



HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Anchored in His Word
15th Sunday after Pentecost

Order of Worship

September 6, 2026

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Order of Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be God, the one who forms us, Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete. **Amen**

Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Faithful God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen**

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of + Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world. **Amen**

Gathering Hymn

Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven

ELW 864

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**

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 Lord God, **enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy. Without your help, we mortals will fail; remove far from us everything that is harmful, and lead us toward all that gives life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen**

[Sit]

Youth Message

Choral Anthem

Lord, Here am I
The Luther Singers

by John Ness Beck

First Lesson

Ezekiel 33:7-11

⁷So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. ⁹But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life. ¹⁰Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" ¹¹Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

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

Psalm

Psalm 119:33-40

(Congregation speaks together.)

- ³³Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes,
and I shall keep it to the end.
- ³⁴Give me understanding, and I shall keep your teaching;
I shall keep it with all my heart.
- ³⁵Lead me in the path of your commandments,
for that is my desire.
- ³⁶Incline my heart to your decrees
and not to unjust gain.
- ³⁷Turn my eyes from beholding falsehood;
give me life in your way.
- ³⁸Fulfill your promise to your servant,
which is for those who fear you.
- ³⁹Turn away the reproach that I dread,
because your judgments are good.
- ⁴⁰Behold, I long for your commandments;
by your righteousness enliven me.

Second Lesson

Romans 13:8-14

⁸Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. ¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

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 eighteenth chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord**



Matthew 18:15-20

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

[Sit]

Sermon

[Stand]

Hymn of the Day

Where Charity and Love Prevail

ELW 359

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

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

[After each petition, the congregation responds with: **Receive our prayer.**]

Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ. **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 our provider, **we bring nothing into this world and we can take nothing out of it. Accept the gifts you have first given us, which we bring to your table, and with them the offering of our lives. Nourish us now with the life that really is life, revealed to us in 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

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.**

[Sit]

Communion

*All are welcome at the Lord's table.
We're nourished together by the body and blood of our Lord.*

Communion Hymns

***As We Gather at Your Table
For the Beauty of the Earth
Blest Be the Tie That Binds***

ELW 522
ELW 879
ELW 656

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. Blessed be your name, O God, **for we have feasted on your Word, Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen**

Sending Hymn

Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

ELW 836

Benediction

The God of glory, + Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, 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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Today's Heavenly Helpers

* Assisting Minister	8:15 service	Carol Townsend
	10:45 service	John Hanson
* Director of Music		Sandy Hunter
* Lector	8:00 service	Jan Austin
	10:00 service	Aaron Engles
* Greeters	10:00 service	Fred & Sandi St. John
* Ushers	10:00 service	Leon & June Edgemon
* Communion Assistant	10:00 service	Aaron Engles
* Counters		Karie Rench & Karen Baker

Last week's attendance, in person and streaming: 204

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 – Genesis 50:15-21
Psalm – Psalm 103:8-13
Second Reading – Romans 14:1-12
Gospel – Matthew 18:21-35

Mid-Week Altar Guild – Ann Berman 9/13

Next Week's Worship Assistants Are...

8:15 Lector - Carole English
10:45 Lector – Carol Townsend
10:45 Greeters – Ann & Jim Berman
Ushers – Steven & Amy Freese
Communion Asst – Carol Townsend
Counters – Sylvia Negri & Barbara Mefford

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome, Pastor Paula

Today we're delighted to have Pastor Paula Smith with us. Welcome to Hope! There will be a cookie reception to greet her after each of our services.

2026 Annual Report and Annual Meeting

The *2026 Annual Report of the Congregation* has been distributed by email to Hope members. If you do not have email access to the report, printed copies are available today in the narthex. The document covers the ministries and activities of Hope Church this past year and a proposed budget for our next fiscal year, which began this past Tuesday. Final financial reports for the fiscal year just ended will be distributed by email as soon as they are ready with printed copies available in the narthex.

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 Retirement 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. See the formal invitation below.



**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
404-550-5376**

Hope Lutheran Church

Ministering in His Mountains



3295 Old Hwy 5 South
Ellijay, GA 30540
Telephone: 706.636.4673 (HOPE)
Email: hope.elca.ellijay@gmail.com
Web site: www.hopeonthehill.church

Pastor: Pastor Paula Smith
Ministers: The People of Hope Church

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