

Saint James Lutheran Church

September 20, 2026

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost



Parable of the Vineyard Workers

The Rev. John Locke

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www.saintjamesfay.org

Musician: Alyssa Hall

Worship Leaders		
	September 20 17 th Sunday after Pentecost	September 27 18 th Sunday after Pentecost
Assisting Minister	Ruth Ann Crecelius	Jacky Hummel
Lector	Anna Lisa Johannessen	Rick Black
Communion Assistant	Dave Runkle	Paula Burns
Ushers	Tonie Neal / James Peterson	Hannah Rea, Joan Eissinger
Greeter	Patsy Linkous	Barbara Azzarelli
Acolyte	Holden Linkous	Willow Linkous
Rover	Edward Samuelian	Todd Burns
Worship Nursery	Erika Stockwell, Tonie Neal	Amber Habermehl, Kathy Brown

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

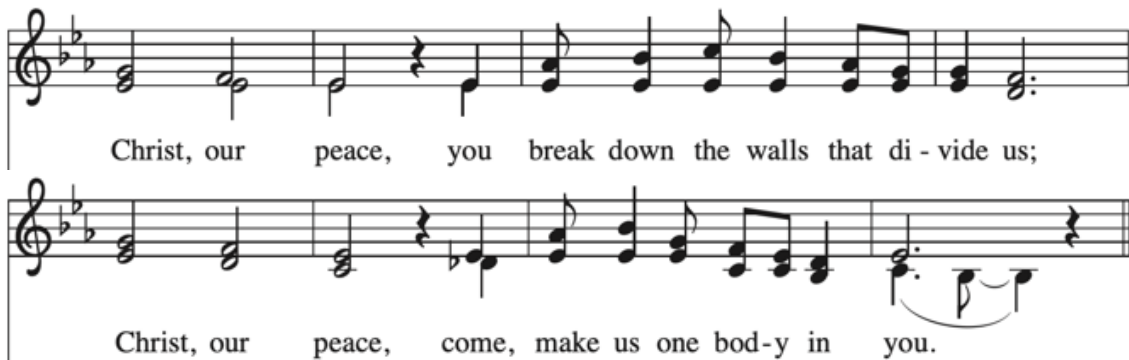
WORDS OF WELCOME

We stand

CONFESSION / FORGIVENESS LITANY *Based on Psalm 145:1-8*



Music of "Christ Our Peace" begins



We exalt our God and king. We will bless God's name forever and ever.
Let us confess our sins before God and one another.

Silence is kept for reflection as Music plays throughout confession.

We sing "Christ Our Peace"

Faithful God, each generation is called to tell of your mighty acts, yet we sometimes keep silent about your goodness. We fail to share the stories of your faithfulness and fail to encourage others in faith. Give this community of faith the courage to a bold witness of your love and mercy.

We sing "Christ Our Peace"

Gracious God, you are worthy of our praise, yet we often fail to place you at the center of our lives. We become distracted by our own concerns, desires, and accomplishments. We forget that every day is a gift from you and that our lives belong to you. Turn our hearts toward you and teach us to praise you in all that we do.

We sing "Christ Our Peace"

Faithful God, each generation is called to tell of your mighty acts, yet we sometimes keep silent about your goodness. We fail to obey your commands to love one another. To those who lead governments, give the courage to be humble and the integrity to elevate the concerns of the poor, the orphans, and the strangers among us. Empower us to truly love our neighbor.

We sing "Christ Our Peace"

Compassionate God, you are gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Yet we are often impatient, judgmental, and quick to anger. We withhold mercy from others even though we depend upon your mercy each day. Mold us to be gracious and merciful people, reflecting your steadfast love. **Amen.**

We sing "Christ Our Peace"

Hear the good news: The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. God does not abandon us in our sin but calls us back through grace and forgiveness. In Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven, our lives are renewed, and we are set free to praise God and serve our neighbors.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Lord of All Hopefulness ELW 765

GREETING

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

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together.

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

CHILDREN'S TIME

Following Children's Time:

- *Children (PreK-5th grade) are invited and encouraged to participate in the Children's Worship Time in the lower level. They will return prior to Holy Communion.*
- *Pre-K -2nd grade will be in the nursery for a supervised play time.*
- *Children 3rd -5th grade will participate in a more structured learning time led by Jacky Hummel.*

(Adult volunteers will meet children at sanctuary entrance doors and accompany them to the lower level. They will return to the sanctuary during the Hymn of The Day or Apostles Creed.)

FIRST READING Jonah 3:10—4:11

¹⁰ When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

^{4:1} But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the Lord and said, “O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. ³ And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” ⁴ And the Lord said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” ⁵ Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. ⁶ The Lord God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.”

⁹ But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” ¹⁰ Then the Lord said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?”

The word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

We stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (Setting 8)

Al-le-lu-ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e-ter-nal life. Al-le-lu-ia.
Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.
Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia.

GOSPEL The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Matthew 20:1-16

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹ “The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ ⁷ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ ⁹ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² 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.’ ¹³ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius?’ ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

We sit.

SERMON

Pastor John

HYMN OF THE DAY

This Is The Spirit’s Entry Now

ELW 448

We stand.

APOSTLES CREED

We confess our faith, using the words of the Apostles Creed.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

Response: I renounce them.

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

Response: I renounce them.

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

Response: I renounce them.

Do you believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit?

**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 to the dead.**

**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.**

We sit.

RECEIVING OF NEW MEMBERS

We welcome Tassie Collins and Patrick Rosenfeld.



RITE OF BAPTISM

We welcome Tyler Evans Collins Rosenfeld, Teddy Elijah Collins Rosenfeld, and Jacob Edward Smalley III to the family of God through the sacrament of baptism.

At the end of the baptism the Assisting Minister will lead in the following welcome:

Let us welcome these new members and the newly baptized.

You belong to Christ, in whom you have been baptized.

We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share.

**Join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing
God's creative and redeeming word to all the world. Alleluia!**

INTRODUCTION OF THE BAPTIZED & NEW MEMBERS

PEACE

The peace of God be with you always.

And also with you.

We share this peace as a sign of our baptismal unity as children of God. The “exchange of peace” (also commonly called “sharing the peace” or “passing the peace”) is an act of reconciliation that serves as a transition point between the Word and Meal portions of the liturgy.

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.



Support of the ministries of St. James, as well as the wider church, is appreciated. To donate with cash or check use an envelope from the back of the pew or scan the QR code to donate digitally. Thank you for your generosity.



ANTHEM *Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us*

Adult Choir

We stand as offering is presented.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

(Names of those on the congregation's prayer list are listed in the back of the bulletin)

Each petition concludes with "Hear us, O God."

Congregation responds with "Your mercy is great."

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW setting 8)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER *(Traditional Version)*

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.**

THE HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Christ invites you to this table.
All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!
Thanks be to God!

We sit.

COMMUNION INSTRUCTIONS

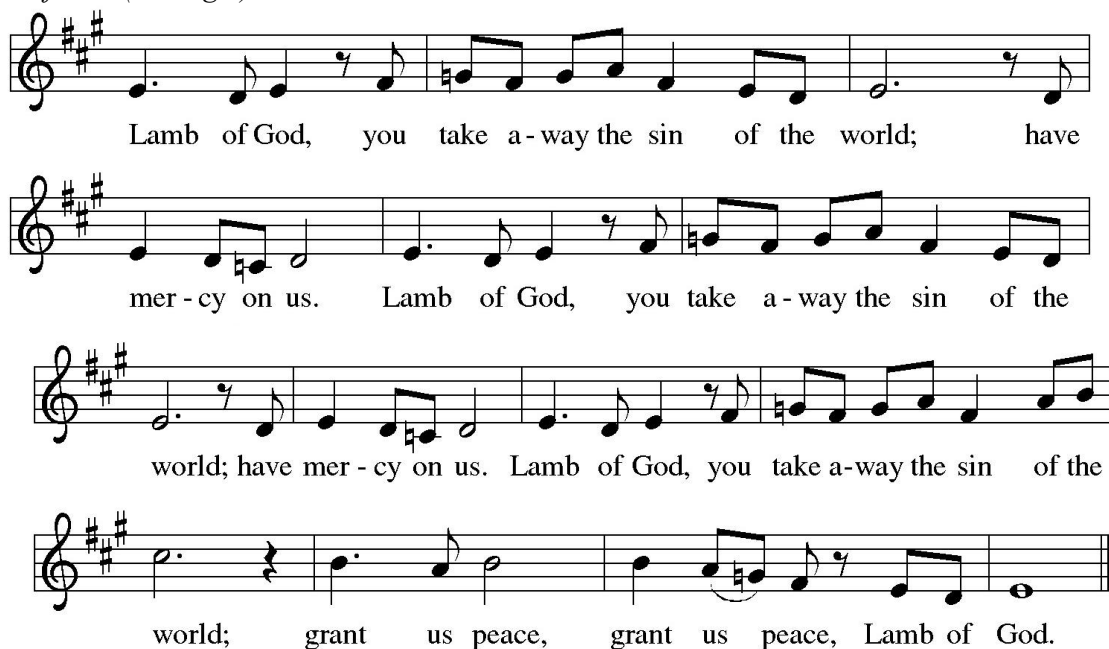
All are welcome at Holy Communion. Lutherans believe that Jesus' real presence is in, under, and through the bread and wine. The sacrament is effective in either bread or wine, so if you have an issue with either bread or wine, you may commune with one element. Grape juice and gluten-free wafers are available for those who prefer. We will distribute bread and wine by individual cup. Children and others not communing may fold arms across their chest, and they will receive a blessing from the communion minister.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say
The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
And each person may respond **Amen.**

COMMUNION SONGS

Lamb of God (Setting 8)



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

Baptized In Water

ELW 456

Will You Let Me Be Your Servant

ELW 659

We stand.

TABLE BLESSING

May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His Grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Sustaining God,
with this bread and cup,
you nourish us with mercy and abundant life.
By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world.
Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love,
following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.
Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

The God of love
draw you into full accord and one mind,
in the body of Christ Jesus.

Amen.

The God of hope
grant you strength and joy in all circumstances
through the interceding of the Spirit.

Amen.

The God of grace
✠ bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN *Rise Up Oh Saints of God* ELW 669

DISMISSAL

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE



We welcome the families of Jacob Smalley, Tassie Collins, Patrick Rosenfeld, Teddy Collins Rosenfeld, and Tyler Collins Rosenfeld. Celebrating baptism is truly a blessing for the church and a particular joy for this congregation. We are always thankful to have family and friends present to join in this gift of God.

Everyone is invited to gather for a time of reception and celebration following worship.

A special welcome to Rev. Michael and Beth Collins, uncle and aunt of Tassie Collins.
Pastor Mike is retired ELCA clergy, and will be assisting in the baptisms for Teddy and Tyler.
(They are also longtime friends of Pastor John and Anna Lisa.)

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER CONCERNS

September 20, 2026

The list in the weekly bulletin is intended to be for persons in immediate crisis. Generally, those names will be moved to the newsletter after 3 weeks. The newsletter has our long-term prayer list which is updated as you tell us.

Members · Beth Sessoms · Larry Schiebe · Philip Williams · Anna Lena Andersen · Cayla Chaplin
· Gary Eissinger

Friends & Family

· Diane Stultz · Peter Lundell · Gregg Nazario · Sandy Pangle · Stasha · Alan Carlson · Katie Maxwell
· Charlotte Choice and family · Sara Brown · Mindy Quinby · Morgen Jensen · Buddy Prevatte · James Rose
· Ethan Thompkins · Simone Ryan · Sharon Decatur · Mike Crecelius · Connie Vargas

People at Home or in Care facilities: · Charlotte Davis · Brenda Killett · Carolyn Uchtorff · Betty Kern

Our military members (*deployed)

· Earl Stockham · Dan Gibson · Joshua Trogdon* · Bella Fish · Hochang Min · Alex Habermehl
· Matthew Porter* · Derek Carlson · Howard Hogan* · Zach Fuhr · Addie Piatz* · Douglas Gearing*
· Chad Kennedy · Riley Broding



To celebrate our 90th anniversary, a small snippet of our history will be featured in the bulletin each week.

On November 10, 1952, the church council voted to recommend to the congregation that a lot on the corner of Fort Bragg Rd. and Dobbin Avenue be purchased for the sum of \$10,000. The existing parsonage was moved across the street to this lot. Needed renovations were made and necessary rooms added. The cost of this work and the moving was \$7500.00.



St. James Lutheran Parsonage, 1961

Ministry at St. James ... September 20-27, 2026

Sun. Sept 20 *Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost*

- 9:00 am Sunday Morning Faith Formation for men and women
- 10:00 am Worship
 - Baptism of Teddy Collins Rosenfeld, Tyler Collins Rosenfeld and Jacob Smalley.*
 - Receiving membership for Tassie Collins and Patrick Rosenfeld*
- 11:30 am Choir Practice

Mon. Sept 21

- 9:00 am Quilting Ministry (Annex)
- 10:45 am Bible Study of Unnamed Women of the Bible
- 6:00 pm Cub Scouts Den Meeting

Tue. Sept 22

- 6:30 pm Boy Scouts Troop 747
- 7:00 pm Fellowship on Zoom

Wed. Sept 23

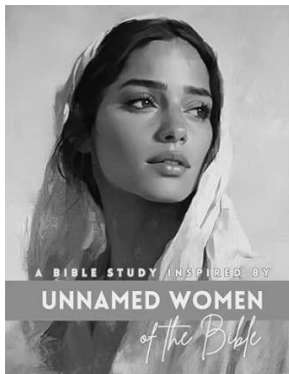
- 6:30 pm Handbell Choir rehearsal

Sun. Sept 27 *Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

- 9:00 am Sunday Morning Faith Formation
- 10:00 am Worship
- 11:30 am Choir Practice



Bible Study- Mondays @ 10:45 – 11:45 (Office meeting room)



Do you know the names of those women who were important in the Bible, women who were never named? In the Old Testament there were women who lived in times when God used many women, but they were never named. Lot's wife, Noah's daughters-in-law, Eve's daughters, Potiphar's wife etc. I am sure there were many more who lived in that time. The New Testament is as full of women who followed Jesus or who were a part of his life and ministry. The Samaritan woman at the well, the adulteress, Peter's mother-in-law and many others.

We will be using a study guide called **Unnamed Women of the Bible**. It is a 6-week study of just a few of these women. There are at least 78 unknown women, and I have a list which we could look at.

If you would like to join this bible study on Mondays, starting September 21, for about an hour please email Diana Vittoe at vittoediana@gmail.com.



Sunday School Series

Ruth

Join us as we study about the remarkable Ruth. Famous for her loyalty, kindness and faithfulness.



Courage in uncertain times



God's providence and faithfulness



Identity, purpose, and redemption



Friendship, loyalty, and hope

 SUNDAYS AT 9:00 AM

 ROOM 127

 LIGHT SNACKS & FELLOWSHIP

*"All because someone was willing to say yes...
for such a time as this."*

—  —

You don't want to miss the exciting study with Anna Lisa Sunday mornings!



KIWANIS CLUB OF HOPE MILLS

BBQ FUNDRAISER

Friday October 2nd!

St. James' members Erin Smith, Lindsey Smith, Glenn Stockwell, and Delores Schiebe are members of Kiwanis and can be contacted to purchase tickets for the BBQ meals.

You can pick up your meal at the church as well at 11:00 am in the kitchen.


Pulled Pork, Bun, Baked Beans, & Cole Slaw

\$14.00



Friday, October 2nd
10:00 AM-1:00 PM



5788 Rockfish Road Hope Mills (Fire Department)



POC: Dwayne Jacobs
910-850-8403



Minimum 10 plate order for delivery



YOUR SUPPORT HELPS US TO SUPPORT

Terrific Kids, K-Kids, Builders Club, Key Clubs, Community Service Projects
(Local, National, & International)

Shoebox packers:

Praise be to God!!! We packed 62 boxes last Sunday at the packing party during *God's. Work. Our Hands. Many people will be blessed.* A very special thank you to all those who helped pack boxes.

And we are grateful to all those who donated supplies. **If you still want to donate supplies, please bring them to the church through next Sunday (September 27th). We will continue to fill more boxes through mid-November, when we will offer prayers for the boxes to be a blessing for others.**

Also, if you would like to assist with shipping costs, Operation Christmas Child encourages a \$10 donation per box. Current donations are at \$350. Please make checks payable to St James with "Shoebox" in the memo line.

Gratefully,

Jane Boelke, Coordinator of Operation Christmas Child Show Box Ministry



Celebrating 90 Years, 90 Acts of Grace

As we celebrate 90 years of God's faithfulness at Saint James, we want to honor the living, breathing impact of Christ's love in our community. Over nine decades, our church has been built on quiet prayers, shared meals and open doors.

To celebrate this milestone, we are launching the
90TH ANNIVERSARY KINDNESS JOURNAL

Our goal is to physically record 90 distinct acts of kindness—both big and small—that happen within our congregation and community. This book will be in the gathering space for the next few weeks and then be safely stored in our Archives room for future generations.

How you can participate:

- Notice the good: Did someone bring you a meal, send a timely card or offer a helping hand? Did you witness someone else showing kindness to a neighbor? Or did you offer those things to your neighbor?
- Write it down: Stop by the table in the gathering space to journal the kindness given or received. Entries can be signed or anonymous.
- Pass it on!: Let this challenge inspire you to be the answer to someone else's prayers.

Let's fill these pages with gratitude, bridging 90 years of faith with 90 tangible expressions of love.

With joy,
The 90th Anniversary planning team



September 13th we participated in God's Work. Our Hands.



Youth handed out cards and cookies to our local firefighters



Lunch



Kids made cards

