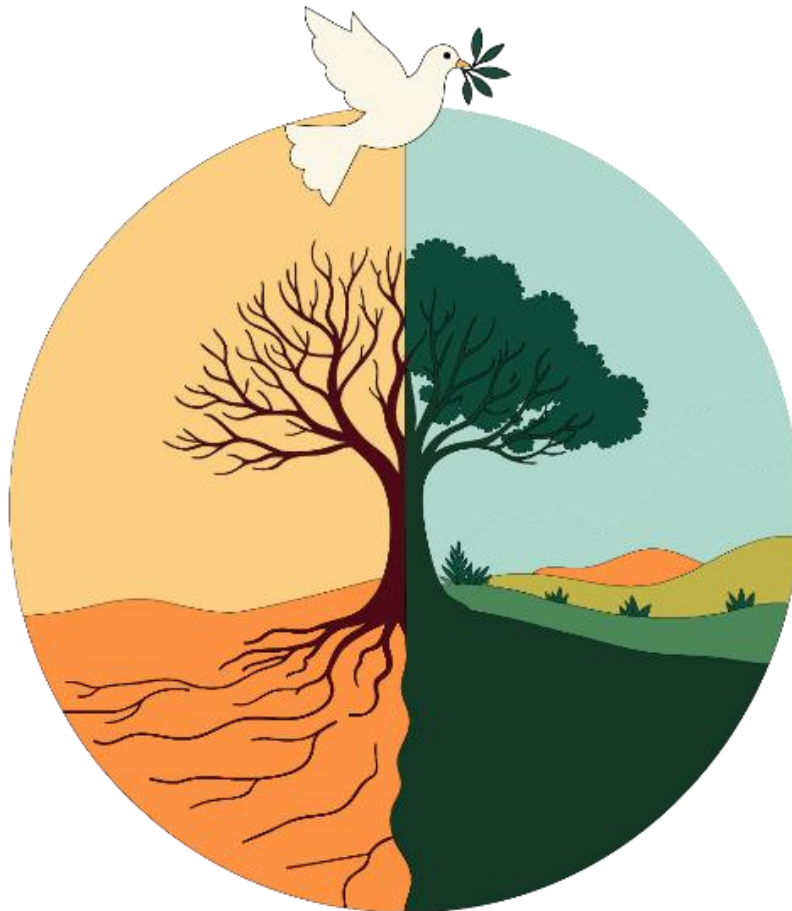


13th Sunday after Pentecost

September 7, 2025

Season of Creation



Garden of Peace

Isaiah 32:14-18

Gethsemane Lutheran Church

3600 Hampton ~ St. Louis, MO 63109

Worship God, welcome all to nurture a community of harmony, healing, and justice.

Welcome to worship! We're delighted you are here!



Gethsemane Lutheran Church is a *Reconciling in Christ* Congregation. **You are welcome here.**



We ask all members, guests, and visitors to please fill out the **attendance slip** in your worship folder and place it in the offering plate.



Please **silence** phones and other devices during the worship service. Sharing that you're at Gethsemane on social media is encouraged! "Check in" using hashtag: #glcstlCheckIn.



The presence, energy, and noise of **children** are always welcome in worship at Gethsemane. The sound of a child in worship is music to our ears. We welcome and encourage kids to move and play. Additional space to move and Wiggle Bags are located in the narthex entry area.



Postures are a way in which we engage the body in worship. These movements (sitting, standing, making the sign of the cross) are optional; please engage in them only as you are comfortable or able.



Holy Communion is offered to all who seek the presence of Christ. This is a welcome table.



Gethsemane Lutheran Church wishes to **acknowledge** and **honor** the Osage, Quapaw, Myaamia, Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, Kaskaskia, and Kickapoo peoples upon whose ancestral homelands we gather for worship, as well as all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to care for this place—this land—and call it their home.

CHURCH STAFF

Minister: Pastor Cheryl Walenta Gorvie
Connections Coordinator: Gretchen Jenson
Office Manager: Eve Cooney
Music Director: Dr. Aria Thomé
Organist: Amy Crousore
Council President: Gary Borkowski

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Office Hours: Vary. Please call before coming to the church to ensure someone will be here to let you in.

Church Office – (314) 352-8050

office@gethsemanestl.org

www.gethsemanestl.org

Holy Communion, Setting Three

Called to contemplate the cost of discipleship, we might be helped by translating Paul's request to Philemon into our prayer of the day: Refresh my heart in Christ. Strengthened by the company and forgiveness of Christ in holy communion and recalling God's grace in remembrance of baptism, we can be strengthened in this hour to "choose life"—to choose life in God as our own.

GATHERING

PRELUDE: *Gather Us In*

Arr. by John Benke

The congregation may stand as comfortable.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: All Creation is full of God's praise, and we are called to join in with joy, righteousness and peacefulness. Yet as we look around us, we see conflict and destruction. We acknowledge our part, as we often fail to walk the path of peace.

Let us confess our sins before the Triune God to ask for forgiveness and renewal.

P: Creator God, God of the oceans, God of the land and all that is within it:

C: You created this world with the power of your word. You formed humankind with your own hands, and breathed your own breath into us. You gave us these lands as a gift— a source of our identity and sustenance. You empowered us to be the guardians of what you have made.

P: Loving God, we have failed you and abused the gift you have given us.

C: We have offended you and defiled what you have made. Forgive us for betraying your trust. Forgive us for our greed and arrogance. Forgive us for what we have done to your Earth. Forgive us for what we have done to your oceans. Forgive us for what we have done to your creatures— on the land, in the sky, and in the depths.

P: Hear, O God of Compassion:

C: The cries of the land—now a desert, laid barren through corrupt agricultural practices, pollution, mining, and deforestation. The cries of the islands—drowning in rising seas, oceans swelling with melting ice. The cries of distress from Mother Earth— storm and drought.

P: God of Life, heal your wounded Earth.

C: Empower us to choose the road that leads to life. Guide us in the paths of righteousness, for your name's sake, so that we may experience once again your Shalom in the land and in the sea. This we ask in the name of the one who came that we may have life in abundance— your Son, our Savior, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

P: May our God have mercy on us, forgive us our trespasses and give us new life. Indeed, God has promised grace and forgiveness to us, in the words of Isaiah: “My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.” Let us rejoice and trust in our calling, live as we are called to live, reconciled with the Father, ambassadors for Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

GATHERING HYMN: *Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross*

HYMN# 335

GREETING:

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE *Gloria*

front of hymnal p. 139

PRAYER OF THE DAY

A: Direct us, O Lord God, in all our doings with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

The congregation is seated.

WORD

THE FIRST READING: DEUTERONOMY 30:15-20

Moses speaks to the Israelites, who are about to enter the land promised to their ancestors. In this passage, he lays out the stark choice before them: choose life by loving and obeying the Lord; or choose death by following other gods.

¹⁵ “See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. ¹⁶ If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. ¹⁷ But if your heart turns away and you do not hear but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸ I declare to you today that you shall certainly perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹ I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may

live, ²⁰ loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him, for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: PSALM 1

A cantor will lead the singing of the Psalm with the congregation singing the bolded lines.

¹ Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel [|] of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats [|] of the scornful!

² **Their delight is in the law [|] of the Lord,**
and they meditate on God’s teaching [|] day and night.

³ They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves
that [|] do not wither;
everything they [|] do shall prosper.

⁴ **It is not so [|] with the wicked;**
they are like chaff which the wind [|] blows away.

⁵ Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when [|] judgment comes,
nor the sinner in the council [|] of the righteous.

⁶ **For the Lord knows the way [|] of the righteous,**
but the way of the wicked shall [|] be destroyed.

SECOND READING: PHILEMON 1-21

Onesimus, a new Christian and a man enslaved by Philemon, has helped Paul, who is in prison. Paul writes this letter to his friend Philemon to encourage him to receive Onesimus, upon his return, as a sibling in Christ.

¹ Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To our beloved coworker Philemon, ² to our sister Apphia, to our fellow soldier Archippus, and to the church in your house: ³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I thank my God always when I mention you in my prayers, ⁵ because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. ⁶ I pray that the partnership of your faith may become effective as you comprehend all the good that we share in Christ. ⁷ I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

⁸ For this reason, though I am more than bold enough in Christ to command you to do the right thing, ⁹ yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. ¹⁰ I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. ¹¹ Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me. ¹² I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. ¹³ I wanted to keep him with me so that he might minister to me in your place

during my imprisonment for the gospel, ¹⁴ but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. ¹⁵ Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for the long term, ¹⁶ no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷ So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸ If he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to me. ¹⁹ I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. ²⁰ Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹ Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The congregation may stand as comfortable.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 14th chapter:
Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: LUKE 14:25-33

Jesus speaks frankly about the costs of discipleship. Those who follow him should know from the outset that completing the course of discipleship will finally mean renouncing all other allegiances.

²⁵ Now large crowds were traveling with [Jesus], and he turned and said to them, ²⁶ “Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸ For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, ³⁰ saying,

‘This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.’ ³¹ Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³² If he cannot, then while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. ³³ So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, O Christ.

The congregation is seated.

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

The congregation may stand as comfortable.

HYMN OF THE DAY: *The Son of God, our Christ*

HYMN# 584

CONFESSION OF FAITH

P: Let us confess our faith using the words of the Apostles’ creed.

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 into hell. 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

AM: Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need.

(A brief silence.)

AM: . . . God of grace,
receive our prayer.

P: We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend.

C: Amen.

PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also, with you.

P: Let us share a sign of peace with one another, using the words of the risen Lord: Peace be with you.

*The ministers and congregation may greet one another with a gesture of peace, using these or similar words: **Peace be with you.***

The congregation is seated.

MEAL

THE OFFERING: *The Offering is received as the Lord's table is prepared.*

MUSICAL OFFERING: *Refuge*

David Allen Fettke and Tom Fettke

The congregation rises in body or spirit.

OFFERING PRAYER

AM: Lord of the harvest, we return to you a portion of what you have given to us. Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches, but on you, who richly provides for us. Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are suffering and in need, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

THE 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.

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,



WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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

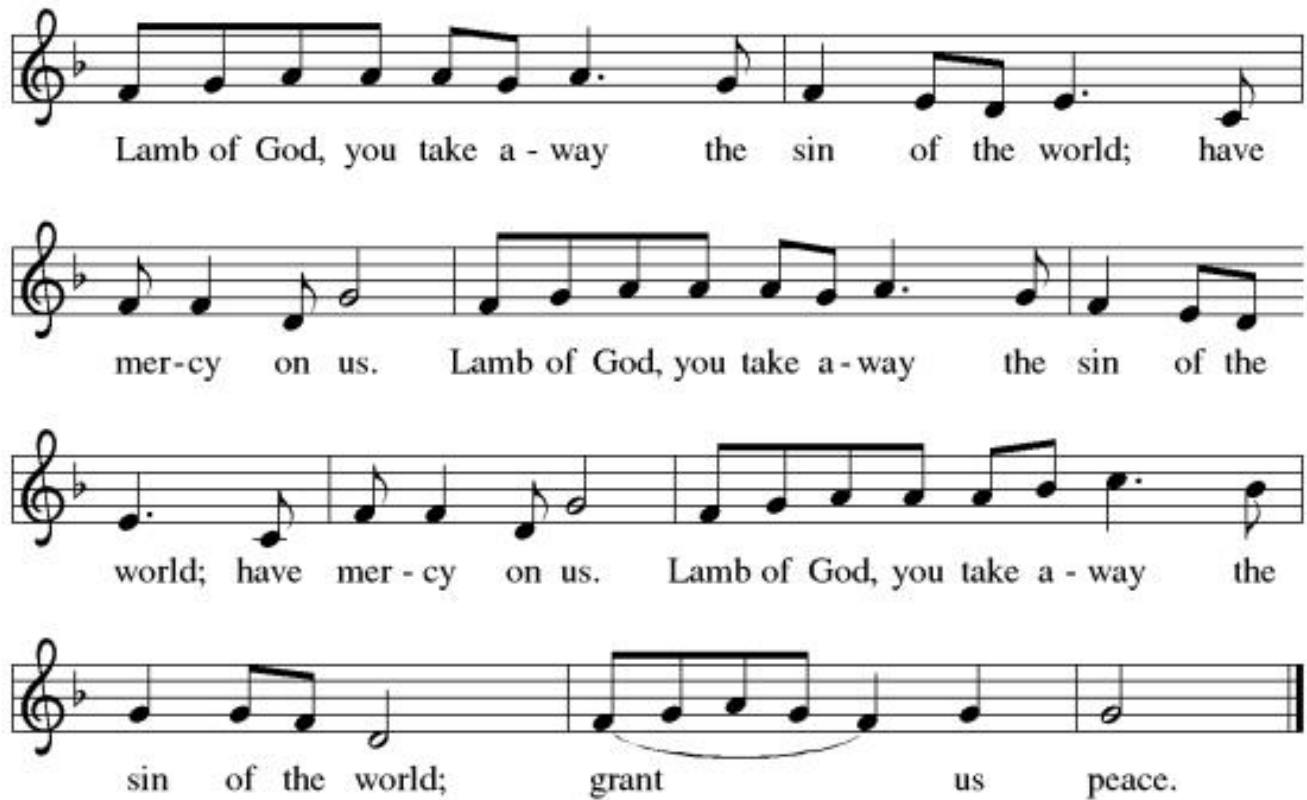
COMMUNION

P: Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. Come to this meal of mercy.

The congregation is seated.

All who seek the Lord are welcome at Christ's table to receive the gift of God's grace! Those not receiving the bread and wine are welcome to come for a blessing. Please come forward at the direction of the ushers.

MUSIC DURING DISTRIBUTION: *Lamb of God*



Lord Jesus, You Shall be my Song

HYMN# 808

Oh, Freedom

The African American spiritual “Oh, Freedom” is a song of hope and defiance that reaches back to the time of slavery in the United States. Sung as both a prayer and a protest, its powerful words declare freedom in this life and the next. After the Civil War, it became a hymn of emancipation, and during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s it was revived as a freedom song at marches and rallies, including the 1963 March on Washington. Today it continues to remind us of the unshakable dignity of the human spirit and the call to live in God’s freedom.

Oh, Freedom



1 Oh, free - dom, oh, free - dom,
 2 No more moan - ing, no more moan - ing,
 3 There'll be sing - ing, there'll be sing - ing,
 4 There'll be shout - ing, there'll be shout - ing,
 5 There'll be pray - ing, there'll be pray - ing,




oh, free - dom o - ver me,
 no more moan - ing o - ver me,
 there'll be sing - ing o - ver me,
 there'll be shout - ing o - ver me,
 there'll be pray - ing o - ver me,
 me, o - ver me,

Refrain



and be - fore I'd be a slave, I'll be bur - ied in my grave,



and go home to my Lord, and be free.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: FREEDOM OVER ME, African American spiritual; arr. Evelyn Davidson White

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen

The congregation may stand as comfortable.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

AM: Our God of abundance has fed us with the bread of life and the cup of love. With deep appreciation and thanks for the communion we share with each other and with the Earth, we pray:

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Life-giver, Pain-bearer, source of all that is and ever shall be, you have showered us with abundance. With the food we need for today, feed us. For the hurt we cause, forgive us. As we lose our way, restore us. Enlarge within us the sense of fellowship with all living creatures, all part of the family of God. Tune our hearts to live in harmony with Christ, with the Earth, with all creatures, and with our human neighbors too. Now and forever.

C: Amen

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

After making this time to worship God, these are ways we welcome all to nurture a community of harmony, healing, and justice.

The congregation may stand as comfortable.

BLESSING

P: The God of righteousness, who gives justice to the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry, who sets the prisoners free, ☩ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN: *Lift High the Cross*

HYMN# 660

DISMISSAL

AM: Go in peace. Do not lose heart.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE: *Lift High the Cross*

Arr. by John Leavitt

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The **Altar Flowers** are sponsored by
Joan Williams and Lois and Jack Wind
for blessings to have such a loving mother, Norma Schenck



WORSHIP LEADERS		
PRESIDER	Rev. Cheryl Walenta Gorvie	
GREETER	Richard Lima	Peggy Lewis
USHERS	Kate Hartz	Steve Hetager
ASSISTING MINISTER	Phyllis Saathoff	Carolyn Schainker
LECTOR	Rick Schuessler	Willow Gorvie
CHILDREN'S SERMON	Lindsay Schuessler	
BREAD BAKER	Sarah Bohnert	
DONUT DRIVER	Cayce Morice	
FELLOWSHIP HOST	<i>needed</i>	
ALTAR GUILD	Missy DeVore	
CAMERA	Gretchen Jenson	
WINE SPONSOR	Carleen Reinhardt	

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Natalie Traylor Fontana and family: Mourning the death of Natalie's niece, Emily

Mike Elliott and family: Mourning the loss of Mike's father, Dr. Jan Elliott

Barb Johnson: healing and strength

Dell Roth: healing, strength and peace as she awaits surgery

Sharon Salerno: healing and strength

Damien Gustafson: wisdom and strength

Request for:	<i>On Behalf of:</i>
Reagan and Colin - as they start at a new school	<i>Beth Jung</i>
Josh and Lydia (strength and healing)	<i>Jerry Koch</i>
Liam (healing,) Marisa (loss of Mom,) Melissa (employment,) Dad (healing,) Andrea (wisdom, courage)	<i>Cat Leonard</i>
The people of Gaza and the Occupied Territories of Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Ukraine, Sudan and Myanmar; Ginny Olson (healing and strength); Sister Marie Orf (healing and strength); Marcelle (successful treatment); Jojo (healing and courage); all impacted by disasters; for peace with justice in our world.	<i>Maryn Olson and Angie Fulton</i>
The Hoppe Family, - Jessica, Justin, Henry, Andy and Olie	<i>Elizabeth Penny</i>

LIVING YOUR FAITH

+ GIVE

The **September Big Ask** is diapers! Place donations for Big Ask items in the cabinets near the shopping cart. Items placed **IN** the cart go to our Free Food Pantry

Little Free Pantry Items needed include jelly, mac n' cheese, bottled water and lotion

The next **Red Cross Blood Drive** is Oct.13, 1-5 pm.

Support college students by providing snacks, meals or the funds to purchase them, through **LuMin** Campus Ministry

⚡ ACT

Blessing bags are available in the Narthex for anyone to pick up and give to those in need.

The **Fall Worship Leader** schedule is in the works. Please fill out the online form with your availability and service time preferences. New helpers are always needed and appreciated!

Fellowship hosts are needed on Sundays to help clean up after coffee and donuts.

Volunteer at **Tower Grove Pride Fest** on Sept 27-28. Details in the e-news.

Help with **Blessing of the Animals** on Oct 5 at 4 pm. Serve snacks, help with a craft, meet neighborhood pets and their people.

The Messenger has a digital format! If you have any items to include for the September newsletter, please send them to Gretchen at connect@gethsemanestl.org by **September 26**.



♡ JOIN

Singing for our Lives! Pastors Kendra and Jeff will lead songs of justice, unity and compassion in the Gethsemane Fellowship Hall, on Sat. Sept 27 from 6-8 pm. Community, Music, and Snacks provided!

Join **Choir** and/or **Handbell Choir** for another music-filled season. Rehearsal starts this evening! All ages and abilities welcome.

Sunday School and Confirmation Class begin next Sunday, Sept 14. Music starts at 10 am in the sanctuary, followed by age-based lessons in the classroom at 10:15 am and an activity or craft in the Fellowship Hall at 10:30 am. Join the fun!

The September Women's Luncheon will be Monday, September 22 at LaFuentes Mexican Restaurant on MacKenzie Rd. Contact Phyllis Saathoff to RSVP.

God's Work Our Hands (Continued!) – Trinity Lutheran Church in Chesterfield is organizing a trip to St. Phillips Lutheran Church on Sun, September 14. Dr. Terrance Freeman will be leading a walking tour about North City and the May 16 tornado. Dr. Freeman is an engineer, professor at STLCC and member of St. Phillips. Gethsemane folks are invited to join and should meet at St. Phillips at 12:30 pm. More details in the enews!

**Gethsemane Lutheran Church Calendar
September 7-14, 2025**

9/7 Sunday	8:30 am 9:45 am 11:00 am 5:00 pm	Worship Service: In-Person and LiveStream Fellowship Hour, Blood Pressure Worship Service: In Person Choir Rehearsal
9/8 Monday	6:00 pm	Handbell Choir Rehearsal
9/9 Tuesday	10:00 am	Bible Study
9/10 Wednesday	10-noon	Church Office Staff Meeting, phones unanswered
9/14 Sunday	8:30 am 9:45 am 10 am 11 am Noon-ish 5:00 pm	Worship Service: In-Person and Livestream Fellowship Hour, Sunday School/Confirmation Begins! Worship Service: In Person Worship and Music Committee Meeting after worship Choir Rehearsal

Upcoming Dates to Consider

Date	Time	Event
Mondays	6:00 pm	Handbell Choir Rehearsal
Tuesdays	10:00 am	Bible Study
Wednesdays	10 am-noon	Church Office Staff Meeting, phones unanswered
Sun, Sept 14	Noonish	Worship and Music Committee Meeting
Tues, Sept 16	6:30 pm	Church Council Meeting
Sun, Sept 21	10:00 am	Social Action Committee Meeting
Mon, Sept 22	11:30 am	Women's Lunch at LasFuentes
Sat, Sept 27	11 am–2 pm	Car Wash at GLC to benefit the Ignite Theater Group (Colleen Rentschler's group).
Sat, Sept 27	6-8 pm	Singing for our Lives! Fellowship Hall
Sept 27-28	All Day	Tower Grove Pride Fest (sign up link in e-news)
Sun, Oct 5	4:00 pm	Blessing of the Animals
Sun, Oct 12	9:45 am	Bread for the World Sunday

Blood Pressure (BP): First Sunday of each month in the fellowship hall.
Women's Luncheon: Fourth Monday of every month. *Except for Holidays.

Gethsemane is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation Affirmation of Welcome

Christ's welcome knows no boundaries! Therefore, our welcome knows no boundaries and we invite all people to full participation in the life of the congregation.

We at Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Saint Louis embrace...

People of any race or ethnicity...

People who are male, female, transgender, intersex or any other gender identity...

People of any age...

People wherever they are, or wherever they have been, on their faith journeys...

People who are single, married, widowed, divorced, separated or partnered...

People who are gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual, or any other sexual orientation...

People with a variety of political perspectives...

People who have, or had, addictions, phobias, abortions, or a criminal record...

People who are homeowners, renters, living with parents, or homeless...

People who are fully-abled, disabled, or of differing abilities...

People of differing educational backgrounds...

People of any socio-economic condition...

People not mentioned above, all of whom are created and loved by God!

As we celebrate and seek to preserve the beautiful, amazing diversity of God's creation, we pledge to ourselves and to all others that we will strive to live as a reconciling people in our life together and in our outreach to the world. We are committed to being a radically loving and welcoming community of faith.


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Scan here to donate to Gethsemane's African American Spiritual Reparation project.

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