

The Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

Hymn Supplement • September 27, 2026

The Hymns as Sung Today

Opening Hymn: "O Day of Rest and Gladness" (LSB 906)

Christopher Wordsworth (1807-85), nephew of the poet William Wordsworth, was vicar of the delightfully named Stanford in the Vale cum Goosey and later Bishop of Lincoln. He held it "the first duty of a hymn-writer to teach sound doctrine, and thus to save souls," and he drew his hymns straight from Scripture. This one opened his collection *The Holy Year* (1862) under the heading "Sunday." It takes its theme from Psalm 118:24, "This is the day that the LORD has made," and its second stanza counts three gifts of light, one from each Person of the Trinity: light at creation, Christ risen from the depths of the earth, and the Spirit sent from heaven, all on the first day of the week. The text we sing only partly resembles Wordsworth's. His original blurred the Jewish Sabbath with the Christian Sunday, and later editors reworked it; the Episcopal Hymnal 1982 changed his "On thee," which addressed the day itself, to "This day," so that praise goes to the Creator and not to His creation, and it replaced his last stanzas with two new ones. LSB follows that version. The LSB companion notes that since the "day of rest" is Sunday, Sunday is the only day on which the hymn is properly sung. The tune ELLACOMBE is a German melody first printed at Stuttgart in 1784.

Hymn of the Day: "Seek Where You May to Find a Way" (LSB 557)

Georg Weissel (1590-1635), the pastor who also gave us "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates," wrote this hymn in 1623 for his own installation as the first pastor of the new church in the Rossgarten district of Königsberg, now Kaliningrad in Russia. The occasion explains its opening. The LSB companion paraphrases Weissel's point: build whatever buildings you like in this life; in the end they will crumble, and the eternal Church stands on Christ alone. The second stanza presses the same claim: seek where you may, salvation is found in no one but Christ, the one foundation that remains when every other has failed (John 14:6; 1 Corinthians 3:11). No copy printed in Weissel's lifetime survives; the earliest is in the Prussian Festival Songs of 1642, compiled by the Königsberg musicians Johann Eccard and Johann Stobäus. The tune has an unexpected origin. Stobäus, cantor of the cathedral at Königsberg, first wrote it in 1613 as a five-voice wedding song for a local couple, set to the words "Wie Gott bestellt, mir wol gefällt" ("As God ordains, it pleases me well"). Arthur P. Voss translated the hymn in 1938 for *The Lutheran Hymnal*. LSB appoints it as the Hymn of the Day for this Sunday, the Seventeenth after Trinity.

Hymn: "Lord Jesus Christ, We Humbly Pray" (LSB 623)

Early in the twentieth century Luther D. Reed, a leader of the General Council of the Lutheran Church in North America, challenged his colleagues to remedy the scarcity of English hymns that confessed the real presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar without hedging. His fellow professor at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Henry Eyster Jacobs (1844-1932), answered in 1910 with this hymn. It first appeared in the *Common Service Book* of 1917, which Reed compiled, and it passed into *The Lutheran Hymnal*, *Lutheran Book of Worship*, and *Lutheran Worship*, which revised the text substantially; LSB keeps that revision. Lawrence Rast calls it "a theology of the Sacrament in sung form," and its five stanzas move through the true presence of Christ's body and blood, the forgiveness the Sacrament gives, the faith that clings to His Word, the unity of those who proclaim His death until He comes, and the heavenly feast to which it points. Since 1910 it has become a favorite for singing during the distribution. The tune is the seventeenth-century German melody of "Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now" (LSB 902).

Closing Hymn: "I Know My Faith Is Founded" (LSB 587)

Erdmann Neumeister (1671-1756) was chief pastor of St. James's Church in Hamburg for forty years and a fierce opponent of Pietism, which in his view rested faith on the feelings of the heart instead of God's work in Word and Sacrament. In 1736, when an anonymous play mocking Pietist teaching appeared in Leipzig, enraged Pietists assumed he had written it and smashed the windows of his house. Yet some orthodox Lutherans distrusted him too, for allowing operatic music in church. Neumeister adapted madrigal verse to create the modern cantata libretto, and Bach and Telemann set his texts. He often closed his sermons with a hymn of his own on the day's Gospel. This one, "Ich weiss, an wen ich glaube" (2 Timothy 1:12), was written for Quasimodogeniti, the Sunday of Thomas's doubt (John 20:19-31), and published in 1718 in his *Evangelischer Nachklang*. Oddly, that book holds two hymns with the same first line, meter and length; the other is for Saints Peter and Paul. The hymn confesses that faith stands on Christ's sure Word where human reason cannot reach. Neumeister himself chose the tune, NUN LOB, MEIN SEEL, probably by Johann Kugelman (1540). The English is a composite from *The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941).