September 13, 2026

LAKE OCONEE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

God writes His Word on our Lives, building us into a Family engaged in Spirit-filled Service.

LAKE OCONEE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

1089 Lake Oconee Parkway
Eatonton, GA 31024
Church Office: 706-485-4600
Cheri Kitchens, Church Secretary
www.lakeoconeelutheran.org
Office email: officelolc@gmail.com

Pastor Steven Hayden
Pastor's Cell: 515-360-5081
Pastor's email: revshayden@gmail.com

Elder of the Month: Mark Ketchie
Scripture reader: Thomas Mathson
Coffee & Fellowship:
Greeter(s): Evelyn Crockett
Sunday Counter(s): Jaye McCrea & Charlie Crouch

Lake Oconee Lutheran is blessed to be able to live-stream our worship on Facebook and our website for those unable to be present. Our cameras are directed at the front of the sanctuary, but by entering and by your presence here you consent to be recorded if you appear.

Pre-Service Music: This is time to turn our hearts & minds toward God in preparation of worship.

Instrumental Prelude **Dr. Lev Ryabinin**
Choir Anthem **Dr. Youngmi Kim**
Invocation

Confession and Absolution

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.**

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

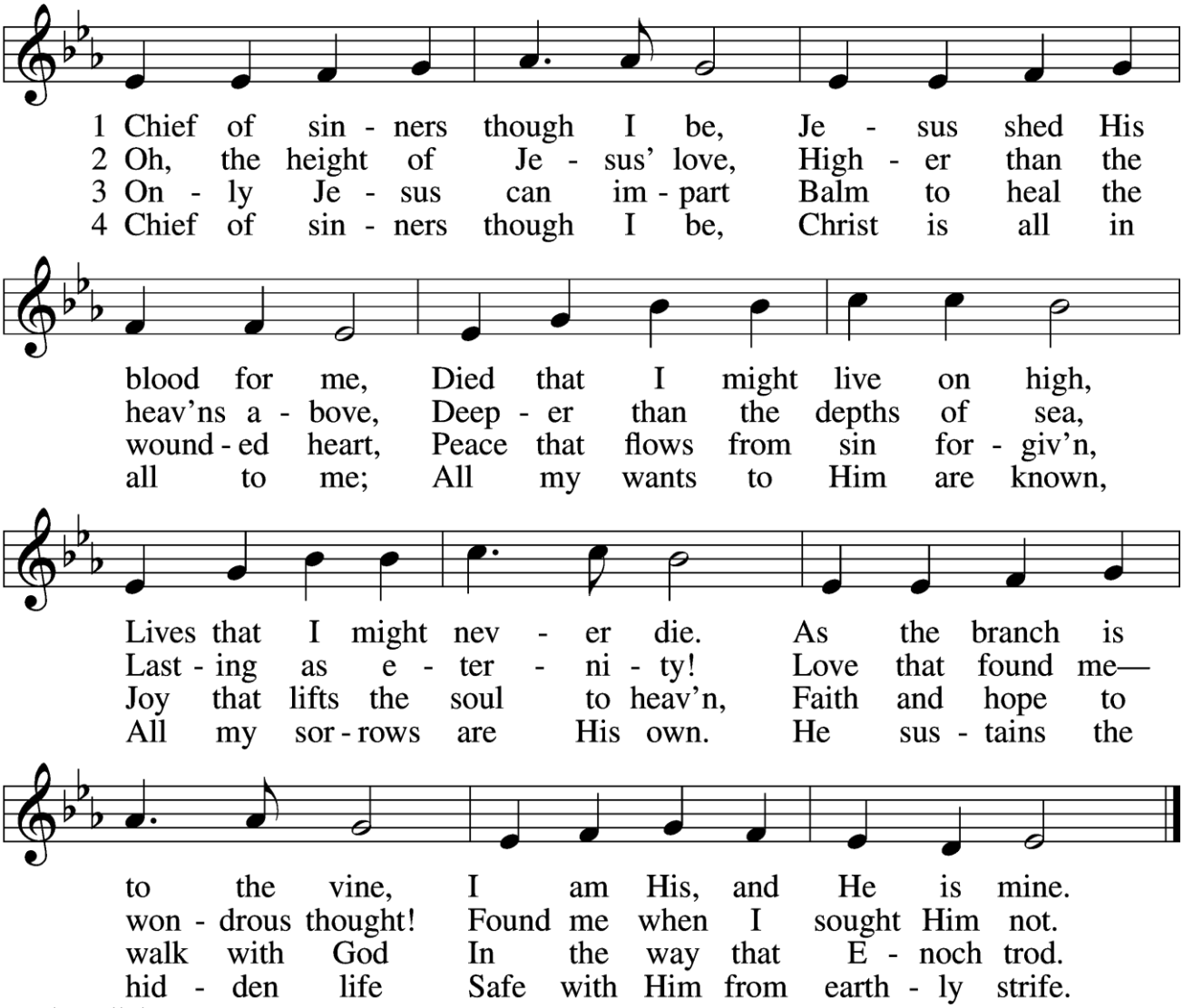
C: **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean**. **We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your 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.

C: **Amen.**

Hymn #611

"Chief of Sinners Though I Be"



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Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also, with you.

P: O God, our refuge and strength, the author of all godliness, hear the devout prayers of Your Church, especially in times of persecution, and grant that what we ask in faith we may obtain; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The First Lesson: Genesis 50:15–21

15When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said,
"It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we
did to him." 16So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave
this command before he died, 17'Say to Joseph, Please forgive the
transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.'
And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of
your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18His brothers also
came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your
servants." 19But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of
God? 20As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good,
to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are
today. 21So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus
he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

R: This is the Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

The Epistle Lesson: Romans 14:1–12

1As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to
quarrel over opinions. 2One person believes he may eat anything, while
the weak person eats only vegetables. 3Let not the one who eats despise
the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on
the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. 4Who are you to pass
judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he
stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him
stand.

5One person esteems one day as better than another, while another
esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own

mind. [6]The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. [7]For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. [8]If 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. [9]For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

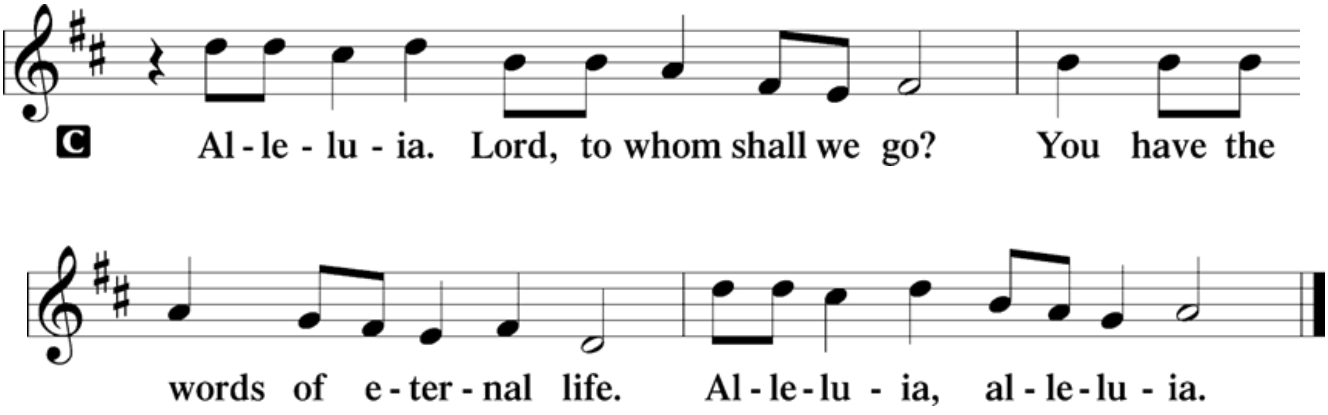
[10]Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; [11]for it is written,

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall confess to God."

[12]So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

R: This is the Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

The Alleluia Verse

Holy Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35
R: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 18

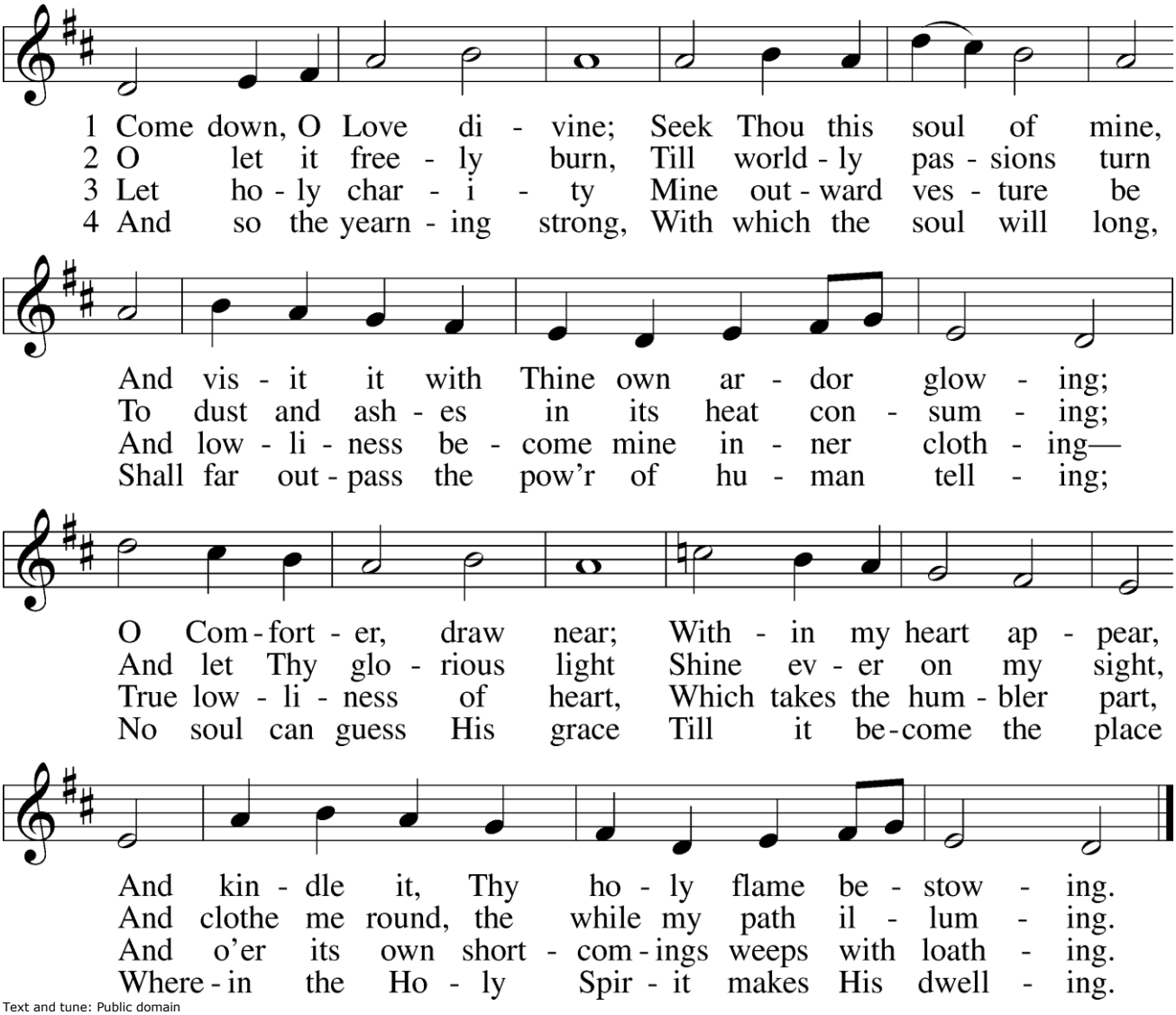
C: Glory to You, O Lord.

[21]Peter came up and said to [Jesus], “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” [22]Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.

[23]“Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. [24]When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. [25]And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. [26]So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ [27]And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. [28]But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay what you owe.’ [29]So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ [30]He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. [31]When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. [32]Then his master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. [33]And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’ [34]And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. [35]So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”

R: This is the Gospel of the Lord

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

Sermon Hymn #501 “Come Down, O Love Divine”

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The Message **Pastor Steve Hayden**

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.

Offering

To Our Guests: We do not charge for any of our services. All our services, programs, and expenses are freely supported by the gifts and offerings of our members. As our guests, you have not been invited for what you can give, but for what God can give you. The Offering is collected at the door when you enter.

Prayer of the Church

* Prayer of The Church
(After the pastor ends each petition with, "Lord in Your Mercy, the congregation responds with, "Hear our prayer.")

The Lord's Prayer

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.**

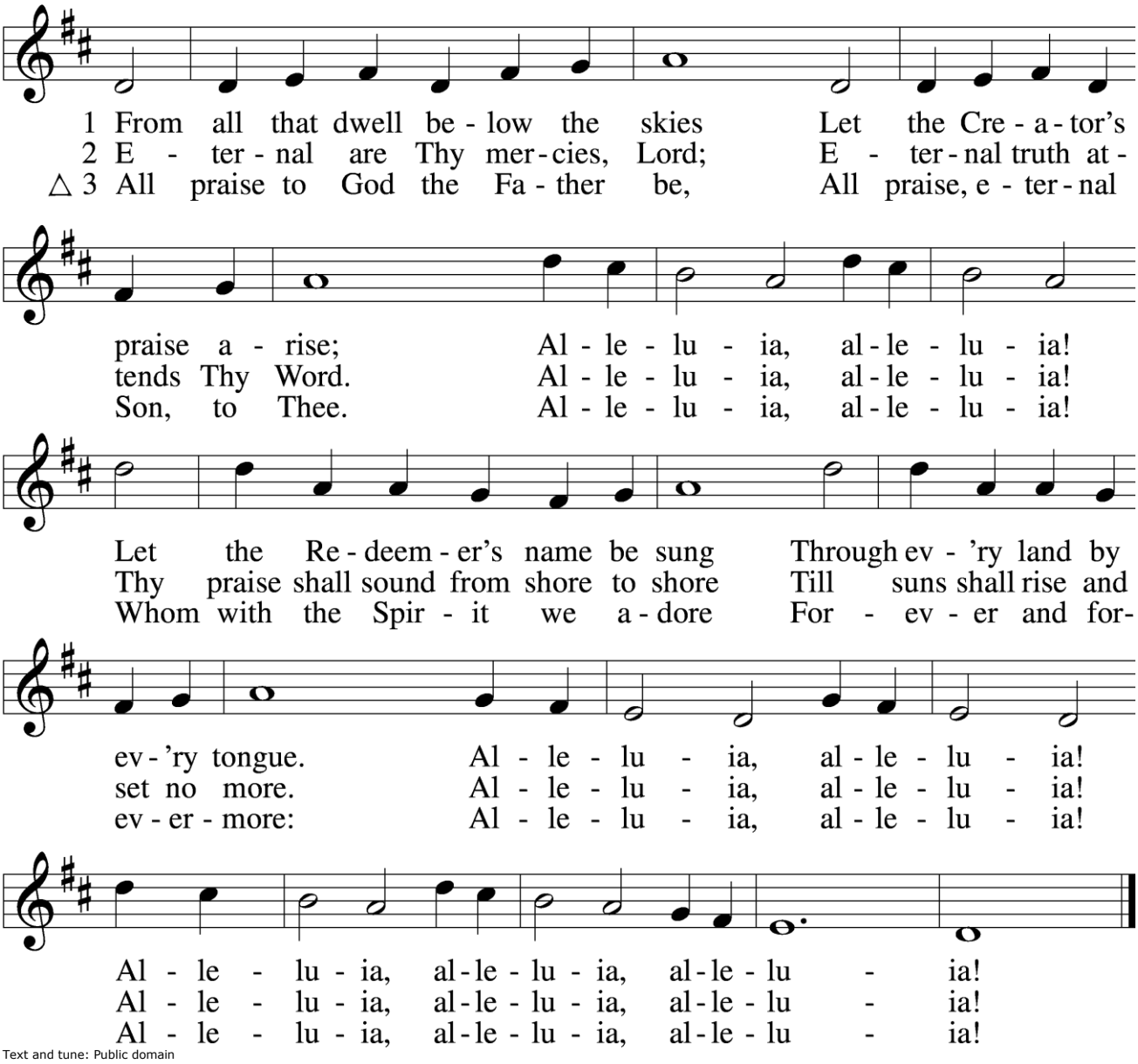
Benediction

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord makes His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord looks upon you with favor and gives you peace.

C: Amen.

Congregational Hymn #816

"From All That Dwell Below the Skies"



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Announcements

The Dismissal

P: Go in Peace, Serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God

+ Post-service Music +

GOD'S BLESSINGS to all those celebrating:

Birthdays

- 9/15 Elizabeth Ringer

Anniversaries

- 9/14 Charles & Donna Crouch
- 9/18 Don & Pam Kunz

Best Wishes!

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Sunday	Council Meeting	After Worship
Tuesday	Women' Bible Study	10 am
Wednesday	Zoom Bible Study	10:30 am
Sunday	Choir Practice	9 am
Sunday	Children's Bible School	9 am
Sunday	Bible Class	9 am
Sunday	Worship Service	10:30 am

Sunday Morning Bible Class

The story of the Bible has been called "The Greatest Story Ever Told." But did you ever wonder where the Bible came from? Who wrote it? Why they wrote it? Who decided which books to include? In this study, we will join Dr. Paul Maier as he shares with us "How We Got the Bible."

Join us on **Sunday mornings at 9am** in person and live streamed to learn more about how God gave us His Word.

Wednesday morning Zoom class

What is prayer? It's a simple enough question and a natural place to start. Perhaps just as good a question is "What isn't prayer?" Prayer, quite simply, is speaking to God what is in our hearts. Prayer is not a means through which God speaks to us; God speaks to us through His

Word. In prayer, then, we have the privilege of striking up a conversation with our Creator.

Join us on Zoom every **Wednesday morning at 10:30am** for **Prayer.**

Women's Bible Study

Join us each **Tuesday at 10:00 AM** in the Conference Room for a Bible study: "Luke: Gut-Level Compassion" by Lisa Harper. Together, we will dive into Luke's Gospel and look at the profound, unconditional love Jesus has for real, messy people. You don't have to have it all together to fit in here—just come as you are!

Lake Oconee Lutheran has activated a call committee. The committee's job will be to develop a list of pastor candidates to present to the Voter's Assembly out of which the Voters may select one to call to serve our church along with Pastor Steve and to serve the mission in Milledgeville.

The most important job of this committee, in fact, the most important job for each of us, is to pray. Pray that the Lord will lead us to the pastor who may serve here faithfully and joyfully and be a part of our life in mission and obedience to God's Word.

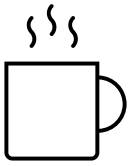
Join me in saying this prayer, or a prayer like this:

> **Almighty God, since You have called Your Church to witness that in Christ You have reconciled us to Yourself, grant that by Your Holy Spirit we may proclaim the good news of Your salvation so that all who hear it may receive new life. May Your Holy Spirit lead and guide us in calling a pastor to serve among us according to Your will and proclaim Your saving Gospel to us and to our communities. And may that same Spirit help the one called to recognize Your presence among us and, if it be Your**

will, to accept the call as Pastor here. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

American Red Cross

Upcoming Blood Drive dates are scheduled for **October 1 and November 5.** We will need volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering email Pam Kunz at Kunzpd3@outlook.com. To sign up to donate blood go to redcrossblood.org and use code LOLC.



Do you enjoy our coffee and treats after service during **Coffee Fellowship time**? If so, there are quite a few openings over the next month for you to provide something. Join with a friend or bring a few things to share on your own. Sign up on the **Blue Table** for the week that you are available to host our **Coffee Fellowship Time.**

Thank you to everyone who donates flowers for our Sunday worship! If you would like to give flowers, please keep these two important points in mind:

- **Bulletin Dedications:** To have your dedication included in the bulletin (e.g., *in memory of* or *in honor of*), please write the exact wording on the sign-up sheet located on the **blue table in the entry**.
- **Strictly No Lilies:** Please explicitly request **no lilies** in your

arrangements. A member of our congregation has a life-threatening allergy to them and cannot be in the building if they are present.

Make a Joyful Noise: Join the Choir!

Do you love to sing? Whether you are a seasoned vocalist or just love singing along to the radio, our Church Choir has a seat waiting for you! There are three great reasons to join us:

1. You have a wonderful voice and want to share it.
2. You have an okay voice and want to improve it.
3. You think you have a terrible voice, and this is your chance to make a joyful noise anyway!

No auditions or professional experience are required—just a heart ready to praise. We practice on **Sunday Morning at 9 am** in the **Choir Room.** We can't wait to sing with you!

Help our kids experience God's love! We are recruiting Children's Sunday school teachers to pour into the next generation. We need two volunteers per **Sunday for our 9:00 – 10:00 AM** Bible Study Hour. If a childhood Sunday school teacher made a difference in your life, consider

stepping into that role for our kids today. Head to the blue table in the entryway to sign up on the sheet! You can also sign up online with Signup Genius.

Be a Pantry Partner!

Our **Little Free Pantry** needs weekly volunteers to help keep this ministry thriving. If you're able to serve, please stop by the **Blue Table** and choose a week to stock the pantry.

All pantry items are stored in the choir room — simply select your week, gather the food, and fill the pantry for our neighbors in need. Your contribution blesses our community in a meaningful way.

📦 Bread of Life Ministry: Volunteer Opportunities

Help us feed our community! The Bread of Life food pantry needs volunteers for our monthly schedule. Please note our regular hours and upcoming dates below.

📝 How to Sign Up

- **Sign-up sheets are now available on the BLUE table in the entryway.**
- Please drop by and add your name to the dates you can help.

🗓️ Monthly Volunteer Schedule

- **Food Pantry Setup**
  - 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month
  - 1:00 PM
  - *Note: No 4th Wednesday setup in November or December.*
- **Food Pantry Distribution**
  - 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month

    - 10:00 AM
    - *Note: No 4th Thursday distribution in November or December.*
- **Golden Harvest Delivery**
    - 3rd Friday of every month
    - 9:00 AM

Upscale Resale Helpers Needed!

Make a direct impact in fighting local hunger. Helpers are needed to assist with setting up, organizing, and breaking down tables for the Upscale Resale fundraiser. 100% of all proceeds support Greene and Putnam County food pantries.

- Setup & Organizing: Thursday, September 24 at 2:00 PM
- Table Breakdown: Saturday, September 26 at 3:00 PM

If you can lend a hand with the tables, please sign up on the Blue Table in the Narthex.

Volunteers Needed!

We need people to sign up to help! We need help in the Little Free Pantry, Coffee fellowship, greeters, ushers and more.

You can sign up for the following Sunday Worship Volunteer Roles online through Sign-up Genius:

- Greeter
- Scripture Reader
- Communion Assistant
- Communion Usher
- Coffee Fellowship

- Sunday School teacher

You can call or email Cheri in the Church Office to have her send a link to the Sign-Up Genius website or to sign up for you.

Additional volunteer Roles include:

- ❖ Altar Care there is a signup sheet in the narthex on the front table.
- ❖ Sunday service camera operator. We will provide training on how to manage it. signup sheets are in the narthex on the front table, or you can call/email the church office.
- ❖ Little Free Pantry signup sheets are in the narthex on the front table.

LAKE OCONEE LUTHERAN CHURCH

We are Built for a Purpose

Built Through Word and Sacrament –
…believing in and making faithful and frequent use of the Bible, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper as the means by which God gives and sustains faith and empowers and strengthens us for Christian living.

Built Through Ongoing Learning –
…providing quality, Bible based instruction to foster greater understanding of God's Word and to better equip members for their discipleship.

Built For Service –
…reaching out to others by word and deed to join in the sharing of God's blessings and grace, which is free to all believers.

Built For Discipleship –
…utilizing fully our time, talents, and resources to serve and love the Lord, furthering our commission of discipleship.

Built For Fellowship –
…caring for and sharing with our church family; fostering greater love, understanding, and concern for the physical and spiritual well-being of all brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.

The window behind the altar is our EASTER SUNRISE WINDOW.
The cross hanging in front of the window is an empty cross, reminding us that Jesus rose from the dead and is alive now to be with us here and always. Every Sunday is a celebration of Easter. The symbol on the front of the ALTAR is a combination of two Greek letters: the "chi," which looks like our English "x," and the "rho," which looks like our "p." In the Greek, these letters are the first two of "Christ." Combined as they are, they suggest the cross. Superimposed on the cross is a heart, the reminder that God's love for us is the reason Jesus died on the cross. God's love for us empowers us to share his love with others.