

Sunday Worship Service – September 20, 2026

With One Voice – Service of Word and Prayer

Welcome and Announcements

A Moment of Reflection

Gathering Hymn *“Oh, Sing to God Above”* #726 WOV

1. Oh, sing to God above a hymn of joyful greeting,
a song of grateful love in the new day's light repeating:
you made the sea and sky, the sun and stars in splendor;
delight shone in your eye – all your works were filled with wonder.

Refrain: Alleluia! Alleluia! Oh, sing to God above: Alleluia!

2. Oh, sing to God above a hymn of praise and blessing,
a song of grateful love, hope and faith our hearts expressing:
creation lifts its voice to tell your might and glory,
and we, too, will rejoice to proclaim the saving story. (*Refrain*)

Greeting (WOV page 46)

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.

You are the treasured people of the Lord,

a people holy to the Lord our God.

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

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

One does not live by bread alone,

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

Scripture Song (WOV page 47)

Salvation belongs to our God and to Christ the Lamb forever and ever.

Great and wonderful are your deeds, O God of the universe;

just and true are your ways, O Ruler of all the nations.

Who can fail to honor you, Lord, and sing the glory of your name?

Salvation belongs to our God and to Christ the Lamb forever and ever.

For you alone are the Holy One. All nations will draw near and worship before you, for your just and holy works have been revealed.

Salvation belongs to our God and to Christ the Lamb forever and ever.

Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray:

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness 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.

Psalm 145:1-8

Great and lov - ing are you, O Ho - ly

One. We praise you with all our hearts.

My sovereign God, I must exalt you;

I must bless your Name for ever and ever.

Every day I will bless you and everlastingly praise your Name.

**Great are you, Holy One, most worthy of praise,
grand beyond all knowing. (Refrain)**

Generation on generation shall praise your works,
and proclaim your mighty power.

They will declare your glorious majesty.

I will meditate on your marvelous works.

They will speak of the power of your awesome acts.

I will proclaim your greatness.

**They will pour out memories of your great goodness
and loudly praise your true justice.**

You are gracious and merciful,

slow to anger, and filled with faithful love. (Refrain)

Scripture Reading: Philippians 1:21–30

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission. A reading from the Letter to the Philippians, the first chapter:

Because for me, living serves Christ and dying is even better. If I continue to live in this world, I get results from my work. But I don't know what I prefer. I'm torn between the two because I want to leave this life and be with Christ, which is far better. However, it's more important for me to stay in this world for your sake. I'm sure of this: I will stay alive and remain with all of you to help your progress and the joy of your faith, and to increase your pride in Christ Jesus through my presence when I visit you again.

Most important, live together in a manner worthy of Christ's gospel. Do this, whether I come and see you or I'm absent and hear about you. Do this so that you stand firm, united in one spirit and mind as you struggle together to remain faithful to the gospel. That way, you won't be afraid of anything your enemies do. Your faithfulness and courage are a sign of their coming destruction and your salvation, which is from God. God has generously granted you the privilege, not only of believing in Christ but also of suffering for Christ's sake. You are having the same struggle that you saw me face and now hear that I'm still facing.

Here ends the reading.

Inspire our understanding, Spirit of God.

Gospel Acclamation “Word of Life, Jesus Christ” (WOV page 48)

Word of life, Jesus Christ, all glory to you!

Word of life, Jesus Christ, all praise to you!

Our hearts burn within us while you open to us the Scriptures.

Word of life, Jesus Christ, all glory to you!

Word of life, Jesus Christ, all praise to you!

Gospel Reading: Matthew 20:1-16

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 20th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

“The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. After he agreed with the workers to pay them a denarion, he sent them into his vineyard.

“Then he went out around nine in the morning and saw others standing around the marketplace doing nothing. He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I’ll pay you whatever is right.’ And they went.

“Again around noon and then at three in the afternoon, he did the same thing. Around five in the afternoon he went and found others standing around, and he said to them, ‘Why are you just standing around here doing nothing all day long?’ “ ‘Because nobody has hired us,’ they replied. “He responded, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’

“When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the workers and give them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and moving on finally to the first.’ When those who were hired at five in the afternoon came, each one received a denarion. Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more. But each of them also received a denarion. When they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ‘These who were hired last worked one hour, and they received the same pay as we did even though we had to work the whole day in the hot sun.’

“But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I did you no wrong. Didn’t I agree to pay you a denarion? Take what belongs to you and go. I want to give to this one who was hired last the same as I give to you. Don’t I have the right to do what I want with what belongs to me? Or are you resentful because I’m generous?’ So those who are last will be first. And those who are first will be last.”

The gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon: The Trap of Comparison

Hymn of the Day “A Man Owned a Vineyard”¹ (sung to TFBF #264)

1. **A man owned a vineyard and needed a crew
to tend to his land — there was plenty to do.
He called out to people downtown in the square,
“Come work hard all day and I’ll pay you what’s fair.”
God, you call and you send; there is work here to do.
There’s your whole world to tend; may we garden for you!
O Lord, in your vineyard may we seek to be
the workers who tend to your justice and peace.**

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2. He went back a number of times on that day;
he called to new workers and promised fair pay.
Can we but imagine those first workers' rage
when all those who labored received the same wage?
God, the gift of your grace comes as quite a surprise.
For your mercies embrace even latecomers' lives.
May all who have worked long and hard humbly learn:
Your grace is a gift and not something we earn.
3. He called the complainers and said, "This is true —
that I kept my word and I gave you your due.
I share with compassion; I'm loving and kind.
I care for all people and give what is mine!"
God you give what is yours, more than what we deserve;
May we reach out in love where you call us to serve.
May we who have witnessed your grace gladly share
your justice and love with your world everywhere.

Response to the Word: Creed and Confession (WOV page 49)

In Christ, you have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

**We believe in him and are marked with the seal
of the promised Holy Spirit.**

Living together in trust and hope, we confess 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 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.**

Build yourselves up on your most holy faith;
pray in the Holy Spirit.

Keep yourselves in the love of God;
look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:

Everything old has passed away; behold, everything has become new!

God has given us the ministry of reconciliation.

Therefore, let us be reconciled to God and to one another.

Silence for reflection and self examination.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone. Uphold us by your Spirit so that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

Amen.

Peace

Sisters and brothers, rejoice. Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

Offering / Offertory (WOV page 50)

(an Offering plate is placed on the altar as the Offertory is sung)

**Glory to you, God, for yours is the earth;
yours the anointing, the radiant worth.**

**Ours the rejoicing for spirits aflame;
ours the thanksgiving to your holy name.**

**Ours be the telling of deeds greatly done;
yours be the glory, O God, yours alone.**

Let us pray:

God, our Creator,

you open wide your hand and satisfy the desire of every living creature. With these gifts we bless you for your tender nurture and care. Help us to delight in your will and walk in your ways, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession ²

God is a God of tenderness and compassion, slow to anger and rich in mercy, generous and forgiving to all who cry for grace. With confidence, let us turn to our God in prayer. Each petition will end with “let us pray to the Lord” and the congregational response “Lord, have mercy.”

For people throughout the world who are suffering at this very hour from drought and famine, from economic distress and social disruption, from violence and war, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the church throughout the world, that we, together with all our brothers and sisters in Christ, may be effective agents of social transformation and reliable messengers of hope, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For those in our own city and neighborhood who are out of work and out of luck, for broken families, for those crippled by debt, for those at their wit's end, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For our own community, and especially for those among us who are dispirited and broken-hearted, who find no hope or meaning or purpose in life, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the sick, especially those in hospital (*names*), for the dying victims of incurable disease, for those chained by depressions, fear, and addiction, and for those who minister to them, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For ourselves, that we may have the grace to rejoice with those who rejoice, to weep with those who weep, such as the friends and family of Eugene Nickel, to grieve for others' losses rather than our own, to be quick to forgive and slow to take offense, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

Lord God, in your presence none of us can boast, and all must ask for mercy; yet your Son has embraced us and called us to share in his labors for the salvation of every man, woman, and child. Grant us the grace to see what needs to be done and the wisdom and resources to do it, through the same Christ our Lord.

Let us pray with confidence in the words our Savior gave us:

The Lord's Prayer (spoken)

**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.**

² *Prayers of Intercession* from *Intercessions for the Christian People: Prayers of the People for Cycles A, B, and C*, edited by Gail Ramshaw, © 1990 The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN.

**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.**

Sending Song “O God beyond All Praising” #797 (WOV)

1. **O God beyond all praising, we worship you today
 and sing the love amazing that songs cannot repay;
 for we can only wonder at ev’ry gift you send,
 at blessings without number and mercies without end:
 we lift our hearts before you and wait upon your Word,
 we honor and adore you, our great and mighty Lord.**
2. **Then hear, O gracious Savior, accept the love we bring,
 that we who know your favor may serve you as our king;
 and whether our tomorrows be fill’d with good or ill,
 we’ll triumph through our sorrows and rise to bless you still:
 to marvel at your beauty and glory in your ways,
 and make a joyful duty our sacrifice of praise.**

Blessing (WOV page 53)

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
 fill you with every spiritual blessing.

Amen.

May the God of faithfulness and encouragement grant you to live
 in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus.

Amen.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
 so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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.**

Commission

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

Postlude – Joshua Hendricksen