeds a - long with wheat; the good and bad are
bar - ren land con - cealed. If once you find that
yet un - no - ticed, grow; from deep with - in it
ti - ny seed will spread, till birds of ev - 'ry
reign of God is near. A - blaze a - mong us,



Post Communion Blessing

Prayer after Communion

AM Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine, our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. **Amen.**

THE SENDING

Milestones & Announcements

The Blessing

P Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ✝ one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

ELW 631

Dismissal

AM Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news! **Thanks be to God.**

AM And next week, **C Bring a friend!**

Postlude:

“Love Divine, All Love's Excelling” - arr. J. Raney

“Making Jesus Known”

You're Invited! Join us for worship this Summer every Sunday at 9:00 a.m.—either in person or via Facebook Live. We'd love to see you there, and don't forget to bring a friend! Interested in becoming a member? Just fill out your information in the friendship pads or call the church office at 419-877-0607. We'd be honored to welcome you into our church family!

Summer Adult Forum - “Journey through the Old Testament”

We invite you to join us for our summer Adult Forum series, “Journey through the Old Testament.” Over these weeks, we'll have the chance to take an overview of the books and stories of the Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament, in the hopes of becoming more familiar with these books, understanding how to read them, the times and cultures they were first written in, and how they continue to speak to us as followers of Jesus today. Join us in the Bible study room on Sundays at 10:15 for this series!

Thursday Bible Study Opens Up the Book of Acts Join us for our current series in our Thursday afternoon Bible Study, as we take a deep dive into the New Testament book of Acts to learn the story of the early church and how the band of rag-tag fishermen and tax collectors from Galilee grew into a movement that reached outward to the very heart of the Roman Empire and became a “found family” of Jewish and Gentile people, rich and poor, enslaved and free, women and men, and lived through the growing pains of that outreach to change the world. Join us weekly on Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. in the Bible Study/Council Room as we work through the book of Acts and let it spark our own ways of living out our faith and sharing the good news of Jesus in the world around us. Remember, too, that we'll continue to share video catch-up sessions on our social media (see the church Facebook page) each week, so that you can know what we'll be looking at each week in case you miss a week, want to join in, or to share with a friend!

The Shaping of Our Hearts—Spiritual Practice Series for Summer 2026

All are welcome on Wednesday evening as we gather weekly for a series of spiritual practices from 6:30 p.m.-7:45 p.m. So far, we have been introduced to “Spiritual MacGyvering,” the art of new creation, breath prayer, labyrinth walking, and reverse Visio Divina, and we've got more great opportunities to learn new ways to connect with God in our daily lives and weekly routines. We'd invite you to sign up in advance, either at the kiosk or online through the Sign-Up Genius tab on our website (www.commofchrist.org), but even if you can't sign up ahead of time, we'd be glad to have you join us! Coming up in July, we'll feature archery as a spiritual practice, tangible prayer (like prayer squares, shawls, and other textiles), the daily Examen

with Bishop Daniel Beaudoin, and sand art in what we'll call "the spirituality of the ephemeral." We hope you can try out some of these new practices this summer!

Summer Reading Club: Kids join us on Wednesdays through August 12. We'll welcome kids of all ages from 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. every week for stories, songs, fun, and friends. Bring a friend or neighbor, and we'll gather in the church library (the long classroom where our youngest Sunday School class meets on Sunday mornings). But wait, there's more! You will also be able to find our bookshelf in the Gathering Space all summer, with a new collection of kid-friends' books as well as some of our favorites from last year, that you can borrow, read, and return. We're inviting you to read ten books over the course of the summer for a special prize at the end of the summer! And if you are an adult who might be free on a Wednesday morning this summer and you would like to volunteer to be a guest reader of one of our stories, please reach out to Pastor Steve or Bryce and let us know—we'd be glad to welcome you to be a special guest on one or more of our Wednesday story times! See you this summer around a good book!

Average Joe Car Show Break out the Turtle-Wax, the Outreach Committee is organizing the inaugural Community of Christ Average Joe's Car Show! Do you have a sweet ride or maybe it just looks GREAT from 10 feet away – either way, we'd LOVE for you to show it off to the community here in our parking lot on Saturday, August 15th from 4-7 p.m. Food will be available for a free-will offering to support our youth's trip to the National Youth Gathering next year. Come out and purchase a lucky 50/50 ticket to help support our friends down at Salem. You may be asking yourself how can I get involved in this fun experience? The answer is simple – just reach out to a member of the Outreach Committee or look for the sign-up sheet on the kiosk so we can ensure we have enough space. We look forward to seeing you – and your ride! Thank you – The Outreach Committee – Cammie Abraham, Dave Braun, Shelly Hayes, Tammy & Greg Myers, Cindy Smigelski, Kari Swagler, and Pastor Steve.

"Better Together" Toledo Pride Sign-Up Let's lace up those walking shoes to help love, unity, and inclusion shine brightly in our community. Community of Christ has been asked once again to join a multi-faith initiative and walk in support of the Toledo Pride parade on the morning and midday of Saturday, August 15th. Last year, more than 300 people from over 30 different local faith communities joined together, highlighting a message that we all Love Out Loud and we are Better Together. Think of this as a chance to say by our presence and our walking feet, "God's love is for you!" to people who might just be aching to hear that they are beloved. Even if that's all our presence can do for someone else, that might just be the starting point for the

Spirit to move in amazing and gracious ways. Please consider joining the Outreach Committee and walking to promote inclusion for all in the world that God loves. A sign-up sheet for the walk and information on how to order this year's t-shirt will be located on the kiosk and in SignUp Genius on the church's website, and we'll share more details about walking times and carpooling for those who sign up as we get closer to the event in August.

Helping Salem! During the month of July and through the first week in August, until Sunday, August 9th, we will be accepting donations for Salem Lutheran of feminine hygiene products: tampons, sanitary pads, and urinary incontinence products. These items are dispensed with wise stewardship of a limited resource. Donations may be placed in the Salem Lutheran basket under the table in the gathering place. Thank you so much!

Treasurer Needed for 2027 We are seeking a new Treasurer to begin serving in 2027. If you are interested in this important ministry or would like more information, please contact the church office. Please prayerfully consider sharing your gifts and talents in support of our congregation's mission.



<i>Event</i>	<i>Day and Time</i>
Youth Group @ COC	Today, Sunday, July 26, 6:30 p.m.
Bittersweet Farms Bldg. Use	Tuesday, July 28, 10:00 a.m.
Kids Summer Reading	Wednesday, July 29, 9:30 a.m.
Spiritual Practices	Wednesday, July 30, 6:30 p.m.
Bible Study	Thursday, July 30, 1:00 p.m.
Search Committee	Thursday, July 30, 7:00 p.m.



**Sunday mornings, @
9:00 a.m. both in person
and Facebook Live**

Church Office Hours
8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
(Monday through Friday) **Please note.....**
Hours may vary during vacations.
Please call ahead ☺



**Altar Flowers given by Tina & Jeff Baden in celebration of
Jessica, Tyler & Troy's Birthdays! † ❤️ 🙏**



Did one of our Bible readings capture your attention today? Was there a story you could picture in your mind? Did a phrase from a hymn or a thought from the sermon start some new ideas or inspire some reflection? Did a Scripture passage spark a question for you to think about? Use this space here as an open canvas for your faithful imagination: you can draw a picture of something you pictured, write a question, take

notes from the message or scriptures, or doodle your faith into a visible form here. Then, either take it with you or leave your thoughts and images here to be shared in an ongoing collection here at Community of Christ!