

Stewardship 2026 Join the Journey

*"Trust in God from the bottom of your heart;
don't try to figure out everything on your own.
Listen for God's voice in everything you do,
everywhere you go." Proverbs 3:4-6*



WELCOME TO WORSHIP Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost September 13, 2026 8:00 AM Traditional Worship

Pastor: Paula Geister-Jones **Lay Ministry Administrator:** Jenny Hoffman
Organist/Pianist: Linda Kunz
Lector: Colby Smith **Acolyte:** Becket Nelson
Ushers: Jim Lunde, Myron Sime & Gary Gullickson
Technical Support: Thomas Lehr, Roger Slack

We do love to judge one another. Today in the gospel reading, instead of judging one another Jesus challenges us to forgive one another seventy times seven. That's what God does. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship God is also challenging us to go out into the world and forgive. That is the only way there will ever be peace.

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Take My Life and Let It Be" Mallan/Cota First Class Ringers

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth.

C: Amen.

P: Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.
Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Compassionate God,

C: 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.

P: 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.

C: Amen.

Stand

HYMN: “All Are Welcome” #641 ELW vss. 1, 2 & 5

GREETING

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

C: And also with you.

KYRIE: page 120 ELW (*front of the hymnal*)

CANTICLE OF PRAISE: page 121 ELW (*front of hymnal*)

SALUTATION

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

C: 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.

Sit

ANTHEM: “We Are All One in the Lord” Chancel Choir

READING: Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵ After the funeral, Joseph's brothers talked among themselves: "What if Joseph is carrying a grudge and decides to pay us back for all the wrong we did him?" ¹⁶⁻¹⁷ So they sent Joseph a message, "Before his death, your father gave this command: Tell Joseph, 'Forgive your brothers' sin—all that wrongdoing. They did treat you very badly.' Will you do it? Will you forgive the sins of the servants of your father's God?" When Joseph received their message, he wept. ¹⁸ Then the brothers went in person to him, threw themselves on the ground before him and said, "We'll be your slaves."
¹⁹⁻²¹ Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid. Do I act for God? Don't you see, you planned evil against me but God used those same plans for my good, as you see all around you right now—life for many people. Easy now, you have nothing to fear; I'll take care of you and your children." He reassured them, speaking with them heart-to-heart.

P: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: "Alleluia!" page 124 ELW

The Gospel is announced...

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 18th Chapter

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

²¹ At that point Peter got up the nerve to ask, "Master, how many times do I forgive a brother or sister who hurts me? Seven?" ²² Jesus replied, "Seven! Hardly. Try seventy times seven. ²³⁻²⁵ "The kingdom of God is like a king who decided to square accounts with his servants. As he got under way, one servant was brought before him who had run up a debt of a hundred thousand dollars. He couldn't pay up, so the king ordered the man, along with his wife, children, and goods, to be auctioned off at the slave market. ²⁶⁻²⁷ "The poor wretch threw himself at the king's feet and begged, 'Give me a chance and I'll pay it all back.' Touched by his plea, the king let him off, erasing the debt.

²⁸ "The servant was no sooner out of the room when he came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him ten dollars. He seized him by the throat and demanded, 'Pay up. Now!' ²⁹⁻³¹ "The poor wretch threw himself down and begged, 'Give me a chance and I'll pay it all back.' But he wouldn't do it. He

had him arrested and put in jail until the debt was paid. When the other servants saw this going on, they were outraged and brought a detailed report to the king. ³²⁻³⁵ “The king summoned the man and said, ‘You evil servant! I forgave your entire debt when you begged me for mercy. Shouldn’t you be compelled to be merciful to your fellow servant who asked for mercy?’ The king was furious and put the screws to the man until he paid back his entire debt. And that’s exactly what my Father in heaven is going to do to each one of you who doesn’t forgive unconditionally anyone who asks for mercy.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Stand

HYMN: “Amazing Grace How Sweet the Sound” #779 ELW

APOSTLE’S CREED

**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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

A brief silence

P: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Raise up leaders to hold all in authority accountable for any misuse of the power entrusted to them. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: 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. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: 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

C: Amen.

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Sit

OFFERTORY: “Interstellar” Ben Foltz

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: God of creation,

C: you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. Amen.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stand

BLESSING

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

C: Amen.

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

C: Amen.

P: The God grace ✠ bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

DISMISSAL

P: Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

C: Thanks be to God.

SENDING HYMN: “Lord Dismiss Us with Your Blessing” #545 ELW

POSTLUDE: “Praise the Lord, Rise Up Rejoicing” Löhner/Dahl