



NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE



*"No one can serve two masters....
You cannot serve both God and money."*



NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE



Star of
Bethlehem Lutheran Church

4465 South Blosser Road
Santa Maria, CA 93455
Office: 805-937-0339
www.starlutheran.org
Pastor Michael Foley

Worship Service

Sunday, September 21, 2025 10:00 a.m.

The Fifteenth Sunday after PENTECOST

Theme of the day: Money is a master the devil often uses to tempt us. Jesus knows that serving money makes it impossible to serve God. The human heart is not big enough for both. So our Savior exposes the futility of serving money and also helps us see that the only one truly worth serving is our gracious, loving God.

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our friends and visitors! Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church is eager to share with you the blessings of its Christ-centered ministry. If you are a new or long-time resident of the Central Coast looking for a church home, we invite you to meet with us at the close of this worship service or at your convenience. All are welcome to stay for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Families are encouraged to worship together. If you need to step out with your children, the service can be seen and heard in the fellowship hall or narthex area. Feel free to enter and return at any time.

OUR MISSION

Our congregation exists for the purpose of "HOLDING OUT THE WORD OF LIFE." This is accomplished by faithfully preserving and proclaiming all of God's inerrant word, and administering the Sacraments as they were instituted by Christ.

OPENING HYMN: # 749 “God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending”

♪ **God, whose giving knows no ending,
from your rich and endless store:
nature’s wonder, Jesus’ wisdom,
costly cross, grave’s shattered door —
gifted by you, we turn to you,
off’ring up ourselves in praise;
thankful songs shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.**

**Skills and time are ours for pressing
toward the goals of Christ, your Son:
all at peace in health and freedom,
races joined, the church made one.
Now direct our daily labor, lest we strive for self alone;
born with talents, make us servants
fit to answer at your throne.**

Please stand for last verse:

**Treasure, too, you have entrusted,
gain through pow’rs your grace conferred:
ours to use for home and kindred,
and to spread the gospel word.
Open wide our hands in sharing,
as we heed Christ’s ageless call,
healing, teaching, and reclaiming, serving you by loving all.**

Minister: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Congregation: **And also with you.** (*spoken*)

M: God invites us to come into his presence to worship him with humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.

C: **Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful, and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

M: For all that we need in life and for the wisdom to use all your gifts with gratitude and joy, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: ♪ Lord, have mercy.

M: For the steadfast assurance that nothing can separate us from your love and for the courage to stand firm against the assaults of Satan and every evil, hear our prayer, O Christ.

C: ♪ Christ, have mercy.

M: For the well-being of your holy Church in all the world and for those who offer here their worship and praise, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: ♪ Lord, have mercy.

M: Merciful God, maker and preserver of life, uphold us by your power and keep us in your tender care:

C: ♪ Amen.

M: The works of the Lord are great and glorious; his name is worthy of praise.

♪ O Lord, our Lord, how glo-rious is your name in all the earth.

**Al-might-y God, mer-ci-ful Father,
you crown our life with your love.**

**You take a-way our sin; you com-fort our spir-it;
you make us pure and ho-ly in your sight.**

**You did not spare your on-ly Son,
but gave him up for us all.**

O Lord, our Lord, how glo-rious is your name in all the earth.

**O Son of God, e-ter-nal Word of the Fa-ther,
you came to live with us;**

you made your Fa-ther known;

you washed us from our sins in your own blood.

You are the King of glo-ry; you are the Lord!

O Lord, our Lord, how glo-rious is your name in all the earth.

M: O God, you have told us not to be anxious about what we need for this life. Move our hearts to seek you and your kingdom, that all good things may be given to us as well; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C:  Amen.

Please be seated.

FIRST LESSON: Ecclesiastes 5:10-20

¹⁰Anyone who loves money is never satisfied with money, and anyone who loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is vanishing vapor.

¹¹When goods increase, so do those who eat them. What profit, then, does the owner get, except to see these things with his eyes?

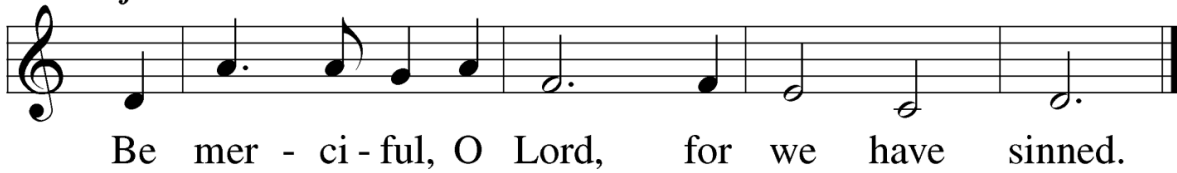
¹²The worker's sleep is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but a rich person's abundant possessions allow him no sleep.

¹³I have seen a sickening evil under the sun—wealth hoarded by its owner to his own harm,¹⁴ or wealth that is lost in a bad investment. Or a man fathers a son, but he has nothing left in his hand to give him.¹⁵ As he came out from his mother's womb, so he will go again, naked as he came. From his hard work he can pick up nothing that he can carry away in his hand.¹⁶ This too is a sickening evil: Just as he came, so he will go. So what does he gain, he who works for the wind?¹⁷ Besides this, during all his days he eats in darkness, with great frustration, sickness, and anger.

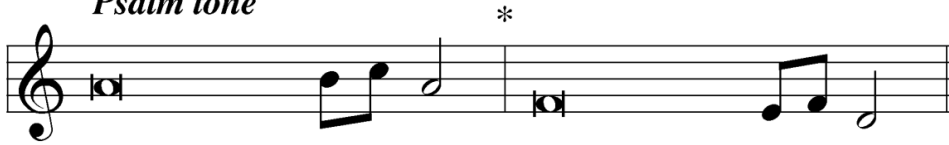
¹⁸So then, here is what I have seen to be good: It is beautiful to eat, to drink, and to look for good in all a person's hard work which he has done under the sun, during the few days of his life that God has given him, for that is his reward.¹⁹ Likewise, for everyone to whom God has given wealth and riches, if God has also given him ability to eat from it, to enjoy his reward, and to rejoice in the results of his hard work—this is a gift of God,²⁰ for the man seldom reflects on the days of his life, since God keeps him busy with the joy in his heart.

PSALM OF THE DAY: Psalm 38

Refrain



Psalm tone



O LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger*
or discipline me in your wrath.

For your arrows have pierced me,*
and your hand has come down upon me.

My guilt has overwhelmed me*
like a burden too heavy to bear.

Refrain

All my longings lie open before you, O LORD;*
my sighing is not hidden from you.

I wait for you, O LORD;*
you will answer, O Lord my God.

Come quickly to help me,*
O Lord my Savior.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Refrain

VERSE OF THE DAY:

M: Alleluia. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,
and all these things will be given to you as well. Alleluia.

(Matthew 6:33)

C:  Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

These words are written that we may believe
that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 16:1-13

Jesus also said to his disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager who was accused of wasting his possessions. ²The rich man called him in and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you can no longer be manager.’

³“The manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, since my master is taking away the management position from me? I am not strong enough to dig. I am ashamed to beg. ⁴I know what I will do, so that when I am removed from my position as manager, people will receive me into their houses.’

⁵“He called each one of his master’s debtors to him. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶He said, ‘Six hundred gallons of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and write three hundred.’ ⁷Then he said to another, ‘How much do you owe?’ And he said, ‘Six hundred bushels of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and write four hundred and eighty.’

⁸“The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the children of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the children of the light are. ⁹I tell you, make friends for yourselves with unrighteous *mammon*, so that when it runs out, they will welcome you into the eternal dwellings. ¹⁰The person who is faithful with very little is also faithful with much. And the person who is unrighteous with very little is also unrighteous with much. ¹¹So if you have not been faithful with unrighteous *mammon*, who will entrust you with what is really valuable? ¹²If you have not been faithful with what belongs to someone else, who will give you something to be your own? ¹³No servant can serve two masters. Indeed, either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and *mammon*.”

HYMN: # 751 “O God, Your Hand the Heavens Made”

**♪ O God, your hand the heavens made and all that they contain;
the world appeared at your command,
and in it now you reign.
The restless sea, the land, the sky your handiwork declare;
The touch of your creative pow’r is present ev’rywhere.**

**To us are given gifts divine, all talents you have sent;
inspire us now to use them well your kingdom to extend.
We hold each gift a trust from you nor claim it as our own;
we gratefully acknowledge, Lord,
all things are yours alone.**

**Deliver us from selfish aims; true stewards we would be;
endow us with a deep desire to live unselfishly.
A full accounting we must give and see you face to face;
let us approach your throne with joy,
supported by your grace.**

MESSAGE: 1 Timothy 6:6-10,17-19

⁶But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷For we brought nothing into the world, and we certainly cannot take anything out. ⁸But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be satisfied.

⁹Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge them into complete destruction and utter ruin. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evils. By striving for money, some have wandered away from the faith and have pierced themselves with many pains.

¹⁷Instruct those who are rich in this present age not to be arrogant or to put their hope in the uncertainty of riches, but rather in God, who richly supplies us with all things for our enjoyment. ¹⁸Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹In this way they are storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

The Holy Sacrament

Holy Communion, will be celebrated in today's service. The Bible teaches us that Jesus offers us his body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins in the Lord's Supper. The Bible also instructs us that receiving the Lord's Supper together is a public expression of our complete "oneness," or unity of faith.

Because the Lord's Supper is an expression of our unity in faith, we invite to the Lord's Supper only those who have expressed that unity with us through membership in our congregation or one of our sister congregations in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), or our sister church body, the ELS.

If you are a guest from another Christian church, we kindly ask that you simply refrain from participation in our celebration of the Lord's Supper today. We don't want to be presumptuous and put you in the position of declaring your agreement with our beliefs before you have had a chance to learn more.

M: The Lord be with you.

C: ♪ And also with you.

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: ♪ We lift them up to the Lord.

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: ♪ It is right to give him thanks and praise.

M: Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. He raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms and placed all things under his feet for the benefit of the Church.


Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory forever and ever.

♪ Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of your glory. You are my God, and I will exalt you. I will give you thanks for you have become my salvation. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of your glory.


The Words of Institution

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C:  **Amen.**

 **O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world grant us your peace. Amen.**

COMMUNION HYMN: # 807 “All Depends on Our Possessing”

 **All depends on our possessing
God’s abundant grace and blessing,
though all earthly wealth depart.
They who trust with faith unshaken
in their God are not forsaken
and will keep a dauntless heart.**

**He who to this day has fed me
and to many joys has led me
is and ever shall be mine.
He who ever gently schools me,
he who daily guides and rules me,
will remain my help divine.**

**Many spend their lives in fretting
over trifles and in getting
things that have no solid ground.
I shall strive to win a treasure
that will bring me lasting pleasure
and that now is seldom found.**

**When with sorrow I am stricken,
hope anew my heart will quicken;
all my longing shall be stilled.
To his loving kindness tender
soul and body I surrender,
for on God alone I build.**

**Well he knows what best to grant me;
all the longing hopes that haunt me,
joy and sorrow, have their day.
I shall doubt his wisdom never;
as God wills, so be it ever;
I commit to him my way.**

**If my days on earth he lengthen,
he my weary soul will strengthen;
all my trust in him I place.
Earthly wealth is not abiding,
like a stream away is gliding;
safe I anchor in his grace.**

Please stand.

**♪ Thank the Lord and sing his praise.
Tell ev'ryone what he has done.
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice
and proudly bear his name.
He renews his promises and leads
his people forth in joy
With shouts of thanksgiving.
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

M: Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of your Son may long for his coming again, and that all who have received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: ♪ Amen.

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace.
Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: ♪ Amen. Amen. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: # 750 “We Give Thee but Thine Own”

♪ We give thee but thine own, whate’er the gift may be;
all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.

May we thy bounties thus as stewards true receive
and gladly, as thou blessest us, to thee our first-fruits give.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS: Remember to pray for: Shawn Lozano, little Elias, Dennis Douglas, Bob Ward, George Caravana, Molly Webb, Doug Ward, Kathy Jones, Art Amarillas, Melinda Brown, Alice Taubman, Monica, Louise Perry, Rylan Downs, Jeff Brown, Aaron Taubman, Marlene Washburn, Helen Cummings, and Delores Bass.

THIS WEEK

Tuesday	ESL (English as a Second Language), 6:00 p.m.
Thursday	Bible Class, 10:00 a.m.
	ESL, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
Sunday	Bible Class and Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
	Worship, 10:00 a.m.

COMING UP

AREA REFORMATION SERVICE, October 26th, 4:00 p.m.
It is Star of Bethlehem’s turn to provide the luncheon.

Christian Questions

prepared by Dr. Martin Luther for those who intend to go to the Sacrament

1. Do you believe that you are a sinner? Yes, I believe it. I am a sinner.

2. How do you know this?

From the Ten Commandments, which I have not kept.

3. Are you sorry for your sins?

Yes, I am sorry that I have sinned against God.

4. What have you deserved from God because of your sins?

His wrath and displeasure, temporal death, and eternal damnation.

See Romans 6:21, 23.

5. Do you hope to be saved? Yes, that is my hope.

6. In whom then do you trust? In my dear Lord Jesus Christ.

7. Who is Christ? The Son of God, true God and man.

8. How many Gods are there?

Only one, but there are three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

9. What has Christ done for you that you trust in Him?

He died for me and shed His blood for me on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.

10. Did the Father also die for you?

He did not. The Father is God only, as is the Holy Spirit; but the Son is both true God and true man. He died for me and shed His blood for me.

11. How do you know this?

From the holy Gospel, from the words instituting the Sacrament, and by His body and blood given me as a pledge in the Sacrament.

12. What are the words of institution?

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

13. Do you believe, then, that the true body and blood of Christ are in the Sacrament? Yes, I believe it.

14. What convinces you to believe this?

The word of Christ: Take, eat, this is My body; drink of it, all of you, this is My blood.

15. What should we do when we eat His body and drink His blood, and in this way receive His pledge?

We should remember and proclaim His death and the shedding of His blood, as He taught us: This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.

16. Why should we remember and proclaim His death?

First, so that we may learn to believe that no creature could make satisfaction for our sins. Only Christ, true God and man, could do that. Second, so we may learn to be horrified by our sins, and to regard them as very serious.

Third, so we may find joy and comfort in Christ alone, and through faith in Him be saved.

17. What motivated Christ to die and make full payment for your sins?

His great love for His Father and for me and other sinners, as it is written in John 14; Romans 5; Galatians 2; and Ephesians 5.

18. Finally, why do you wish to go to the Sacrament?

That I may learn to believe that Christ, out of great love, died for my sin, and also learn from Him to love God and my neighbor.

19. What should admonish and encourage a Christian to receive the Sacrament frequently?

First, both the command and the promise of Christ the Lord. Second, his own pressing need, because of which the command, encouragement, and promise are given.

20. But what should you do if you are not aware of this need and have no hunger and thirst for the Sacrament?

To such a person no better advice can be given than this: first, he should touch his body to see if he still has flesh and blood. Then he should believe what the Scriptures say of it in Galatians 5 and Romans 7.

Second, he should look around to see whether he is still in the world, and remember that there will be no lack of sin and trouble, as the Scriptures say in John 15–16 and in 1 John 2 and 5.

Third, he will certainly have the devil also around him, who with his lying and murdering day and night will let him have no peace, within or without, as the Scriptures picture him in John 8 and 16; 1 Peter 5; Ephesians 6; and 2 Timothy 2.

