

Sunday, July 26th, 2026

The Kingdom of Heaven is like...



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GATHERING

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

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts... through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.

We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin...
that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

ELW 532

Gather Us In

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

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.**

WORD

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

FIRST READING: 1 Kings 3:5-12

⁵ At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I should give you." ⁶ And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷ And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?"

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ God said to him, "Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself

understanding to discern what is right, ¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you.”

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

DISCUSSION

1. If you could ask God for anything, what would you ask for?
2. What is the wisest advice you have ever received?
3. In what area of your life could you ask God for more wisdom?

PSALM 119:129-136

Please read responsively.

- ¹²⁹ Your decrees are wonderful;
therefore I obey them with all my heart.
- ¹³⁰ **When your word is opened it gives light;
it gives understanding to the simple.**
- ¹³¹ I open my mouth and pant
because I long for your commandments.
- ¹³² **Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as you always do to those who love your name.**
- ¹³³ Order my footsteps in your word;
let no iniquity have dominion over me.
- ¹³⁴ **Rescue me from those who oppress me,
and I will keep your commandments.**
- ¹³⁵ Let your face shine upon your servant
and teach me your statutes.
- ¹³⁶ **My eyes shed streams of tears,
because people do not keep your teaching.**

SECOND READING: Romans 8:26:39

²⁶ The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ³⁶ As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ 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.

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PRAYER ACTIVITY

ELW 631

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

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

A TIME ESPECIALLY FOR CHILDREN

HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW 793

Be Thou My Vision

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

God of grace,

hear our prayer.

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 518

We Eat the Bread of Teaching

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

...Together as the body of Christ,

we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes:

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

...We await his coming,

when, with the world made perfect through your wisdom,

all our sins and sorrows will be no more.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

...Nurture in us the fruits of the Spirit,

that we may be a living tree, sharing your bounty with all the world.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

...all glory and honor is your, O God, O Living One,

with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, 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 622 & 705

BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine, our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. Amen.

SENDING

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

BENEDICTION

SENDING HYMN

ELW 867

In Thee Is Gladness

SENDING

Go in peace. The Kingdom of heaven is near!
Thanks be to God.

Thank you, worship leaders!

Greeter/Usher: Tim Kass

Accompanist: Mike Rathke

Reader: Kay Michaelson

Communion Assistant: Peg McAllister

Altar Guild: Kay Michaelson

Livestream: Bailey Quanbeck

Audio/Visual: Tim Kass & Kay Michaelson

Bulletin Art: Angela Catton

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