

16th Sunday after Pentecost



***Welcome to
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Child Development Center and Pre-School***
Rev. Dr. George R. Qualley, D.R.S., Ph.D., Pastor

September 13, 2026

FORGIVE
as you've been
FORGIVEN

Matthew 18:21-35



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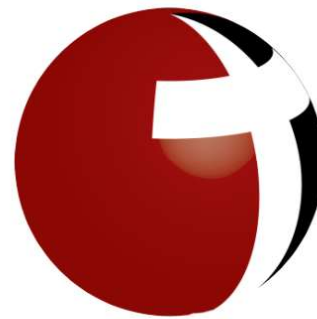
The LORD is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

Psalm 103:8



WELCOME

WE'RE GLAD YOU JOINED US



lcmc

Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ



Thank you for so many wonderful blessings
in our lives, children, grandchildren, and friends
by the Zuehlke family



*A special shout out to Lydia Burow celebrating her
101st birthday on September 16th.*



The handbell choir will be practicing 9-9:45 am on:
Sept 27, Oct 11 & 25, Nov 15 & 22, Dec 13 & 20
Please contact Debbie Matthys or come to practice if
you are interested in joining!



Jesus,
you told your church to go.
Give us courage to obey.

*Go therefore and make disciples
of all nations.*

—Matthew 28:19

 PRAYER LEAGUE
prayerleague.org

INTRODUCTION

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

“As We Gather at Your Table”

Hymn # 522

**¹ As we gather at your table,
as we listen to your word,
help us know, O God, your
presence;
let our hearts and minds be
stirred.**

Hymn # 522

**Nourish us with sacred story
till we claim it as our own;
teach us through this holy
banquet
how to make Love's vict'ry
known.**

Hymn # 522

**2 Turn our worship into witness
in the sacrament of life;
send us forth to love and serve
you,
bringing peace where there is
strife.**

Hymn # 522

**Give us, Christ, your great
compassion
to forgive as you forgave;
may we still behold your image
in the world you died to save.**

Hymn # 522

**Final Gracious Spirit, help us
summon
other guests to share that feast
where triumphant Love will
welcome those who had been
last and least.**

Hymn # 522

**There no more will envy blind us
nor will pride our peace destroy,
as we join with saints and
angels
to repeat the sounding joy.**

Hymn # 522

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

Kyrie eleison

Lord, have mercy.

Christe eleison

Christ, have mercy.

Kyrie eleison

Lord, have mercy.

Glory To God

*Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest,
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on
earth.*

*Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you
thanks, we praise you for your
glory.
[Refrain]*

[Refrain]

*Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest,
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on
earth.*

*Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the
Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us; you are seated
at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.*

[Refrain]

[Refrain]

*Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest,
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on
earth.*

*For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord
you alone are the Most High, Jesus
Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the
glory of God the Father. Amen.*

[Refrain]

[Refrain]

*Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest,
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on
earth, and peace to God's people
on earth.*

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

WORD

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

.

¹⁵ Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, “We are here as your slaves.” ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.” In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: 103:[1-7] 8-13

LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy. (Ps. 103:8)

¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's holy
name.

² **Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all God's benefits**

³who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases;

⁴**who redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast love
and mercy;**

⁵who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

⁶**O LORD, you provide vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.**

⁷ You made known your ways to Moses
and your works to the children of Israel.

⁸ **LORD, you are full of compassion and
mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in
steadfast love;**

⁹ you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.

**¹⁰ You have not dealt with us according
to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our
iniquities.**

¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who
fear you.

¹² **As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our
transgressions from us.**

¹³ As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear
you, O LORD.

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

¹ Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷ For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.

⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

¹² So then, each one of us will be held accountable. The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia.

Lord, to whom shall we go?

Alleluia.

You have the words of eternal Life.

Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel according to
Matthew 18:21-35

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

²¹ Peter came and said to [Jesus,] “Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?”

²² Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³ “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him,

²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made.

²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt.

²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.'

²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.'

³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.'

³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

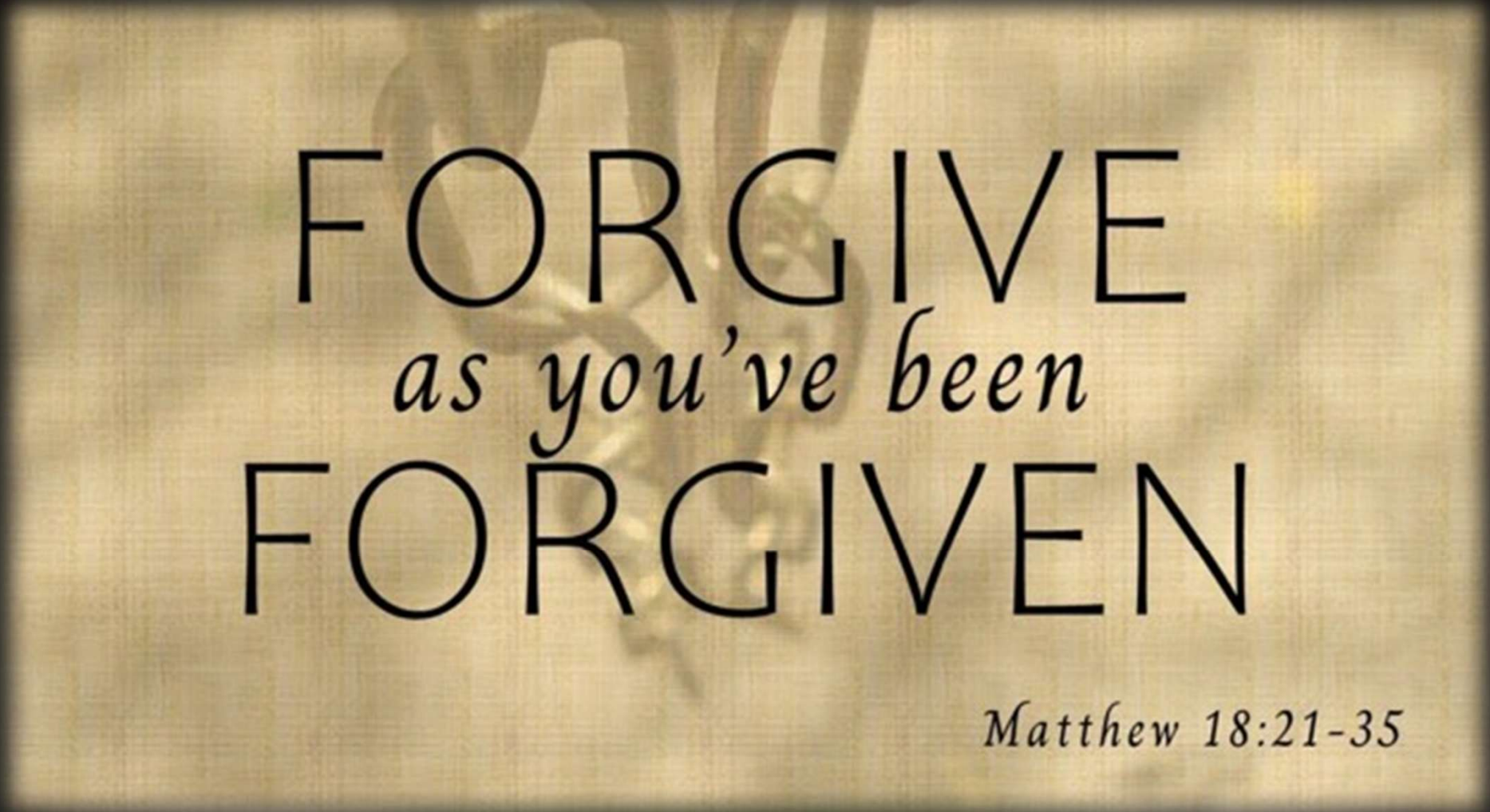
The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.



Sermon

Rev. Dr. George R. Qualley



FORGIVE
as you've been
FORGIVEN

Matthew 18:21-35

Hymn of the Day

“O Christ, Our Hope”

Hymn # 604

**¹ O Christ, our hope, our
hearts' desire,
creation's mighty Lord,
redeemer of the fallen world,
by holy love out-poured,
by holy love out-poured:**

Hymn # 604

**³ But now the bonds of death are
burst,
the ransom has been paid;
you reign above at God's right
hand,
in robes of light arrayed,
in robes of light arrayed.**

Hymn # 604

**Final All praise to you, ascended
Lord;
all glory ever be
to Father, Son, and Spirit blest
through all eternity,
through all eternity!**

Hymn # 604

With the whole church let us confess our faith.

CREED

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.**

Congregation may be seated

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

A brief silence.

Move your church throughout the world away from judging and despising others. Lead us to embody the forgiveness you have given us in Jesus.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

The endless beauty of your creation reminds us of your mercy. Protect those who care for farms and ranches. Guide those who lead us to wonder at your creation.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Raise up leaders to hold all in authority
accountable for any misuse of the power entrusted
to them.

Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Calm the fears of all in need with your promises.
Compassionately free the lives of any who feel
bound by their failures. Remember your children
and our friends and family members in need.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Ground this congregation in the welcome you show us in forgiving our sin. Inspire each of us to welcome others for your honor and glory.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for all our military, especially those deployed. We keep in our prayers all the Wounded Warriors that have returned home to heal. We pray for our missionary Berhane in East Africa, serving with the World Mission Prayer League, and for our sister congregation at Grace Lutheran Church in Ennis, Texas.

Especially today we celebrate and lift before you the ministry of St. John's Lutheran Church in Winters, Texas and their pastor, Kris Rebentisch. May your grace flow through them as they share your Good News.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

With you is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember all those who have gone before us.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

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.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Amen.

Canticle of Thanksgiving

Refrain ***Salvation belongs to our God
and to Christ the Lamb for ever and
ever.***

***¹ Great and wonderful are your
deeds, O God of the universe; just
and true are your ways, O Ruler of
all the nations.***

***Who can fail to honor you, Lord, and
sing the glory of your name?***

Refrain ***Salvation belongs to our God
and to Christ the Lamb forever and
ever.***

***² For you alone are the Holy One,
and blessed is the one whose
name is the Word of God.
All praise and thanks to you, holy
God!***

Refrain ***Salvation belongs to our God
and to Christ the Lamb forever and
ever.***

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Let us pray.

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Amen.

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.**

SENDING

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and
mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you
peace.

Amen.

Sending Song

“Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven”

Hymn # 864

**¹ Praise, my soul, the God of
heaven;
joyfully your tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored,
forgiven,
evermore God's praises sing.**

Hymn # 864

Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praises everlasting ring!

Hymn # 864

**2 God be praised, for grace and
favor**

to our forebears in distress.

**God be praised, the same forever,
slow to chide and swift to bless.**

Hymn # 864

Alleluia! Alleluia!
Glorious is God's faithfulness!

Hymn # 864

**3 Frail as summer's flow'r we
flourish,
blows the wind and it is gone;
but, as mortals rise and perish,
God endures unchanging on.**

Hymn # 864

Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise the great Eternal One!

Hymn # 864

**Final Angels sing in adoration,
in God's presence, face to face.
Sun and moon and all creation,
all who dwell in time and space.**

Hymn # 864

Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise with us the God of grace!

Hymn # 864

DISMISSAL

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

Thanks be to God.

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