

Grace Lutheran Church
18th Sunday after Pentecost
September 27, 2026

“Which of the two did the
will of his father?”

~Matthew 21:31



Service of Holy Communion

18th Sunday *after* Pentecost

(*) the assembly may stand
Congregation speaks responses in bold

PRESERVICE **"Holy Forever"** by Chris Tomlin

Words & Music by Brian Johnson, Chris Tomlin, Jason Ingram, Jenn Johnson, Phil Wickham
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WELCOME

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS** (*Presiding Minister*)

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

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people,
turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your
Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and
grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you
and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry
and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins,
known and unknown, things we have done and things we have
failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit,
so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin,
and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been
saved. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty
God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ
may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

***GATHERING SONG "Your Grace Is Enough" by Matt Maher**

Words & Music by Matt Maher CCLI Song #4477026 / © 2003 Thankyou Music | [spiritandsong.com /](http://spiritandsong.com/)

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Verse 1

**Great is Your faithfulness, O god;
You wrestle with the sinner's restless heart.
You lead us by still waters into mercy
and nothing can keep us apart.**

Pre-chorus

**So, remember Your people,
remember Your children,
remember Your promise O god.**

Chorus 1

**Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough for me.**

Verse 2

**Great is Your love and justice, God of Jacob;
You use the weak to lead the strong.
You lead us in the song of Your salvation,
and all Your people sing along.**

Pre-chorus

**So, remember Your people,
remember Your children,
remember Your promise o god.**

Chorus 1

**Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough for me.
(repeat)**

Pre-chorus

**Remember Your people,
remember Your children,
remember Your promise O God.**

Chorus 1

**Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough,
Your grace is enough for me.**

Chorus 2

**Yeah, Your grace is enough;
heaven reaches out to us.
Your grace is enough for me.
God, i sing: Your grace is enough;
I'm covered in your love.
Your grace is enough for me___, for me.**

***GREETING** (*Presiding Minister*)

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.

KYRIE **ELW PG. 138** (*Assisting Minister*)

***PRAYER OF THE DAY** (*Presiding Minister*)

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

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.**

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.*

A reading from Ezekiel.

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

The psalm for the day is spoken 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

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.

A reading from Philippians.

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.**

FAMILY MESSAGE Anne Corti, Director of Youth & Family Ministries

CHILDREN'S CHAPEL

Elementary children are welcome to join our teachers in Hilmer Chapel for a short, fun-filled lesson on the Gospel text. The children will exit as a group after Family Message and return as a group during the Peace. Parents are always welcome to join.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION ELW PG. 142**

***GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32**

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 21st chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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

Rev. Jennifer S. Michael

***HYMN OF THE DAY "Lord I Need You" by Matt Maher**

Words & Music by Christy Nockels, Daniel Carson, Jesse Reeves, Kristian Stanfill, Matt Maher

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Verse 1

**Lord, I come, I confess.
Bowing here, I find my rest.
And without You, I fall apart.
You're the one that guides my heart.**

Chorus

**Lord, I need You, oh, I need You.
Ev'ry hour I need You.
My one defense, my righteousness;
Oh God, how I need You.**

Verse 2

**Where sin runs deep, Your grace is more.
Where grace is found is where You are.
And where You are, Lord, I am free.
Holiness is Christ in me.**

Chorus

**Lord, I need You, oh, I need You.
Ev'ry hour I need You.
My one defense, my righteousness;
Oh God, how I need You.**

Bridge

**So, teach my song to rise to You
When temptation comes my way.
And when I cannot stand, I'll fall on You.
Jesus, You're my hope and stay____.**

Chorus

**Lord, I need You, oh, I need You.
Ev'ry hour I need You.
My one defense, my righteousness;
Oh God, how I need You.**

Ending

**My one defense, my righteousness;
Oh God, how I need You.
My one defense, my righteousness;
Oh God, how I need You.**

CREED *(Assisting Minister)*

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith...

**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 *(Assisting Minister)*

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 struggled to feel welcome in our faith communities. Show all your love and help them know we are a welcoming church.

Receive our prayer, O Lord. **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.

Receive our prayer, O Lord. **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.

Receive our prayer, O Lord. **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...the Iavarone Family. We also pray for those we name aloud now or those we name silently in our hearts.

A brief moment of private petitions is observed.

Receive our prayer, O Lord. **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.

Receive our prayer, O Lord. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE (*Presiding Minister*)

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING ANTHEM "Holy Forever" by Chris Tomlin

Words & Music by Brian Johnson, Chris Tomlin, Jason Ingram, Jenn Johnson, Phil Wickham
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***OFFERING PRAYER** (*Assisting Minister*)

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

***DIALOGUE** (*Presiding Minister*) *Sung responsively*

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** (*Presiding Minister*)

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...

...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY** ELW PG. 144 "Holy, Holy, Holy"

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE (*Presiding Minister*)

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

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

***LORD'S PRAYER** (*Assisting Minister*)

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray...

**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** (Presiding Minister)

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Believing in Jesus Christ, we invite ALL to the sacrament of Holy Communion. Receive the host, then take one of the small cups. Wine is the outer rings and grape juice is the inner rings. Gluten-free wafers are available. Follow the directions of the ushers to return to your pew leaving cups in bowls provided.

The assembly is seated

LAMB OF GOD ELW PG. 146

COMMUNION SONG “Living Hope” by Phil Wickham

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Verse 1

**How great the chasm that lay between us.
How high the mountain I could not climb.
In desperation I turned to heaven
And spoke Your name into the night.
Then through the darkness Your loving-kindness
Tore through the shadows of my soul.
The work is finished, the end is written.
Jesus Christ, my living hope.**

Verse 2

**Who could imagine so great a mercy?
What heart could fathom such boundless grace?
The God of ages stepped down from glory
To wear my sin and bear my shame.
The cross has spoken; I am forgiven.
The King of kings calls me His own.
Beautiful Savior, I’m Yours forever.
Jesus Christ, my living hope.**

Chorus

**Hallelujah, praise the One who set me free!
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me!
You have broken every chain.
There’s salvation in Your name.
Jesus Christ, my living hope.**

Verse 3

Then came the morning that sealed the promise,
Your buried body began to breathe.

Out of the silence, the Roaring Lion
Declared the grave has no claim on me.

(REPEAT)

Jesus, Yours is the victory!

Chorus

Hallelujah, praise the One who set me free!

Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me!

You have broken every chain.

There's salvation in Your name.

Jesus Christ, my living hope. (REPEAT)

Ending

Jesus Christ, my living hope.

Oh God, You are my living hope.

***POST COMMUNION BLESSING** *(Presiding Minister)*

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION** *(Assisting Minister)*

Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

***BENEDICTION** *(Presiding Minister)*

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

***SENDING SONG "The Blessing"** by Kari Jobe and Cody Carnes
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Verse (United Adoration)

**The Lord bless you and keep you,
Make his face shine upon you
And be gracious to you.
The Lord turn his face toward you
And give you peace.**

Chorus (All)

Amen, amen, amen. Amen, amen, amen.

Verse (All)

**The Lord bless you and keep you,
Make his face shine upon you
And be gracious to you.
The Lord turn his face toward you
And give you peace.**

Chorus

Amen, amen, amen. Amen, amen, amen.

Bridge

**May God's favor be upon you,
And a thousand generations,
And your family and your children,
And their children, and their children.**

**May God's presence go before you
And behind you, and beside you,
All around you and within you.
God is with you, God is with you.**

**In the morning, in the evening,
In your coming and your going,
In your weeping and rejoicing,
God is for you, God is for you.
God is for you, God is for you_!**

***DISMISSAL** (*Assisting Minister*)

Go in peace. Christ is with you. Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP LEADERS – September 27, 2026 – 10:00 a.m.

PRESIDING MINISTER	Rev. Jennifer S. Michael
ASSISTING MINISTER	Nadine Anderson
COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	Reagan Heisler, Jeffrey Anderson
ACOLYTE/ CRUCIFIER	Joey Corti
READER	Debra Pedonti
HEAD USHER	Fred Borchers
USHERS	Juan Prat,
GREETERS	Susan Andree
DEPOSITOR	Alice Deal
ALTAR GUILD	Aida Fardella, Jennifer Mirin, Nadine Anderson
REFRESHMENTS	Juan Prat, John Reinhardt – Flavors of Fall
VIDEO/CAMERA	Rob Barry
SOUND	Barb Toepke
POWERPOINT	Lori Ludick

*Connecting People to People, People to Christ,
and People to their role in the world*

The People of Grace, Ministers

Rev. Pedro Suarez, Bishop of the Florida/Bahamas Synod

Rev. Jennifer S. Michael, Pastor	pastorjmmichael@gracelutherantampa.org
Lisa Katt, Director of Music	lisak@gracelutherantampa.org
Jim Sawyers, Organist	jims@gracelutherantampa.org
Anne Corti, Director of Youth & Family Ministry	annec@gracelutherantampa.org
Nadine Anderson, Synod Parish Deacon	nkatx@aol.com

OFFICE STAFF:

Maggie Gould, Office Manager	maggiek@gracelutherantampa.org
Meagan Orbin, Administrative Assistant	Officeadmin@gracelutherantampa.org
Fred Borchers, Custodian	

NURSERY: Ruth Sawyers, Kahlie McCarty, Erin Dean

STEPHEN MINISTRY LEADERS: Mickey Castor, Ruth Anderson, Karen Jankowski,
Janet Wise

Stephen Ministry Congregation



Rev. Jennifer S. Michael, Pastor - 813-599-2390

3714 W. Linebaugh Avenue, Tampa, Florida 33618

Mailing address: P.O. Box 274242 Tampa Florida 33688-4242

813-961-8747 – www.gracetampa.org / FB-Grace Lutheran Tampa

Church office hours 9 a.m.-noon, 1:00 p.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday