



TRINITY MERRILL LUTHERAN CHURCH

107 N. State St. Merrill, WI 54452
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Reverend Scott Gustafson
Reverend Jonathan Chapa

September 6, 2026 - 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM D.S. 1

The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Sharing the message with us today is Pastor Jon Chapa, Pastor Scott Gustafson will be our Liturgist and Mark Knorr our Lector. Eileen Hass is our organist today.

AS WE GATHER: In every congregation, there are those who once sat together with us in the pews but have since been lost to error or sin. Those who used to be Christian may constitute a number larger than those who are currently Christian. It is one thing to lament this and criticize from the sidelines. It is quite another to warn the wicked. Though some might assume that the chief purpose of church discipline is to condemn the sins and errors of others, our Lord reminds us that discipline is an act of love that seeks to restore the fallen. While this idea may seem out of step with the emphasis in our times on tolerance without judgment, if our Lord loves the lost enough to save us, then we are called to do no less. Key to this is warning the wicked (as Ezekiel puts it) with the voice of God's Word. This certainly includes condemning sin and error, but it also includes restoring the fallen through forgiveness. It is not the will of our Father in heaven that any should perish, and it is the joy of heaven to welcome them back. Is it also our passion to seek them out, to warn them with the voice of God's Word, and to welcome them home through forgiveness?

OPENING HYMN

"Before You, Lord, We Bow"

LSB 966



1 Be - fore You, Lord, we bow, Our God who reigns a - bove
2 The na - tion You have blest May well Your love de - clare,
3 May ev - 'ry moun - tain height, Each vale and for - est green,
4 Earth, hear your Mak - er's voice; Your great Re - deem - er own;
5 And when in pow'r He comes, Oh, may our na - tive land



And rules the world be - low, Bound-less in pow'r and love. Our thanks
From foes and fears at rest, Pro - tect - ed by Your care. For this
Shine in Your Word's pure light, And its rich fruits be seen! May ev -
Be - lieve, o - bey, re - joice, And wor-ship Him a - lone. Cast down
From all its rend - ing tombs Send forth a glo - rious band, A count -



we bring In joy and praise, Our hearts we raise To You, our King!
bright day, For this fair land—Gifts of Your hand—Our thanks we pay.
'ry tongue Be tuned to praise And join to raise A grate - ful song.
your pride, Your sin de - plore, And bow be - fore The Cru - ci - fied.
less throng, With joy to sing To heav'n's high King Sal - va - tion's song!

Text: Francis Scott Key, 1779–1843, alt. Tune: John Darwall, 1731–89 Text and tune: Public domain

INVOCATION

A In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit

C **Amen.**

A If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

A Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. 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. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. 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.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

KYRIE

A In peace let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

A For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

A For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

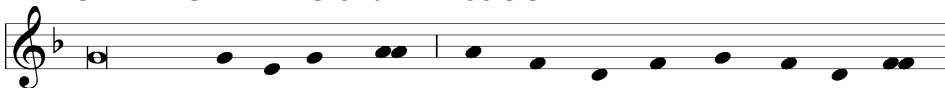
C **Lord, have mercy.**

A Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C **Amen.**

HYMN OF PRAISE “Gloria in Excelsis”

LSB 154



A Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His peo - ple on earth.



C Lord God, heav-en-ly king, al-might-y God and Fa - ther:

We wor-ship You, we give You thanks, we praise You for Your glo-ry.
 Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:
 You take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.
 You are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther; re-ceive our prayer
 For You a-lone are the Ho-ly One, You a-lone are the Lord,
 You a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,
 in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

SALUTATION

- A The Lord be with you.
 C **And also with you.**

COLLECT OF THE DAY

- A Let us pray. O God, from whom all good proceeds, grant to us, Your humble servants, Your holy inspiration, that we may set our minds on the things that are right and, by Your merciful guiding, accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
 C **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Ezekiel 33:7-9

⁷ "So you, son of man, I have made a watchman 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 one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. ⁹ But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.

- A This is the Word of the Lord.
 C **Thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

EPISTLE

Romans 13:1-10

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ³For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. ⁵Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. ⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. ⁷Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

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

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

ALLELUIA AND VERSE

LSB 156

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.

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 18:1-20

A The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the Eighteenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ²And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them ³and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵"Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, ⁶but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

⁷"Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! ⁸And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be

thrown into the eternal fire. ⁹ And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

¹⁰ “See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. ¹² What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? ¹³ And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. ¹⁴ So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

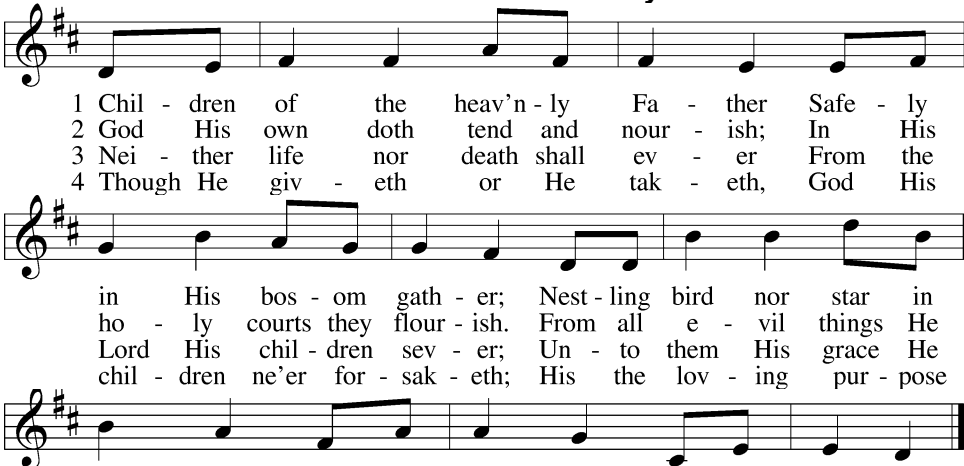
¹⁵ “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸ Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”

- A This is the Gospel of the Lord.
- C Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Children of the Heavenly Father”

LSB 725



1 Chil - dren of the heav'n - ly Fa - ther Safe - ly
2 God His own doth tend and nour - ish; In His
3 Nei - ther life nor death shall ev - er From the
4 Though He giv - eth or He tak - eth, God His

in His bos - om gath - er; Nest - ling bird nor star in
ho - ly courts they flour - ish. From all e - vil things He
Lord His chil - dren sev - er; Un - to them His grace He
chil - dren ne'er for - sak - eth; His the lov - ing pur - pose

heav - en Such a ref - uge e'er was giv - en.
spares them; In His might - y arms He bears them.
show - eth, And their sor - rows all He know - eth.
sole - ly To pre - serve them pure and ho - ly.

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903; tr. Ernst W. Olson, 1870–1958 Tune: Lofsånger och andeliga wisor, 1873, Sweden Text: Public domain Tune: Public domain

SERMON

APOSTLES' CREED

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

And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence 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.

ATTENDANCE / CONNECT TIME / OFFERING

During this time, please sign the attendance book found in the pew or use your mobile device to fill out the Connect Card or submit prayer requests on our app or online at www.trinitymerrill.com/live. You can also visit our app or www.trinitymerrill.com/give to learn more about other ways to support the ministries at Trinity. (When filling out the attendance book – please list the names of all in attendance in your family.) If you are a visitor interested in membership, please include your email and phone number on the attendance pad.

OFFERTORY



What shall I ren-der to the Lord for all His ben-e-fits to
me? I will of - fer the sac-ri-fice of thanks-giv - ing and will
call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal-
va - tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my
vows to the Lord now in the pres-ence of all His peo-ple, in the
courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je - ru - sa - lem.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

(8:00 AM) **SOLO** “The Lord’s Prayer” by Mark Knorr

(6:00 PM) **THE 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.

BENEDICTION

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and T give you peace.

C Amen.

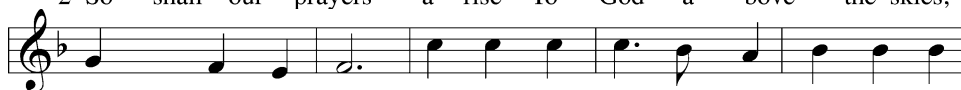
CLOSING HYMN

“God Bless Our Native Land”

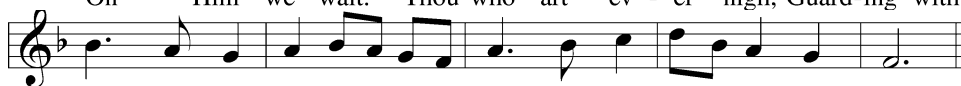
LSB 965



1 God bless our na - tive land; Firm may she ev - er stand
2 So shall our prayers a - rise To God a - bove the skies;



Through storm and night. When the wild tem - pests rave, Rul - er of
On Him we wait. Thou who art ev - er nigh, Guard - ing with



wind and wave, Do Thou our coun - try save By Thy great might.
watch-ful eye, To Thee a - loud we cry: God save the state!

Text (st. 1): Charles T. Brooks, 1813–83, alt.; (st. 2): John S. Dwight, 1813–93, alt. Tune: Thesaurus Musicus, c. 1740, London Text and tune: Public domain

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Today's radio broadcast is sponsored in celebration of the 49th Wedding Anniversary of Richard and Ann Stoeckmann

The flowers on the altar are sponsored in loving memory of Roger & Lenore English and Gerald and Carol Duwe and for blessings received by Brent & Crystal Duwe.

NEED A RIDE TO CHURCH? WE'RE HERE TO HELP! Trinity is pleased to offer **free taxi rides to and from worship services** through Blue Jay Taxi. If you or someone you know could benefit from transportation assistance, simply call **715-921-4110** by **Wednesday** before the weekend service you plan to attend. When leaving your message, please include: which worship service you will attend, your pick-up address, and how many people need transportation to Trinity.

Bible Legacy Night – September 10 at 6:00 PM at Trinity Church

This invitation is for all Trinity third graders and their families, including students enrolled at Trinity School and public-school students who are Trinity members. This special evening celebrates an important milestone in each child's faith journey as our third graders receive their own Bible from Trinity. Families are encouraged to attend as we gather to give thanks for God's Word and pray that these Bibles will guide, encourage and strengthen our students for years to come.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY – Diane Kreager's bible study on The book of Ruth "More than a Love Story" will begin on Wednesday, September 9th from 1:00-2:00. No need to sign up.... Just show up.

The Fall Congregational Meeting is October 25 after the 10:30 service. At that meeting we will be electing three members to serve the next three years on the Church Council. If anyone's interested or if anyone has recommendations, please speak to Pastor G.

Lincoln County Health Department will be offering some seniors (65+) flu shot clinics in September.

Sept 9th we will be at TB Scott Library from 11-12 to give flu shots.

Sept 16th from 8:30-11:30 we will be at the Merrill EXPO center- in the Steckling building to offer "drive thru" flu shots for seniors. No need to get in or out of the car at this clinic. No pre-registration or appointment needed. **We will also be offering "walk in" flu shots (including high dose flu shots) every Wednesday from 8:30-4pm from mid Sep-Nov. No appointment needed.**

Sunday Morning Bible Class resumes on September 13th! Join us at 9:15am each Sunday in the Fellowship Hall here at Trinity! This year, we'll be going through the Augsburg Confession. This historic document, written in 1530, is the foundation statement for what we Lutherans believe, teach, and confess--and why! Registration is necessary to make sure we have enough materials for you. Please contact the church to sign up.

**Join us for Trinity's next FREE COMMUNITY MEAL-
Wednesday, September 16th from 4:30-6:30.**

Trinity Kids (Sunday School) will begin on September 20th from 9:15-10:15 at Trinity School. Children will enjoy learning about Jesus and his love for them.

North Wisconsin District Adult Gathering - Make plans now to attend the NWD Adult Gathering on Tuesday, October 13 at Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Weston. Registration & morning refreshments begin at 9:30 a.m. with the program from 10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. A catered lunch will be served at noon. Devotions will be led by District President, Rev. Timothy Shoup. Keynote speaker, Rev. Dr. Brian Gauthier, who serves as managing director – global mission operations of the LCMS Office of International Mission.. The \$35 registration fee includes morning refreshments, program, and a catered lunch. Registration deadline is September 25. Registration forms are available in the office and on the NWD homepage at nwdlcms.org under 'Events and Info'.

OPEN HEARTS FOOD SHELF — VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! Our Open Hearts Food Shelf is open every Wednesday and Friday from 2:00–4:00 PM, providing food to individuals and families in our community. We are looking for a few volunteers who can help pick up food on Thursday or Friday mornings and bring it to Trinity. The food will already be packaged and ready to go—no shopping required! Some muscle is helpful, as there will be boxes and food packages to load and unload. If you can help on a regular or occasional basis, please contact the church office or speak with Pastor G. Your helping hands can be an Open Heart to someone in need!

Fundraiser for Kaye Annis - Join us on Thursday, September 17, 2026 from 4:00-8:00 PM at the Eagles Club, 1205 Lake Street, Merrill for a Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser. All Proceeds go to Kaye for medical related expenses. Buy your tickets at the door for \$13. for all the Spaghetti you can eat. Join us for an evening of food, fun and community spirit to assist Kaye Annis.

GRIEF SHARE- September 14th through December 7th (Monday's) from 6:00-8:00 PM at Trinity Church. Trinity will once again be offering Grief Support to our church and community. This support group will offer help and encouragement after the death of a loved one. At a GriefShare meeting, you will find understanding, guidance, relief, and a safe place to navigate the challenges of grief. Come join us and bring a friend. Contact us Today so we have enough materials. 715-536-5482.

