

Created, Saved and gifted by God,  
we seek, serve and share Jesus Christ.



EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

— SERVICE OF THE WORD —

Sunday, September 27, 2026  
10:30 AM

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH  
901 East Stroop Road  
Kettering, Ohio 45429  
(937) 298-0136

# INTRODUCTION

Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

## "An Invitation to Grace"

It is so easy and so tempting to build ourselves up at the expense of others. "I can't imagine ever doing that." "How can people live like that?" "Who would do such a thing?" At some point we all think or say these sorts of things. Like it or not, we use these words to comfort ourselves at the expense of others.

But all people stand in need of God's grace. Each of this day's readings shows us this reality. In the parable of the two sons, Jesus invites us to choose between two sons when neither fully does the will of their father. Here Jesus makes the point that we are all equally in need of God's grace. Ezekiel proclaims God's invitation, "Turn, then, and live" (Ezek. 18:32). This is an invitation that extends to all people from a God deeply desiring a loving and life-giving relationship with humanity.

In Philippians, we are reminded of Jesus' act of grace on the cross, emptying himself, becoming sin so that all creation might be redeemed through him. In response, we discover a vision of the day in which all creation speaks with a unified voice, declaring that Jesus Christ is Lord.

This is a day of confession and forgiveness. We confess our need for God, our distance from God, and our failures before God. In response, to our joy, we discover again the grace of God outpoured. All humans are in need of God's grace; God extends grace to all, and one day we will confess that salvation as one people. All of today's readings reveal the way in which all humans are equal in the eyes of God.

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*\*\* indicates to stand as you are able.*

# GATHERING

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

## PRELUDE

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### \*\* CONFESSION

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Compassionate God,

**we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

### \*\* FORGIVENESS

Hear this good news:

We have peace with God through + Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace. **Amen.**

\*\* GATHERING HYMN

"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"



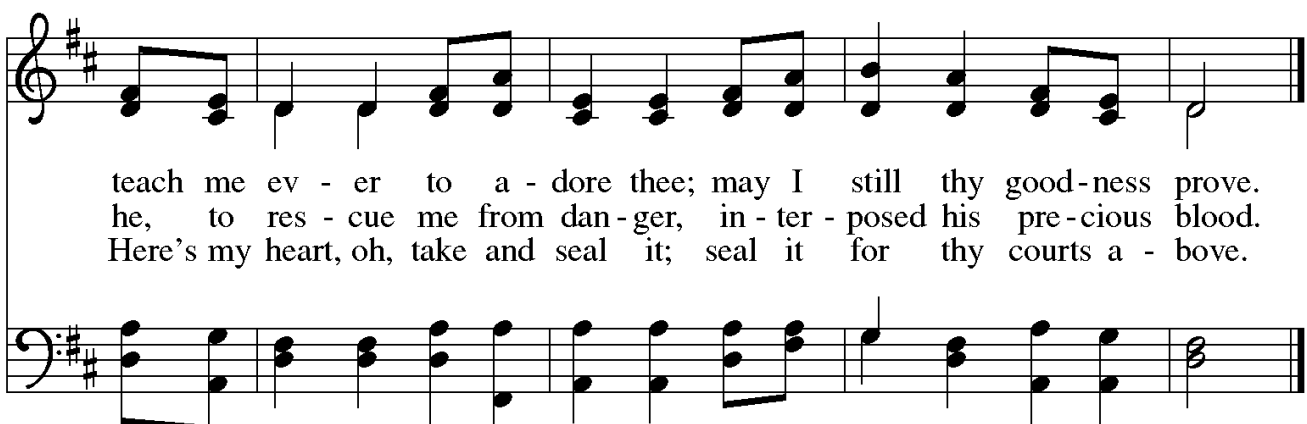
1 Come, thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
 2 Here I raise my Eb - en - e - zer: "Hith-er by thy help I've come";  
 3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be;



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas-ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.  
 and I hope, by thy good plea-sure, safe-ly to ar - rive at home.  
 let that grace now like a fet - ter bind my wan-d'ring heart to thee.



While the hope of end-less glo - ry fills my heart with joy and love,  
 Je - sus sought me when a strang-er, wan-d'ring from the fold of God;  
 Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.



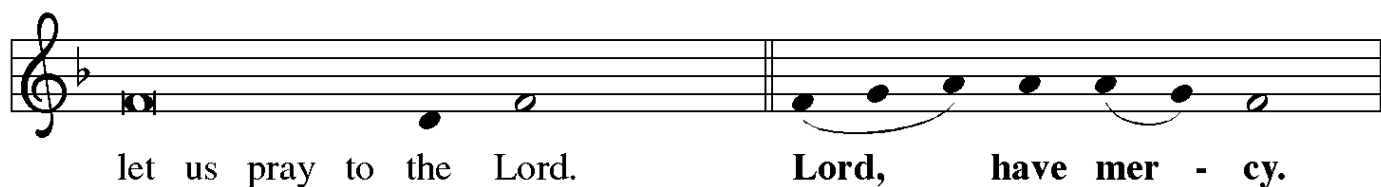
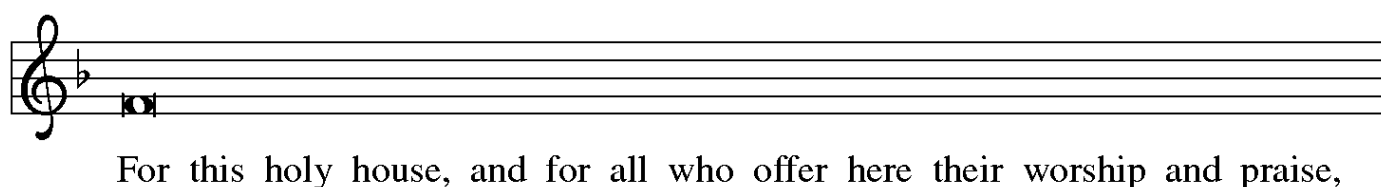
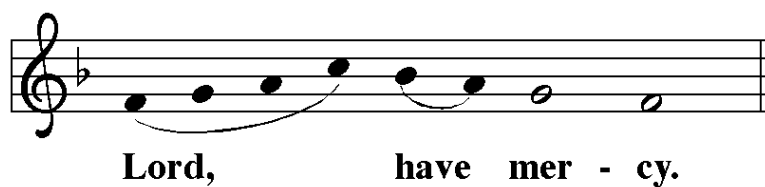
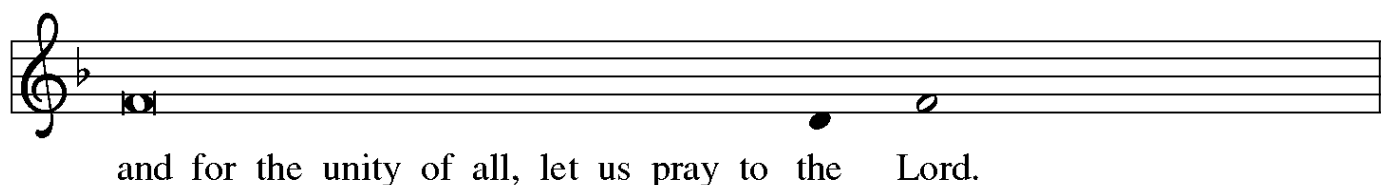
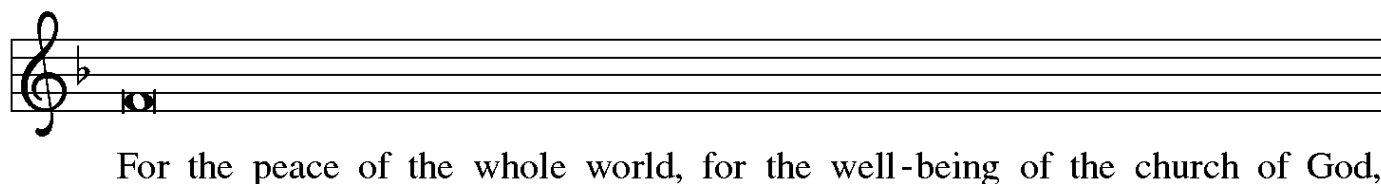
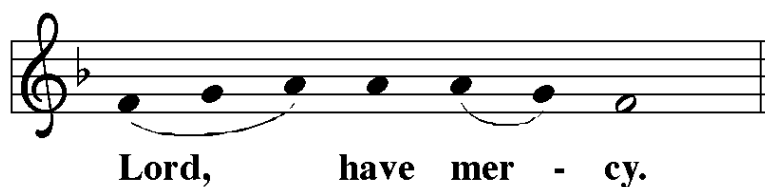
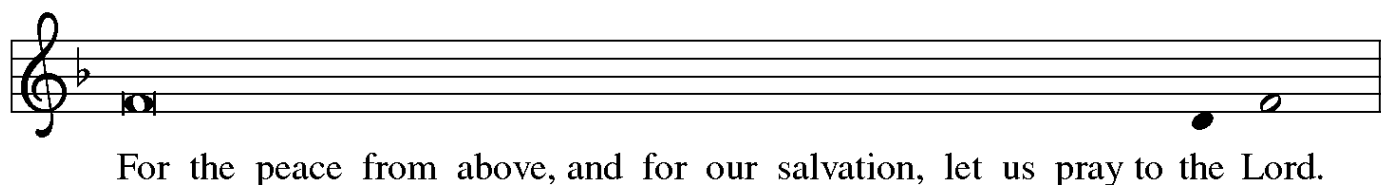
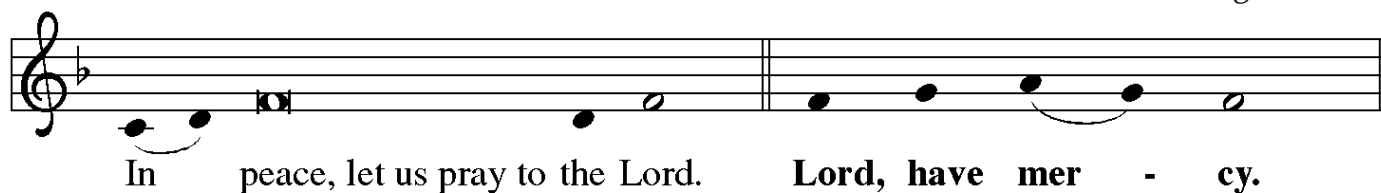
teach me ev - er to a - dore thee; may I still thy good-ness prove.  
 he, to res - cue me from dan-ger, in - ter - posed his pre-cious blood.  
 Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

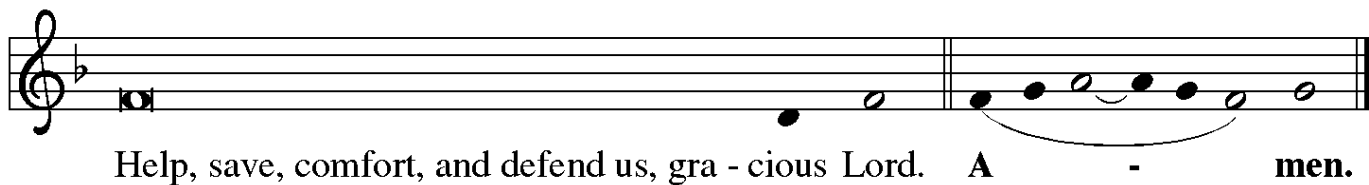
**\*\* GREETING**

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.**

**\*\* KYRIE**

*Assisting Minister*



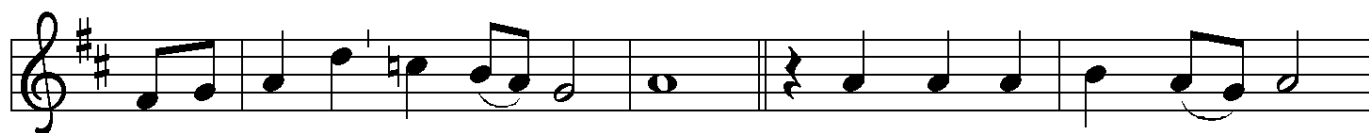


Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

## \*\* CANTICLE OF PRAISE



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



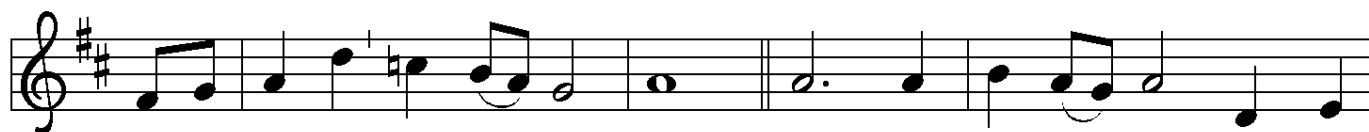
al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb



who was slain, whose blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



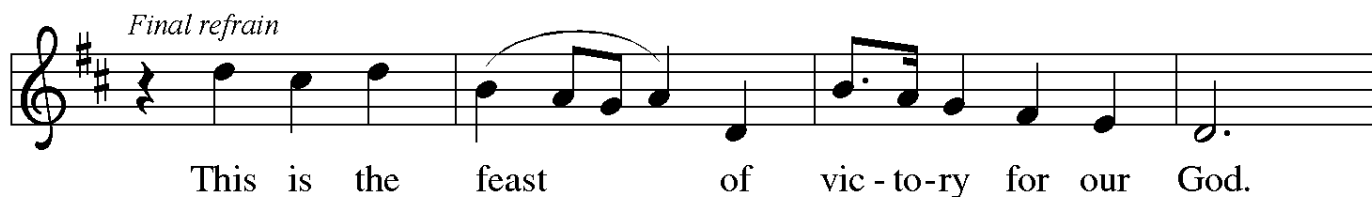
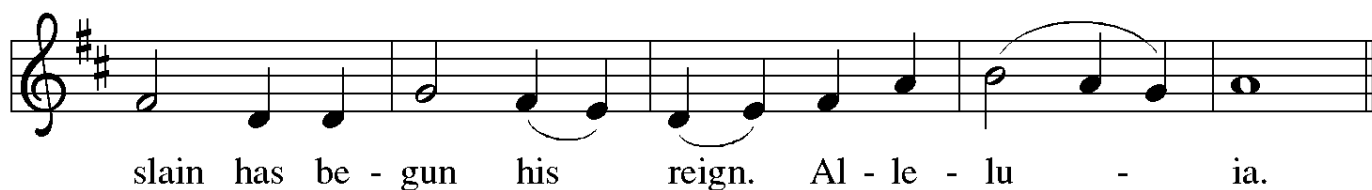
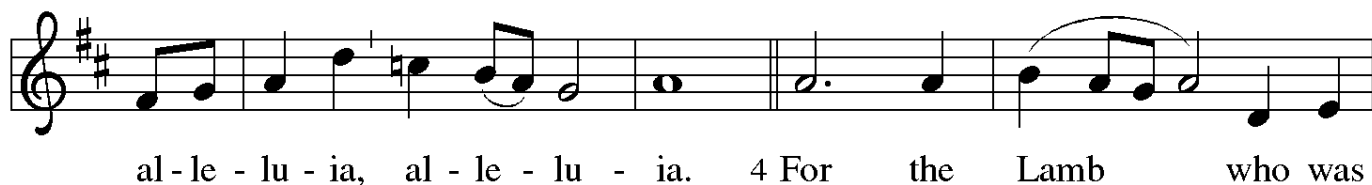
al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 2 Pow - er, rich-es, wis - dom, and



strength, and hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



**\*\* PRAYER OF THE DAY**

*Assisting Minister*

God of love, giver of life, **you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**\*\* PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

## WORD

*God speaks to us in scripture-reading, preaching and song.*

**FIRST READING**

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

*Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.*

A reading from Ezekiel, the eighteenth chapter.

The word of the Lord came to me: What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins who shall die.

Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed, they shall die. Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM

Psalm 25:1-9

*Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love. (Ps. 25:6)*

To you, O Lord,  
I lift up my soul.

**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,  
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

Let none who look to you be put to shame;  
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

**Show me your ways, O Lord,  
and teach me your paths.**

Lead me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

**Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love,  
for they are from everlasting.**

Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;  
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness,  
O Lord.

**You are gracious and upright, O Lord;  
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

You lead the lowly in justice  
and teach the lowly your way.

## SECOND READING

Philippians 2:1-13

*As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.*

A reading from Philippians, the second chapter.

If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,  
who, though he existed in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be grasped,  
but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
assuming human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a human,  
he humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of death—  
even death on a cross.

Therefore God exalted him even more highly  
and gave him the name  
that is above every other name,  
so that at the name given to Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue should confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*\* GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

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.

**\*\* GOSPEL READING**

Matthew 21:23-32

*After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.*

The holy gospel, according to Matthew, the twenty-first chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and

who gave you this authority?" Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why, then, did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not,' but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him."

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

## **YOUTH MESSAGE**

### **MESSAGE**

*Sandra Combs*

### **\*\* HYMN OF THE DAY**

*"The Same Love"*

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)

You choose the humble and raise them high;  
You choose the weak and make them strong;  
You heal our brokenness inside and give us life.

(Refrain - All)

**The same love that set the captives free,  
The same love that opened eyes to see  
Is calling us by name; you are calling us all by name.**

**The same God that spread the heavens wide,  
The same God that was crucified  
Is calling us all by name; you are calling us all by name.**

(Verse 2 - Music Ministers)

You take the faithless one aside  
And speak the words, "You are mine";  
You call the cynic and the proud, "Come to me now."

(Refrain - All)

The same love that set the captives free,  
The same love that opened eyes to see  
Is calling us by name; you are calling us all by name.

The same God that spread the heavens wide,  
The same God that was crucified  
Is calling us all by name; you are calling us all by name.  
Oh...

(Music Ministers/All)

You're calling, you're calling, you're calling us to the cross.  
You're calling, you're calling, you're calling us to the cross.  
**You're calling, you're calling, you're calling us to the cross.**  
**You're calling, you're calling, you're calling us to the cross.**

The same love that set the captives free,  
The same love that opened eyes to see  
Is calling us by name; you are calling us all by name.

The same God that spread the heavens wide,  
The same God that was crucified  
Is calling us all by name; you are calling us all by name.  
Oh...

**\*\* APOSTLES' CREED**

With one voice, let us profess our faith.

**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 power of the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended into hell.  
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.**

**\*\* PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

*Assisting Minister*

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

*A brief silence.*

*After each petition concludes:*

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

**GATHERING OF THE GIFTS**

**OFFERTORY**

**\*\* THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD**

Let us pray.

Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you. For your Word of life, O God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. **Amen.**

**\*\* LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

## 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**

*"This Is Amazing Grace"*

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)

Who breaks the power of sin and darkness,  
Whose love is mighty and so much stronger?  
The King of Glory, the King above all kings.

(Verse 2 - Music Ministers)

Who shakes the whole earth with holy thunder,  
Who leaves us breathless in awe and wonder?  
The King of Glory, the King above all kings.

(Refrain - All)

**This is amazing grace, this is unfailing love,  
That you would take my place,  
That you would bear my cross,  
You laid down your life  
That I would be set free.  
O Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me,  
All that you've done for me.**

**(Verse 3 - All)**

**Who brings our chaos back into order,  
Who makes the orphan a son and daughter?  
The King of Glory, the King above all kings.**

**(Verse 4 - All)**

**Who rules the nations with truth and justice,  
Shines like the sun in all of its brilliance?  
The King of Glory, the King above all kings.**

**(Refrain - All)**

**This is amazing grace, this is unfailing love,  
That you would take my place,  
That you would bear my cross,  
You laid down your life  
That I would be set free.  
O Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me.**

**(Music Ministers)**

**Worthy is the Lamb who was slain!  
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave!  
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain!  
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave!  
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain!  
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave!  
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain:  
Worthy, worthy, worthy! Oh!**

**(Refrain - All)**

**This is amazing grace, this is unfailing love,  
That you would take my place,  
That you would bear my cross,  
You laid down your life  
That I would be set free.  
O Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me,  
O Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me.**

**\*\* DISMISSAL**

**Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.**

**Created, saved and gifted by God,**

**we seek, serve and share Jesus Christ. Hallelujah, thanks be to God!**

## **“W + 2” = WORSHIP PLUS TWO**

**MAKE A COMMITMENT NOT ONLY TO WORSHIP EACH WEEK,  
BUT ALSO TRY TO FIND A WAY TO SERVE IN THE CONGREGATION  
AND SEEK OUT A WAY TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY.**

**YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD**

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## Upcoming Commemorations

### **Michael and All Angels**

Tuesday, September 29, 2026

Michael the archangel, captain of the heavenly hosts, is remembered on this day along with the other angels and archangels. The word "angel" means messenger, and in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, these beings have a fully spiritual nature and no physical body.

### **Jerome, translator, teacher, died 420**

Wednesday, September 30, 2026

Jerome was a biblical scholar and translator, but rather than translating the original Hebrew and Greek scriptures into classical Latin, he worked in the commonly-spoken Latin of the day, creating a version called the Vulgate.