21ST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST **OCTOBER 18, 2026**

GREETING
P: Gathered in Christ.
C: We serve with grace.

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS
P: In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C: Amen. *(Matthew 28:19b; [18:20])*
P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
C: **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** *(1 John 1:8–9)*

Kneel/Stand ~ Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.
C: Most merciful God, we confess that our lives and our world have been corrupted by sin. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen."

P: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. *[John 20:19–23]*
C: Amen.

GATHERING SONG *"A Mighty Fortress is Our God"* ..... #504

PRAYER OF THE DAY
C: O God, our refuge and strength, since you yourself are the author of our devotion, graciously consider the devout prayers of your Church. May those things which we ask in faith effectively follow by your grace; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 45:1-7

[1]Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed: [2]"I will go before you and level the exalted places, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron, [3]I will give you the treasures of darkness and the hoards in secret places, that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who call you by your name. [4]For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I name you, though you do not know me. [5]I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, [6]that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the Lord, and there is no other. [7]I form light and create darkness; I make well-being and create calamity; I am the Lord, who does all these things." The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 96: 1-9

[11]Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the whole earth.
[2]Sing to the LORD and bless his Name;
proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.
[3]Declare his glory among the nations and his wonders among all peoples.
[4]For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised;
he is more to be feared than all gods.
[5]As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;
but it is the LORD who made the heavens.
[6]Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence!
Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!
[7]Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples;
ascribe to the LORD honor and power.
[8]Ascribe to the LORD the honor due his name;
bring offerings and come into his courts.
[9]Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; let the whole earth tremble before him.

SECOND READING: 1 THESSALONIANS 1:1-10

[1]Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace. [2]We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, [3]remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. [4]For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, [5]because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your

sake. [6]And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, [7]so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. [8]For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. [9]For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, [10]and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

P: *Alleluia.*

C: Shine like stars in the world, holding fast to the word of life. *Alleluia.*

*THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 22:15-22

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 22nd chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

[15]Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his words. [16]And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone's opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances. [17]Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" [18]But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? [19]Show me the coin for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. [20]And Jesus said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" [21]They said, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." [22]When they heard it, they marveled. And they left him and went away. The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *"Take My Life That I May Be"* ..... #685

*APOSTLES' CREED

C: 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
P: God of love, you gather us together by the power of the Holy Spirit into Christian community. Give us the willingness to work together for the sake of the Gospel, hearing your voice guiding us in all we do as we serve the world you love. Lord in your mercy,
C: hear our prayer.

P: As daylight diminishes and the night's darkness lengthens, keep us ever mindful of the light we have in Christ. Move us to seek the wisdom of your word, which is the light unto our paths. Lord in your mercy,
C: hear our prayer.

P: Holy God, you have given us all good gifts and have equipped us to serve our neighbors in your name. Give us the creativity, inspiration, and resources to accomplish the mission set before us. Help us to discern where we are needed and also where we are not needed. Lord in your mercy,
C: hear our prayer.

P: Lord Jesus, you prepare a place for us even in the presence of our last enemy, death itself. We thank you for leading safely home all those who listened to your voice in this earthly life [especially ...]. Keep us close to your side and lead us to that place where we shall dwell with you and all the redeemed and feast at your heavenly table forever. Lord in your mercy,
C: hear our prayer.

P: We pray for all who suffer with illness or pain, [particularly ... .] Restore them to health and wholeness and surround them with compassionate caregivers who remind them of your love for them and your never-failing presence. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.
C: Amen.

PEACE
P: The peace of Christ be with you always.
C: And also with you.

OFFERING

*OFFERTORY SONG "*GIVE THANKS*"
C: Give thanks with a grateful heart. Give thanks to the holy one. Give thanks

because He's given Jesus Christ His Son. And now let the weak say I am strong. Let the poor say I am rich; because of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks. Give thanks.

*OFFERING PRAYER
P: 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.
C: Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING
P: The Lord be with you.
C: And also with you.
P: Lift up your hearts.
C: We lift them to the Lord.
P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and salutary…

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, 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 in remembrance of me."

Through him all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.
C: Amen.

*LORD'S PRAYER
P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.
C: 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
P: Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

COMMUNION HYMN *"Lamb of God"*..... Setting 4 #154

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION
P: Sustaining God, with the 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 healing and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.
C: Amen.

BLESSING
P: The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind, in the body of Christ Jesus.
C: Amen.

P: The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit.
C: Amen.

P: The God of grace +bless you now and forever.
C: Amen.

SENDING SONG *"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"*..... #836

RINGING OF THE BELLS

SONG OF PEACE
C: My peace I give unto you. It's a peace that the world cannot give. It's a peace that the world cannot understand; peace to know; peace to live. My peace I give unto you.

DISMISSAL
P: Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.
C: Thanks be to God.