

Sunday Worship Service – September 13, 2026

Worship words from *Sundays and Seasons* marked with *

Other material from various sources as indicated in the footnotes.

Welcome and Announcements

A Moment of Reflection

Call to Worship ¹

Sing praise to God,
our Creator and Redeemer.
Sing praise to Christ,
our Lord and Savior.
Sing praise to the Spirit,
who has called us to worship this day.

Opening Prayer

Loving God, thank you for the great mercy and grace that draw us close to your holiness. Flow through our worship and through our lives with your holy presence and your forgiving grace, that we may be people of holy love and gracious forgiveness. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

Gathering Hymn “O Day Full of Grace” #627 (verses 1,3,5)

1. **O day full of grace that now we see appearing on earth’s horizon,
bring light from our God that we may be
abundant in his joy this season.
God, shine for us now in this dark place;
your name on our hearts emblazon.**
3. **For Christ bore our sins, and not his own,
when he on the cross was hanging;
and then he arose and moved the stone,
that we, unto him belonging,
might join with angelic hosts to raise our voices in endless singing.**
5. **When we on that final journey go that Christ is for us preparing,
we’ll gather in song, our hearts aglow,
all joy of the heavens sharing,
and there we will join God’s endless praise,
with angels and saints adoring.**

¹ *Call to Worship* and *Opening Prayer* written by Mary Scifres from **The Abingdon Worship Annual 2026** © 2025
Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN.

Prayer of Yearning ²

Gracious God,
 we want to be as grace-filled
 with ourselves and with others as you are.
 But honestly, it's easier to sing about grace
 than it is to offer it freely and abundantly.
 Help us put our songs into action,
 our words of yearning into lives filled with mercy
 and forgiveness—for ourselves and for others.
 One time, seven times, or seventy-seven times,
 each moment of grace matters and makes us better.
 Let your grace flow through our lives so abundantly
 that it overflows into every situation,
 protecting and preserving everyone it touches.
 In your love and grace, we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance

My friends, we belong to God, we belong to Christ.
 Christ's amazing grace saves and redeems.
 Christ's grace is enough for all.

Hymn of Praise *"All Creatures, Worship God Most High!"* #835 (verses 1,4,6)

1. All creatures, worship God most high!
 Sound ev'ry voice in earth and sky: Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Sing, brother sun, in splendor bright;
 sing, sister moon and stars of night:
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
4. All who for love of God forgive
 all who in pain or sorrow grieve: Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Christ bears your burdens and your fears;
 still make your song amid the tears:
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
6. O sisters, brothers, take your part,
 and worship God with humble heart: Alleluia! Alleluia!
 All creatures, bless the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Three in One:
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

² *Prayer of Yearning* and *Words of Assurance* written by Mary Scifres from **The Abingdon Worship Annual 2026** ©
 2025 Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN.

Prayer of the Day *

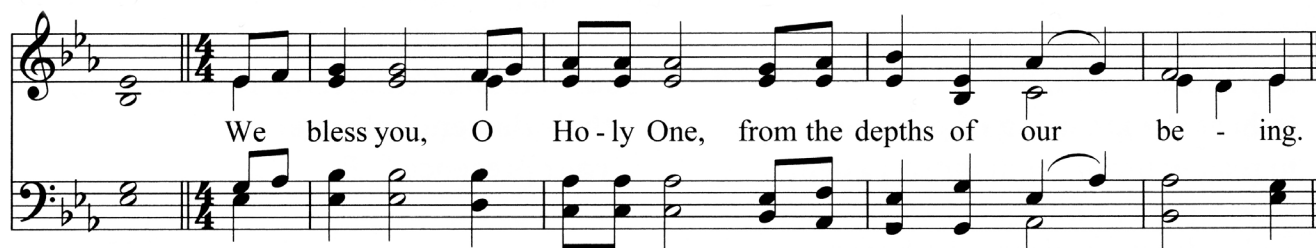
The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray:

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.

Psalm 103:1-13



From the depths of my soul, bless the Holy One!

Bless the Holy Name from my innermost being.

**In the depths of my soul, bless the Holy Name,
and do not forget the bounteous gifts showered upon me. (Refrain)**

Bless the Holy One

who forgives your wicked deeds and heals all your diseases,

who redeems your life from the grave

and crowns you with steadfast love and kindness,

who satisfies you with good things

and renews your youth, lively as an eagle. (Refrain)

The Holy One gives true justice and fair judgements to all who are wronged,

making the right ways known to Moses and the divine plans to Israel.

The Holy One is merciful and gracious,

slow to anger, and full of faithful love;

never accusing, nor retaining anger forever.

God does not treat us as sinners,

nor deal with us as wicked people.

As the heavens are high above earth,

so great is faithful love for those who are reverent.

Far as the east is from the west,

so far the Holy One has put away our wrongdoings.

Tender as parents' love for their children

is the Holy One's love for reverent people. (Refrain)

Scripture Reading: Romans 14:1-12

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us. A reading from the Letter to the Romans, the 14th chapter:

Welcome the person who is weak in faith—but not in order to argue about differences of opinion. One person believes in eating everything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. Those who eat must not look down on the ones who don't, and the ones who don't eat must not judge the ones who do, because God has accepted them. Who are you to judge someone else's servants? They stand or fall before their own Lord (and they will stand, because the Lord has the power to make them stand). One person considers some days to be more sacred than others, while another person considers all days to be the same. Each person must have their own convictions. Someone who thinks that a day is sacred, thinks that way for the Lord. Those who eat, eat for the Lord, because they thank God. And those who don't eat, don't eat for the Lord, and they thank the Lord too. We don't live for ourselves and we don't die for ourselves. If we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to God. This is why Christ died and lived: so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. But why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you look down on your brother or sister? We all will stand in front of the judgment seat of God. Because it is written,

*As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to me,
and every tongue will give praise to God.*

So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

Here ends the reading.

Inspire our understanding, Spirit of God.

Gospel Acclamation “Voice of Creation”

Voice of creation, open our ears to hear your word.

Source of salvation, open our hearts to hold your love.

Soul's inspiration, open our minds to know your grace.

Three in relation, transform our lives with your embrace.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 18:21-35

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 18th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt.

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.’ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. 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. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt.

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 our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon: Which Song Will We Sing?

Hymn of the Day “As We Gather at Your Table” #522

1. **As we gather at your table, as we listen to your word,
help us know, O God, your presence;
let our hearts and minds be stirred.
Nourish us with sacred story till we claim it as our own;
teach us through this holy banquet how to make Love's vict'ry known.**

2. **Turn our worship into witness in the sacrament of life;
send us forth to love and serve you,
bringing peace where there is strife.
Give us, Christ, your great compassion to forgive as you forgave;
may we still behold your image in the world you died to save.**
3. **Gracious Spirit, help us summon other guests to share that feast
where triumphant Love will welcome
those who had been last and least.
There no more will envy blind us nor will pride our peace destroy,
as we join with saints and angels to repeat the sounding joy.**

Apostles' Creed

Let us confess our faith together using the words of the Apostles' 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 *

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us. Each petition will end with "Hear us, O God" and the congregational response "Your mercy is great".

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, especially those in hospital (*names*). 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 Ray Sesula and all those who have gone before us. 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.**

Sharing the Peace

The peace of God be with you all.

And also with you.

Forgiven and loved, we are invited to share signs of forgiveness and love with one another as we pass the peace of Christ.

The Assembly greets one another with a word of peace.

Offering / Offering Prayer ³

In our lives, we live for the Lord. In our offerings, we give for God.
May our lives and our generosity reflect our commitment to these truths.

(an Offering plate is placed on the altar)

Let us pray:

**Thank you for the generosity of your love, forgiveness, and grace, dear God.
Thank you for trusting us to share this generosity with others.**

Bless our offerings with grace, forgiveness, and love.

Bless our lives, our giving, and our actions, that they may reflect and share these gifts in all that we say and in all that we do. Amen.

³ *Offering Prayer* written by Mary Scifres, from **The Abingdon Worship Annual 2026** © 2025 Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN

The Great Thanksgiving

Preface ⁴

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right to glorify you, Father, and to give you thanks,
for you alone are God, living and true,
dwelling in light inaccessible from before time and forever.

Fountain of all life and source of all goodness,
you made all things and fill them with your blessing;
you created them to rejoice in the splendor of your radiance.
Countless throngs of angels stand before you
to serve you night and day,
and, beholding the glory of your presence,
they offer you unceasing praise.

Joining with them, and giving voice to every creature under heaven,
we glorify your name and lift our voices in joyful praise:

Sanctus ⁵ (*sung*)

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. (*repeat*)**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

Thanksgiving at the Table ⁶

Blessed are you, O God, creator of heaven and earth.
You rescued your covenant people,
led them on all their journeys,
and taught them by the prophets.
You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him
may not perish but may have eternal life.

⁴ *Preface* is from a fourth-century liturgy used in the city of Alexandria.

⁵ Music by Jeff Johnson © 2019 Sola Scripture Songs

⁶ *Thanksgiving at the Table* (Form B) from **All Creation Sings** © 2020 Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis, MN.

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.

As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup,
 we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes:

Mystery of Faith ⁷ (sung)

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit in this meal,
 and make us one in this community of faith
 and with your people throughout the world.

Glory and praise to you, O God,
 Author of life, Word made flesh,
 Power of the Most High, now and forever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer (sung)

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

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

⁷ Music by Jeff Johnson © 2019 Sola Scripture Songs

Communion Invitation and Instructions

Communion Distribution (begin with communing the online congregation)

Hymn during Communion “Praise the Lord, Rise Up Rejoicing” #544

1. Praise the Lord, rise up rejoicing,
worship, thanks, devotion voicing:
glory be to God on high!
Christ, your cross and passion sharing,
by this eucharist declaring
yours the final victory.
2. Scattered flock, one shepherd sharing,
lost and lonely, one voice hearing,
ears attentive to your word;
by your blood new life receiving,
in your body, firm believing,
we are yours, and you the Lord.
3. Sins forgiven, wrongs forgiving,
we go forth alert and living
in your Spirit, strong and free.
Partners in your new creation,
seeking peace in ev’ry nation,
may we faithful foll’wers be.

Hymn during Communion “Go, My Children, with My Blessing” #543

1. Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone.
Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own.
In my love’s baptismal river I have made you mine forever.
Go, my children, with my blessing, you are my own.
2. Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.
Here you heard my dear Son’s story,
here you touched him, saw his glory.
Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.
3. Go, my children, fed and nourished, closer to me.
Grow in love and love by serving, joyful and free.
Here my Spirit’s power filled you,
here my tender comfort stilled you.
Go, my children, fed and nourished, joyful and free.

Communion Blessing

May the precious body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, strengthen you, and keep you in his grace now, and unto life everlasting.

Prayer after Communion *

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.

Sending of Communion Prayer

Gracious God, you took the form of a servant, offering yourself as food, comfort, and strength to a sick and hurting world. Anoint with a servant heart those who take your word and sacrament to our sisters and brothers in their homes. Grant grace, mercy, healing, and hope to those who feast on your body and blood and receive your words of new life. May we all recognize that we have a place and a home in the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Commission ⁸

Forgiven and loved,
we go into the world with forgiveness and love.
 Blessed beyond measure,
we will share our blessings with generosity and joy.

Blessing *

The holy Three, the holy One
 increase your hope, strengthen your faith,
 deepen your love, and ✠ grant you peace. Amen.

Benediction Song *“May the Grace of Christ Attend Us”* (#963 Voices United)

**May the grace of Christ attend us, and the love of God surround us,
 And the Holy Spirit keep us, now and ever. Amen.**

Sending

Go in peace, inspired by Christ to love and serve!
Thanks be to God.

⁸ *Commission* written by Mary Scifres, from **The Abingdon Worship Annual 2026** © 2025 Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN