



HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Anchored in His Word

16th after Pentecost/Annual Meeting

Order of Worship

September 13, 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

I Come with Joy

ELW 482

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. O Lord God, merciful judge, **you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen**

[Sit]

Youth Message

Choral Anthem

Love Grows Here
The Luther Singers

by Don Besig

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

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

(Congregation speaks together.)

- ¹**Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.**
- ²**Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all God's benefits—**
- ³**who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases;**
- ⁴**who redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;**
- ⁵**who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.**
- ⁶**O LORD, you provide vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.**
- ⁷**You made known your ways to Moses
and your works to the children of Israel.**
- ⁸**LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**
- ⁹**you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.**

¹⁰**You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**
¹¹**For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.**
¹²**As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**
¹³**As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.**

Second Lesson

Romans 14:1-12

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. ⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. ⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

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

Alleluia Vers

[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 18:21-35

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. ²³For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

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

[Sit]

Sermon

[Stand]

Hymn of the Day

Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling

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

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]

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise him all creatures here below;

**Praise him above ye heav'nly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Amen**

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	<i>We Come to the Hungry Feast</i>	ELW 479
	<i>What a Fellowship, what a Joy Divine</i>	ELW 774
	<i>Where Charity and Love Prevail</i>	ELW 359

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

Benediction

The God of glory, + Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever. Amen

Sending Hymn	<i>Go, My Children, with My Blessing</i>	ELW 543
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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	8:15 service	Carole English
	10:45 service	Carol Townsend
* Greeters	10:45 service	Ann & Jim Berman
* Ushers	10:45 service	Steven & Amy Freese
* Communion Asst.	10:45 service	Carol Townsend
* Counters		Sylvia Negri & Barbara Mefford

Last week's attendance, in person and streaming: 114

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
Saturday	- Pastor Dave's Celebration 1PM

Next Week's Scripture Readings Are...

First Reading – Jonah 3:10 – 4:11

Psalms – Psalm 145:1-8

Second Reading – Philippians 1:21-30

Gospel – Matthew 20:1-16

Mid-Week Altar Guild –

Micky Northrup 9/20

Next Week's Worship Assistants Are...

One Service

10:00 **Lector** - Barbara Fail

Greeters – Joe & Kathy Orlando

Ushers – Steven & Amy Freese

Communion Asst – Barbara Fail

Counters – Karie Rench & Karen Baker

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2026 Annual Report

The *2025 Annual Report of the Congregation* has been distributed by email to Hope members. Printed copies are available 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 September 1st.

Pastor Dave's Retirement Luncheon

For those generously providing food for Pastor Dave's Retirement Luncheon, please plan to drop off your food items between **12:00–12:30 PM**. This will give us time to arrange the buffet tables before the doors open.

Please bring all food ready to serve, including any necessary serving utensils. Since the luncheon is being held off-site, we won't have the church kitchen available for those last-minute serving items.

Calling All Crafters, Knitters, Quilters, Woodworkers & More!

Our Craft Sale will be held in conjunction with Hope's annual Oktoberfest on Saturday, October 24th.

Please have your handcrafted items ready and placed in the designated "Craft Room" downstairs by Sunday, October 11th. This will give our volunteers plenty of time to price, organize, and set up all the wonderful creations for the sale.

Volunteers will also be needed on October 24th, so please mark your calendars and plan to lend a hand if you can! For questions Contact Bev Hiscox at 478-714-7282.

A Quick Reminder

As you wrap up your meeting or activity in the church, please take a moment to make sure the lights are turned off and the doors are securely locked as you leave.

Thank you for helping us care for our church home!

Pastor Paula's Office Hours & Contact information

Monday: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Tuesday: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Wednesday: 11:00 AM – After Choir Practice

Thursday: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Friday: Day Off — *If you have an emergency, please call.*

Saturday: Working from Home

Pastor Paula wants everyone to know that she is available when needed. Please feel free to reach out to her outside of regular office hours for pastoral needs or emergencies.

Phone: 865-719-1292

Email: Pastor.elca.ellijay@gmail.com

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Ministering in His Mountains



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Pastor: Pastor Paula Smith

Ministers: The People of Hope Church

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