



WELCOME TO WORSHIP
Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 20, 2026
9:15 AM Worship Lite

Pastor: Paula Geister-Jones **Lay Ministry Administrator:** Jenny Hoffman
Organist/Pianist: Linda Kunz
Lector: Stephen Peterson **Acolyte:** Lauren Koch & Genevieve Annen
Ushers: Catherine Frye
Technical Support: Thomas Lehr, Roger Slack

Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Lord of Light" Taylor/Patterson

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

GATHERING SONG: “All Are Welcome” #641 ELW vss. 1, 3 & 4

Vs. 1: Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell
how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:

Refrain: All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Vs. 3: Let us build a house where love is found
in water, wine and wheat:
a banquet hall on holy ground
where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus,
is revealed in time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us: *Refrain...*

Vs. 4: Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger

**bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger: *Refrain...***

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.

LITANY

P: You are the treasured people of the Lord,

C: a people holy to the Lord our God.

P: Keep the words of the Lord in your heart; teach them to your children.

C: Talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.

P: One does not live by bread alone,

C: but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

SONG OF PRAISE: "Oh, Sing to the Lord" #822 ELW vss. 1, 3 & 5

Vs. 1: Oh, sing to the Lord, oh, sing God a new song. (3X)

Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing to our God.

Vs. 3: So dance for our God and blow all the trumpets. (3X)

Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing to our God.

Vs. 5: For Jesus is Lord! Amen! Alleluia! (3X)

Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing to our God.

SALUTATION

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

C: Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual loving kindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your

Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

GOSPEL SONG: “Halle, Halle, Hallelujah” #172 ELW

Halle, halle, hallelujah.

Halle, halle, hallelujah.

Halle, halle, hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Sit

THE READING: Jonah 3:10—4:11

Narrator: ¹⁰ God saw what they had done, that they had turned away from their evil lives. He *did* change his mind about them. What he said he would do to them he didn’t do. ^{4 1-2} Jonah was furious. He lost his temper. He yelled at God,

Jonah (Men and Boys): “God! I knew it—when I was back home, I knew this was going to happen! That’s why I ran off to Tarshish! I knew you were sheer grace and mercy, not easily angered, rich in love, and ready at the drop of a hat to turn your plans of punishment into a program of forgiveness! ³ “So, God, if you won’t kill them, kill *me*! I’m better off dead!”

God (Women and Girls):⁴ “What do you have to be angry about?”

Narrator: ⁵ But Jonah just left. He went out of the city to the east and sat down in a sulk. He put together a makeshift shelter of leafy branches and sat there in the shade to see what would happen to the city. ⁶ God arranged for a broad-leafed tree to spring up. It grew over Jonah to cool him off and get him out of his angry sulk. Jonah was pleased and enjoyed the shade. Life was looking up. ⁷⁻⁸ But then God sent a worm. By dawn of the next day, the worm had bored into the shade tree and it withered away. The sun came up and God sent a hot, blistering wind from the east. The sun beat down on Jonah’s head and he started to faint. He prayed to die:

Jonah (Men and Boys): “I’m better off dead!”

God (Women and Girls): ⁹ “What right do you have to get angry about this shade tree?”

Jonah (Men and Boys): Jonah said, “Plenty of right. It’s made me angry enough to die!”

God (Women and Girls):¹⁰⁻¹¹ “What’s this? How is it that you can change your feelings from pleasure to anger overnight about a mere shade tree that you did nothing to get? You neither planted nor watered it. It grew up one night and died the next night. So, why can’t I likewise change what I feel about Nineveh from anger to pleasure, this big city of more than 120,000 childlike people who don’t yet know right from wrong, to say nothing of all the innocent animals?”

P: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

Sit

CHILDREN’S WORD

THE WORD

Stand

SONG OF THE WORD: “Bind Us Together” #748 WOV

**Refrain: Bind us together, Lord, bind us together
with cords that cannot be broken.**

**Bind us together, Lord, bind us together,
Lord; bind us together in love.**

**Vs. 1: There is only one God. There is only one King.
There is only one Body; that is why we can sing: Refrain...**

**Vs. 2: You are the family of God. You are the promise divine.
You are God’s chosen desire, you are the glorious new wine. Refrain...**

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.

Sit

OFFERING: "Love, Love, Love!" #135 The Other Song Book

Vs. 1: Love, love, love! That's what it's all about!

**'Cause God loves us, we love each other,
mother, father, sister, brother.**

**Ev'rybody sing and shout,
'cause that's what it's all about!
It's about love, love, love!
It's about love, love, love!**

Vs. 2: Peace

Vs. 3: Joy

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry,
come! The body of Christ given for you. The blood of Christ shed for you.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Music is played as those who wish to come forward for communion come forward and kneel at the communion rail. Others are invited to commune in your pew.

COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you
in his grace till life everlasting.

C: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: Sustaining God,

**C: 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.**

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 of grace ✠ bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

DISMISSAL

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

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: “Voices Raised to You” Jennings/Farlee