

Sunday, September 27, 2026

Eighteenth Sunday of Pentecost

Celebrating our Partnership with the Meru Diocese, Mulala Parish of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania

INTRODUCTION FOR THE DAY

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. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE CHIMES

GATHERING

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

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,
who pours love into our hearts
and healing upon the earth.

Amen.

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,
**we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.
Creation groans from overuse.
Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.
Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.
Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love
to others.
Turn our hearts back to you.
Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.
Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.
Amen.**



Hear this good news:
We have peace with God through ✝ Jesus Christ,
in whom there is no condemnation,
but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.
Receive freely this healing gift of grace.
Amen.

GATHERING HYMN: ELW # 513 “Listen! God is Calling (Neno lake Mungu)” Led by Sandy Ringwall in Swahili.

Please be seated while the children come forward.

CHILDREN’S TIME – “A Prayer for Children” – Sandy Ringwall

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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.



PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.
Amen.

THE WORD

First Reading: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

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.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

SPECIAL MUSIC: “Bwana Asifiwe”

Adoration’s Chancel Choir

Second Reading: Philippians 2:1-13

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ’s selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

¹ If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, ⁸ he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name that is above every other name, ¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**



Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: ELW # 364 “Christ has Arisen! Alleluia!” Verse 5. (See words below.)

Christ has arisen to set us free.
Alleluia, to him praises be.
Jesus is living! Let us all sing;
He reigns triumphant, heavenly king.

Refrain

Let us sing praise to him with endless joy.
Death's fearful sting he has come to destroy.
Our sin forgiving, alleluia!
Jesus is living, alleluia!



Text: Bernard Kyamanwa, b. 1938; tr. Howard S. Olson, b. 1922 Music: Tanzanian traditional. Text © 1968 Lutheran Theological College, Makumira, Tanzania, admi. Augsburg Fortress Tr. © 1977 Howard S. Olson, admin. Augsburg Fortress

Gospel: Matthew 21:23-32

The Gospel according to St. Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

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.”

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

Please be seated.

Sermon

Pastor Steven Kuhl

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

Thanksgiving & Blessing for Global Partnership

Let us give thanks for the covenant and partnership between Adoration Lutheran Church and the Greater Milwaukee Synod and the Mulala Parish in the Diocese of Meru of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania.

Masai Creed (Based on the Apostles' Creed)

We believe in the one High God, who out of love, created the beautiful world and everything good in it. God created humankind and wants God's creatures to be happy in the world. God loves the world and every nation and tribe on the Earth.

We have known this High God in darkness, and now we know Him in the light. God promised in the book of His word, the Bible, that He would save the world and all the nations and tribes.

We believe that God made good this promise by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, a man in the flesh, a Jew by tribe, born poor in a little village, who left his home and was always on safari doing good, curing people by the power of God, teaching about God and humans, showing the meaning of religion is love. He was rejected by his people, tortured and nailed hands and feet to a cross, and died.

He lay buried in the grave, but the hyenas did not touch him, and on the third day, He rose from the grave. He ascended to the skies. He is the Lord.

We believe that all our sins are forgiven through Christ. All who have faith in Him must be sorry for their sins, be baptized in the Holy Spirit of God, live the rules of love and share the bread together in love, to announce the Good News to others until Jesus comes again. We are waiting for Him. He is alive. He lives. This we believe. Amen.



SPECIAL PARTNERSHIP OFFERING

Special offerings supporting ministry in the Mulala Parish will be taken in the Green Offering Buckets.

Offering Hymn: WOV # 748 “Bind us Together, Lord” (*See words below.*)

Refrain: Bind us together, Lord, Bind us together
with cords that cannot be broken. Bind us Together, Lord,
Bind us together, Lord; Bind us together in love.

(1) There is only one God. There is only one King.
There is only one Body. That is why we can sing: **Refrain**

(2) You are the family of God. You are the promise divine.
You are God’s chosen desire, You are the glorious new wine. **Refrain**



Text: Bob Gillman, b. 1946 Music: Bob Gillman, b. 1946
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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Pastor: Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

We give you thanks, O God, for the ways our partnership helps us see the world more broadly.

We pray for global peace and harmony among nations.

Holy God, out of your great love for the world, your Word became flesh to live among us and to reconcile us to you and to one another. Rekindle among us the gift of your Spirit so that we seek to live in unity with all people, breaking down the walls that divide, ending the hostility among us, and proclaiming peace to those who are near and to those who are far away. **Amen.**

We pray for the ways water impacts our common life.

God, creator of all living things, you fashioned a world in which lands and waterways, plants and animals, together meet the needs of all that you made. We pray that such vitality may flourish around the globe. Bless those who work the soil and who manage animals. Protect farmlands and ranches from drought and flood. Free children from forced labor in the fields. Prevent profiteering to ensure safe and accessible drinking water for all that has life and breath. **Amen.**

We pray for mutual ministries supporting education.

O God, source of all goodness: we give you thanks for the gift of reason and the opportunity for education. Bless our schools, that they may be places of learning and safety where teachers challenge the minds and nurture the hearts of students. Provide access to learning and growth for all. **Amen.**

We pray for mutual ministries supporting health care.

Almighty and merciful God, you are the only source of health and healing; you alone can bring calmness and peace. Grant access to health care with dignity, safety, and compassion. Bless the work of those who care for patients, especially those with terminal illness. Bring strength and healing to
all for whom we name before you now. Give them health and strength and peace. **Amen.**

We pray for our partners in faith.

Gracious God, we thank you and ask your blessing on all the people who have shaped, nurtured, and grown the relationship we share with Mulala parish, that our relationships would continue to be strengthened by your Spirit. **Amen.**

Pastor: Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**



SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace and may say, "Peace be with you" or similar words. The assembly is seated.

OFFERING – Collection of our offerings.

Music during the Offering: Please Sing the following Offertory Hymn continuously until the completion of this collection! Alternating English with Swahili.

Offertory Hymn Liturgy: This Far By Faith # 286 "I Am Thanking Jesus" (Asante Sana, Yesu)

The musical notation is presented in three systems, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first system contains three measures of music. The second system contains two measures of music. The third system contains two measures of music. The lyrics are written below the notes in English and Swahili.

English I am thank-ing Je - sus, I am thank-ing Je - sus, I am thank-ing
Swahili A - san - te sa - na Ye - su, a - san - te sa - na Ye - su, a - san - te sa - na
Oji-vumbo Tan - di tan - ga Ye - sus, tan - di tan - ga Ye - sus, tan - di tan - ga

Je - sus from my heart. I am thank - ing Je - sus,
Ye - su mo - yo - ni. A - san - te sa - na Ye - su, a -
Ye - sus mo - mu - ti - ma. Tan - di tan - ga Ye - sus,

I am thank-ing Je - sus, I am thank-ing Je - sus from my heart.
san - te sa - na Ye - su, a - san - te sa - na Ye - su mo - yo - ni.
tan - di tan - ga Ye - sus, tan - di tan - ga Ye - sus mo - mu - ti - ma.

Text: Namibian and Tanzanian traditional
Music: TANIH TANIGA YINUS, African traditional

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Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

Offering Prayer

Let us pray together.

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.
Amen.

THE MEAL

Eucharistic Prayer

Holy God, our Bread of life, our Table, and our Food:
You created a world in which all might be satisfied by
your abundance.
You dined with Abraham and Sarah, promising them life,
and fed your people Israel with manna from heaven.
You sent your Son to eat with sinners and to become food
for the world.

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.
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.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Invocation of the Spirit

Remembering, therefore, his life given for us
and his rising from the grave, we await his coming again to
share with us the everlasting feast.
By your Spirit nurture and sustain us with this meal:
strengthen us to serve all in hunger and want, and by this
bread and cup make of us the body of your Son.
Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father,
with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and
forever. **Amen**

Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

Lord's Prayer in Swahili

*Baba yetu uliye mbinguni,
jina lako litukuzwe, ufalme wako uje,
mapenzi yako yatimizwe hapa duniani kama huko
mbinguni. Utupe leo riziki yetu,
utusamehe makosa yetu,
kama sisi tunavyowasamehe waliotukosea.
Usititie majaribuni, lakini utuokoe na yule mwovu.
Kwa kuwa ufalme ni wako,
na nguvo, na utukufu hata milele. Amen.*

Please be seated.

Invitation to Communion

Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

Hymn During Communion: ELW # 471 "Let Us Break Bread Together" (Sing continuously)

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

*After all have returned to their places, the assembly stands. The presiding minister may say a table blessing; the assembly responds **Amen**.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray, together.

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.
Amen.**



SENDING BLESSING

The God of love
draw you into full accord and one mind,
in the body of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

The God of hope
grant you strength and joy in all circumstances
through the interceding of the Spirit. **Amen.**

The God of grace
✠ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

Sending Song: ELW # 866 “We Are Marching in the Light of God”

Dismissal

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude



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Today's Lay Leaders

Lector: Sandy Ringwall

Ushers: Gloria & George Becker

Communion Assistant: Sue Clark

Altar Guild: Deanna Posig

Altar Guild for Wednesday Evenings:
Joann Voegeli and Joyce Weinert

Music & Worship Coordinator: Barb
Regent

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Pastor Steve Kuhl, Interim Pastor

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Altar flowers are in celebration of
Alekszander Timmerman's birthday!

