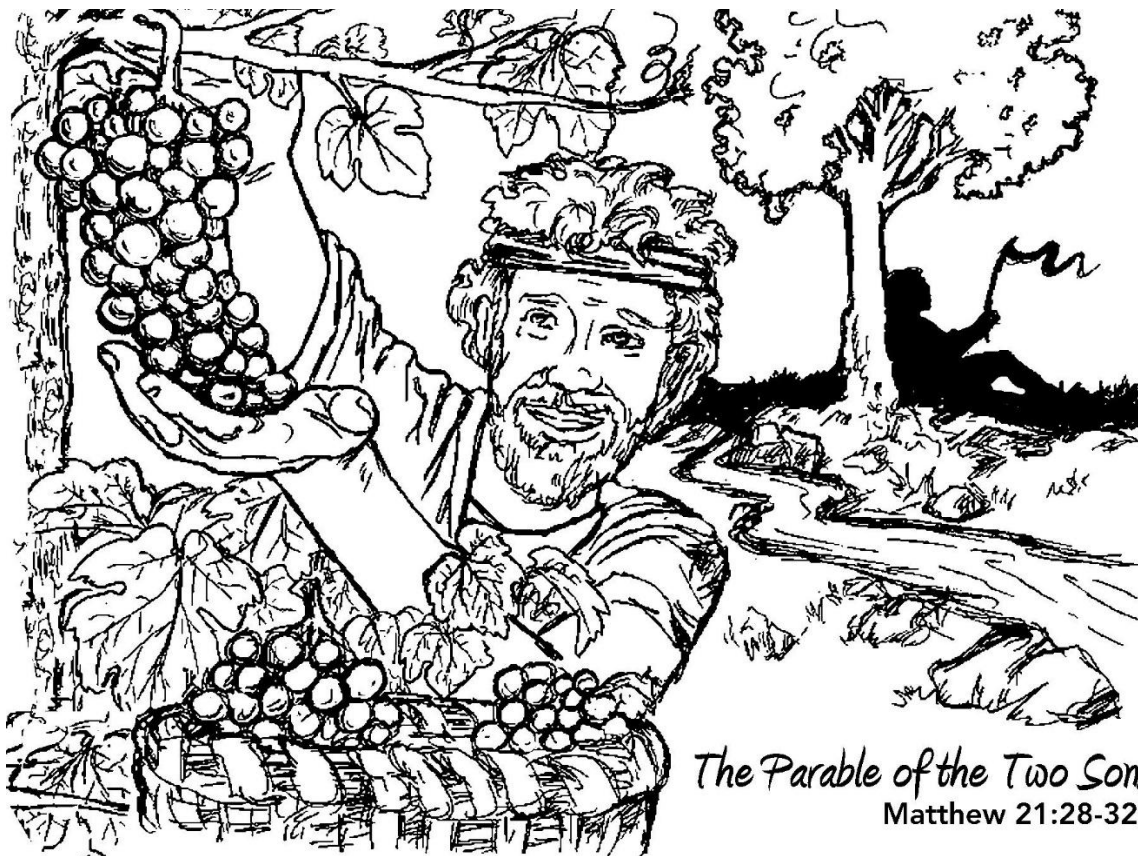


17th Sunday after Pentecost
September 20, 2026



The Parable of the Two Sons
Matthew 21:28-32

Zion Lutheran Church
814 West Brooks St. P.O. Box 371
Arlington, MN 55307
Church: 507-964-5454
Email: zion.elca.814@gmail.com
Web: zionarlington.org // YouTube: Zion ELCA Arlington MN

Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.



GATHERING

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

GATHERING MUSIC

It's a Wonderful Day

CCLI #399538

Jesus Is Lord

CCLI #65020

Only by Grace

CCLI #190579

ANNOUNCEMENTS

INVOCATION SONG

**We are gathered here in the name of the Father.
We are gathered here to sing God's praise.
We are gathered here in the name of the Father,
chosen by God's grace.**

**We are gathered here in the name of the Son.
We are gathered here to sing God's praise.
We are gathered here in the name of the Son,
chosen by God's grace.**

We Are Gathered Here

**We are gathered here in the name of the Spirit.
We are gathered here to sing God's praise.
We are gathered here in the name of the Spirit,
chosen by God's grace.**

Words and Music by Larry Olson
Karol Baer and David Lee Brown
©1990 Dakota Road Music.
All Right Reserved. Used by Permission.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

O Lord, we pray that you would prepare us to receive what you have in store for us today.

Cleanse our minds of all distracting thoughts. Cleanse also the desires of our hearts.

O Lord, you know us through and through. You know our sinfulness.

Father, we confess we have sinned against you, and against other people. We have failed in loving You as we ought. We have also failed to love our neighbors.

Forgive us for our sins of commission-

For those things we did and thought—that we ought not.

Forgive us also for our sins of omission

For our failures in thought, word and deed.

Silence is kept for reflection.

You have promised that you receive repentant sinners and forgive them.

So we ask your mercy once again, for the sake of Jesus.

We pray your healing power—that we might delight in your will,

And by our lives bring glory to your name.

Amen.

In His mercy, God gave His Son to die for us and for our sins.

For His sake, God forgives us all our sins.

Therefore, in the name of Christ, and by His authority,

I now declare to you the complete forgiveness of all your sins.

THEY ARE NO MORE!

Christ has taken them on Himself and removed them.

You are free!

Live in that gracious freedom and be healed in Him.

SONG

Kyrie Eleison

Chorus:

**Kyrie Eleison on our world and on our way
Kyrie Eleison ev'ryday**

**For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the unity of all,
for this holy house, for all who worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord (Chorus)**

**That we may live out your impassioned response to the hungry and the poor,
that we may live out truth and justice and grace,
let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord (Chorus)**

**For peace in our hearts, for peace in our homes, for friends and family,
for life and for love for our work and our play,
let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord (Chorus)**

Words and Music by Larry Olson

©1989 Dakota Road Music.

All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

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.**

SONG

The Journey of Praise

**We are all on a journey
from the cradle to the grave
We are given life through the price
our Savior had to pay**

Chorus:

**Oh let our hearts praise the Lord
Oh let our hands praise the Lord
Oh let our voices praise the Lord
Oh let our lives praise the Lord**

**We can feel suffering
there is someone near in need
We are given choice, heart, hands, voice,
they are within our reach (Chorus)**

Words and Music by Larry Olson, David Lee Brown and Karol Baer
©1989 Dakota Road Music.
All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

God of love,
**giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them,
keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.**



WORD

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

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

¹ The word of the LORD came to me: ² What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? ³ As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴ Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins who shall die.

²⁵ Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶ When the righteous turn away from their

righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed, they shall die. ²⁷ Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸ Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰ Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹ Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 25:1-9

¹ To you, O LORD,
I lift up my soul.

² **My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

³ Let none who look to you be put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

⁴ **Show me your ways, O LORD,
and teach me your paths.**

⁵ Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

⁶ **Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.**

⁷ Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness,

O LORD.

⁸ **You are gracious and upright, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

⁹ You lead the lowly in justice
and teach the lowly your way.

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1-13

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

¹ If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be grasped,

⁷ but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
assuming human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a human,
⁸ he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly
and gave him the name
that is above every other name,

¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Help Us, O Lord
(Sung twice)*

Help us, O Lord, to hear your word.

Open our hearts to feel your word.

Give us the strength to live your word each day.

Words and Music by Larry Olson

©1989 Dakota Road Music. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32

The holy gospel according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

²³ When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴ Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’” ²⁶ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸ “What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The

first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON ON THE STEPS

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Jesus Calls Us Borning Cry #513

**Jesus calls us in our blindness
with a touch that can open up our eyes,
Reaching out with special kindness;
never doubt such a wonderful surprise.
In the morning and in the ev’ning,
in the darkness and in the light,
Jesus calls us,
gently call us to believe in the living sacrifice.**

**Jesus call us thru our neighbors,
those who serve thorough they know not what they do.
Reaching out with special favors,
Helping out like a friend you never knew.
In the morning and in the ev’ning,
in the darkness and in the light,
Jesus calls us,
gently call us to believe in the living sacrifice.**

**Jesus calls us thru the Spirit
With a grace we can never understand.
Reaching out to those who hear it,
Speaking out for a just and righteous land.
In the morning and in the ev'ning,
in the darkness and in the light,
Jesus calls us,
gently call us to believe in the living sacrifice.**

One License #CT-223

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



OFFERING

Gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

OFFERING

We Have Come Into His House

CCLI #17212

OFFERING SONG

Everybody's Got Something to Offer

Chorus:

Everybody's got something to offer
Young and old, the prince and the pauper
Everybody's got something to offer
in the name of the Lord

To the lost and the lowly ones
the message it is clear
we have all got a gift to give
our hands, our hearts, our tears (Chorus)

To the believers gathered here
the message it is true
we have all got a gift to give
in all we say and do (Chorus)

Words and Music by Larry Olson

©1989 Dakota Road Music.

All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

OFFERING 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.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours,

now and forever. Amen.



SENDING

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

BLESSING

Benediction Song – echo song

*L) May the Lord bless and keep us;
L) Make his face to shine upon us;
L) May his blessing go with us;
L) and give us peace
L) In the name of the Father;
L) In the name of the Son;
L) In the name of the Spirit;
L) All three –in-one;*

Benediction Song

(leader in italics; congregation in bold)

**C) May the Lord bless and keep us.
C) Make his face to shine upon us.
C) May his blessing go with us.
C) And – give – us - peace
C) In the name of the Father
C) In the name of the Son.
C) In the name of the Spirit
C) ALL – THREE – IN – ONE!**

DISMISSAL

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Go, My Children with My Blessing

One License #110843



Acknowledgements:

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2021 Augsburg Fortress.

All rights reserved.

License #SB122759—11/30/2026

One License #A-732489

4/15/2026 for ELW hymns

All rights reserved.

CCLI License #20990483

Copyright License + Streaming License—2/28/2026

All rights reserved.

Church ArtPro

Account #73982207—6/30/2026



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.

Clattering Coins for Christ will be held today.

Zingo-Bingo will be held today, from 2p-5p.

Sunday, October 4 worship will be held at Four Seasons Park, in conjunction with the Blessing of the Animals. Please send in a picture of your pet and it will be included in the Announcement slides. Your animal is welcome to join worship on Sunday, October 4.

Date	Weekly Operating Offerings	Weekly Operating Goal	ELCA Missions	Hunger Jar	Parking Lot
9/13/2026	\$ 1,935.00	\$ 4,038.31	\$ 20.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 500.00

Worship Assistants

September 20

Usher: Tim & Stacy Haggenmiller

Neil & Lorraine Mielke

Greeter: Michael Christeson

Acolyte: Adilyn Kamps

Reader: Carrie Bartlette

AV Team: Joe Prasad & Jan Giesen

September 27

Usher: Peg Kamps, Cindy Quast

Brad & Brenda Danielson

Greeter: Jerry & Diane Ebersviller

Acolyte: Jazmyne Wark

Reader: Mary Sylwester

AV Team: Tim Michaelis &

Jeremiah Vazquez

Zion Lutheran Church services can be viewed on:

YouTube at

www.youtube.com

Search: Zion ELCA Arlington MN

www.zionarlington.org

Pastor Gretchen Pierskalla

952-237-1060

pastor@zionarlington.org

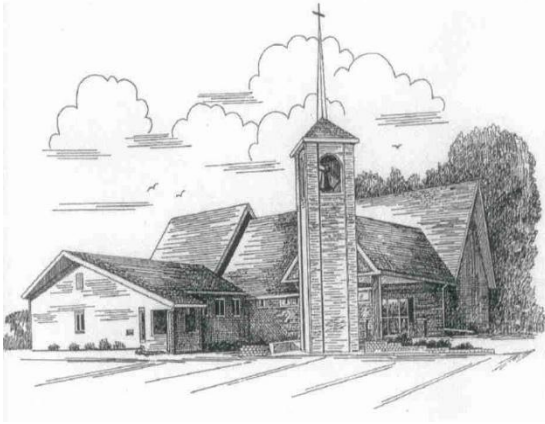
Hours for the week of September 20

Monday, September 21 – 11a-3p

Tuesday, September 22 – 1p-4p

Stacy's Office Hours

Monday—Thursday, 2:30p-5:00p



Zion Lutheran Church ELCA

This Week at Zion:

Sunday, September 20	9:00a	Contemporary Worship
		Clattering Coins for Christ
	10:00a	Sunday School
	2-5:00p	Zingo-Bingo
Tuesday, September 22	10:00a	Quilting
Wednesday, September 23	4-5:30p	6 th , 7 th & 8 th Grade Confirmation
	6:30-8p	9 th Grade Confirmation
Thursday, September 24	10:00a	Adult Bible Study
Sunday, September 27	9:00a	Worship
	10:00a	Sunday School
	10:15a	Harvest Supper Meeting
Sunday, September 27 – Tuesday, September 29 – Fall Theological Conference		

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