

**Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 13, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
Shepherd of the Hill ELCA**

*"Encouraging faith and proclaiming God's love
by Gathering, Growing, Giving."*



Your presence in the sanctuary signifies your agreement to be on our live broadcast.

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.

GATHERING

Please stand for the parts of the service designated with †

The congregation's parts are in **bold type**.

PRELUDE

WELCOME

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.

† CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

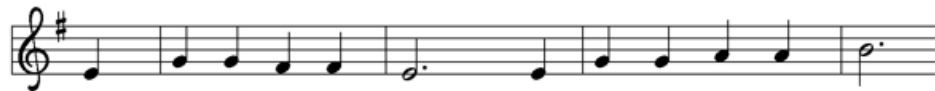
Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God, we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the $\dagger$ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

$\dagger$ KYRIE



1 Have mer-cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol-emn prayer.
2 Have mer-cy on us, Christ, and wash a-way our sin.
3 Have mer-cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de-part.



We come to hear your liv-ing word; it saves us from de-spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be-gin.
Re-new us with your sav-ing pow'r; cre-ate in us new hearts!

$\dagger$ HYMN OF PRAISE



Refrain
Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace



to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the



high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

$\dagger$ PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.**

$\dagger$ GATHERING HYMN

Ten Thousand Reasons

ACS 1097

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.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 103:1-13

We will read Psalm 103 responsively.

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—**

³ who 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;**

⁵ who 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.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

† GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



† GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

† The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 18th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

CHILDRENS TIME

Blessing of Backpacks.

SERMON

Pastor Natalie Leske

† CONFESSION OF FAITH- 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 power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to hell.
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

† PRAYERS OF THE INTERCESSION

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

A brief silence.

Prayers followed by: God of Grace **receive our prayer.**

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.**

TEACHER BLESSING

Anyone who volunteers in our Sunday School or Confirmation Program, or who teaches in a public or private school please stand.

Let us pray. Gracious God, for Jesus' sake, empower these ministers to care for the young ones in our family of faith and our community. Help them to teach faithfully, lead patiently, and guide confidently. Stir up in these servants the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever. **Amen.**

People in the assembly may raise their hands in blessing as the presiding minister continues.

Almighty God, who has given you the gifts and the will to do these things, graciously give you the strength and compassion to perform them. **Amen.**

On behalf of Shepherd of the Hill, we now commission you for ministry, grateful for your gifts and your willingness to serve.

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Today we are receiving new members and celebrating the renewal of memberships of those returning to Shepherd of the Hill.

The following people are being welcomed into active membership today. *Names are read.*

Mia Allen, Amy and Rachel McNaughton, Sara, Dustin, Brynn and Hallee Salisbury, Stacy, Kloey, Kyler and Kannon Powell, Heidi, Cal, Hailey, Hayden and Connor Davis.

I invite new and renewing members to stand at this time. *Please stand.*

We, as a worshipping community we are joyful to welcome you into membership today.

DECLARATION OF INTENTION

Let us all join these siblings in Christ by declaring our intentions together. *All please stand.* I ask you all, is it your intent to join together in worshipping God, hearing God's word, and sharing God's meal of Holy communion? If so, please say: **Yes, with God's help.**

Is it your intent to join together in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ in words and actions, to share your gifts and to work for justice and peace in our community and around the world? If so, please say: **Yes, with God's help.**

ADDRESS TO CONGREGATION

As we celebrate those entering and renewing their membership today. I ask the congregation, will you support these siblings in Christ whom we officially welcome today? Will you pray for them, celebrate with them, and share together with them in the ministry of Jesus Christ? If so, please say: **Yes, with God's help.**

PRAYER

Let us pray. Giver of gifts, we thank you for these siblings in Christ who will journey with us as a community of faith. Help us to recognize and nurture the gifts you have given each of them as we learn and grow together in faith and service. **Amen**

BLESSING

May the grace and love of Jesus Christ be granted to you all so that you may live and serve in the joy of abundant life.

Amen.

† GREETING OF PEACE

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

(Please share God's peace with each other)

† OFFERING and 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.**

† LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

† 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.

† **SENDING HYMN** Come, Join the Dance Trinity

ELW 412

† DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

SENDING MUSIC

WORSHIP LEADERS

Presiding Leader

Pastor Natalie Leske

Musician

Lorin Divine

Usher

Tim Jenson

Video

Billy Heltne

Reader

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Worship Leaders Needed

- Ushers
- Readers
- Communion Assistants
- Livestream Helpers
- Advance Slides for screen

See Tim Jenson, Kris Jenson, Billy Heltne and Pastor Natalie with questions.



Who's Going to Kiss the Pig?

Pastor Natalie? Keith? Terry?

Tickets 1- \$1, 6 - \$5, 12 - \$10,

For tickets see Betty H, Kris J, Pastor,

Keith L, Judy D or Lisa W

Raffle Tickets for Sale

(2) 1st Prizes: 1/2 Processed Hog

(1) 2nd Prize: \$100

1 ticket for \$5, 6 tickets for \$20



***Basket, monetary and food donation
requests, and volunteer sign-up sheets
are in the gathering area!
We appreciate your consideration.***

Welcome to all visitors!

We are grateful that God brought you here today.

Please share your name and contact information in either the Guest Book or on a purple Visitor info sheet found in the Gathering Area.

Let us know if we can serve you in any way or if you have any questions.

Pastor Natalie's Office Hours:

Pastor Natalie's office hours are Wednesday from 10 am to 2 pm or by appointment.
You may call Pastor Natalie's cell phone 715-829-8324 to see if she can meet you Monday - Thursday.

THIS WEEK AT CHURCH AND BEYOND OUR DOORS

SUNDAY	9/13	10 am	- 16 th Sunday after Pentecost
		11 am	- Welcome Brunch - All are Invited!
MONDAY	9/14	7 pm	- AA Meeting
TUESDAY	9/15	4-6 pm	- Food Pantry
WEDNESDAY	9/16	3:20 pm	- Confirmation
		6:30 pm	- Finance Committee Meets
FRIDAY	9/18	10 - Noon	- Food Pantry
SUNDAY	9/20	8:45 am	- Sunday School
		10 am	- 17 th Sunday after Pentecost, communion

Elk Mound Community Food Pantry**Lower Level**

Tuesdays: 4-6 pm

Fridays: 10-Noon

Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church

207 University St., Elk Mound, WI 54739 Phone: 715-879-5115 Email:

sothlc@sothem.org Website: www.sothem.org

Facebook: Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church

Pastor Natalie Leske 715-829-8324

pastorleske.soth@gmail.com

Lay Minister Keith Lee 715-829-4480

keithlee0051@gmail.com

Secretary Kris Jenson 715-563-1402

krisjens4@hotmail.com

Custodian Terry Stamm 715-379-3728

Sunday School Coordinators: Jaime Folczyk
and Holly Sweeney

mjfolczyk@gmail.com

hollysweeney65@gmail.com

Giving questions contact: Ali Sullivan

bookkeeper@sothem.org