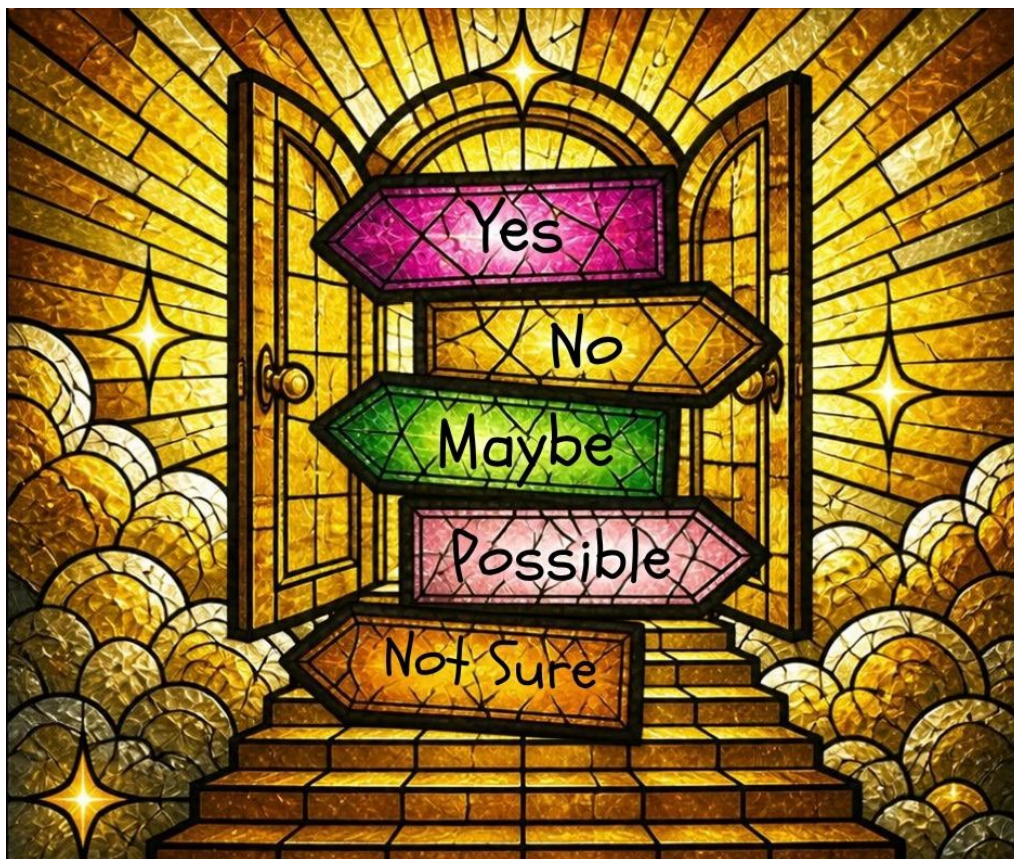


The 18th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, September 27th, 2026

Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.



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GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, one God, who pours love into our hearts, and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

Compassionate God,
**we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.**
Creation groans from overuse.
Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.
Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.
Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others.
Turn our hearts back to you.
Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.
Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Hear this good news:
...Receive freely this healing gift of grace.
Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

ACS 1084

God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me

GREETING

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

¹ The word of the LORD came to me: ² What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? ³ As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴ Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins who shall die.

²⁵ Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶ When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed, they shall die. ²⁷ Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸ Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰ Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹ Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 25-19

¹ To you, O LORD,

I lift up my soul.

² **My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

³ Let none who look to you be put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

⁴ **Show me your ways, O LORD,
and teach me your paths.**

⁵ Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
in you have I trusted all the day long.

⁶ **Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.**

⁷ Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love
and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.

⁸ **You are gracious and upright, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

⁹ You lead the lowly in justice
and teach the lowly your way.

Amen.

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1-13

¹ If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be grasped,

⁷ but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
assuming human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a human,

⁸ he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly
and gave him the name
that is above every other name,

¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now
in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you,
enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Word of God. Word of life.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW p. 142

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32

The holy gospel according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

*After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12),
Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in
charge of the temple.*

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW 772

Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways

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 Pontious 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

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

ELW 814

Take, Oh, Take Me As I Am

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of creation, you send rain, and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

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.

PREFACE

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW p. 144

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

...For as often as we eat of this bread and drink of this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

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

...And let the church say, "Amen." **Amen!** [2x]

...all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

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.**

COMMUNION HYMNS

ELW 818 & 806

BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

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

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BENEDICTION

SENDING HYMN

ELW 526

God Is Here!

SENDING

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Thanks be to God.

Thank you, worship leaders!

Greeter/Usher: Tim Kass

Accompanist: Pixie Balt

Reader: Karen Schroeder

Communion Assistant: Yvonne Law

Altar Guild: Kay Michaelson

Livestream: Bailey Quanbeck

Audio/Visual: Tim Kass & Kay Michaelson

Bulletin Art: Angela Catton

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