

CREATED, SAVED AND GIFTED BY GOD,
WE SEEK, SERVE AND SHARE JESUS CHRIST.



NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SUNDAY, JULY 26, 2026 • 10:30 AM

— SERVICE OF HEALING —

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
901 East Stroop Road
Kettering, Ohio 45429
(937) 298-0136

INTRODUCTION

As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE...

A string of parables describe the kingdom of heaven, and then we hear Jesus' question: "Have you understood all this?" The mustard seed, yeast, hidden treasure, pearls—these bring good news of growth and joy and riches. Then come the fish, the furnace of fire, and the weeping and gnashing of teeth. Once again this week we hear of a God of mercy and justice. Once again there is good news to be heard in Paul's letter to the church at Rome—nothing will ever separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus. How will we reconcile these two images of God?

"Kingdoms" are not common in our world. When most of us think about kingdoms, we call up images of British or other royalty—jeweled crowns, a palace. At the time the Gospel of Matthew was written, the people were subject to the empire, or kingdom, of Rome. Perhaps the writer wants us to contrast the oppressive rule of Rome with a vision of heaven's kingdom of love and mercy. The translation of the Greek *basileia*, a feminine word usually rendered in English as "kingdom," is difficult. The writer of Matthew may have used the expression "kingdom of heaven" instead of "kingdom of God" in order not to offend Jewish Christ-believers who honored the word for God by avoiding its use.

King Solomon asks God for the wisdom to discern between good and evil, for the understanding to live out both justice and mercy as a ruler of God's people. God was pleased with Solomon's request. The wisdom Solomon seeks to rule his earthly kingdom reflects the wisdom of the kingdom of heaven. King Solomon was variously successful in his discernment of good and evil, as are we.

COME FOR HEALING

We will offer a portion of this morning's worship as time of comfort and prayer for those suffering in mind, body or spirit. Those who sense the need for God's healing in any aspect of their lives may receive the gifts of prayer and of the laying on of hands. These signs, first given in baptism, tell us again that we are sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked forever with the cross of Christ, who is health and salvation for the whole world.

In its ministry of healing, the church does not replace the gifts of God that come through the scientific community, nor does it promise a cure. The church offers and celebrates gifts such as these: God's presence with strength and comfort in time of suffering, God's promise of wholeness and peace, and God's love embodied in the community of faith.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Mallory Morris

CALL TO WORSHIP

"Create in Me"

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, oh God, that I might serve

You; Cre-ate in me a clean heart, oh God, that I might be re -

-newed. So fill me and heal me, and bring me back to

You. Cre-ate in me a clean heart, oh God, that I might serve

You.

*** indicates to stand as you are able.*

OPENING LITANY

inspired by Psalm 105

Brothers and sisters, let us give thanks to God
and call upon the name of the Lord.

We remember and rejoice in the wondrous works of the Lord.

Sing to the Lord, sing praises to the Lord.

We proclaim God's faithfulness with songs of worship and deeds of love.

Shout aloud for all to hear of the glorious works of our God.

Make us worthy and capable witnesses of your grace and mercy.

Strengthen us in heart and mind to live lives that reflect your wisdom.

Glory in God's holy name.

**Our souls are renewed by the sound of your name,
and our joy is made full at the sight of your face.**

Seek the Lord, and God will light the way.

Cling to the Lord, and follow where he leads.

We turn the Living God, who opens our eyes and guides our hearts.

Join your voices with the saints of every age.

Ring out your joy for the nations to hear of God's redeeming love.

**We rejoice to be the children of God, anointed to serve
as builders of God's Kingdom and proclaimers of God's Word.**

GATHERING SONGS

"Jesus, Son of God"

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)

You came down from heaven's throne
This earth you formed was not your home
A love like this the world had never known.
A crown of thorns to mock your name.
Forgiveness fell upon your face.
A love like this the world had never known.

(Refrain - All)

**On the altar of our praise,
Let there be no higher name:
Jesus, Son of God.
You laid down your perfect life
You are the sacrifice,
Jesus, Son of God.
You are Jesus, Son of God.**

(Verse 2 - All)

**You took our sin, you bore our shame,
You rose to life, you defeated the grave,
And a love like this the world has never known.
'Cause you took our sin, you bore our shame,
You rose to life, you defeated the grave
A love like this the world has never known.**

(Refrain - All)

**On the altar of our praise,
Let there be no higher name:
Jesus, Son of God.
You laid down your perfect life
You are the sacrifice,
Jesus, Son of God.
You are Jesus, Son of God.**

(Music Ministers)

**Be lifted higher than
All you've overcome.
Your name be louder
Than any other song
There is no power
That can come against your love.
The cross was enough,
The cross was enough,
The cross was enough**

(All)

**On the altar of our praise,
Let there be no higher name:
Jesus, Son of God.
You laid down your perfect life.
You are the sacrifice,
Jesus, Son of God.**

**On the altar of our praise,
Let there be no higher name:
Jesus, Son of God.
You laid down your perfect life.
You are the sacrifice,
Jesus, Son of God.
You are Jesus, Son of God.**

**Be lifted higher than
All you've overcome.
Your name be louder
Than any other song
There is no power
That can come against your love.
The cross was enough,
The cross was enough,
The cross was enough,
The cross was enough,
The cross was enough.**

"Mighty To Save"

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)
Everyone needs compassion,
Love that's never failing;
Let mercy fall on me.
Everyone needs forgiveness,
The kindness of a Savior,
The hope of nations.

(Refrain - All)
Savior, he can move the mountains.
My God is mighty to save,
He is mighty to save.
Forever, Author of salvation,
He rose and conquered the grave,
Jesus conquered the grave.

(Verse 2 - All)
So take me as you find me,
All my fears and failures.
Fill my life again.
I give my life to follow
Everything I believe in.
Now I surrender.

(Refrain - All)

Savior, he can move the mountains.

My God is mighty to save,

He is mighty to save.

Forever, Author of salvation,

He rose and conquered the grave,

Jesus conquered the grave.

(Bridge - Music Ministers / All)

Shine your light, and let the whole world see.

We're singing

For the glory of the risen King:

Jesus.

Shine your light and let the whole world see.

We're singing

For the glory of the risen King.

(Refrain - All)

Savior, he can move the mountains.

My God is mighty to save,

He is mighty to save.

Forever, Author of salvation,

He rose and conquered the grave,

Jesus conquered the grave.

Savior, he can move the mountains.

My God is mighty to save,

He is mighty to save.

Forever, Author of salvation,

He rose and conquered the grave,

Jesus conquered the grave.

(All)

Shine your light, and let the whole world see.

We're singing

For the glory of the risen King:

Jesus.

Shine your light and let the whole world see.

We're singing

For the glory of the risen King.

**** CONFESSION**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose compassion endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,
we confess to you all our sins.
Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves.
In your mercy, call us back to you.
Your yoke is easy and your burden is light.
Restore us to dwell in your peace.
In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

**** FORGIVENESS**

Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary
and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."
In the name of God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love. **Amen.**

**** PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Assisting Minister

Beloved and sovereign God, **through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**** PASSING OF THE PEACE**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture-reading, preaching and song.

FIRST READING

1 Kings 3:5-12

Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people well.

A reading from 1 Kings, the third chapter.

At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I should give you." And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?"

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, "Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

** GOSPEL READING

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Throughout Matthew's gospel, Jesus and his disciples proclaim the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near!" Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people's lives.

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the thirteenth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus put before the crowds another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; 46 on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

"Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SILENT REFLECTION

HEALING

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Healing Rain"

by Michael W. Smith, Matt Bronleewe & Martin Smith

Praise Team

Kris Turner, soloist

Healing rain is coming down,
It's coming nearer to this old town;
Rich and poor, the weak and strong,
It's bringing mercy, it won't be long.

Healing rain is coming down,
It's coming closer to the lost and found.
Tears of joy and tears of shame
Are washed forever in Jesus' name.

Healing rain, it comes with fire,
So let it fall and take us higher.
Healing rain, I'm not afraid
To be washed in heaven's rain.

Lift your heads, let us return
To the mercy seat where time began;
And in your eyes I see the pain;
Come, soak this dry heart with healing rain.

And only you, the Son of Man,
Could take a leper and let him stand,
So lift your hands; they can be held
By someone greater: the Great I Am.

Healing rain is falling down.
I'm not afraid.

**** INTRODUCTION**

Pastor Mallory Morris

Our Lord Jesus healed many as a sign of the reign of God come near and sent the disciples to continue this work of healing—with prayer, the laying on of hands, and anointing. In the name of Christ, the great healer and reconciler of the world, we now entrust to God all who are in need of healing.

**** PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and especially for all who are suffering or are in any affliction.

A brief silence.

After each petition concludes:

In your great mercy, **hear us, O God.**

O God, we bring these intercessions before you, knowing that you will hear us as you have promised, and will answer according to the mercy shown in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**** LAYING ON OF HANDS**

Sisters and brothers, I invite you to come and receive
a sign of healing and wholeness in the name of the triune God.

All those who seek healing may come forward. The minister, laying hands on the forehead of each person, prays:

In the name of our Savior Jesus Christ,
be strengthened and filled with God's grace,
that you may know the healing power of the Spirit. **Amen.**

After all have returned, the assembly stands as the presiding minister prays:

Let us pray. Living God, through the laying on of hands,
grant comfort in suffering to all who are in need of healing.
When they are afraid, give them courage;
when afflicted, give them patience;
when dejected, give them hope;
and when alone, assure them of the support of your holy people.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**** BLESSING**

Almighty God, who is a strong tower to all,
to whom all things in heaven and on earth bow and obey,
be now and evermore your sure defense,
and help you to know that the name given to us for health and salvation
is the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

GATHERING OF THE GIFTS

OFFERTORY

OFFERING PRAYER

Assisting Minister

Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you
and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask
this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. **Amen.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

**** DIALOGUE**

Lift up your heads; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your voices; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your hearts; **we lift them up to God.**

**** THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

And so we gather at the table. We come from many different places in life. And as we
come together around the table we discover that our differences are not something we
just tolerate, but that our differences are indeed a blessing. So come, children of God,
just as you are. Wherever you are on this journey of life and faith, you are welcome
here - here in this place, here in this community, here at this table. Come, children of
God, come and remember. Remember the stories that Jesus' friends tell: Stories of
bread broken and shared to feed a multitude; stories of gathering both enemy and
friend together around a common table; stories of unlikely guests revealing the face of
the sacred.

On a night of both celebration and betrayal Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it;
gave it to his disciples and said, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Do this
for the remembrance of me." Then Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to his
disciples saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all
people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

And so we pray: Lord, bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be open, and that we might recognize the risen Christ in our midst, indeed in one another.

**** LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Heaven has come near.

Come, share in the feast!

For those communing at home or in the pew:

COMMUNION — *Receiving the Lord's tangible presence*

The body of Christ given for you.

The blood of Christ shed for you.

Each person may respond: **Amen.**

Communion Statement ~ We believe that the communion table is not Pr. Mallory's table, Good Shepherd Lutheran's table, or even the ELCA's table. This is God's table. And because this is God's table, we believe that anyone who wishes to receive communion can come forward and do so without condition or qualification.

Please note that we provide a non-alcoholic option (white) for those who do not want to partake of the communion wine (red). We also have gluten-free wafers available for those who need them. Simply let Pr. Mallory and the communion assistants know that you need something different when they come to you.

If anyone wishes to come forward and receive a blessing instead of communion elements, you are welcome to come forward to the communion rails with your arms crossed over your chest in the shape of an "X" instead.

If mobility concerns make it difficult to come forward for communion, you can alert the ushers, and they will let Pr. Mallory know to come to you.

REFLECTION DURING COMMUNION

As we prepare to receive the sacrament today, may we quietly take this time to center ourselves on Christ and ponder the amazing gifts of grace and forgiveness that we have been given. As we receive the body and the blood of our Lord, let us reflect upon His sacrifice. Finally, may we take this time to ask the Holy Spirit to enter our hearts, and then to work in us and through us each and every day.

**** TABLE BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you and always keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

**** PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Assisting Minister

Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. **Amen.**

**** SENDING OF COMMUNION**

Communion ministers may be sent to take the sacrament to those who are absent. The presiding minister may lead this prayer of sending.

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick, homebound, and imprisoned. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**** BLESSING**

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer,
✠ one God,
bless, heal, and hold you
today and always.
Amen.

** SENDING SONG

"Bring Forth the Kingdom"

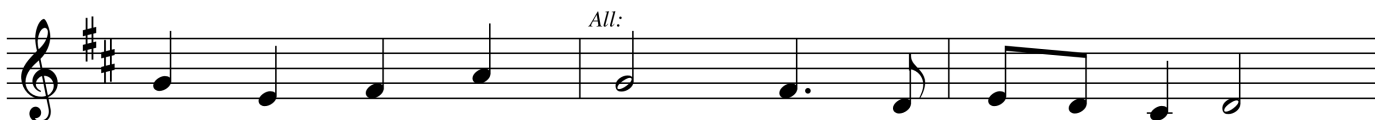
Verses



1. You are salt for the earth, O peo - ple:
2. You are a light on the hill, O peo - ple:
3. You are a seed of the Word, O peo - ple:
4. We are a blest and a pil - grim peo - ple:



Salt for the King-dom of God! Share the fla - vor of
Light for the Cit - y of God! Shine so ho - ly and
Bring forth the King-dom of God! Seeds of mer - cy and
Bound for the King-dom of God! Love our jour - ney and

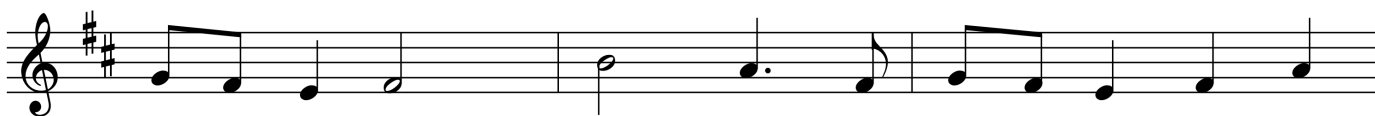


life, O peo - ple: Life in the King-dom of God!
bright, O peo - ple: Shine for the King-dom of God!
seeds of jus - tice, Grow in the King-dom of God!
love our home - land: Love is the King-dom of God!

Refrain



Bring forth the King-dom of mer - cy, Bring forth the



King-dom of peace; Bring forth the King-dom of jus - tice,



Bring forth the Cit - y of God!

** DISMISSAL

Assisting Minister

Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

Created, saved and gifted by God,

we seek, serve and share Jesus Christ. Hallelujah, thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

“W + 2” = WORSHIP PLUS TWO

**MAKE A COMMITMENT NOT ONLY TO WORSHIP EACH WEEK,
BUT ALSO TRY TO FIND A WAY TO SERVE IN THE CONGREGATION
AND SEEK OUT A WAY TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY.**

YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

**Johann Sebastian Bach, died 1750; Heinrich Schütz, died 1672;
George Frederick Handel, died 1759;
musicians**

Tuesday, July 28, 2026

These three German-born musicians have done much to enrich the life of the church. Schütz was an early master who focused on settings of biblical texts. Bach wrote over 300 cantatas along with works for organ and instrumental pieces, and has been called the "fifth evangelist" for the way he proclaimed the gospel in music. Handel's great work, *Messiah*, is a setting of scriptural texts.

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus of Bethany

Wednesday, July 29, 2026

Friends of Jesus, Mary and Martha are remembered for the hospitality of their home that they offered him—Martha focused on serving their guest, and Mary on listening to him. Their brother Lazarus was raised from the dead as a sign of the greater resurrection to come.

Olaf, King of Norway, martyr, died 1030

Wednesday, July 29, 2026

Considered the patron saint of Norway, Olaf went from a life of piracy to becoming Christian and declaring himself king of Norway. He revised the laws and tried to administer them fairly. Driven from Norway in a rebellion, he was killed in battle trying to regain his kingdom.