

16th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, September 13, 2026

Introduction to the day

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

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.

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

PSALM: Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13

LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy. (Ps. 103:8)

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

GOSPEL MESSAGE - Forgiven and Freed

Today's gospel reading is all about forgiveness. In the complex web of human relationships, forgiveness often feels messy. We may not understand it, and it may at times feel entirely out of reach. Yet, as Christians, we are called to wrestle with the promise that even when forgiveness feels impossible, there is room for us and for others in the wideness of God's mercy. How do we make sense of this?

We might begin by experiencing God's forgiveness ourselves. Many worshiping communities begin the service with a time of confession and forgiveness. Together we name out loud the ways we have failed to love God and neighbor, the ways we have failed to recognize ourselves or one another as beloved children of God. We name how we have been complacent in systems of injustice, how we have harmed one another directly, and the hurtful things we don't even know we've done.

This practice may seem deeply unsettling; after all, where else do we greet each other with a list of all the things we've done wrong? But confession is also freeing. It gives us permission to stop pretending we have it all together. It allows us to shed the weight of our mistakes and lay down our burdens so our hands and hearts are ready to receive God's mercy.

And then, week after week, we hear God's words of forgiveness for us and for our neighbors. We are reminded that there is always and forever enough of God's grace and forgiveness to go around. The public declaration of our forgiveness frees us to enter into the rest of our worship service with open and grateful hearts. And then God's forgiveness sends us out in the world to practice the hard work of forgiving others and receiving their forgiveness in turn, knowing that God will meet us again and again with mercy and grace.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

Move your church throughout the world away from judging and despising others. Lead us to embody the forgiveness you have given us in Jesus. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

The endless beauty of your creation reminds us of your mercy. Protect those who care for farms and ranches. Guide those who lead us to wonder at your creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Raise up leaders to hold all in authority accountable for any misuse of the power entrusted to them. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Calm the fears of all in need with your promises. Compassionately free the lives of any who feel bound by their failures. Remember your children in need especially Chris Burchat, Natasha Gagnon-Burchat, Claude Jeannotte, Glenda Panke, Joanne Robinson, Bernadette Schueneman, Adam Schroeder, Heather Schruder, Linda Schruder, Doug Sell, Harold Warlich, Roy Zadow, those in long term care facilities and senior residences. In this moment of silence, we name out loud or in the quiet of our hearts, those who need your healing touch. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Ground this congregation in the welcome you show us in forgiving our sin. Inspire each of us to welcome others for your honor and glory. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

With you is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember all those who have gone before us. Hear us, O God. **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.**

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 221)

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.
Amen.

Announcements:

Sunday, September 13th – 16th Sunday after Pentecost

10:30 AM - Grace – SOW

Greeter: Maureen Springer

Reader: Blaine Johnson

Bell Ringer: Ed Byers

Elevator: Jack Schaven; **Head Usher:** Charlotte Schaven

Join the Sunday School following worship for a congregational potluck luncheon.

Hope you can join us.

Monday, September 14th

9: 00 AM to 3:00 PM - Quilting at Grace

Tuesday, September 15th

10:00 AM – Bible Study

7:00 PM – Property Committee

Wednesday, September 16th

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM - Cuddles and Hugs Quilting

6:30 to 8:30 PM – Community Choir

Thursday, September 17th

10:00 AM – Grace Choir

9:00 to 11:30 AM – Toy Bus

Sunday, September 20th – 17th Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 AM – Bonnechere – Holy Communion

10:30 AM – Grace – Holy Communion – Sunday School

Holy Baptism - Matthew Carl Sack

Grace – Greeters: Clare and Jane Lemke

Reader: Stacey Lance

Communion Assistants: Diane Moore and Joanne Hoelke

Altar Guild: Margaret Felhaber and Karen Sell

Bell Ringer: Ed Byers

Elevator: Jack Schaven; **Head Usher:** Charlotte Schaven

September is here and **Sunday School is back!!** We will be starting on Sunday, September 13 at the 10:30 service with the children singing, a blessing of the backpacks, Sunday School fun, followed by a **congregational potluck luncheon.** Sunday School will continue through the fall, with two weeks off in November, until the Christmas Program on December 20th. Hope you can join us!!

The **Sunday School** is always needing volunteers for teachers, helpers, crafts, etc. In particular, this year we are looking for a volunteer to keep our snack cupboard filled with drinks and snacks for the Sunday school children, with funds from our budget. If you can help out in any way, please reach out.

Reformation Service - Sunday October 18, 2026

Rankin Community Centre 3:00 pm

Rev. Matthew Brown, Parish of the Valley – Anglican Guest Preacher

Dinner 5:00 pm - Dinner Tickets \$35.00 Smoked Pork Loin with all the trimmings. Available at your church office until October 4, 2026

Come Worship and Connect with your Ottawa Valley Lutheran and Anglican Families. Organized by the Ottawa Valley Ministry Team, Eastern Synod of the ELCIC

Newsletter Deadline: Any group or committee who want to include information in the October Newsletter or anyone who would like to sponsor the newsletter in honour of a special occasion or in loving memory of loved ones, please let the office know no later than Tuesday, September 22, 2026

The **Eternity for Today** (October to December) are available on the table in the narthex.

The **Sunday School** invites you to help fill our wagons with food for the Eganville Foodbank. This will take place in the narthex from September 6 until October 11, Thanksgiving Sunday. Please show your love to your neighbours by filling our wagons to the top!

Sebastopol Harvest Service. -_Sunday, September 27th - 2:30 PM

Join our Thanksgiving worship followed by a potluck lunch. Enjoy a wonderful worship experience and the beginning of Fall colours on the mountain.

Please join us for our **MEMORIAL SERVICE** at **Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rankin,** *Remembering, Giving thanks, Celebrating hope,* on Sunday, **September 27th at 3:00 PM,** with Pastor Bruce Thompson presiding. Followed by a delicious meal in the reception hall downstairs. All folks are welcome.