

THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST
September 13th, 2026 – 9:30 AM

WELCOME



Jesus' challenge in the Gospel reading for today is that that we forgive seventy-seven times. This reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

✝ Preacher – The Rev. Dr. Mark Summer

✝ Officiant – Pr. Rudy Schneider

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

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.*

Mighty God, lover of justice, **you call us to life in community, but we have often served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors. We many times have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ and forgives your sin in ✝ Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others and bless you with the gift of peace. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN: ELW#876 – Let the Whole Creation Cry

Prayer of the Day - O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

GOD'S HOLY WORD

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵ Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.



The Word of the Lord...**Thanks be to God!**

Psalm 103:1-13

¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

² **Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all God's benefits—**

³ who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases;

⁴ **who redeems your life from the grave and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;**

⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

⁶ **O LORD, you provide vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.**

⁷ You made known your ways to Moses and your works to the children of Israel.

⁸ **LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**

⁹ you will not always accuse us, nor will you keep your anger forever.

¹⁰ **You have not dealt with us according to our sins, nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**

¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

¹² **As far as the east is from the west, so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**

¹³ As a father has compassion for his children,

so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



HOLY GOSPEL

A Reading from the Holy Gospel of Matthew 18: 21 - 35; **Glory to You, O Lord!**

²¹ Peter came and said to [Jesus,] "Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²² Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³ "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made.

²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

The Gospel of the Lord...**Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE & SERMON – The Rev. Dr. Mark Summer

HYMN: ELW#359 – Where Charity and Love Prevail

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

✠ *We recognize all joining us virtually and give voice to any greetings or prayer requests.*

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

Move your church throughout the world away from judging and despising others. Lead us to embody the forgiveness you have given us in Jesus. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

The endless beauty of your creation reminds us of your mercy. Protect those who care for farms and ranches. Guide those who lead us to wonder at your creation.

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

Raise up leaders to hold all in authority accountable for any misuse of the power entrusted to them. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Calm the fears of all in need with your promises. Compassionately free the lives of any who feel bound by their failures. Remember your children in need. Grace those from our families and community that we now name silently in our hearts, or out loud, with our prayers and your blessings. *(Please name silently or out loud).* Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Ground this congregation in the welcome you show us in forgiving our sin. Inspire each of us to welcome others for your honor and glory. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

With you is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember all those who have gone before us. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Provide this congregation with Your divine wisdom and guidance in our search for a shepherd to lead us with humility, love, and grace. Lord, bless our search process, our call committee and open doors to reveal the right candidate to us. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

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.**

OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

Lord God, your compassion is unlimited, all that we have is yours. Receive these gifts from your bounty and grant that we may live well, love generously and seek first your kingdom on earth as in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love, you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who at his birth took on our human nature, so that we may be partakers of his divine nature.

We remember how 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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest and pray unto you the prayer he taught 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.

Invitation to Communion – Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

OUR TIME OF COMMUNION WITH THE LORD!

COMMUNION HYMN 1: Create in Me

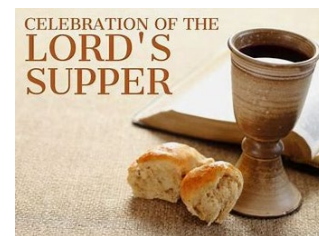
Create in me a clean heart, Oh God,
And renew a right Spirit within me.
Create in me a clean heart, Oh God,
And renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence, Oh Lord,
And take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of your salvation,
And renew a right Spirit within me.

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COMMUNION HYMN 2: Lord, I give my Life to You

Lord, I give my life to You.
At your feet I lay my burdens down.
Lord I place my weakness in the strength of your hand.
Father, work Your will in me.

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COMMUNION HYMN 3: When Peace, Like a River

1. When peace like a river attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll,
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
it is well, it is well with my soul. **Refrain**
2. Though Satan should buffet,
though trials should come,
let this blest assurance control,
that Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
and has shed his own blood for my soul.
Refrain
3. He lives--oh, the bliss of this glorious thought;
my sin, not in part, but the whole,
is nailed to his cross and I bear it no more.
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!
Refrain
4. Lord, hasten the day when our faith shall be sight,
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
the trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend;
even so it is well with my soul. **Refrain**

Refrain

It is well (it is well)
with my soul, (with my soul,)
it is well, it is well with my soul.

Closing Prayer - 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.**

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.**

CLOSING HYMN: Be Exalted, O God

I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord, among the people
I will sing praises to Thee, Among the nations
For Thy steadfast love is great, Is great to the heavens
And Thy faithfulness, Thy faithfulness to the clouds

CHORUS:

Be exalted, O God, Above the heavens
Let Thy glory be over all the earth
Be exalted, O God, Above the heavens
Let thy glory, let thy glory.
Let Thy glory be over all the earth

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Dismissal: Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace. **Thanks be to God.**

Notes:
