



HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Anchored in His Word
13th after Pentecost/Returning Thanks Sunday

Order of Worship

August 23, 2026

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Order of Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. **Amen**

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy, **we confess that we have sinned against you and offended one another. We are worried and distracted by many things, and we fail to love you above all else. We store up treasures for ourselves and turn away from our neighbors in need. Forgive us, that we may live in the freedom of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

When we were laid low by sin and guilt, God made us alive together with Christ, forgiving us all our trespasses by taking our sins to the cross. Claim the gift of God's mercy: you are freed and forgiven in the name of + Jesus Christ. **Amen**

Opening Hymn

We All Are One in Mission

ELW 576

Greeting

From God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, grace and peace be with you all.
And also with you.

Kyrie

In peace let us pray to the Lord. **Lord have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all,
let us pray to the Lord. **Lord have mercy.**

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

Help, save, comfort and defend us, gracious Lord. **Amen**

Glory to God

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father: we worship you and we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God:
you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One; you alone are the Lord;
you alone are the Most High Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen**

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray together. O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into the body of your Son, that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

[Sit]

Youth Message

"Who is Jesus?"

Choral Anthem

As Jabez Prayed
The Luther Singers

Lloyd Larson

First Lesson

Isaiah 51:1-6

¹Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness, you that seek the LORD. Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. ²Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many. ³For the LORD will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song. ⁴Listen to me, my people, and give heed to me, my nation; for a teaching will go out from me, and my justice for a light to the peoples. ⁵I will bring near my deliverance swiftly, my salvation has gone out and my arms will rule the peoples; the coastlands wait for me, and for my arm they hope. ⁶Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and those who live on it will die like gnats; but my salvation will be forever, and my deliverance will never be ended.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalms

Psalm 138

(Congregation speaks together.)

¹**I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with my whole heart;
before the gods I will sing your praise.**
²**I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name,
because of your steadfast love and faithfulness;
for you have glorified your name and your word
above all things.**
³**When I called, you answered me;
you increased my strength within me.**
⁴**All the rulers of the earth will praise you, O LORD,
when they have heard the words of your mouth.**
⁵**They will sing of the ways of the LORD,
that great is the glory of the LORD.**

⁶The LORD is high, yet cares for the lowly,
perceiving the haughty from afar.
⁷Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe;
you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies;
your right hand shall save me.
⁸You will make good your purpose for me;
O LORD, your steadfast love endures forever;
do not abandon the works of your hands.

Second Lesson

Romans 12:1-8

¹I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ²Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. ³For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, ⁵so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Alleluia Verse

[Stand]

**Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, alleluia!**

Holy Gospel

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixteenth chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord**



Matthew 16:13-20

¹³Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

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

[Sit]

Sermon

"The Power of Personal Commitment"

Hymn of the Day

"Softly and Tenderly"

[Stand]
ELW 608

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He 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, and is seated at the
right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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

Confident that God receives our joys and concerns, let us offer our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

[After each petition, the congregation responds with: **Your mercy is great.**]

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, in the name of the one who reconciled all creation to himself, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen**

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

(The congregation is asked to greet one another with the words of Christ: "Peace be with you.")

Offering

[Sit]

Offertory

[Stand]

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 filled with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and the dreams of all, unite them with the prayers we offer now.
Grace our table with your presence, and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

Offertory Prayer

Let us pray together. God of field and forest, sea and sky, **you are the giver of all good things. Sustain us with these gifts of your creation, and multiply your graciousness in us, that the world may be fed with your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen**

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 him thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy . . . *(Here the minister continues with the preface appropriate to the day or season, concluding:)* we praise your name and join their unending hymn.

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power 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.

Words of Institution

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.

Lord's Prayer

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

[Sit]

Lamb of God

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.

Communion

All are welcome at the Lord's table.

We're nourished together by the body and blood of our Lord.

Communion Hymns

Come, Let Us Eat

ELW 491

The Church's One Foundation

ELW 654

My Hope is Built on Nothing Less

ELW 596

Post-Communion Canticle

[Stand]

Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev'ry one what he has done.
Let ev'ry one who seeks the Lord rejoice and proudly bear his name.
He recalls his promises and leads his people forth in joy
With shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Post-Communion Prayer

Let us pray together. We thank you, generous God, **for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table. Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen**

Hymn

Take My Life, That I May Be

ELW 685

Commitment Time and Benediction

*Each year at this time, you're asked to prayerfully consider how you will respond to God's blessings for your life by committing of your time, talents and treasures for the support of God's work in the church and in the world. Today as you consider the "**Estimate of Giving**" sheet in your hand, you're asked to record your response on the sheet, place it in the envelope provided and seal it. Then, after putting your name and address in the appropriate place, you're asked to place the envelope in the basket on the altar and say "Amen" as your benediction for today's worship. The envelope will remain unopened and returned to you after the first of the year. Your commitment is between you and the Lord. No one at Hope will see what you have written.*

"Our worship is ended; our service and our witness continue!"

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Today's Heavenly Helpers

* Assisting Minister	8:15 service	Carol Townsend
	10:45 service	John Hanson
* Director of Music		Sandy Hunter
* Lector	8:15 service	Ann Buehler
	10:45 service	Barbara Fail
* Greeters	10:45 service	Maureen & Ted Grener
* Ushers	10:45 service	Rudy & Judy Kruger
* Communion Assistant	10:45 service	Barbara Fail
* Counters		Sylvia Negri & Barbara Mefford

Last week's attendance, in person and streaming: 135

Calendar of Events for This Week

Monday	- Knitting & Crochet ministry, 2 PM
Tuesday	- Men's Bible Study/Ellijay, 9 AM, Mike's Restaurant - Ladies Bible Study, 12:15
Wednesday	- Food Pantry, 8 AM-1 PM - Choir rehearsal, 6 PM
Thursday	- Quilters, 10 AM - Co-ed Bible Study, 2 PM

Next Week's Scripture Readings Are...

First Reading – Jeremiah 15:15-21

Psalm – Psalm 26:1-8

Second Reading – Romans 12:9-21

Gospel – Matthew 16:21-28

Mid-Week Altar Guild – Doris Goplin 8/30

Next Week's Worship Assistants Are...

10:00 **Lector** - Karen Baker

Greeters – Ann & Jim Berman

Ushers – Barbara Fail & Jack O'Donovan

Communion Asst – Karen Baker

Counters – Karie Rench & Mike Hoover

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Returning Thanks Sunday Today

Returning Thanks Sunday has traditionally been the focal point of our stewardship emphasis time here at Hope Church. The past two weeks we have heard from church members about their use of time, talents and treasure. As we give thanks for the wonderful year here at Hope we're completing and look forward to the challenges of the coming year, we take time too to briefly reflect on those blessings and how we respond to them.

At the end of the service today, each family will be asked to fill out an *"Estimate of Giving"* sheet, place it in a self-addressed envelope and place it sealed in the basket on the altar. The next time your envelope will be opened will be after the first of the year when it has been returned to you still sealed.

2026 Annual Report and Annual Meeting

The *2026 Annual Report of the Congregation* will be distributed by email to Hope members. If you do not have email access to the report, printed copies will be available in the narthex on Sunday, September 6th. The document covers ministries and activities of Hope Church this past year and a proposed budget for our next fiscal year, which begins September 1st. Final reports for the fiscal year just ending will be distributed as soon as they are ready.

The entire report will be presented at our Annual Meeting on September 20th for your approval. Please read through the report and bring any questions to the meeting, or ask a Council member ahead of time. New Congregation Council members will also be elected at the meeting. We will have one worship service that day, at 10 AM, and the meeting will follow.

Ye Old Funsters – Revision

Our next meeting will be **Friday September 11th**. Meet at the church at 10 am for carpooling to Helen Ga. Additional details will follow. We anticipate we will eat at Hofer's Bakery and Cafe, 8758 N. Main St., Helen Hwy in Helen Ga. Following lunch, we can explore the town and then drive home.

Pastor Dave's Reception Celebration

Hope Lutheran Church invites you to join us in celebrating Pastor David E. Smedley, Jr. as he retires after 27 years of faithful service as our called pastor. We hope you will join us as we honor Pastor Smedley, thank him for his many years of ministry, and wish him well in this next chapter.

Next Sunday we'll have just one service at 10 AM.



You are cordially invited to a reception celebrating
Pastor David E. Smedley, Jr.
on his retirement as called pastor of
Hope Lutheran Church in Ellijay, Georgia
after 27 years of service

Saturday, September 19, 2026
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Legacy Event Hall
772 Maddox Drive, Suite 110
(Clock Tower Center)
East Ellijay, Georgia 30540

Baskets will be available for cards of
congratulations and a Thank You cash purse.
Light buffet will be served.

**RSVP to: sylvianegri@live.com
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Hope Lutheran Church

Ministering in His Mountains



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Pastor: Rev. David Smedley
Ministers: The People of Hope Church

*"Making Christ known through reaching, welcoming,
praising, equipping and sending"*