

September 6, 2026

Pentecost 15



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

11 East Dawes Avenue, Somers Point, NJ 08244

Church Office: 609-927-3082 **Food Pantry:** 609-927-9982

Website: www.GraceLutheranSPNJ.org

E-mail: office@GraceLutheranSPNJ.org

Reverend ✝ Elizabeth Frey, Pastor, Scott J. Breiner, Music Director
Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant

We welcome you to worship here at Grace!

*Note that all text written in **bold** is for congregation participation.
Most of our hymn songs are found in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship
red hymnal found in the pews.*

S=service music in the front part of the hymnal.

GATHERING

Thank you for joining us as we worship our Lord together!

Conflict is a part of relationships and life in community. Jesus' words in today's gospel are often used in situations having to do with church discipline. The prophet Ezekiel tells of warning the wicked to turn from their ways, and Paul reminds us that love is the fulfilling of the law. We gather in the name of Christ, assured that he is present among us with gifts of peace and reconciliation.

WELCOME

Rev. Elizabeth Frey

PRELUDE

Joyful, Joyful

arr. by Diane Bish

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin to God.

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.**

OPENING HYMN

As We Gather at Your Table

ELW #522

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.**

KYRIE

ELW S138

HYMN OF PRAISE*This is the Feast*

ELW S140

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord God, enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy. Without your help, we mortals will fail; remove far from us everything that is harmful, and lead us toward all that gives life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

GREET YOUR NEIGHBOR**CHILDREN'S SERMON***Please be seated.***FIRST READING: Ezekiel 33:7-11**

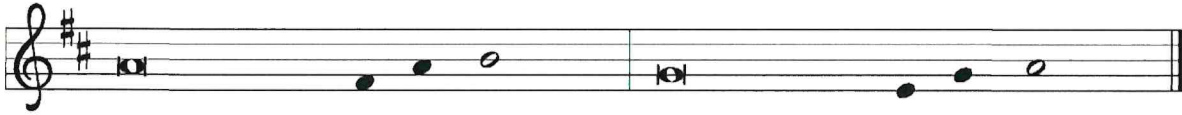
God appointed Ezekiel as a sentinel for the house of Israel. Ezekiel must faithfully convey God's warnings to the people. Remarkably, God—who is about to attack Jerusalem—gives a warning with the hope that repentance will make the attack unnecessary.

⁷ So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸ If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. ⁹ But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

¹⁰ Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel: Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" ¹¹ Say to them: As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 119:33-40



- ³³ Teach me, O LORD, the way [|] of your statutes,
and I shall keep it [|] to the end.
- ³⁴ **Give me understanding, and I shall [|] keep your teaching;
I shall keep it with [|] all my heart.**
- ³⁵ Lead me in the path of [|] your commandments,
for that is [|] my desire.
- ³⁶ **Incline my heart to [|] your decrees
and not to [|] unjust gain.**
- ³⁷ Turn my eyes from be- [|] holding falsehood;
give me life [|] in your way.
- ³⁸ **Fulfill your promise [|] to your servant,
which is for [|] those who fear you.**
- ³⁹ Turn away the reproach [|] that I dread,
because your judg- [|] ments are good.
- ⁴⁰ **Behold, I long for [|] your commandments;
by your righteousness en- [|] liven me.**

SECOND READING: Romans 13:8-14

The obligation of Christians is to love one another and so fulfill the heart and goal of the law. Clothes make the person as we “put on the Lord Jesus Christ” and live today in light of the future God has in store for us.

⁸ Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹ 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.” ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

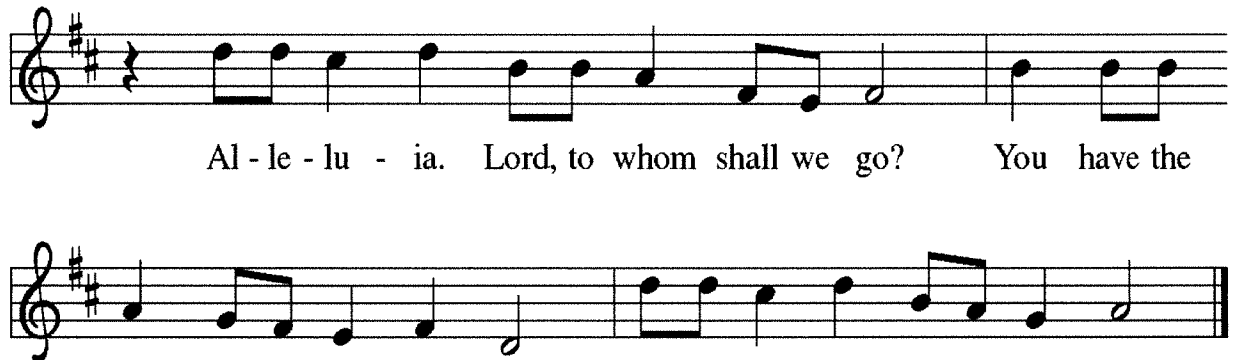
¹¹ Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is already the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹² the night is far gone; the day is near. Let us then throw

off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³ let us walk decently as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in illicit sex and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



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.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 18th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:15-20

Jesus offers practical advice to his disciples on how individuals—and the church as a whole—should go about restoring relationships when one member has sinned against another.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹⁵ “If your brother or sister sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If you are listened to, you have regained that one. ¹⁶ But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If that person refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸ Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again, truly I tell you, if two of

you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

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

Please be seated.

SERMON

Rev. Elizabeth Frey

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY *God, When Human Bonds are Broken* **ELW #603**
Verses 1, 3, 5 ALL, Verse 2 WOMEN, Verse 4 MEN

THE APOSTLE’S 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.

JOYFUL NOISE OFFERING

Our monthly special noisy offering for the month of September is the Seaman’s Institute.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Teach Me, O Lord

by Thomas Attwood

Please stand as you are able.

OFFERTORY RESPONSE *Create in Me a Clean Heart O God* **WOV #732**

OFFERING PRAYER

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.

Please be seated.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

A: Proclaiming God, empower your church throughout the world to announce the words you give us. Open us to receive your word in unexpected ways. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Forming God, renew the cycles of your creation that provide for the needs of all. Protect grasslands, marshes, swamps, and all places of transition. Heal communities crying out after disaster. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Governing God, turn all who create, enforce, or interpret legislation away from selfish gain and toward your promise of good for all, especially the good of all who labor. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

P: Attending God, wake us up to any around us who are in need. Restore broken relationships, failing health, frayed emotions, and the hurts we carry with us. (*We pray especially for all who are on our prayer list and all those we name aloud or in our hearts. . .*) Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Gathering God, resolve conflicts in this community through your righteousness and grace. Reconcile us to each other, making your good news known even through our imperfections. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Loving God, all who die in faith have life with you. We give you thanks for the nearness of your salvation for all who have gone before us. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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

HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

ELW S144

PREFACE

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW S144

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

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

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

EVERYONE IS INVITED to receive Holy Communion. The ushers will invite worshippers forward to receive communion in front of the altar steps. Once you have received the wafer and the red wine/white grape juice, place your empty cup in the tray and return to your pew via the side aisles. If you do not wish to receive communion, or are worshipping with children who have not had First Communion, we welcome you to come forward for a blessing and cross your arms over your chest to show your preference to the pastor.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

BLESSING

The God of grace + bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

ELW #836

*Please be seated. Enjoy the postlude music.
and meditate on how God spoke to your heart today.*

POSTLUDE

Trumpet Tune

by Henry Purcell

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

*We are glad for your presence today.
We hope you come again soon!*

We thank all those serving in worship today:
Worship Assistant: Corinne Rhodes



The flowers sponsor this week is: Roberta Blumenthal,
wishing all teachers and students a productive school year!

The candles, wine, and bulletins sponsor is: Clare Brick, in
honor of her great granddaughter, Karleigh!

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

September

WELCA (Women of the Church) will have the first meeting of their new season on Tuesday, September 8 at 12:00 PM in the lounge.

All women of the church are invited to attend! They will continue to meet the second Tuesday of each month.

Grace will have a table at the Good Old Days Festival at Kennedy Park on Saturday, September 12 from 10:00 AM-6:00 PM.

Volunteers are needed! Please sign-up in the narthex on Sundays, or call the church office and let us know your availability.

Sunday September 13: Blessing of Backpacks

If you are a teacher, administrator, or student in any capacity, please come and receive a back to school blessing during 10:15 worship!

Starting **Thursday, September 17**, please join us for Bible Study with Pastor Liz Frey! This will be held every **Thursday at 9:30 AM.**

Sunday School will start on September 20. Please spread the word! All ages are welcome! If you are interested in helping with Sunday School, please contact Ellie Hull at 609-287-6550.

Grief Support Group will start on Monday, September 21 at 6:30 PM and they will continue to meet the 3rd Monday of each month through the end of December.

ATTENTION ALL WORSHIP ASSISTANTS AND ANYONE WHO WOULD LIKE TO BE A WORSHIP ASSISTANT:

Please plan to attend one of our Worship Assistant Trainings on Sunday September 20 or Sunday September 27 following 10:15 AM worship in the sanctuary.

October:

The Installation for Pastor Liz will be on October 11

at our 10:15 worship service with Bishop Compton. We will have a special luncheon for Pastor Liz following that worship service at 11:30. We are asking all who attend to please RSVP so we know how much food to order and please bring a can of soup for our food pantry in honor of our SOUPer pastor!

Tickets are now on sale for our 4th Annual Oktoberfest!

\$30 for adults and \$15 for children under 12

Friday October 16 from 5:00-7:00

Great German food and drinks, trivia, 50/50 raffle, and a craft for kids! Tickets may be purchased in the narthex before or after church or in the church office during regular office hours.

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

September 6, 2026-September 13, 2026

15th Sunday of Pentecost 9/6/26

Office Closed for Labor Day

8:00AM Spoken Worship
10:15AM Traditional Worship

MONDAY 9/7/26

7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

TUESDAY 9/8/26

12:00PM WELCA

6:30PM Narcotics Anonymous
7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

WEDNESDAY 9/9/26

11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge
6:00PM AA Book Study
7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

THURSDAY 9/10/26

12:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous
5:00PM Choir Rehearsal
5:30PM AA 12-Step
7:00PM Al-Anon
7:00PM Antique Collector's Club

FRIDAY 9/11/26

10:30AM Grace Stitchers
7:30PM Alcoholics Anonymous

SATURDAY 9/12/26

7:30AM & 8:30AM Weight Watchers
**10:00AM-6:00PM Good Old Days
at Kennedy Park**

16th Sunday of Pentecost 9/13/26

8:00AM Spoken Worship
10:15AM Traditional Worship
Blessing of Backpacks

 SHORE DINER
Present this bulletin on a Sunday and Shore Diner will donate 20% to Grace Lutheran Church. Present this on any other day, and we will donate 10%.
Shore Diner 6710 Tilton Road Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234 609-641-3669

Office Hours This Week:
Tues-Fri 10:00-3:00