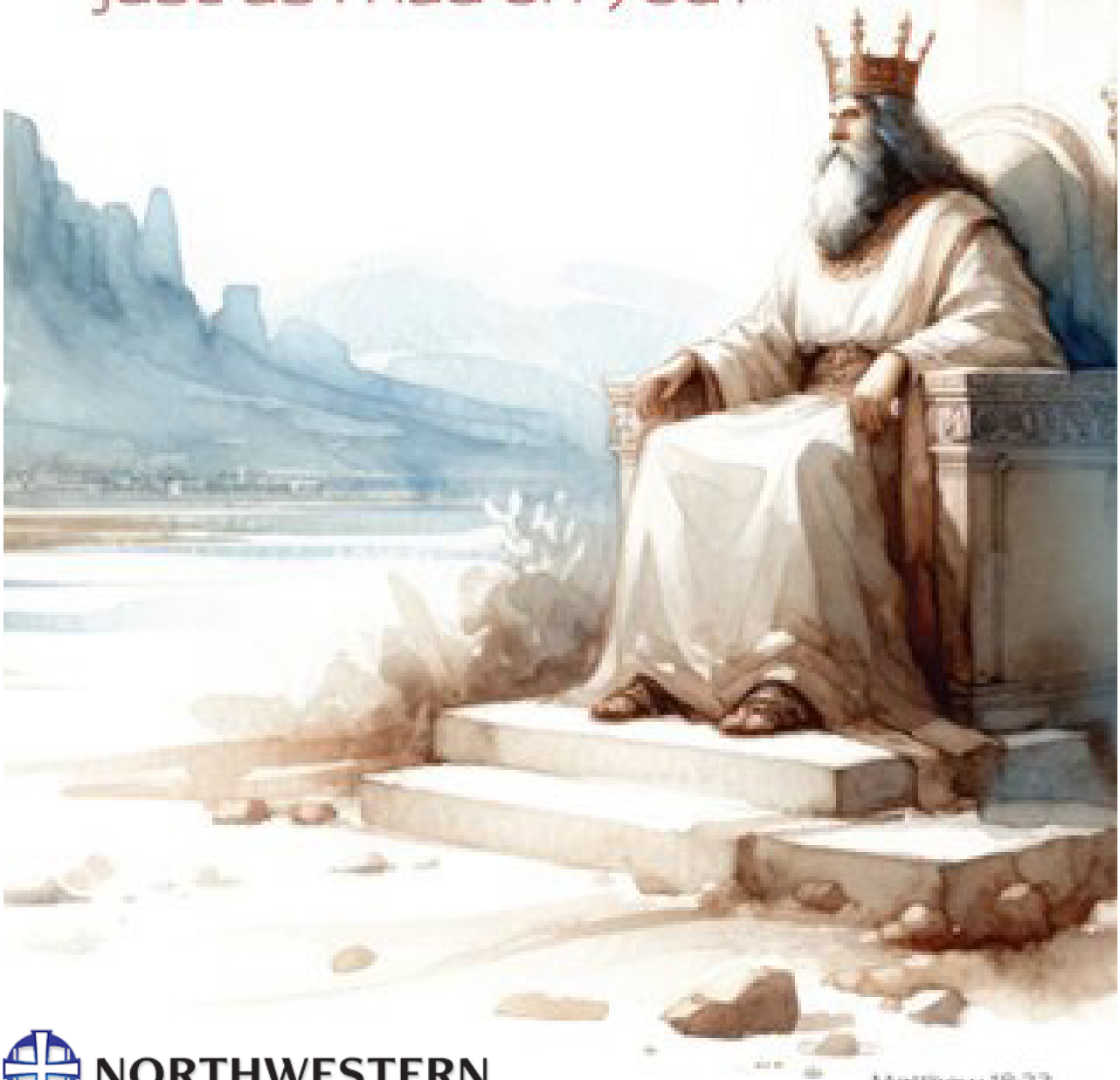
NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE

"'Shouldn't you
have had mercy
on your fellow servant
just as I had on you?'"



Matthew 18:33

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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 13, 2026 10:00 a.m.

Sixteenth Sunday after PENTECOST

Theme of the day: God tells his Church to model our forgiveness on his: a boundless, free, and loving forgiveness based on the sacrifice of Christ. How could our sinful hearts ever forgive like that? It is God's forgiveness that moves us to forgive. It is our forgiveness that shows gratitude and a reflection of God's grace in us.

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: # 623 **"O Bless the Lord, My Soul"**

♫ **O bless the Lord, my soul!**
Let all within me join
and aid my tongue to bless his name
whose favors are divine.

O bless the Lord, my soul,
nor let his mercies lie
forgotten in unthankfulness
and without praises die.

'Tis he forgives your sins,
'tis he relieves your pain,
'tis he that heals your sicknesses
and makes you young again.

He fills the poor with good;
he gives the suff'rers rest.
The Lord has judgments for the proud
and justice for th' oppressed.

Please stand for last verse:

His wondrous works and ways
he made by Moses known
but sent the world his truth and grace
by his beloved Son.

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)*

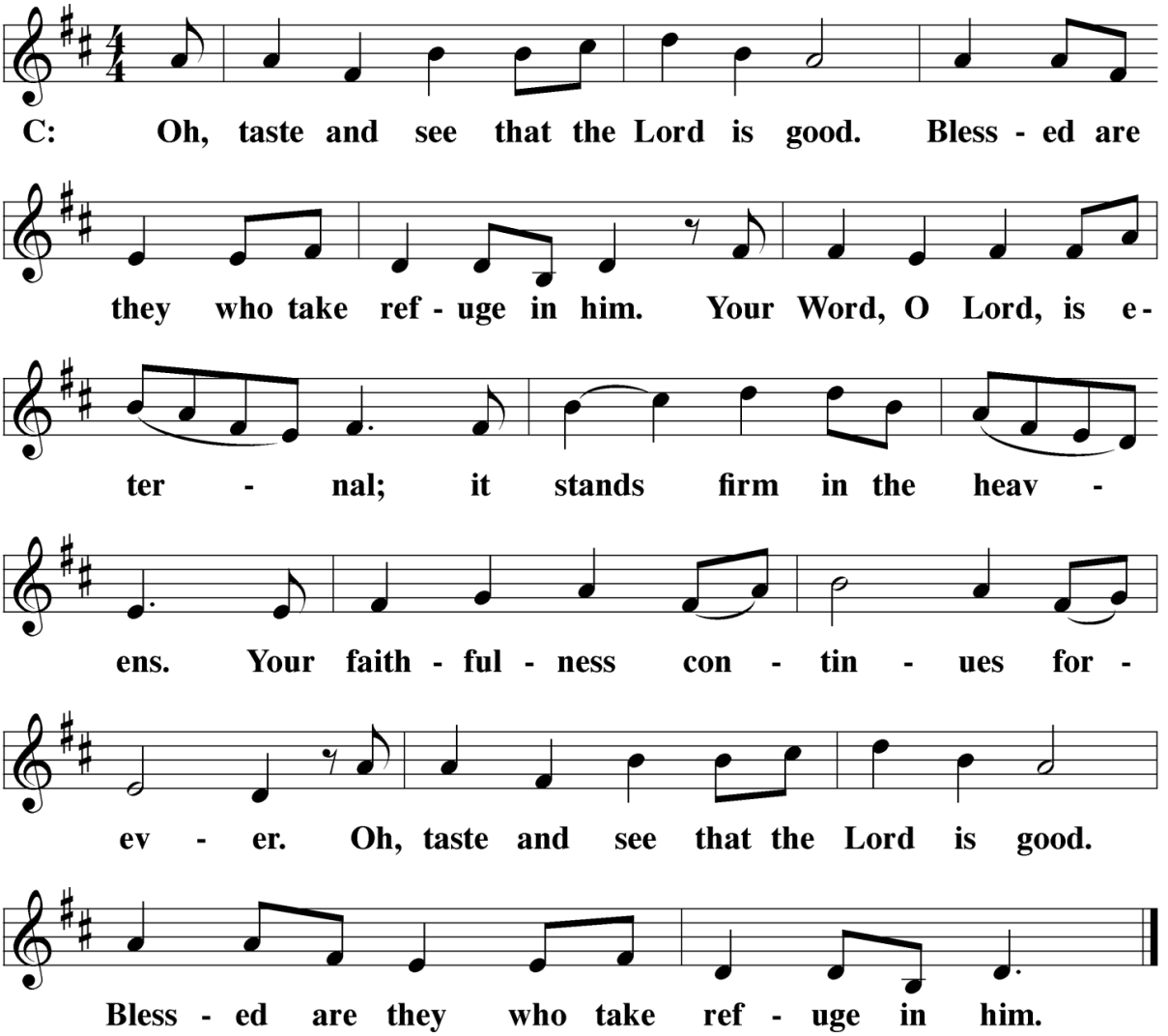
M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: Amen.

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.



M: Lord God, heavenly Father, you graciously forgive us all our sins and abundantly provide for all our needs of body and soul. Give us confidence in your mercy, and teach us also to be merciful to our neighbor, that we willingly forgive all people, and judging only ourselves, lead blessed lives to your glory; 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: Genesis 50:15-21

15When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and will pay us back in full for all of the evil that we did to him."

16They sent the following message to Joseph: "Before he died your father commanded us, 17'You are to tell Joseph, "Please forgive the offense of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you." ' Now, please forgive the offense of the servants of the God of your father."

Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

18His brothers also came and fell down in front of him, and they said, "See now, we are your servants."

19Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? 20You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring this to pass and to keep many people alive, as it is this day. 21Now therefore, do not be afraid. I will nourish you and your little ones." He comforted them and spoke to them in a kind way.

PSALM of the Day: Psalm 103

Praise the LORD, O my soul;*
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

He forgives all your sins*
and heals all your diseases;

he redeems your life from the grave*
and crowns you with love and compassion.

Refrain

The LORD is compassionate and gracious,*
slow to anger, abounding in love.

He does not treat us as our sins deserve*
or repay us according to our iniquities.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,*
so great is his love for those who fear him;

as far as the east is from the west,*
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Refrain

As a father has compassion on his children,*
so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;

for he knows how we are formed,*
he remembers that we are dust.

Our days are like grass, like a flower of the field;*
the wind blows over it and it is gone.

But the LORD'S love is with those who fear him*
from everlasting to everlasting.

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. Bear with one another and forgive each other. Forgive, just as Christ forgave you. Alleluia. *(Colossians 3:13)*

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

SECOND LESSON: Ephesians 4:29-5:2

[29]Do not let any unwholesome talk come from your mouths. Say only what is beneficial when there is a need to build up others, so that it will be a blessing to those who hear. [30]Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. [31]Get rid of every kind of bitterness, rage, anger, quarreling, and slander, along with every kind of malice. [32]Instead, be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ has forgiven us.
5 Therefore, be imitators of God as his dearly loved children.
[2]And walk in love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

HYMN: # 583 **"God Loves Me Dearly"**

♫ God loves me dearly, grants me salvation,
God loves me dearly, loves even me.
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, loves even me.

I was in slav'ry, sin, death, and darkness;
God's love was working to make me free.
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, loves even me.

He sent forth Jesus, my dear Redeemer,
he sent forth Jesus and set me free.
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, loves even me.

Jesus, my Savior, himself did offer;
Jesus, my Savior, paid all I owed.
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, loves even me.

Now I will praise you, O Love eternal;
now I will praise you all my life long.
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, loves even me.

SERMON: Matthew 18:21-35

[21]Then Peter came up and asked Jesus, "Lord, how many times must I forgive my brother when he sins against me? As many as seven times?"
[22]Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but I tell you as many as seventy-seven times. [23]For this reason the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. [24]When he began to settle them, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. [25]Because the man was not able to pay the debt, his master ordered that he be sold, along with his wife, children, and all that he owned to repay the debt.
[26]"Then the servant fell down on his knees in front of him, saying, 'Master, be patient with me, and I will pay you everything!' [27]The master of that servant had pity on him, released him, and forgave him the debt.
[28]"But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him one hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began choking him, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!'
[29]"So his fellow servant fell down and begged him, saying, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back!' [30]But he refused. Instead he went off and threw the man into prison until he could pay back what he owed.
[31]"When his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were very distressed. They went and reported to their master everything that had taken place.
[32]"Then his master called him in and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt when you begged me to. [33]Should you not have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had mercy on you?' [34]His master was angry and handed him over to the jailers until he could pay back everything he owed.

[35]"This is what my heavenly Father will also do to you unless each one of you forgives his brother from his heart."

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit;
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen.

HYMN: # 697 **"May We Your Precepts, Lord, Fulfill"**

♫ **May we your precepts, Lord, fulfill**
and do on earth our Father's will
as angels do above;
still walk in Christ, the living way,
with all your children, and obey
the law of Christian love.

So may we join your name to bless,
your grace adore, your power confess,
to flee from sin and strife.
One is our calling, one our name,
the end of all our hopes the same:
a glorious crown of life.

Spirit of life, of love, and peace,
unite our hearts, our joy increase,
your gracious help supply.
To each of us the blessing give
in Christian fellowship to live,
in joyful hope to die.

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.

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: # 562 **"Jesus Paid It All"**

♫ I hear the Savior say, "Thy strength indeed is small!
Child of weakness, watch and pray, find in me thine all in all."
Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe;
sin had left a crimson stain, he washed it white as snow.

Lord, now indeed I find thy pow'r, and thine alone
can change the leper's spots and melt the heart of stone.
Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe;
sin had left a crimson stain, he washed it white as snow.

For nothing good have I whereby thy grace to claim;
I'll wash my garments white in the blood of Calv'ry's Lamb.
Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe;
sin had left a crimson stain, he washed it white as snow.

And when, before the throne, I stand in him complete,
"Jesus died my soul to save," my lips shall still repeat.
Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe;
sin had left a crimson stain, he washed it white as snow.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God by the Evers in thankfulness for many blessings.

PRAYERS: Remember to pray for: little Elias, Dennis Douglas, George Caravana, Molly Webb, Kathy Jones, Art Amarillas, Melinda Brown, Alice Taubman, Monica, Rylan Downs, Jeff Brown, Aaron Taubman, Marlene Washburn, Helen Cummings, Delores Bass, Rick Stovall, Suzy Garvin, Linda Wilkinson, Kathie Stillwater, Louise Perry, Phil Schaaf, and Ilene Trevarrow.

THIS WEEK

Today	**Fellowship Potluck, after service**
Tuesday	**ESL Open House and Fiesta, 5:30-7:30 p.m.**
Thursday	**Bible Class, 10:00 a.m.**
	ESL, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
Sunday	**Bible Class & Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.**
	Worship with Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m.