

Order of Worship

17th Sunday after Pentecost

September 20, 2026

Call to worship (inspired by Psalm 145:1-8)

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised

God's greatness is unsearchable.

From generation to generation, we sing of your righteousness.

The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love

Call to confession

God loves us and calls us by name. Too frequently, we stake our claim on that tenderness and use it as a weapon against others, forgetting that God's love does not build walls but knocks them down. Let us set down our burdens and our defenses as we confess our sins in front of God and one another.

Prayer of confession

Almighty God, when we follow the path of Jonah and allow our anger and frustration to cut us off from others, you sit next to us and call us back to your way of mercy, love and redemption. It is one thing to accept these gifts for ourselves; it is another to extend them to those who frustrate us. Forgive us for our anger, resentment, and desire to hoard. We lay these impulses at your feet and ask that you create a new heart within us, one modeled after your steadfast love and generosity. Help us to see the world in new ways. Amen.

Assurance of pardon (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old has gone; a new life has begun. Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

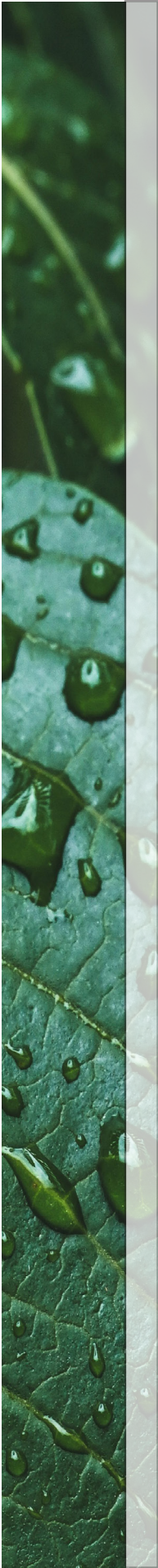
Thanks be to God.

Prayer for illumination

Eternal God, you know our hearts and minds. Bless this time together that in reading, hearing and reflecting on your Word together, we may be changed. We surrender this time to you and ask for your blessing upon it. Amen.

Scripture readings





Sermon

Affirmation of faith (The Apostles' Creed)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
the Creator of heaven and earth,
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He arose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
from whence He shall 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 life everlasting.
Amen.

Call for the offering

By the grace of God, we are saved — today and every day. Let us embrace this gift and respond with generosity. In gratitude, let us present our tithes and offerings.

Prayer of dedication

Almighty God, we offer you these gifts and our hearts alongside them. May they be blessed to do your bidding. May our expectations of what is right and what is wise always be governed by your unruly love. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Creator, your love is beyond our knowledge and understanding. We are full of wonder at your boundless mercy. We put our faith in this love as we come to you today to express our communal prayers for the world, knowing that you hear us.

God of all peoples, we pray for the world. Please be at work in places that are full of violence and suffering. We pray, in particular, for the people of Israel and Palestine, Ukraine and Iran. Please show us a pathway to peace. Put the right people in the right places to make decisions not just for themselves but also for others.

We pray for those affected by natural disasters, including the flash flood and landslide in Nepal and Tibet. In rooms full of raw anger and grief, we ask that those who are hurting might feel your presence. Bless those who are working to rebuild. And help us as a human race to make the appropriate changes to stop such climate-based disasters from happening in the future. Forgive us for the destruction we have caused.





We pray for our own country, God. Help us to balance your desire for justice and equality with your call to love our neighbor. May our churches be spaces of welcome where we can have faithful conversations that push all of our understanding. Please be with our political leaders, [name local and national leaders in your area].

Almighty, you tell us time and again in your Word that you care for the poor, for the abused, for the cast out. We pray for those people now. We pray for those who are houseless. We pray for those who are struggling to make ends meet. We pray for new immigrants to this country seeking asylum. We pray for the lonely. We pray for the sick. We pray for grieving. If we are to play a role in providing these needs, Heavenly Parent, spark our hearts toward action.

Lastly, God, we lift up our specific community. We pray for [insert the prayer concerns for your congregation]. We know that you see us and hear us, and so it is in the name of Jesus Christ that we pray together, **“Our Father...”**.

Charge and benediction

My prayer for us today, Beloved of God, is that our eyes are open to the people we discount. May we humbly accept that God’s love does not follow our logic. May we be freed from the burden of our resentments. May the Holy Spirit create a new work within us so that we can bring about the kingdom of God, here on earth.

In the name of our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, I bless you. Go and be at peace.

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Liturgy written by Rose Schrott Taylor
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