

Millcreek Lutheran Church
September 27, 2026
Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost

A warm welcome to our church! We appreciate your presence here today and enjoy the new and the familiar faces as we gather together. If you are a visitor, we hope you will consider joining us- knowing that you can expect to find people who love God and who want to know and love you. Visitors, please sign our guest book or fill out a visitor's card in the pew rack. We're glad you're here!

Prayer: Almighty and most merciful Father, whose mercy is without end toward those who respond in obedience to your word: Convict us of our shallow faith when we profess with our lips, obedience which we are unwilling to put in practice; that we may find mercy and grace to atone for our sins. We pray in Jesus' name. **Amen**.

Serving you this morning:

Interim Pastor,	Pastor Frank Terhune
Lay Leader,	Jennifer Rosengrant
Organist/Pianist,	Debbie Tice
Lay Reader,	Deb Buffington
Ushers/Audio,	Scott Johnson & Frank Hoffman

The Service

Prelude of Entrance:

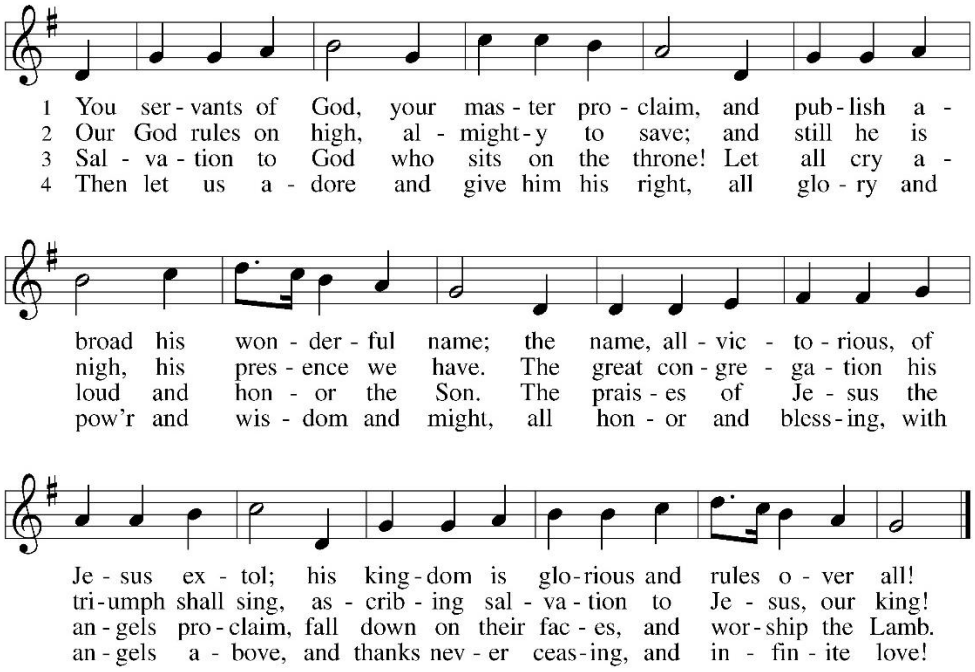
Announcements

Prelude of Preparation:

***Confession & Forgiveness** **LBW p. 56**

Opening Hymn:** ***You Servants of God **LBW #252**

You Servants of God



Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.
Music: LYONS, Johann M, Haydn, 1737–1806, adapt.

***Greetings:** **LBW p. 57, line 5**

***The Kyrie** **LBW p. 57-58, line 6**

Hymn of Praise, *Glory to God* **LBW p. 58**

Prayer of the Day (read in unison)
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.

Children's Sermon

First Reading: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

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.

Psalm 25:1-9 (read responsively)

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

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.

Gospel Acclamation, *Alleluia verse **LBW p. 62**

***Gospel: Matthew 21:23-32**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the twenty-first chapter.

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 Holy Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The Sermon

Hymn of the Day ***Once a Father Told His Children***

NETTLETON 8.7.8.7 D ("Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing")

Once a father told his children,
"Go and do your daily chores.
Go and work out in my vineyard;
All that's mine will soon be yours."
One responded, "I won't do it!"
Then he changed his mind and went.
One said, "Yes! Just send me to it!"
But he went back home again.
Once a church was filled with Christians
Who were proud and feeling blessed.
"God has called us and we've answered!
We have truly answered, "Yes!"
On a chilly Sunday morning,
When a homeless man came by,
They said, "Go! It's not yet storming!
God is love — he will supply."
Once a woman, quite the sinner,
Struggled deep in pain and doubt.
As she passed that church in winter,
There she saw that man walk out.
He was homeless, worn and weary,
So she stopped her car and said,
"I'm no saint but you look hungry —
Let's go buy some soup and bread."
God of love, you call your children;
Some say, "No!" and some say, "Yes!"
Lord, forgive us for our judging
Who will be among the blessed.
For your kingdom is surprising;
Some you call will not obey;
Those we find ourselves despising
May be those who seek your way.

Biblical Reference: Matthew 21:23-32

Tune: John Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music*, 1813 ("Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing") (MIDI) Text: Copyright © 2011 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved.

***The Apostles' Creed** **LBW p. 65**

***The Prayers**

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

A brief silence.

Center your church in humility as we strive to follow in your way. Help us listen to the cries of those who have been unfairly hurt by the church and dare to name difficult truths. Show all your love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You call us to care for your creation. Lead us into your promise of a better world through sustainable practices and respect for your handiwork. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Inspire all in positions of authority to act honorably. Remind them of their call to use their authority for the sake of the common good. Give them the gift of humility. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Comfort those who come before you in fear and trembling. Calm troubled hearts with your forgiveness. Help all those in need (*especially*). Grant us your salvation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Change this congregation's heart when we say no to your call. Open us to courageous learning and service in our community, especially in new or challenging places. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your steadfast love holds all the saints who have finished their work and are at rest. As we grieve, remind us of your mercy so we may also give thanks. 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 Lord's Prayer** **LBW p.71**

***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.**

Moments of Meditation (seated)

Closing Hymn** ***Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways **LBW #480**

***Dismissal** **LBW p.74**

Postlude

The flowers & bulletins are given in honor & glory of God.



Millcreek
LUTHERAN CHURCH
"The Church on the Hill"

Our Mission:
Motivating Lives Through Christ and our community, our congregation, & ourselves.

Interim Pastor: Rev. Frank Terhune
Cell: 610-751-5472
Email: frankterhune@gmail.com
In Office: Tues. & Fri. 9am-12pm

www.millcreeklutheran.com
Secretary: Jennifer Miller Email: secretary@millcreeklutheran.com
Lay Leader: Jennifer Rosengrant

Sunday, September 27, 2026

You can listen to the worship service over the phone patch at 10:15 AM. Just dial 717-628-0125. You will hear a message welcoming you to Millcreek. At that point you are connected to our church sound system, so just stay on the line. You may also watch the service later on You Tube.

Motivating Lives Through Christ and our Community

TRUNK OR TREAT: This year's trunk or treat event will take place on Sunday, October 25th from 1-3pm (rain or shine). To make this event a success we need volunteers to decorate their vehicles to hand candy or treats out to the children. We are looking forward to another successful trunk or treat event, but we wouldn't be able to do it without all your help! Sign-up sheet will be in the Narthex starting September 27th.

SAMARITAN'S PURSE- OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD:
We will be participating in Samaritan's Purse- Operation Christmas Child this year by filling shoe boxes for children who would otherwise not receive any gifts at Christmas. There are brochures and labels in the narthex with instructions. (Please read them carefully as there are restrictions as to what can be included in the shoe boxes.) There are also pre-printed shoe boxes that can be assembled, or you can wrap a shoe box of your own, just make sure the lid can be opened. Finished shoe boxes should be placed on the table in the multi-purpose room. If you are including the shipping charges, it is $10 per box, payable to Samaritan's Purse (put your check in an envelope inside your box) or you can refer to the instructions in the brochure to donate online. The deadline for completed boxes is Sunday, November 8, 2026. If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Martin (610) 589-5501.

Motivating Lives Through Christ and our Congregation

FLOWER AND BULLETIN SIGNUP SHEETS for 2026 are available on the bulletin board in the narthex. Flowers-$30, Bulletins- $10.

UPCOMING SERVICE SCHEDULE & EVENTS:

- Sunday, Sept. 27- 9am Sunday School, 10:15am regular service
- Sunday October 4- 9am Sunday School, 10:15am regular service
- Sunday October 11- 9am Sunday School, 10:15am communion service
- Sunday October 18- 9am Sunday School, 10:15am regular service
- Sunday October 25- 9am Sunday School, 10:15am communion service. Trunk or Treat 1-3pm

WE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) WITH CARDS & PRAYERS:

Alfred & Barb Beck
153 Deck Rd.
Womelsdorf, PA 19567

PRAYER LIST: Please make requests to Jen M. by noon Wed. each week: secretary@millcreeklutheran.com or call: 610-589-2570. *Please provide updates when our prayers have been answered, so this list can be kept current.*

MILLCREEK MEMBERS:

Violet Hepler	Liz Leibig	Michael Yiengst, Jr	Stewart Wolf
Portia Lindermuth	Brian Ream	Devon Yiengst	Norm Sharp
Gerry Strickler	Julie Strickler	Aaron Yiengst	Greer Zellers

NON-MEMBERS:

Gary Beatty, brother in law of Debbie Hartman
JoAnn Deahl, Brandy Gahres' mother
Linda McMullan, sister in law of Greta McMullan
Jennifer Clinton, daughter of Renee & Layne Strickler
Alethea Grissinger, friend of Deb Buffington
Kevin Kochinsky, family friend of Stephanie Seldomridge
Kaylee Gordon, family member of Jamie Keener
Candy Hibshman, friend of Rachel Mock
Pat Ontkos, friend of MLC
Gary, friend of Kristin Bender

TENT REVIVAL!



Hosted by New Life Fellowship

Featuring Evangelist Mike Shrock

At Newmanstown Memorial Blvd Park

SEPTEMBER 27 - 30, 2026

Sunday: 9:00 AM

10:15 AM

7:00 PM

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings: 7:00 PM

Come Join Us!

Parking is available at Memorial Blvd park,

Newburg Recreation Area, or

New Life Fellowship at 2 Memorial Blvd

For more information visit www.newmanstownchurch.com

Authority of Jesus Is Questioned



When Jesus returned to the Temple and began teaching, the leading priests and elders came up to him. They demanded, "By what authority are you doing all these things? Who gave you the right?" Matthew 21:23 (NLT)

The puzzle is based on Matthew 21:23-32

E K Q T E Y U W K A N S W E R
Q E C G N I X W N P M X U I E
U R O D E B W O O X E P Z V G
E U U Y V C I Z W R Z O E S V
S J R H E A V E N I K I P G N
T X T K M M K A B F L E G L S
I P S K D O M C W E O Z O B E
O F R L L S Z Y B F N F Z E Y
N I S O I T E A C H I N G L P
X O Y T P D L C M O G T T D R
Q V P Q O H O K E Q Y V J E I
W A F H M Y E M N O E M W R E
B F G X Z N O T P Y K L K S S
H A F R A I D H T E M P L E T
M U P J K R C O A D Z W R G S

AFRAID	PEOPLE	QUESTION	TEACHING	PROPHET
TEMPLE	BAPTISM	KNOW	PRIESTS	BELIEVE
HEAVEN	MEN	ELDERS	ANSWER	COURTS

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Marching Orders

Members of the string quartet look around at each other, nod, and begin tuning up to play. The basketball team huddles around the coach as she draws up the play on a dry-erase board. The volunteer teams go over their assignments one last time before heading off to their positions for the charity run. In each instance, before beginning their mission, the group takes a moment to get on the same page, to get their marching orders. In our lives as disciples of Christ, that moment is baptism.

Our marching orders, our mission guidelines, are marked on our hearts in baptism. The good news of forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation in Jesus Christ that is poured over us spills out in our lives, and we are called to be agents of restoration: to bind up the brokenhearted, to care for all people and all creation. Just as the coach draws up the play or someone makes a list of the things that need to get done, we are imbued with a way of life in baptism's waters. Our motivation for this way of life is the love that has also been shown to us in Jesus: the love that feeds us each week as we gather around our Savior's table.

Even if we are sometimes reluctant, like the son in Jesus' parable who initially says he will not go to the vineyard but eventually goes, we are motivated to carry out the work to which God has called us because of the baptismal grace we have received. And whenever we pause to collect ourselves—whether it's tuning up before the performance, getting the play in the huddle, or just taking a deep breath before beginning the next item on the to-do list—we think of baptism, when our marching orders and our motivations are indelibly marked on us by Jesus.

Cover: Picking white grapes. Photo by tomazl. Copyright © 2025 Getty Images Plus via Getty Images/E+ Collection. Used by permission.
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