

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

15th Sunday after Pentecost
Rev. Tripp Brogdon, Pastor
Mavis Stephens, Choir Director

September 6, 2026
Elder Don Koza, Liturgist
Dr. Jeff Gilbreath, Pianist

WE GATHER IN GOD'S PRESENCE

PRELUDE

Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine

JEFF GILBREATH

WELCOME

* CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Six weeks ago, we began with a promise: where you go, I will go.

All: We end today with a promise kept: what was lost has been found, what was in danger has been delivered.

One: The book of Esther ends the way it began: God's name never spoken, but God's hand still at work.

All: What looked like it would be lost, God turned. Sorrow became joy. Mourning became a holiday.

One: Come, let us worship the God who holds the whole story, from beginning to end.

All: We worship the Lord who delivers, and who is delivering us still!

* GATHERING HYMN #12

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

ST. DENIO

GATHERING PRAYER

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O God, we confess that despair often silences us. We look at the cruelty and injustice of our world and assume that hatred holds the upper hand. Like those who sat in sackcloth and ashes, we grieve; yet unlike Esther, we often retreat into comfort rather than speaking the truth. We hoard our safety while our neighbors suffer. Forgive us for doubting your steadfast presence in the darkest valleys. Untie the knots of our unbelief, awaken our courage, and transform our sorrow into joyful service for your kingdom. (Silent Confession)

HYMN OF RESPONSE #833

O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go

ST. MARGARET

***O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee; I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thine ocean depth its flow may richer, fuller be.***

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Hear the good news of the gospel: God does not leave us in the grip of defeat. In Jesus Christ, the plot is overturned, the snare is broken, and life triumphs over death. Friends, believe the promise:

All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

* GLORIA PATRI

GLORIA PATRI

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen, Amen.***

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1:68-72

* HYMN #821 *My Life Flows On (How Can I Keep from Singing?)*

HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

Esther 7:1-10; 9:1-2, 20-22, 29-32

SERMON

"From Sadness to Joy"

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

GIVING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Call for the Offering

(The offering plate is not passed but is located on the stand outside the sanctuary doors.)

Offertory

Because He Lives

JEFF GILBREATH

* Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

* Prayer of Dedication

COMMUNION ANTHEM

The Table of Grace

ARR. BY JOHN CARTER

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Prayer of Great Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

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

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks, Sovereign God, Creator of heaven and earth.

One: Therefore, joining our hearts with prophets, matriarchs and queens, your ordinary saints, and with all the company of heaven, we praise you, singing the eternal hymn:

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest. (Glory to God #552)**

One: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son, Jesus Christ.

One: Remembering his life, death, and resurrection, we take this bread and this cup, proclaiming the mystery of faith:

All: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again. Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again. (Glory to God #553)

Rev. Brogdon continues.

All: Amen, amen, amen. (Glory to God #554)

Breaking of the Bread and the Sharing of the Cup

Prayer after Communion

Gracious God, you have fed us at this table with the joy of your salvation. Having tasted your steadfast love, send us out from this place renewed in hope and fortified in courage. Wherever sorrow lingers, make us agents of your deliverance, sharing feast and fellowship until all your children dwell in safety and delight. Through Christ our Redeemer, Amen.

WE ARE SENT INTO THE WORLD

* **HYMN** #840

When Peace Like a River

VILLE DU HAVRE

* **BENEDICTION**

* **POSTLUDE**

Only Trust Him

JEFF GILBREATH

* **Please rise in body or in spirit.**

WELCOME TO ST. ANDREW!

Whether you are a first-time guest, a long-time member, or somewhere in between, know that you are welcome in this place. We are so glad you are here, and we hope that your time in worship this morning draws you closer to God and to God's people. Our journeys of faith are not just lived on Sunday mornings, so we invite you to also join us in the fellowship and ministry of our congregation. Rev. Tripp is available to answer any questions you might have after worship, by email (tripp@standrewdecatur.org), or by phone. There is a place for you here!

THIS WEEK TOGETHER

Monday, September 7th

Church Office Closed for Labor Day

Wednesday, September 9th

4:30 PM Choir

5:30 PM CONNECT

ABOUT OUR WORSHIP: GATHERING

Preparing for Worship

Worship begins as the people gather — greeting one another, praying in silence, sharing announcements, or offering music to the glory of God. The act of assembling in Jesus' name bears witness to the Church's identity and mission as Christ's body in the world.

Opening Sentences

A call to worship, typically drawn from sentences of scripture, expresses God's invitation to gather as Christ's body in this place. A greeting in the name of Jesus Christ or the triune God establishes the context for worship as an encounter with the Holy One who calls all things into being.

Gathering Prayer

A prayer may be offered, giving thanks and praise to God, expressing joy in the presence of Christ, and calling for the gifts of the Spirit to be poured out upon the gathered community. This prayer may employ themes and images that are drawn from the biblical readings for the day or from the setting in the Christian year.

STEADFAST LOVE

A Sermon Series on Ruth and Esther

September 6, 2026

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
Rev. Tripp Brogdon, Pastor
256-355-6310
www.standrewdecaturn.org

Scripture Reading, Don Koza: Luke 1:68-72

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant.”

Scripture Reading, Rev. Brogdon: Esther 7:1-10; 9:1-2, 20-22, 29-32

So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, “What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled.” Then Queen Esther answered, “If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me—that is my petition—and the lives of my people—that is my request. For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace; but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king.” Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, “Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?” Esther said, “A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!” Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen.

The king rose from the feast in wrath and went into the palace garden, but Haman stayed to beg his life from Queen Esther, for he saw that the king had determined to destroy him. When the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall, Haman had thrown himself on the couch where Esther was reclining; and the king said, “Will he even assault the queen in my presence, in my own house?” As the words left the mouth of the king, they covered Haman’s face. Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, “Look, the very gallows that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, stands at Haman’s house, fifty cubits high.” And the king said, “Hang him on that.” So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated.

Now in the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day, when the king's command and edict were about to be executed, on the very day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain power over them, but which had been changed to a day when the Jews would gain power over their foes, the Jews gathered in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who had sought their ruin; and no one could withstand them, because the fear of them had fallen upon all peoples.

Mordecai recorded these things, and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, enjoining them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same month, year by year, as the days on which the Jews gained relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor.

Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, along with the Jew Mordecai, gave full written authority, confirming this second letter about Purim. Letters were sent wishing peace and security to all the Jews, to the one hundred twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, and giving orders that these days of Purim should be observed at their appointed seasons, as the Jew Mordecai and Queen Esther enjoined on the Jews, just as they had laid down for themselves and for their descendants regulations concerning their fasts and their lamentations. The command of Queen Esther fixed these practices of Purim, and it was recorded in writing.