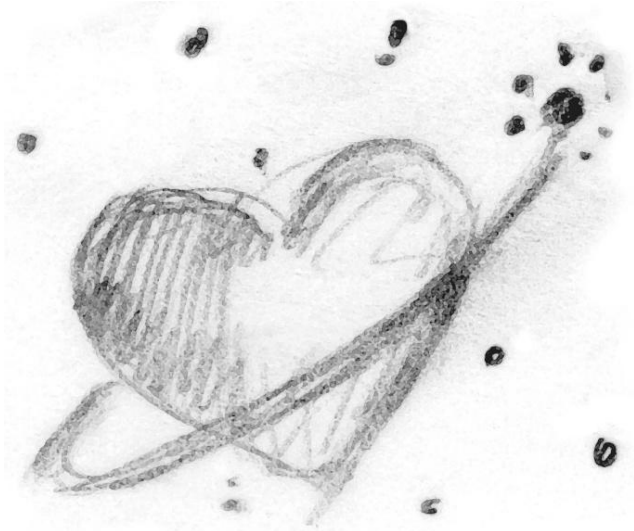


16th Sunday after Pentecost
September 13, 2026



“Forgive your
brother or sister
from your heart.”

MATTHEW 18:35, NRSV

Zion Lutheran Church
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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

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

PRELUDE

Love Medley

One License #240326

Borning Cry

One License #50-8530

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who pours love into our hearts
and healing upon the earth.

Amen.

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,
**we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.**

Creation groans from overuse.

Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.

**Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.
Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love
to others.
Turn our hearts back to you.
Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.
Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

Hear this good news:
We have peace with God through † Jesus Christ,
in whom there is no condemnation,
but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.
Receive freely this healing gift of grace.
Amen.

HYMN

***All Creatures, Worship God Most High* RED ELW #835
(Vs. 1, 4 & 6)**

- 1 All creatures, worship God most high!
Sound ev'ry voice in earth and sky: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Sing, brother sun, in splendor bright;
sing, sister moon and stars of night:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**
- 4 All who for love of God forgive,
all who in pain and sorrow grieve: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ bears your burdens and your fears;
still make your song amid the tears:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**
- 6 O sisters, brothers, take your part,
and worship God with humble heart: Alleluia! Alleluia!
All creatures, bless the Father, Son,
and Holy Spirit, Three in One:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

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.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE—*Now the Feast and Celebration*

RED ELW #167

Refrain

**Now the feast and celebration,
all of creation sings for joy
to the God of life and love and freedom;
praise and glory forevermore!**

- 1 Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain,
whose blood has freed and united us
to be one great people of God. *Refrain***
- 2 Power and riches, wisdom and might,
all honor and glory to Christ forever. *Refrain***
- 3 For God has come to dwell with us,
to make us people of God;
to make all things new. *Refrain***

Text: Marty Haugen b. 1950

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PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

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.

WORD

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

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:[1-7] 8-13

- [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.

PLEASE RISE FOR THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

***Open Our Eyes, Lord* BC #176**

**Open our eyes, Lord,
We want to see Jesus,
To reach out and touch him
And say that we love Him.
Open our ears, Lord,
Help us to listen,
Open our eyes, Lord,
We want to see Jesus.**

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

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.

SERMON ON THE STEPS

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Jesus Loves Me! RED ELW #595

- 1** Jesus loves me! this I know,
for the Bible tells me so;
little ones to him belong,
they are weak, but he is strong.

Refrain

Yes, Jesus loves me,
yes, Jesus loves me,
yes, Jesus loves me,
the Bible tells me so.

- 2** Jesus loves me! he who died
heaven's gates to open wide;
he will wash away my sin,
let his little child come in. *Refrain*

- 3** Jesus loves me! he will stay
close beside me all the way;
when at last I come to die,
he will take me home on high. *Refrain*

Text: Anna B. Warner, 1820-1915, alt.
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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 Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
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 INTERCESSION

Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

**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.**

THE PEACE

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

Prelude in F

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OFFERING HYMN

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful RED ELW #183

Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,
and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.
Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,
that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and the dreams of all;
unite them with the prayers we offer.
Grace our table with your presence,
and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

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OFFERTORY 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.

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION
GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

HOLY HOLY HOLY

RED ELW page 144

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of pow'r and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord, Jesus Christ took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the disciples saying, "Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Again after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me."

Great is the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

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

Christ invites you to this table.

All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

COMMUNION

(Zion practices an open table. God welcomes everyone to come forward. Young children may receive bread and a blessing. If you prefer not to receive, fold your hands and receive a blessing. Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available; please ask your servers. Come to the Lord's table and share in the feast!)

LAMB OF GOD

RED ELW page 146

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace.**

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Amazing Grace

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Beautiful Savior

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COMMUNION BLESSING

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Sustaining God,
**with this bread and cup,
you nourish us with mercy and abundant life.
By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world.
Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love,
following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.
Amen.**

SENDING

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

INSTALLATION OF SUNDAY SCHOOL & CONFIRMATION TEACHERS

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.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

Amigos De Cristo BC #359

Refrain:

**Amigos de Cristo; we're friends of the Lord;
Amigos de Cristo; we're friends of the Lord.
For we've been forgiven, and we've been restored,
Amigos de Cristo; we're friends of the Lord.**

**1. Friends of the covenant renewed each morn;
baptized and loving it, we've been reborn.
Gift of the dove is ours for evermore.
Amigos de Cristo; we're friends of the Lord.
(Refrain)**

**2. Born of a family, the young and old,
we'll be on hand to see new life unfold.
We understand the need to be made whole.
Amigos de Cristo; we're friends of the Lord.
(Refrain)**

DISMISSAL

**Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.
Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Meditation on “Surrender”

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Weekly Announcements

Please keep these family, friends and members in your prayers: Dilshad and Sonya Perani, Gary Revier and Deb Otto

Welcome Guests!

Please sign the visitor book in the entrance to the sanctuary.

We are glad you are here!

Hunger Jar for the month of September is designated to Sibley County FoodShare.

Pictures for the Announcements: What did you do this summer? Send a picture into the office to be included on the announcement slides.

Zingo-Bingo

It's time to gather all of the donations toward the Silent Auction being held in conjunction with Zingo Bingo on Sept 20.

Bring your baskets, items to be included with other baskets, gift certificates, personal service certificates (a dozen cookies made per month?) (lawn mowing or snow shoveling services) etc. to the collection tote in the fellowship room by Thursday Sept. 17. Please list the approximate value of your items on the items.

Zion Parking Lot Fundraising

Pie Making for the Zingo-Bingo Event

Saturday, September 19 at 11am
Emma’s Bakery

Clattering Coins for Christ will be next Sunday, September 20.

Date	Weekly Operating Offerings	Weekly Operating Goal	ELCA Missions	Hunger Jar	Parking Lot
9/6/2026	\$ 3,530.00	\$ 4,038.31	\$ 60.00	\$ 52.00	\$ 60.00

Pastor Gretchen Pierskalla

952-237-1060

pastor@zionarlington.org

Hours for the week of September 13
Thursday, September 17 – 11a-3p

Stacy’s Office Hours
Monday—Thursday, 2:30p-5:00p

Worship Assistants

September 13

Usher: Jerry & Diane Ebersviller

Nick Schiroo, Rich Nagel

Greeter: Scott Bergs

Acolyte: Jeremiah Vazquez

Reader: Peg Kamps

AV Team: Jan & Matt Giesen

Altar Guild: Jackie Alsleben &
Jan Wark

Bread Maker: Jane Scharpe

September 20

Usher: Tim & Stacy Haggenmiller

Neil & Lorraine Mielke

Greeter: Michael Christeson

Acolyte: Adilyn Kamps

Reader: Carrie Bartlette

AV Team: Joe Prasad & Jan Giesen

Zion Lutheran Church services can be viewed on:

YouTube at

www.youtube.com

Search: Zion ELCA Arlington MN

www.zionarlington.org



Zion Lutheran Church ELCA

This Week at Zion:

Sunday, September 13	9:00a	Worship w/Holy Communion
Monday, September 14		October Newsletter Deadline
Tuesday, September 15	10:00a	Anniversary Committee Meeting
Wednesday, September 16	6:30p	Confirmation Orientation Meeting
Thursday, September 17	10:00a	Adult Bible Study
Saturday, September 19	8:00a	Men's Prayer Breakfast
	11:00a	Pie Making at Emma's Bakery
Sunday, September 20	9:00a	Contemporary Worship
		Clattering Coins for Christ
	2-5:00p	Zingo-Bingo

LSS Meals on Wheels Monday—Friday 9:00a—12:00p

