The 3rd Last Sunday of the Church Year
November 8, 2026



When The Bridegroom Seems Late
No One Is Left Behind
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

TOWARD ETERNITY
PREPARING PEOPLE FOR THE ROAD AHEAD

The Lutheran Church & School of Messiah

840 N. 11th St. Grand Junction, CO
970-245-2838

The 3rd Last Sunday of the Church Year
(November 8, 2026)

Prayers: *if you have any prayer requests, feel free to use the QR code, or fill out the pew card.*

Offering *baskets are at either end of the back pews. Or feel free to use the QR code in the offering section of the bulletin. We use Square.*

Confession and Absolution

Stand

514 The Bridegroom Soon Will Call Us



Text: Johann Walter, 1496–1570; (st. 1): tr. F. Samuel Janzow, 1913–2001; (sts. 2–4): tr. Matthias Loy, 1828–1915, alt.
Tune: Musae Sioniae, 1609, vol. 7, Wolfenbüttel, ed. Michael Praetorius
Text (st. 1): © 1982 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000694
Text (sts. 2–4) and tune: Public domain

Confession and Absolution

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit. *(Matthew 28:19b; 18:20)*

C **Amen.**

Exhortation *203*

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.** ***Psalm 124:8***

P If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.** ***Psalm 130:3-4***

P Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner. *(Luke 18:13)*

Kneel/Stand

Confession of Sins *LSB 203*

C **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

Absolution *203*

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 T Son and of the Holy Spirit. *(John 20:19-23)*

C **Amen.**

Stand

Service of the Word

Psalm *Psalm 70*

[1]Make haste, O God, to deliver me!
O Lord, make haste to help me!
[2]Let them be put to shame and confusion
who seek my life!
Let them be turned back and brought to dishonor
who desire my hurt!
[3]Let them turn back because of their shame
who say, "Aha, Aha!"
[4]May all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you!
May those who love your salvation
say evermore, "God is great!"
[5]But I am poor and needy;
hasten to me, O God!
You are my help and my deliverer;
O Lord, do not delay!

Kyrie *204*





Gloria in Excelsis Luke 2:14; John 1:29 *204*



Text: Stephen P. Starke

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.

Lord God, heavenly Father, send forth Your Son to lead home His bride, the Church, that with all the company of the redeemed we may finally enter into His eternal wedding feast; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Sit

Old Testament Reading *Amos 5:18–24*

18 Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord!
Why would you have the day of the Lord?
It is darkness, and not light,
19 as if a man fled from a lion,
and a bear met him,
or went into the house and leaned his hand against the wall,
and a serpent bit him.
20 Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not light,
and gloom with no brightness in it?
21 "I hate, I despise your feasts,
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
22 Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,
I will not accept them;
and the peace offerings of your fattened animals,
I will not look upon them.
23 Take away from me the noise of your songs;
to the melody of your harps I will not listen.
24 But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."

A This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle *1 Thessalonians 4:13–18*

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. 15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

A This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

Adult Choir ***Blessed Is The Man*** by V. Nelhybel

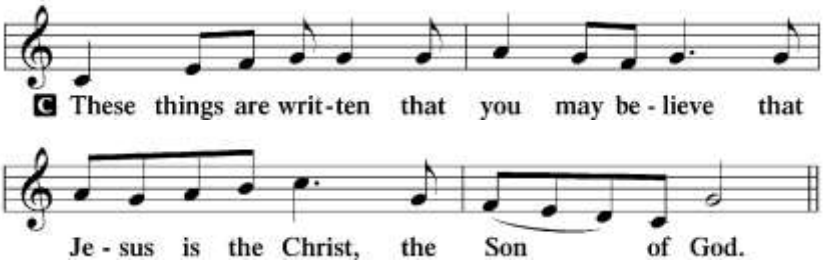
Stand

Alleluia and Verse

Alleluia *LSB 205*



Verse *205*



Alleluia *LSB 205*



Holy Gospel*Matthew 25:1–13*

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-fifth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[1][Jesus said:] "The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. [2]Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. [3]For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, [4]but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. [5]As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. [6]But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' [7]Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. [8]And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' [9]But the wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.' [10]And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. [11]Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' [12]But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.' [13]Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Creed ["Creed" comes from the Latin credo, which means "I believe." From the time of Pentecost, the Ancient Christian Church has confessed a creed. The Early Christian Church has always believed, taught, and confessed these Scriptural teachings. This is why we are called a Creedal Church.] (Us men means all people)

Apostles' Creed

C **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,**
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ⊤ everlasting. Amen.

Sit

Kids' Time

508 The Day Is Surely Drawing Near *sts. 1–2, 5, 7*



Text: Bartholomäus Ringwaldt, 1532–99; tr. Philip A. Peter, 1832–1919, alt.
Tune: Geistliche Lieder auffs new gebessert, 1535, Wittenberg, ed. Joseph Klug
Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon *You Will Not Be Left Behind*
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Stand

Offering *Offering baskets are located at either end of the back pews. Or, feel free to scan the QR code below. We use Square.*

Scan for Offering

853 How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord *sts. 1, 4*



Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000
Tune: C. Hubert H. Parry, 1848–1918
Text: © 1982 Hope Publishing Co. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000694
Tune: Public domain

Prayer of the Church 1 Timothy 2:1-4

Veterans Day Responsive Prayer

L: Lord God, on this Veterans Day weekend we remember those who have served in the armed forces, including those who did not come home. You have sustained our nation, and You hold the living and the dead. We give thanks for the living and the dead who have borne the cost of service.

R: We remember them before You. Comfort the families who grieve. Hold the wounded and the weary. You do not leave Your own behind.

L: You sent Your Son to die and rise. He is the One who holds both the living and the dead. In Him the dead in Christ will rise first, and the living will be gathered together with them, and we will always be with the Lord.

R: We rest in that promise. The dead are not left out. The living are not left out. Both belong to Him.

L: We remember with thankfulness the families who have waited, watched, and borne the weight of service. Guard them in Your peace. Give us hearts that honor the living and the dead without forgetting the greater promise.

R: We are grateful for their devotion. Grant us the will to support those who still carry the cost, and the faith to rest in the word that comforts the grieving.

L: You prayed for Your disciples that they would be kept in Your name and sanctified in Your truth. Keep the chaplains who serve among the armed forces. Fill them with the joy that comes from knowing You have defeated sin and death.

R: Sanctify their ministry in Your Word. Let them speak the comfort of the gospel to the wounded, the grieving, and the waiting.

L: Gracious Lord, strengthen those who minister in hospitals, wards, and places of recovery. Mend the wounds of body, mind, and spirit. Grant wisdom to physicians and caregivers.

R: Lord, have mercy on the hurting. You are the One who gathers the living and the dead. You will not leave them behind.

L: God of mercy, grant patience and insight to all who serve in the armed forces and to those who care for them. Only through Your sustaining love can they live in hope. These and all things we ask through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and rules with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Service of the Sacrament

The Lord's Supper: If you are visiting with us or have not been instructed in the unique Lutheran teaching regarding the Lord's Supper, we kindly ask you to speak to the Pastor before communing. If you would like to come up for a blessing, feel free to do so. Simply cross your arms over your chest to let the Pastor know you would like a blessing. Thank you.

Stand

Preface 2 Timothy 4:22; Colossians 3:1; Psalm 136 *LSB 208*

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 Him thanks and praise.**

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore, with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9 *LSB 208*



Text: Stephen P. Starke

Lord's Prayer Matthew 6:9-13

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.

[The Conclusion for the Lord's Prayer is not in Matthew or Luke. The Conclusion is from 1 Chronicles 29:10-11, King David's prayer in the assembly.]*

The Words of Our Lord
Words of Institution: Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; 1Corinthians 11:23-25

Pax Domini John 20:19
P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C **Amen.**

Agnus Dei John 1:29 *LSB 210*



Text: Stephen P. Starke

Sit

Distribution

673 Jerusalem, My Happy Home
Text: F. B. P., 16th cent., alt.
Text: Public domain

TLH 566: CHRIST BY HEAVENLY HOSTS ADORED

1. Christ, by heavenly host adored,
Gracious, mighty, sovereign Lord
God of nations, King of kings,
Head of all created things,
By the Church with Joy confest,
God o'er all forever blest,--
Pleading at Thy throne we stand,
Save Thy people, bless our land.

2. On our fields of grass and grain
Send, O Lord, the kindly rain;
O'er our wide and goodly land
Crown the labors of each hand.
Let Thy kind protection be
O'er our commerce on the sea.
Open, Lord, Thy bounteous hand;
Bless Thy people, bless our land.

3. Let our rulers ever be
Men that love and honor Thee;
Let the powers by Thee ordained
Be in righteousness maintained.
In the people's hearts increase
Love of piety and peace.
Thus united, we shall stand
One wide, free, and happy land.

636 Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness

Text: Johann Franck, 1618–77

Stand

Nunc Dimittis Luke 2:29-32 *LSB 211*



Post-Communion Collect

P Let us pray.

Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Benedicamus (Psalm 103:1) *LSB 212*

A Let us bless the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Benediction Numbers 6:24-26

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and T give you peace.

C **Amen.**

457 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today



Text: tr. Lyra Davidica, 1708, London, alt.; (sts. 1–3): Latin, 14th cent.; (st. 4): Charles Wesley, 1707–88
Tune: Lyra Davidica, 1708, London
Text and tune: Public domain

Acknowledgments

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What the Rapture Is Not

The word "rapture" simply means being "caught up." It does not mean a secret coming of Christ that removes some people while others are left behind to face a tribulation. That teaching is not in 1 Thessalonians 4 or anywhere else in the New Testament. The Lord does not return in secret, and He does not abandon any of His own. "Caught up" is not a permanent location in the air or a one-way trip away from the earth. The fear that the dead might be left out, or that the living might be left behind, is the very fear Paul writes to correct.

Why the Pre-Tribulation Rapture Is Not Biblical

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 itself shows why the pre-tribulation rapture does not fit the text. Paul writes to people who are grieving the dead. He does not describe a secret removal of the living church that leaves others behind. He describes one return of the Lord: the Lord Himself descends with a shout, the voice of an archangel, and the trumpet of God; the dead in Christ rise first; then those who are alive are caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air. The result is that we will always be with the Lord. There is no gap, no secret stage, and no separate later coming for the rest of God's people. The dead and the living are gathered together at the same return.

The same public return appears elsewhere. Matthew 24:29–31 places the gathering of the elect at the visible coming of the Son of Man after the tribulation. 1 Corinthians 15:51–52 places the raising of the dead and the changing of the living at the last trumpet—one event. The pre-tribulation theory separates these into two comings, inserts a seven-year tribulation and a later millennium, and treats 1 Thessalonians 4 as an escape for some rather than the gathering of all who belong to Christ.

What the Rapture Is

In 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 the rapture is the public gathering of the whole Church—the Church Militant & the Church Triumphant—at the Lord's visible return. The dead in Christ rise first. Then those who are still alive are caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air. "Caught up" means suddenly seized and gathered to meet the descending Lord. The meeting is the welcome of a returning King; the Church goes out to meet Him and remains with Him. The result is not escape while others are left; the result is that we will always be with the Lord. This is the comfort Paul gives to those who grieve: no one who belongs to Christ is left behind. The dead are not left out. The living are not left out. Both are gathered to Him forever. Comfort one another with these words.

Reflection Questions

When the Bridegroom Seems Late: **1 Thessalonians 4:13–18**

General

Where has the fear of being left behind—by death, by the future, or by the Lord—spoken more loudly than the promise that the dead in Christ rise first and that we will always be with the Lord? How does the Bible's word in this text answer the accusation Satan uses against the grieving?

Youth

When someone you care about dies, or when you wonder what happens to people who have already died, what does Satan want you to believe about being left out? What does the Bible actually promise in 1 Thessalonians 4 about the dead and the living being gathered together with Him?

Gen Z

You have heard versions of the "left behind" story—sometimes as fear, sometimes as entertainment. Where has that story shaped how you think about Jesus' return? How does the actual text (the dead rise first, the living are caught up together with them, and we will always be with the Lord) correct the fear Satan uses to make the gospel feel like a test you might fail?

Spiritually Curious

Many people hear that some will be taken and others left behind. The text says the opposite: the dead in Christ rise first, the living are gathered with them, and the result is that we will always be with the Lord. If Jesus does not leave His own behind—neither the living nor the dead—what does that change about the fear of death or the fear of missing out?

Faith & Family Survey

Everyone 17 and older is invited to take the Faith & Life Survey. Couples and families, please each complete it yourselves so we receive your individual input—your anonymous responses help us strengthen family ministry that prepares households for eternity through Lutheran theology in action.



Faith & Life Survey

Scan to take the survey

https://bit.ly/4iqgcZQ

Pastor: Mike Redeker
Elders: John McDowell, Ray Seeley, John O'Connor, Gary Anderson
DCE: Jonathan Peterson
Acolytes: Ryker Bish and Liam Conwell

Ushers: Brian Bruns, Cody Bonnell, Daniel Bonnell, Nicholas Bonnell
Organist: Marilyn Smith
Greeters:

PRAYER REQUESTS– *"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."* Prayer requests for you, family with permission, or by a pastor, may be sent to **admin@mlgj.org** & **sec@mlgj.org**

Messiah's Prayer List

Birth Announcements:

Continued health and healing: Chris Ballard, Mary Ann Bradshaw, Peter Chaney, Darlene & Darrel Clark, Lucy Clemmer, Linda Currey, Carol Haller, Jimmie Kenner and family, Carrie Lamgo, Jack Messenger, Jess Messenger, Tom Moore, Illona Rennels, Bob Rennick, Esther Schlauger, Karen Skoog, Bill & Deborah Stacy, Shane Walz, Jeff Vagneur, Rick Shaper, Joanie Lozano, Edie, Whinnie, Mark Ackermann, Brent Allred, Dan Crabtree, Jennifer Oien, Jennifer Oien's friend Alietta, Darlene Johnson's Family, Mike Merry, Paula Rigoni, Marc Davis

Fighting serious diseases: Sharon Breshears, Denise Currie, Courtney Grieger, Misty Hannah, Steve Kaskus, Shane Larsen, Anna Marie Mautz, Barb Moore, Melani Perschbacher, Debra Proctor, Diana Walcher, John Moseman Jr., Sue Morris, Brian Johnson, Bobby Jones

Continue to fight cancer: Karen Caldwell, Tyler, Rhonda Covington, James Hamleton, Les Hawkins, Barbara Huff, Mike Jerome, Arthur Kluegel, Chuck Magner, Marshall Mead, Walter Netzke, Amy Poulin, Rick Reimers, Loretta Siilata, Skogen, Karen Shoda, Connie Vazquez, Morgan Stewart, Jane Withee

Home Hospice Care:

Called Home:

Serving in the military: Jake Bradshaw, Jack Eberhard, Elijah and Rachael Messenger, Karen and James Moore, Caleb Schmidt, Brandon & Kayt Soine, Eric Stahly.

Messiah Lutheran members

Messiah Lutheran faculty & staff

Messiah Lutheran Church/School

High School Students

Mavericks of Messiah: *Continue to pray for the college students.*

Missionaries: Rev. Tim Norton to the Navajo Nation and **Rev Dr. Karl Heimer**, Ysleta, El Paso Texas.

Celebrating Birthdays:

8-Nov Bob Johnson, Marla Larson
11-Nov Ken Currey, Carol Peterson
14-Nov Ronan Bethka, Debbie Fenske, Grayson Morris

Wedding Anniversaries: