



"HE TOLD THEM,
"YOU ALSO
GO AND

work
IN MY
vineyard

AND I WILL PAY YOU
WHATEVER IS RIGHT."

MATTHEW 20:4

September 20, 2025

Saint Thomas Lutheran

23801 Kelly Road, Eastpointe, Michigan 48021 - 586-772-3370

www.stl-eastpointe.org

Pastor - Rev. Dietrick Gladden - 248-719-2766 pastorgladden@stl-eastpointe.org

Specific Ministry Pastor - Rev. Richard A. VanBriggle, Deacon Don Cooley

Connecting Individuals to Jesus and to One Another

Educating Minds – Growing Faith – Serving People

We are here to serve our community. As you worship with us online, the Lord Jesus is at work, uniting us as friends and family. If you want to learn more about ministry in the community, go to www.stl-eastpointe.org, or like us on FaceBook. To get your questions answered more personally, contact the church office (586-772-3370) and ask for a pastor to call you.

Divine Service Setting Four

LSB page 203

Prelude

Announcements and Attendance/Communion Registration

(either use the form on the last page, and put in white boxes at entrances, or the QR code)

Opening Hymn

“Seek Ye First”

LSB 712

Rise on last verse

- 1 Seek ye first the kingdom of God, And His righteousness.
And all these things shall be added unto you! Allelu, alleluia!
- 2 Ask and it shall be given unto you, Seek and ye shall find,
Knock and the door shall be opened unto you, Allelu, alleluia!
- 3 Man does not live by bread alone, But by ev’ry word
That proceeds from the mouth of the Lord, Allelu, alleluia!

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Confession and Absolution

L: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

L: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C: **who made heaven and earth.**

L: 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.**

L: 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.

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

L: 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.

C: **Amen.**

Psalm

27:1-9; antiphon: v. 4a

L: The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

C: When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall.

L: Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.

C: One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.

L: For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me high upon a rock.

C: And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

L: Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me!

C: You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, LORD, do I seek."

L: Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation!

Kyrie (sung)

C: Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy

Gloria in Excelsis

1 To God on high be glory And peace to all the earth; Goodwill from God in heaven
Proclaimed at Jesus' birth! We praise and bless You, Father; Your holy name, we sing—
Our thanks for Your great glory, Lord God, our heav'nly King.

2 To You, O sole-begotten, The Father's Son, we pray; O Lamb of God, our Savior,
You take our sins away. Have mercy on us, Jesus; Receive our heartfelt cry,
Where You in pow'r are seated At God's right hand on high—

3 For You alone are holy; You only are the Lord. Forever and forever,
Be worshiped and adored; You with the Holy Spirit Alone are Lord Most High,
In God the Father's glory. "Amen!" our glad reply.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Let us pray. Lord God, heavenly Father, since we cannot stand before You relying on anything we have done, help us trust in Your abiding grace and live according to Your Word; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sharing of Peace

L: The peace of the Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

(share the peace with one another then be seated)

The Service of the Word

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 55:6-9

"Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

(after the reading)

R: This is the word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Epistle Reading

Philippians 1:12-14, 19-30

I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. . . .

for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

(after the reading)

R: This is the word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

The Holy Gospel

*(all rise)***Matthew 20:1-16**

C: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

L: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 20th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] “The kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’ And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’ So the last will be first, and the first last.”

(after the reading)

L: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Nicene Creed

(LSB Inside back cover)

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen

Children’s Sermon *(Please be seated)*

Hymn of the Day

“Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling”

LSB 827

- 1 Hark, the voice of Jesus calling, “Who will go and work today?
Fields are white and harvests waiting— Who will bear the sheaves away?”
Loud and long the Master calleth; Rich reward He offers thee.
Who will answer, gladly saying, “Here am I, send me, send me”?
- 2 Some take up His task in morning, To their Lord responding soon;
Some are called in heat of midday, Others late in afternoon;
Even as the sun is setting, Some are sent into the fields,
There to gather in the bounty That God’s Word so richly yields.
- 3 For as rain and snow from heaven Water seeds in dusty soil,
Causing them to bud and flower, Giving bread to those who toil;

So the Lord sends forth His promise, Words of life and joy and peace—
Never void to Him returning, Bearing fruit with great increase.

- 4 Harken to the Lord whose coming Marks the time when grace shall end,
When with His angelic reapers He in glory shall descend.
Soon the night, the final harvest; Soon the time for work shall cease.
Then the souls His grace has garnered Shall enjoy His Sabbath peace.

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Sermon

Matthew 20:1-16

GRACE IS NOT EARNED

In Matthew 20:1–16, Jesus teaches us that **GRACE IS NOT EARNED—it is given**. As we study this parable, we will look personally at what Christ has done for **us**. We will see that we cannot earn God’s forgiveness or prove that we deserve His love. Instead, Christ stepped into our place, carried our sin to the cross, died for us, and rose again so that we could receive forgiveness, righteousness, and eternal life as a gift. **We are not saved because of what we have done for Christ, but because of what Christ has done for us.**

Couch Questions (Adults)

1. What does Matthew 20:1–16 teach us about the difference between earning something and receiving God’s grace as a gift?
2. When you think about your own life, how does knowing that Jesus died and rose for you change the way you see God’s forgiveness and love?

Car Questions (Kids)

3. Who loves you very much?
4. Did Jesus die on the cross for you?
5. Can we earn Jesus’ love, or does Jesus give His love to us?

The Prayer of the Church

L: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

(after each petition)

L: Lord in your mercy,

C: **Hear our prayer.**

L: Hear us, heavenly Father, for the sake of Christ Jesus, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

The Service of the Sacrament

“As we receive the True Body and Blood of our Lord, our faith is fed, our spirits are encouraged, and we are moved to share God's grace with the world.”

[Because of the closeness of this sharing (and the concerns expressed in

1 Corinthians 11:27-29) we ask that those who have not been taught the faith at STL speak with a pastor or elder before communing.]

Preface (all rise)

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

L: 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 singing:

**C: (sung) Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;
Heaven and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name.
Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord.
Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

L: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In Your righteous judgement You condemned the sin of Adam and Eve, who ate the forbidden fruit, and You justly barred them and all their children from the tree of life. Yet, in Your great mercy, You promised salvation by a second Adam, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and made His cross a life-giving tree for all who trust in Him.

We give You thanks for the redemption You have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may faithfully eat and drink of the fruit of His cross and receive the blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation that come to us in His body and blood.

C: Amen

Lord's Prayer

LSB, inside back cover

L: Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

Words of Our Lord

Pax Domini

L: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen

**O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away;
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.**

**O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away;
Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ, And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.**

Distribution of the Sacrament *(Please be seated)*

Alcohol-free wine is available in the center of each individual cup tray.

Gluten-free host is available upon request from the host server.

If you are coming for a blessing, please cross your arms across your chest.

Hymns during the Distribution

“Communion Hymn”

M. Opie

“We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight”

LSB 720

- 1 We walk by faith and not by sight, No gracious words we hear
From Him who spoke as none e’er spoke, But we believe Him near.
- 2 We may not touch His hands and side, Nor follow where He trod;
But in His promise we rejoice And cry “My Lord and God!”
- 3 Help then, O Lord, our unbelief; And may our faith abound
To call on You when You are near And seek where You are found.
- 4 For You, O resurrected Lord, Are found in means divine:
Beneath the water and the Word, Beneath the bread and wine.
- 5 Lord, when our life of faith is done, In realms of clearer light
We may behold You as You are, With full and endless sight.

Text: Public domain

Nunc Dimittis

(Please rise)

LSB 211

**O Lord, now let Your servant Depart in heav’nly peace,
For I have seen the glory Of Your redeeming grace:
A light to lead the Gentiles Unto Your holy hill,
The glory of Your people, Your chosen Israel.**

**All glory to the Father, All glory to the Son,
All glory to the Spirit, Forever Three in One;
For as in the beginning, Is now, shall ever be,
God’s triune name resounding Through all eternity.**

Post-Communion Collect

L: Let us pray.

C: We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore
You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love

toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever Amen.

Benedicamus and Benediction

L: Let us bless the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

L: The Lord bless you ...

C: **Amen**

Sending Hymn

"The Lord Is My Light"

LSB 723

**ref The Lord is my light and my salvation, The Lord is the stronghold of my life.
Since the Lord is my life, my strength, and my all, Whom then shall I fear?**

- 1 There is one thing I ask of the Lord: To dwell in His house forever,
To gaze on the beauty of the Lord All the days of my life. **Refrain**
- 2 Do not hide Your face, O Lord; Ev'ry day I will seek Your face.
Though my father and mother may forsake me, The Lord will receive me. **Refrain**
- 3 Teach me, Lord, and keep me on Your paths; Guide me, Lord, along a level way.
I will gaze on the goodness of the Lord In the land of all the living. **Refrain**

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Please place your offering in the boxes at the entrances!



**Today's Flowers are given to praise and honor our Lord
for blessings received.**

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Watch services on Facebook or at www.stl-eastpointe.org – videotaping in progress during service

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Your personal prayer guide for the week of:
September 20, 2026

Our Primary Prayer focus for this week is upon Christ's people on earth:

- Keep us all ever mindful that it is only by Your grace we are included in Your kingdom and privileged to serve in it.
- Embolden Your Church to honor You with our bodies in this life, that we may also depart this life in faith to be with Christ, which is far better.
- Grant that we may serve our neighbors in love, and that all authorities would exercise their callings with humility and wisdom on behalf of the defenseless.
- Nourish all who are still being instructed, and bring them soon to Your table.

And we remember all children who hear the gospel in church and from their parents, and those in hospice care.



To connect to the **STL PRAYER CHAIN**, contact Karen Dolan (mdolan421@gmail.com), text "Prayer" to 1-586-800-2223, or scan this QR code, with your phone's camera, to be taken to the prayer request form.

† In Our Thoughts and Prayers †

✠**For Loved Ones Called Home:** Linda Conger was called home September 11th.

✠**God's Healing Hand on:** Janice Engel, Nancy Wargo, Doug Klawender (son of Shirley), Emily Henze (Caroline's daughter-in-law), Carol Hawkins (cousin of Jan Patty), Jennifer Patterson (friend of Jan Patty), Regina (aunt of Jan Patty) Marlene Debrosse and Donna Karas and Kathy Bommarito and Matt Kaye (Debbie Kujawski's relatives and friends), Debbie Closurdo, Tom Habrowski (Sue Wensink's brother) Nicole Lechner (Daughter of Hope Nawrocki, niece of Ann Schnepfer and John Hupp), Maryann Setter (niece of Caroline Henze), Uli Korell, Wilhelm Wolf (Cousins of Vera Lafrate)

✠**Continued prayers for Healing & Strength for:** Harrison Ahee, Kennedy Pank (great-granddaughter of Marilyn Redmond), Andrew Brejnak, 19, (grandson of Gerry & Nola Klonowski, son of their daughter, Lisa), Robert Laroche (family of Jan Adams), Claire Armstrong (granddaughter of Clyde & Carolyn Armstrong), Sally Burk (sister of Lois Revard), Tamara Sommer (Connie's daughter-in-law), Marge Bittner, Steve Kruse, Beatrice Paden (Pastor Gladden's aunt), Pastor Rick VanBriggle.

Palliative care: Dolly Houth, Estella Robbins (Mother of Roberta Gibson)

Upcoming Events:



(visit the web page or see the STL publications for more information)

Family Night – September 24th from 6 pm – 8 pm

Join with the community to share a meal & fun!

MCREST 2026 - September 20th-27th. We are still in need of monetary donations. The sign-up sheets are in the west entrance, stop by and sign up and grab a Thrivent shirt or 2!

If you have any questions contact Kelly Crivella 313.550.2950 or kelly.crivella@gmail.com. Thank you for your continued support of this very special ministry.

September 28th - H.I.S. II – 7:00 pm in conference room 1

All women are invited to the Bible Study – “Driven, Heroes of the Faith” followed by a short meeting and assembling backpacks.

Clothing Closet - September 30th 11am – 1pm

Your help is needed!

Love My City – October 10th 8 – 11am

Our community is not just the place we live; it's where we make connections and build lasting relationships with our neighbors. St. Thomas partners with local organizations across our community to make a real impact and share the love of Jesus with everyone we meet.

S.A.S.S. – October 17th

(Soup and Sandwich Saturday)

Your time and talents are needed!

Lutheran World Relief School Kits will be collected by H.I.S. II (Hearts in Study and Hands in Service) women's group. Please see the flyer for items and directions, located on the table in the west entrance or from Marilyn Redmond. Do not purchase the backpack, only items to be included in the backpack.

All Women Invited to H.I.S. II (Hearts in Study and Hands in Service Women's group) H.I.S II is beginning another season in His grace and we look forward to seeing everyone at our Bible Study/meeting on Sept 28th in Conference Room #1, 7:00 pm. We usually meet at 7pm on the last Monday of the month. We have another great bible study series planned – “Driven, Heroes of the Faith - Proclaiming Heroes of the Faith”. Come join us for fun and fellowship and a pleasant chance to grow in HIS Word!

I-Can Tutoring

Free tutoring for grades K – 8

Room 210 (enter through door #2)

August 31, 2026 – June 16, 2027

Monday – Thursday, from 3 – 6 PM

Includes: Reading, Math, Spelling, Writing, Prayer

Contact Mrs. Becky Gladden for more information at (248) 821-4967

Patrons are needed to help defray the cost of the professional musicians we hire for our Christmas Eve and Easter services. These musicians enhance the special services and help support the Kapelle and congregational singing. If you would like to be a patron, please place your donation in an envelope marked Patron for Kapelle and place it in the offering box in the back of the church, bring it to the church office or donate online, specifying Patron for Kapelle. Thank you so much for your genuine support of the Kapelle and its mission of edifying the church through music in song.

\$125 Per Household Bonus Grant for Your Congregation

In Celebration of our 125th anniversary, CEF is launching the Ministry Partner Bonus Grant. Here's how it works: when an individual investor (that's you or others that attend your church or school!) opens a new CEF note of \$1,000 or more with a term of at least 24 months, your church earns a \$125 Bonus Grant. One grant per household.

This is a meaningful way for your congregation members to put their savings to work for the Kingdom- and to see that faithfulness come back as a direct blessing to your ministry. Every new note opened is a step toward a stronger church.

How to participate:

1. Share this opportunity with your fellow congregation members and take advantage of it yourselves by opening another note.
2. Invite them to open a new CEF note of \$1,000 or more at a 24-month minimum term.
3. Your church receives a \$125 Bonus Grant-automatically. (Limit one per household.)

Visit churchextensionfund.com to learn more about our investment note offerings and to get started today.



EASY WAYS TO SUPPORT THE STL MISSION There is a variety of ways to give your support to the mission of STL. For many the easiest is to simply mail in a check or drop your offering off at the church. If you prefer electronic giving, STL offers multiple options:

- Text "GIVE" to 1-586-800-2223
- Visit: stl-eastpointe.org and click on "Mission Support"
- Through your Pay Pal account
- Scan this Quick Response (QR) code

These will connect you to our on-line giving form, where you can have your mission support offering automatically taken from your checking account or use your credit or debit card (STL is charged extra fees for debit and credit card transactions). **You can even set up recurring giving with many of these options!** IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, OR DESIRE ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE (586-772-3370).

CAMP RESTORE - Detroit **September and October Mission Envelopes**

DID YOU KNOW? The area surrounding Camp Restore Detroit (9th Precinct of Detroit) is only 20% populated. This means many houses, lots, and even entire blocks are abandoned. Camp Restore works to restore hope in the community through hosting groups of all ages and sizes, housing and feeding them, and partnering with community leaders and community organizations in activities of environmental cleanup, construction, and human care. **100% of your Mission Envelope donations (either using the envelope provided in your box or through your designation electronically or with a different envelope) to STL during the months of July & August will be given to World for Life Uganda. For more information on the mission, go to www.worldforlifeuganda.org or call (201) 423-0535.**