

9th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, July 26, 2026

Introduction to the day

As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: 1 Kings 3:5-12

A reading from 1 Kings.

Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people well.

PSALM: Psalm 119:129-136

When your word is opened, it gives light and understanding. (Ps. 119:130)

SECOND READING: Romans 8:26-39

A reading from Romans.

These words celebrate the depth of God's actions for us. Through Christ's death for us and the activity of the Spirit praying for us, we are fused to God's love poured out in Jesus Christ. Nothing, not even death itself, is able to separate us from such incredible divine love.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Throughout Matthew's gospel, Jesus and his disciples proclaim the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near!" Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people's lives.

GOSPEL MESSAGE - It's the Small Things

Children like to collect things: rocks, sticks, and more. Adults tend to pretend-love the items that are brought to them: "Oh, how beautiful!" "Oh, that's a good one." Children, encouraged, continue their collections, finding the smallest of things and displaying them like they are the most valuable items in the world.

Jesus' parables in today's gospel reading teach the disciples about things that are so small they are often overlooked: a mustard seed, a little bit of yeast, a tiny pearl, and even a net that is quite small until it is filled with fish. These little things in his parables are treasures important for understanding the reign of God.

Adults tend to overlook the small things while seeking larger things, heavier things, shinier things. We walk right past the tiny flower in the crack of a sidewalk, which once would have caught our eye. One pearl? A full necklace is better. A shrub that provides creatures a home? It's now in an inconvenient place.

But Jesus teaches that in God's reign all things, large and small, matter. All people matter. It is a wise disciple who recognizes this. Even King Solomon, with all his wealth, prayed for wisdom. Wisdom helps us see more clearly and begin to understand the depth of God's grace.

And that grace Jesus displayed immediately. "Have you understood all this?" he asked. The disciples answered simply, "Yes" (Matthew 13:51). What a bold answer! They were too worried to admit they did not understand. A little yeast, though, goes a long way. Jesus knew this. Each parable would build on another until the disciples understood the entire collection.

For us today, understanding God's grace takes study, prayers for wisdom, and walking the path while looking for the small things that matter. The reign of God is like a rose among a bramble bush? A child's picture of their home? However you visualize it, it is a treasure to cherish and to share.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

God our wisdom and our song, we pray for bishops, candidacy committees, those preparing for seminary, those awaiting call as deacons or pastors, and all who seek to lead your disciples in any way. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

God our breath and our heartbeat, help us to recognize signs of your presence among us. Protect and support diverse ecosystems, from national parks to family farms, from ranches to wild places. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

God our peace and our guide, help civic leaders hear all their peoples' stories with compassion and curiosity, and remind us of your love from which we can never be separated. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

God our intercessor and our lawgiver, dismantle the barriers to care and recognition of all who live with chronic illness, mobility struggles, pain, and uncertainty. We pray especially for Chris Burchat, Natasha Gagnon-Burchat, Donna L. Hoffman, Claude Jeannotte, Lillian Jeannotte, Glenda Panke, Adam Schroeder, Carolyn Schroeder, Heather Schruder, Doug Sell, Roy Zadow, those in long term care facilities and senior residences. In this moment of silence, we name out loud or in the quiet of our hearts, those who need your healing touch. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

God our redeemer, may we trust your love above and beyond all else that distracts, annoys, frightens, exhausts, or divides us. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

God who seeks, finds, and saves, for our community's part in the ongoing gift of creation, and for the riches of faith and hope which came before, we give you thanks. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

**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.

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.
Amen.

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Announcements:

Sunday July 26th - Pentecost 9

9:00 AM – Grace – Holy Communion

Grace – Helpers – Greeter: Maureen Springer

Reader: Haylee Felhaber

Communion Assistants: Ellen Weigold and Karen Sell

10:30 AM – Bonnechere – Holy Communion

Monday, July 27th

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM - Quilting at Grace

7:00 PM – Christian Education Meeting

Tuesday, July 28th

10:00 AM – Bible Study

Sunday, August 2nd – 10th Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 AM – Grace – Holy Communion

Grace – Helpers – Greeter: Gavin Pape; **Reader:** Michael Johnson

Communion Assistants: Donna Freitag and Margaret Weckwerth

Bell Ringer: Zig Mintha; **Elevator:** Claude Jeannotte;

Head Usher: Zig Mintha