



CELEBRATE PRAISE GIVE

Millcreek Lutheran Church

September 20, 2026

Seventeenth 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: Gracious Father, who desires to forgive all sinners when they turn to you in repentance: Rid our minds of the worldly ways in which we evaluate a person's worthiness of forgiveness, that we may know our own forgiveness is by grace alone, and not by any righteousness of ours. In our Savior's name we pray. **Amen.**

Serving you this morning:

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

Every fall, Millcreek Lutheran Church continues the Pennsylvania Dutch tradition of "Harvest Home." Although the service is no longer in High German, our gifts are no longer homemade- nor given to the minister- the central focus "to celebrate and praise God's goodness" and give food "to poor families in the neighborhood" remains unchanged. Gifts of food and money collected today will be used to help our neighbors facing the challenges of food insecurity. Thank you for being generous!

About Harvest Home

"Since the Pennsylvania Germans were a religious people who placed their trust in God, they knew that without the help of the Heavenly Father there would not be any food. So, when the harvest was gathered sometime in late summer or early fall, they had a special service called Harvest Home or *Die Am Karrich* set aside to praise and celebrate God's goodness to them in harvest time. Pennsylvania Harvest Home was more important to the Pennsylvania Dutch farmers than November's Thanksgiving. In fact, before Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day, the Harvest Home celebration was the chief thanksgiving among our ancestors. It was the custom of the Pennsylvania Dutch to display the fruits of the field, garden and orchard around the altar to thank God for the harvest. Parishioners brought sheaves of wheat and corn stalks to decorate the display of pumpkins, squash, homemade preserves, ears of corn, clusters of grapes, homemade bread, and all kinds of fruits and vegetables. The entire service was conducted in High German—the singing of the hymns and the sermon were delivered in High German. After the service, the display was dismantled and often given to the minister, whose salary was meager, or to poor families in the neighborhood."

Source: Gladys M. Lutz in *Folk Art Memories: The Folklife Illustrations of Gladys M. Lutz*, The Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center at Kutztown University, 2014.

The Service

Prelude of Entrance:

Announcements

Prelude of Preparation:

We Gather to Celebrate the Harvest

Opening Dialog & Prayer (standing)

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Affirmation of Faith:

Let us affirm our faith together.

Women: We believe that God creates all things, renews all things, and celebrates all things.

Men: We believe Earth is a sanctuary, a sacred planet filled with God's presence, a home for us to share with our kin.

Women: We believe that God became flesh and blood, became a part of Earth, a human being called Jesus Christ, who lived and breathed and spoke among us, suffered and died on a cross, for all human beings and for all creation.

Men: We believe that the risen Jesus is the Christ at the core of creation, reconciling all things to God, renewing all creation, and filling the cosmos.

Women: We believe the Spirit renews life in creation, groans empathy with a suffering creation, and waits for the rebirth of creation.

All: We believe that with Christ we will rise and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation.

***Opening Hymn:** *Come, You Thankful People, Come* LBW # 407



Come, You Thankful People, Come



1 Come, you thank-ful peo-ple, come; raise the song of har-vest home.
2 All the world is God's own field, fruit un-to his praise to yield.
3 For the Lord our God shall come and shall take his har-vest home;
4 E-ven so, Lord, quick-ly come to your fi-nal har-vest home.



All is safe-ly gath-ered in ere the win-ter storms be-gin.
Wheat and tares to- geth-er sown, un-to joy or sor-row grown.
from his field shall in that day all of-fens-es purge a-way,
Gath-er all your peo-ple in, free from sor-row, free from sin,



God, our mak-er, does pro-vide for our wants to be sup-plied.
First the blade, and then the ear, then the full corn shall ap-pear.
give his an-gels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast,
there, for-ev-er pu-ri-fied, in your gar-ner to a-bide.



Come to God's own tem-ple, come, raise the song of har-vest home.
Lord of har-vest, grant that we whole-some grain and pure may be.
but the fruit-ful ears to store in his gar-ner ev-er-more.
Come, with all your an-gels, come, raise the glo-rious har-vest home!

Text: Henry Alford, 1810–1871, alt.

Music: ST. GEORGE'S, WINDSOR, George J. Elvey, 1816–1893

We Praise God in Word and Song

Children's Sermon

First Reading: Jonah 3:10—4:11

¹⁰ When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

^{4:1} But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast

love, and relenting from punishment. ³ And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” ⁴ And the Lord said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” ⁵ Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶ The Lord God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.”

⁹ But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” ¹⁰ Then the Lord said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?”

The Psalmody (seated)

I love the Lord, who has heard my voice,
and listened to my supplication,
For the Lord has given ear to me
whenever I called.

The cords of death entangled me; the anguish of the grave came upon me;
I came to grief and sorrow.

Then I called upon the name of the Lord:
“O lord, I pray you, save my life.”

Gracious is the Lord and righteous;
our God is full of compassion.

The Lord watches over the innocent;
I was brought low, and God saved me.

Turn again to your rest, O my soul.
for the Lord has dealt well with you.
For you have rescued my life from death,
my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling;
I will walk in the presence of the Lord
in the land of the living.

***Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the twentieth chapter.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ ⁹When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

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

The Sermon

Hymn of the Day:

A Man Owned a Vineyard



A Man Owned a Vineyard

1. A man owned a vine-yard and need - ed a crew to tend to his
 2. He went back a num - ber of times on that day; he called to new
 3. He called the com - plain - ers and said, "This is true, that I kept my

land, there was plen - ty to do. He called out to peo - ple down -
 work - ers and prom - ised fair pay. Can we but i - mag - ine those
 word and I gave you your due. I share with com - pas - sion; I'm

town in the square, "Come work hard all day and I'll pay you what's fair."
 first work - ers' rage when all those who la - bored re - ceived the same wage?
 lov - ing and kind. I care for all peo - ple and give what is mine."

God, you call and you send; there is work here to do. There's your whole world to
 God, the gift of your grace comes as quite a sur - prise, for your mer - cies em -
 God, you give what is yours, more than what we de - serve; may we reach out in

tend; may we gar - den for you! O Lord, in your vine - yard may
 brace e - ven late - com - ers' lives. May all who have worked long and
 love where you call us to serve. May we who have wit - nessed your

we seek to be the work - ers who tend to your jus - tice and peace.
 hard hum - bly learn: your grace is a gift and not some - thing we earn.
 grace glad - ly share your jus - tice and love with your world eve - ry - where.

(Higher key at *United Methodist Hymnal* no. 98.)

WORDS: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 2011 (Matthew 20:1-16)
 MUSIC: William Howard Doane, 1875

TO GOD BE THE GLORY
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Prayer of Dedication (seated)

May we be the blessing.

may we be the justice in the harvest.

The sharing in the community,

the hope in the neighborhood.

May the gift of ourselves

be a blessing to many.

May we be the change the world needs:

the light in the shadows,

The truth in the darkness,

the healing in the hurt.

May our gift of ourselves

be a blessing to the world.

For we need to be no other than ourselves.

It is enough.

This prayer is adapted from the work of Roddy Hamilton.

The Prayers (standing)

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

A brief silence.

Hold your church accountable for our unwillingness to share your good
news and our anger at your generosity to others. Nourish us by your grace
to be witnesses to your love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Guide scientists and researchers studying responses to the climate crisis so
that all your creation may inspire us to give thanks for your great goodness.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Show employers the benefits of equal pay standards for all their employees.
Reconcile conflicts between employees. Fill places of employment with
camaraderie, and bring an end to employment disparity. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Encourage any who cannot work or who cannot work a full day with the
truth that their value comes from your everlasting love for them. Provide
for those who are injured, ill, and for all in any need. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Strengthen all those in this congregation whose labor serves the needs of
others in the community (*especially*). Inspire all in this congregation to
support community endeavors with our time and talents. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Comfort us with the promise of the resurrection as we remember all our
loved ones whose desire to be with Jesus is fulfilled. 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.**

A Harvest Lord's Prayer (standing)

Our Father in heaven,

Creator of good, may your fatherly care protect and sustain all people.

May your kingdom come.

Hallowed be your name.

Grant us the grace of honoring you through our love shown in practical action.

May your kingdom come.

Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

May your passion for righteousness and justice become the pattern of life on earth.

May your kingdom come.

Give us today our daily bread.

Help us to ensure that no child of God is hungry, and that there is enough for all to be fed.

May your kingdom come.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

We recognize the human greed which contributes to human need.

May your kingdom come.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Challenge us to strive for change and transformation, for the vision of our world as you would have it be.

May your kingdom come.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. **Amen.**

We Are Sent to Help our Neighbors in Need

Benediction and Dismissal (standing)

In our sowing and our harvesting, in our cooking and our eating. Let us

Till the earth gently, fish the seas wisely, tend to the animals lovingly, share with the hungry generously, enjoy the food thankfully, praise the giver abundantly.

So may the Father who provides for all creation, the Son who encompasses God's most holy mercy, the Spirit who gives breath to all living things bless our lives with goodness and guide us in generous living. **Amen.**

Go in peace. Remember the poor.

Thanks be to God.

Sending Hymn: **Hark, the Voice of Jesus is Calling** **LBW# 381**

Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling



1 Hark, the voice of Je - sus call - ing, "Who will go and work to - day?
2 If you can - not speak like an - gels, if you can - not preach like Paul,
3 If you can - not be a watch - man, stand - ing high on Zi - on's wall,
4 Let none hear you i - dly say - ing, "There is noth - ing I can do,"



Fields are white and har - vests wait - ing, who will bear the sheaves a - way?"
you can tell the love of Je - sus; you can say he died for all,
point - ing out the path to heav - en, of - f'ring life and peace to all,
while the mul - ti - tudes are dy - ing and the mas - ter calls for you.



Loud and long the mas - ter calls you; rich re - ward he of - fers free.
If you can - not rouse the wick - ed with the judg - ment's dread a - larms,
with your prayers and with your boun - ties you can do what God de - mands;
Take the task he gives you glad - ly; let his work your plea - sure be.



Who will an - swer, glad - ly say - ing, "Here am I. Send me, send me?"
you can lead the lit - tle chil - dren to the Sav - ior's wait - ing arms.
you can be like faith - ful Aar - on, hold - ing up the proph - et's hands.
An - swer quick - ly when he calls you, "Here am I. Send me, send me!"

Text: Daniel March, 1816–1909, alt.
Music: GALILEAN, Joseph Barnby, 1838–1896

*The flowers & bulletins are given in
honor & glory of God and in
celebration of Tammy and Kent Hepler's anniversary.*





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 20, 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

HARVEST HOME: September 20 will be Harvest Home. Bring canned goods or fresh vegetables to the service. It will be boxed and taken to the local food pantry. Monetary gifts are also welcome.

RELAY FOR LIFE: Mum order pick up will be 9/24. Please Deb Buffington with any questions.

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. 20- 9am Sunday School, 10:15am regular service & Harvest Home
- Sunday, Sept. 27- 9am Sunday School, 10:15am regular service

Motivating Lives Through Christ and Ourselves

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

Sandy & Dale Bashore

604 W. Franklin St.

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
 Rev. Althea Seidel
 Candy Hibshman, friend of Rachel Mock
 Laura Weist, friend of Debbie Tice
 Pat Ontkos, friend of MLC

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The Harvest

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

WORD LIST

BEAT	DAUGHTER	HARVEST	SHELTER
BELONG	EVERYTHING	HARVESTERS	SHOWING
BELONGED	FOLLOW	INFLUENTIAL	SPEAKING
BETHLEHEM	FOREIGNER	KINDNESS	STRANGERS
BREAD	FOREMAN	MINUTES	WARMLY
BUNDLES	GRAIN	MORNING	WINGS
COMFORTED	GREETED	ROUGHLY	WOMAN
DAUGHTER	HAPPENED	SHEAVES	WORKING