



HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Anchored in His Word

18th Sunday after Pentecost

Order of Worship

September 27, 2026

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Order of Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth.

Amen.

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,

we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hear this good news: We have peace with God through ☩ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

Amen.

Gathering Hymn

God is Here!

ELW 526

Greeting

Sisters and brothers in Christ, beloved children of God: grace, mercy, 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**

This is the Feast

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Power, riches, wisdom and strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are his.

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

**Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation:
Blessing, honor, glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever.
Amen.**

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

For the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia.

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray together.

**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.**

[Sit]

Youth Message

Choral Anthem

Did You Think to Pray?

The Luther Singers

Arr. Gilpin

First Lesson

Ezekiel 18:1-41-4, 25-32

¹The word of the LORD came to me: ²What 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"? ³As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb

shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know 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 that shall die. ²⁵Yet 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? ²⁶When 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. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet 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? ³⁰Therefore 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. ³¹Cast 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? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

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

Psalms

Psalm 25:1-9

(Congregation speaks together.)

¹To you, O LORD,

I lift up my soul.

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

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

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

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

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

**⁷Remember 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.**

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

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

Second Lesson

Philippians 2:1-13

¹If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. ¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Response: 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 twenty-first chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord



Matthew 21:23-32

²³When [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?" ²⁴Jesus 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.

²⁵Did 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?'" ²⁶But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷So 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. ²⁸What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. ³¹Which 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. ³²For 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."

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

[Sit]

Sermon

[Stand]

Hymn of the Day

We Are Called

ELW 720

Installation of Hope's 2026/2027 Congregation Council

The following persons, having been elected by the congregation to positions of leadership, are asked to come forward: Vicki Christensen, Steven Freese, Doris Goplin, Carolyn Clark Hill, Shela Huff, Sylvia Negri, Jim Sease, Carol Townsend, June Edgemon and Karie Rench.

In Holy baptism our Lord Jesus Christ liberated you from sin and death and made you members of his Church. Through Word and Sacrament you have been nurtured in faith. I ask you, together with all who are here gathered, to confess the faith of the Church, and the faith in which we are baptized.

(The pastor invites the congregation to stand for the 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**

(The congregation may be seated)

St. Paul writes: There are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

(The pastor addresses the new congregation council)

You have been elected to positions of leadership and trust in this congregation. You are to see that the words and deeds of this household of faith reflect Him in whose name we gather. You are to work together with other members to see that the worship and work of Christ are done in this congregation, and that God's will is done in this community and in the whole world. You are to be diligent in your specific area of serving, that the one Lord who empowers you is glorified. You are to be examples of faith active in love, to help maintain the life and harmony of this congregation.

Now, on behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ, I ask you: Are you ready to accept and faithfully to carry out the duties of the offices to which you have been elected?

Yes, by the help of God.

(The pastor invites the congregation to stand)

People of God, I ask you: Will you support these, your elected leaders, and will you share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all who are baptized?

Yes, by the help of God.

(Pastor addresses the council) I now declare you installed as council members of this congregation. God bless you with His Holy Spirit, that you may prove faithful servants of Christ. Amen

Prayers

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

A brief silence.

[After each petition, the congregation responds with: **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

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.

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.

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

Christ invites you to this table.

All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

Communion Hymns

All Who Hunger Gather Gladly

ELW 461

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service

ELW 712

Change My Heart, O God

ELW 801

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.

Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.

Amen.

Sending Hymn

O Master, Let Me Walk with You

ELW 818

Benediction

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.**

“The Peace of God”

**Whatsoever things are honest,
 whatsoever things are true,
Whatsoever things are pure and lovely,
 think on these things.
Whatsoever things are wholesome,
 whatsoever things are good,
If there be any virtue, be any praise,
 think on these things.
And the peace of God
 that passes all understanding
Shall keep your hearts,
 shall keep your minds
 on Jesus Christ.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. God is at work in you. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

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

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Serving Today

* Assisting Minister	8:15 service	Carol Townsend
	10:45 service	John Hanson
* Director of Music		Sandy Hunter
* Lector	8:15 service	Charlie Brown
	10:45 service	Karen Baker
* Greeters	10:45 service	Janice Weber & Jeannine Sieck
* Ushers	10:45 service	Rudy & Judy Kruger
* Communion Assistant	10:45 service	Karen Baker
* Counters		Sylvia Negri & Steven Freese

Last week's attendance, in person and streaming: 81

Calendar of Events for This Week

Monday	- Knitting & Crochet ministry, 2 PM
Tuesday	- Men's Bible Study/Elijah, 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 – Isaiah 5:1-7

Psalms – Psalm 80:7-15

Second Reading – Philippians 3:4b-14

Gospel – Matthew 21:33-46

Mid-Week Altar Guild – Doris Goplin 10/4

Next Week's Worship Assistants Are...

8:15 **Lector** - Sue Marler

10:45 **Lector** - Aaron Ingles

Greeters -Ann & Jim Berman

Ushers -Jeannine Sieck & Janice Weber

Communion Asst -Aaron Ingles

Counters -Mary Leyden & Mike Hoover

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Blessing of the Animals

St. Francis of Assisi is recognized as the patron saint of animals. Many Christians mark the feast of St. Francis of Assisi – October 3rd – by having their pets blessed. We will again be hosting a *Blessing of the Animals* here at Hope next Saturday, October 3rd, at 10 AM. You're invited to bring your pets that day and participate.

We'll gather under the drive-through at the front entrance. There will be treats for the pets and a snack table for the proud owners! We'll publish this in the Jasper and Ellijay newspapers and invite the larger communities! Come join us!

Christmas Appeal and Bike Blessing

As in recent years past, our community Christmas gift appeal this year will be held throughout October to support our local American Legion Christmas Toy Ride. We're looking for **unwrapped** toys with a minimum price of \$10 for boys and girls aged birth to 14 years. Cash gifts will be gladly accepted! Make checks to Hope Lutheran Church with "Toy Ride" on the memo line.

Our Evangelism Team and Men's Group are going to host a *Blessing of the Bikes* (and Bikers) on Saturday, November 7th to kick off the Toy Ride and deliver your gifts to prepare for the Legion Christmas party. Please know how much the folks at the Legion appreciate your generosity for the sake of the children in our community! Boxes for toys are set up in our narthex to receive these gifts.

Octoberfest Is Fast Approaching

OctoberFest 2026 will be Saturday, October 24th, between the hours of 11 AM and 4 PM. We'll have German brat plates and barbecue plates available for \$10 per plate (\$5 for children and youth). And, of course, we'll have our wonderful craft bazaar – perfect for getting a head start on Christmas! Then at the end of the day we'll have a drawing for raffle ticket winners.

A reminder to crafters - Please bring in any items to be added to the bazaar sale as soon as possible. There is a table labeled "Crafts" downstairs in Founders Hall for them to be placed. Everything is needed on or before October 15th.

Plan to join us on the 24th and invite your neighbors and friends! There will be an announcement in the local paper but the very best advertising is word-of-mouth.

OctoberFest Raffle Tickets

Raffle Ticket packets are now available for you to pick up. Pastor Paula will have tickets available today after each of our church services. They're in quantities of 30 tickets per envelope. The cost of the tickets is \$1 each, or 6 for \$5. The prizes will be: a beautiful quilt donated by our quilters; a gorgeous; large "Bear" quilt with matching pillow shams; a lovely shawl donated by our knitters; an Ellijay dining package that includes a \$25 gift card from the Country Corner Kitchen and a \$20 gift certificate from Ellijay's Little Italian Restaurant on River Street in Ellijay; a \$25 gift card from The Carriage House Restaurant in Jasper; two Works Service Packages (oil change and tire rotation) from Ronnie Thompson Ford in Ellijay; a day of

whitewater rafting with John Hiscox; a round of golf for two at Whitepath Golf Course; a \$50 gift certificate and dessert for two at the Woodbridge Inn in Jasper; and, a \$100 gift card from The Roof Restaurant off the square in Ellijay .

The drawing will be held at the close of *OctoberFest*, October 24th, at 3:30. Ticket holders do not have to be present to win a prize.

Help Pastor Paula Learn Our Names!

Please remember to wear your name badge each Sunday as Pastor Paula gets to know everyone in our Hope family. If you do not have a name badge or need a new one, please let Amanda know.

Prayer List Updates

If you have requested that you or someone else be added to our prayer list, please contact the church office monthly to let us know if the name should remain on the list. Please continue to keep us updated as prayer needs change.

Yea Ole Funsters – Let's Do Lunch!

Join the Yea Ole Funsters on Friday, October 2! Meet at the church at 12:00 PM as we head to Roo Winery for lunch at their new restaurant. Come enjoy delicious wine and marvelous fellowship!

Calling All Men of Hope!

The men of the church are invited to gather every Tuesday at 9:00 AM at Mike's Restaurant on Hwy. 282 in Ellijay for Bible study, breakfast, and fellowship. Come enjoy a good meal, meaningful conversation, and time together in God's Word. All men are welcome!

Hope Lutheran Church

Ministering in His Mountains



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