

Order of Worship

16th Sunday after Pentecost

September 13, 2026

Call to worship (from Psalm 103:1-4)

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me.

Bless God's holy name.

God forgives. God heals. Gods transforms with steadfast love.

Bless God's holy name.

Call to confession

Before we can hear God's truth spoken in love, we must free ourselves from all that obstructs us from honestly acknowledging our wrongdoing. Let us examine our hearts and confess our sins to God.

Prayer of confession

Nurturing God, like a hen gathers her brood under her wings, you desire to gather your children. But division and disagreement plague us. We cling to rigid certainties, approach each other in arrogance, and fail to listen. We walk away from conflict, rather than working through it. Forgive us, Holy God. Help us grow in faith, mature in relationship, and be transformed through your steadfast love. Amen.

Assurance of pardon (James 5:15-16)

The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. Anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, redeemed and restored to God's path of righteousness. Amen.

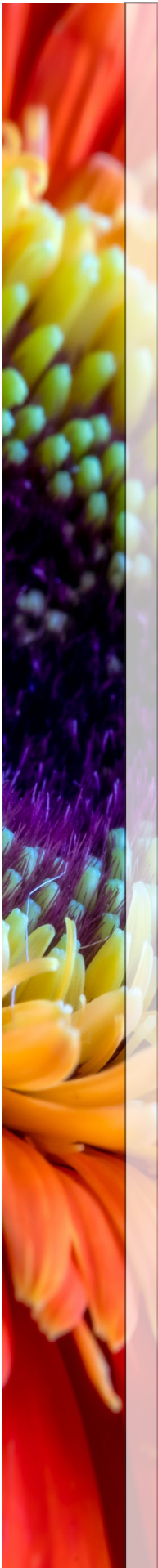
Prayer for illumination

Open us, Eternal God, to your Word read and proclaimed. Help us not to turn from your truth or avoid your message. Help us be receptive to the wisdom you offer. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon





Affirmation of faith (From Book of Common Worship)

**We believe there is no condemnation
for those who are in Christ Jesus;
for we know that all things work together for good
for those who love God,
who are called according to God's purpose.
We are convinced that neither death, nor life,
nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

Call for the offering

We are inspired to be generous by a generous God. We are inspired to give by the greatest of givers. In gratitude to God, let us present our tithes and offerings.

Prayer of dedication

Holy God, bless these gifts for your good use. May these tokens of our gratitude be of service in blessing the poor, feeding the hungry, clothing and sheltering those struggling to survive. Use these gifts to further Christ's mission and ministry in a hurting world. Amen.

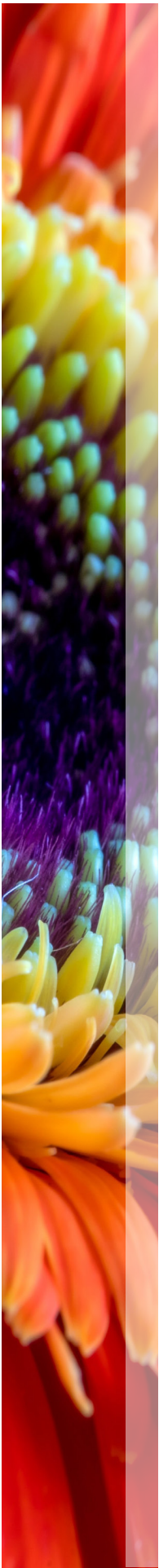
Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Loving God, as swiftly as summer ripens and yields to fall, our schedules fill. And as our days crowd with tasks, the quiet to contemplate the eternal seems to vanish. But now, we pause. We still ourselves, intent to enter your presence, to open our minds and hearts as the season opens its arms to autumn. We inhale the oxygen you supply; we note the steady pulse within us. We give thanks for breath, for heartbeat, for life's return with each silent moment. And in this hush, we gather our petitions and lift them to you.

Your steadfast love surrounds us, God — in suffering, in sorrow, in the uncertainty of what lies ahead. The devastation of this world is vast, too vast to hold in a single prayer. And yet we bring it to you. We ask you to walk beside those still clearing the wreckage of disaster, to fortify those who are ground down beneath the heel of greed and power, to reach into and soften the hearts of those who would choose war, to lay your hands upon the wounded, the sick, the grieving.

Faithful God, your faithfulness outlasts our fear. In your hands rest our children, our neighbors, this fragile creation — and we find, in that knowledge, something that feels like rest. You are the author of our laughter, the reason a table full of friends and family can nourish us. Even now, when the world presses in, you slip joy into the margins: a song, a game, a moment of delight we did not expect. Turn our eyes, Holy God — not away from what is broken, but toward what your hands are holding and healing.





We return, O God, to the good news that holds us — the promise made flesh in Jesus our Christ, who walked this same chaotic world and loved it anyway. May we follow where he led. May we love as he loved. We close now, praying as he taught us: **“Our Father...”**

Charge and benediction

God does not abandon us. God's love is steadfast.
May this love inspire all our relationships
as we leave this house of worship,
knit together in God's love,
bound as a community of Christ,
guided by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

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Liturgy written by Teri McDowell Ott
and provided for free distribution.

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