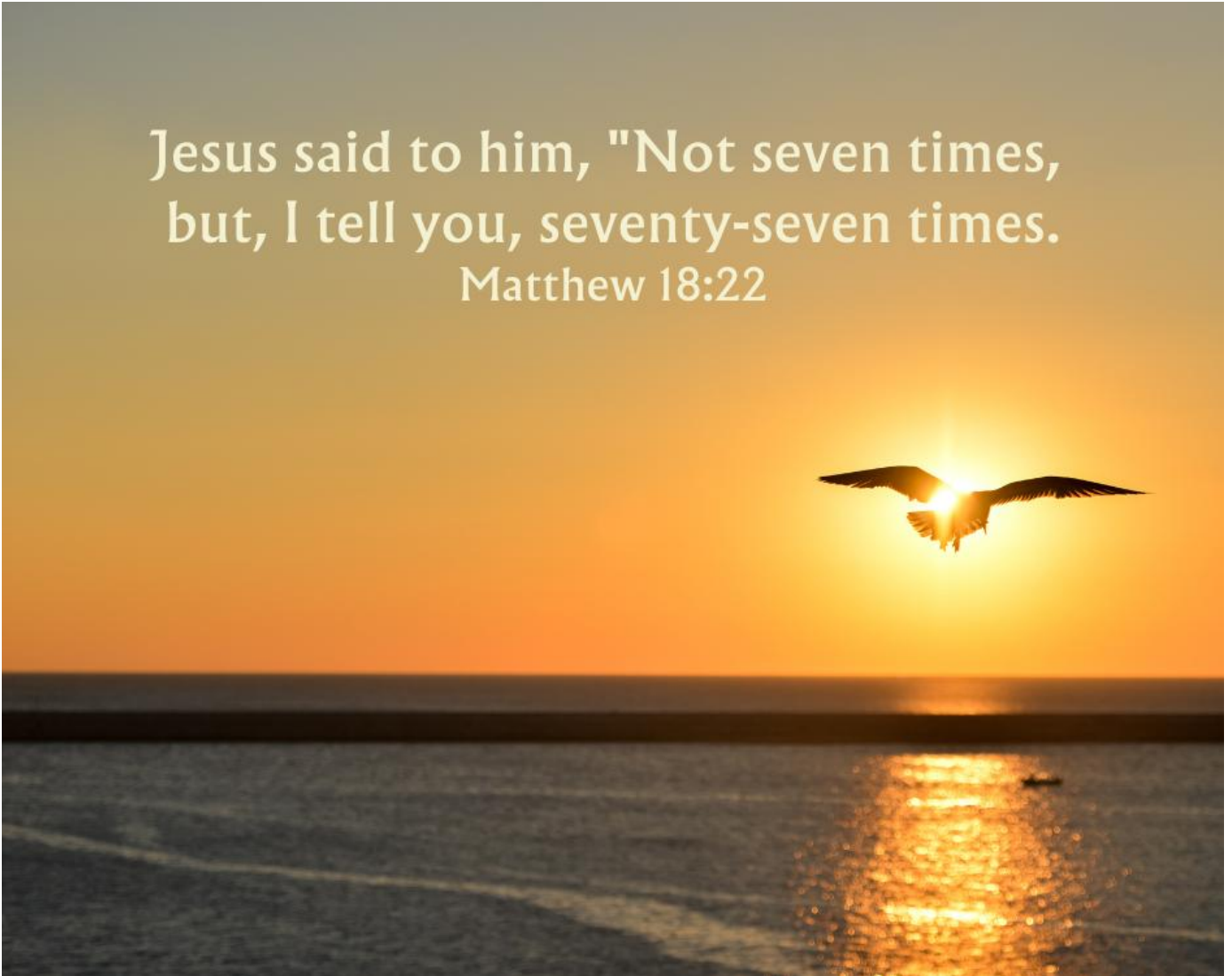


Jesus said to him, "Not seven times,
but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.
Matthew 18:22



September 13, 2026

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

(†) The congregation is invited to stand or (Sit with Gusto)
(BOLD-FACED TYPE) Congregation responds

THE CHURCH GATHERS

Silent Prayer and Time for Centering

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

*CALL TO WORSHIP ***

Followers of Christ,

we live in a world where we hurt one another,
where sin divides us one from another
and makes us enemies instead of neighbors.

Yet we are a people of grace,

called by Christ to forgive and repair the rifts between us.

The divisions in our world seem like too much to overcome,
and we wonder if this forgiveness thing really works anymore.
Maybe it worked for Jesus, but not for us.

Yet we are a people of grace,

called by Christ to forgive and repair the rifts between us.

We find ourselves tempted by easy answers and quick solutions,
reticent to do the slow and difficult work of reconciliation.

Yet we are a people of grace,

called by Christ to forgive and repair the rifts between us.

In this place, may we encounter Christ

who meets us in the places where we want to give up,
where we despair that life-giving change is even possible,
with abundant grace to sustain us on the journey.

God, form us today as people of grace,

called by Christ to forgive

and repair the rifts between us. Amen.

66 Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

1. Praise, my soul, the King of heav - en, to the throne thy
 2. Praise the Lord for grace and fa - vor to all peo - ple
 3. Fa - ther - like, God tends and spares us; well our fee - ble
 4. An - gels in the heights, a - dor - ing, you be - hold God

trib - ute bring; ran - somed, healed, re - stored, for - giv - en,
 in dis - tress; praise God, still the same as ev - er,
 frame God knows; moth - er - like, God gent - ly bears us,
 face to face; saints tri - um - phant, now a - dor - ing,

ev - er - more God's prais - es sing. Al - le - lu - ia!
 slow to chide, and swift to bless. Al - le - lu - ia!
 res - cues us from all our foes. Al - le - lu - ia!
 gath - ered in from ev - ery race. Al - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia! Praise the ev - er - last - ing King.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Glo - rious now God's faith - ful - ness.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Wide - ly yet God's mer - cy flows.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Praise with us the God of grace.

WORDS: Henry F. Lyte, 1834 (Ps. 103)
 MUSIC: John Goss, 1869

LAUDA ANIMA
 87.87.87

Alt. tune: REGENT SQUARE

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† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Loving God, we confess that we struggle to forgive,
and we struggle to create space for forgiveness to happen.
We rush ourselves to excuse the harmful speech
and actions of others
as a way of suppressing instead of honestly naming
the hurt we have experienced.
We expect others to pardon our faults
without also attending to our own need to repent.
We demand forgiveness from others instead
of recognizing forgiveness as a gift
we give to one another and that we receive from you.
We wield forgiveness as a weapon
instead of a bridge that brings us back together.
Forgive us, we pray, and free us
to joyfully extend mercy and grace to one another,
to set and respect boundaries with one another,
and to receive from you the love and wisdom
we need to grow as the community of Christ. Amen.**

† WORDS OF ASSURANCE

**God's gift of forgiveness makes us able,
with the power of Holy Spirit, to choose to forgive,
renew, and live again in right relationship with each other
and with our God.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.
Glory to God! Amen.**

WE PASS THE PEACE OF CHRIST

THE CHURCH HEARS THE WORD OF GOD

Old Testament Lesson: *Genesis 50: 15-21* (Pg. 42) **

ANTHEM A Song of Peace *Sheldon Curry*

Lord let me sing a song of peace;
where there is hate, help me show love;
where fear divides, help me restore;
where doubt deters, help me believe.

When tears flow free, reach out in grace;
when darkness falls, bring soon your light;
when grief abounds, show boundless care;
Lord, let me be Love's servant here.

May we care less to be loved, than to love,
to talk, than to hear,
to rule, than lift up,
to keep, than let go.

Teach me the ways of harmony,
by pardoning, we, our guilt assuage,
by pouring out, we're made complete,
Lord, help me sing a song of peace.
Lord, let me sing a song of peace, of peace.

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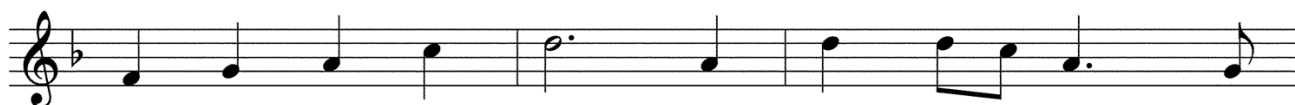
TIME FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

† HYMN

Forgive Our Sins



1. "For - give our sins as we for - give," You
2. How can your par - don reach and bless The
3. In blaz - ing light your Cross re - veals The
4. Lord, cleanse the depths with - in our souls And



taught us, Lord, to pray, But you a - lone can
un - for - giv - ing heart That broods on wrongs and
truth we dim - ly knew: What triv - ial debts are
bid re - sent - ment cease. Then, bound to all in



grant us grace To live the words we say.
will not let Old bit - ter - ness de - part?
owed to us, How great our debt to you!
bonds of love, Our lives will spread your peace.

Text: Rosamond Herklots, 1905-1987, © Oxford University Press

Tune: DETROIT, CM; Supplement to *Kentucky Harmony*, 1820; harm. by Gerald H. Knight, 1908-1979

Words; Rosamond E. Herklots © 1983 Rosamond Herklots, by permission of Oxford University Press, Great Clarendon Street / Music Department Oxford, UK OX2 6DP; Music: from Kentucky Harmony 1820, Public Domain Reprinted and recorded with permission under [OneLicense.net](https://www.onelicense.net) # A-711296.

† GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 18: 21-35 (Pg. 800) **

PRESIDER: For the word of God in Scripture,
For the word of God among us,
For the word of God within us,

ALL: Thanks be to God!

† GLORIA PATRI

Glory Be to the Father

70

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of staves. The lyrics are: 'Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and ev - er shall be, world without end. A - men. A - men.'

WORDS: Lesser Doxology, 3rd-4th cent.
MUSIC: Charles Meineke, 1844

MEINEKE
Irr.

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SERMON: Jane Combs

“The Power of Letting Go”

THE CHURCH RESPONDS TO THE WORD OF GOD

Grace Alone

2162



1. Ev - ery prom - ise we can make, ev - ery prayer and
2. Ev - ery soul we long to reach, ev - ery heart we



step of faith, ev - ery dif - ference we will make
hope to teach, ev - ery - where we share his peace



is on - ly by his grace. Ev - ery moun - tain
is on - ly by his grace. Ev - ery lov - ing



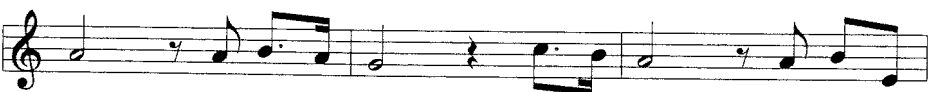
we will climb, ev - ery ray of hope we shine,
word we say, ev - ery tear we wipe a - way,



ev - ery bless - ing left be - hind } is on - ly by his
ev - ery sor - row turned to praise }



grace. Grace a - lone which God sup - plies, strength un -



known he will pro - vide. Christ in us our Cor - ner -



stone; we will go forth in grace a - lone.

WORDS: Scott Wesley Brown and Jeff Nelson (Eph. 2:8-10)

MUSIC: Scott Wesley Brown and Jeff Nelson

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GRACE ALONE

Irregular with Refrain

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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE
Sharing of Joys and Concerns

PRAYER SONG

Sanctuary

Lord, pre - pare me to be a sanc - tu - ar - y, pure and

ho - ly, tried and true; with thanks - giv - ing, I'll be a

liv - ing sanc - tu - ar - y for You.

Text: John Thompson, b.1950 and Randy Scruggs
Tune: John Thompson, b.1950 and Randy Scruggs
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SILENT PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(UMH p. 895)

PRAYER SONG (See Above)

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

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OFFERTORY MUSIC

† DOXOLOGY

THE GLORY OF THE TRIUNE GOD

94 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Unison



Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;



praise God, all creatures here be - low:

Harmony

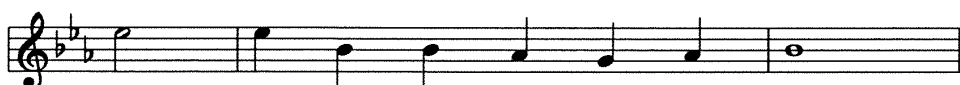


Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Unison



Praise God, the source of all our gifts!



Praise Je - sus Christ, whose power up - lifts!

Refrain (Harmony)



Praise the Spir - it, Ho - ly Spir - it! Al - le - lu - ia!

Unison



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

WORDS: Thomas Ken, 1674; adapt. by Gilbert H. Vieira, 1978
MUSIC: *Geistliche Kirchengesänge*, 1623; harm. by Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906
Adapt. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House

LASST UNS ERFREUEN
88.44.88 with Refrain

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Offertory Prayer:

THE CHURCH IS SENT TO SERVE

God, How Can We Forgive



1. God, how can we for - give when bonds of love are torn?
 2. When we have missed the mark, and tears of an - guish flow,
 3. Who dares to throw the stone to damn an - oth - er's sin,

How can we rise and start a - new, our trust re - born?
 how can you still re - lease our guilt, the debt we owe?
 when you, while know - ing all our past, for - give a - gain?

When hu - man lov - ing fails and ev - ery hope is gone,
 The o - cean depth of grace sur - pass - es all our needs.
 No more we play the judge, for by your grace we live.

your love gives strength be - yond our own to face the dawn.
 A priest who shares our hu - man pain, Christ in - ter - cedes.
 As you, O God, for - give our sin, may we for - give.

WORDS: Ruth Duck (Matt. 6:12-15; 18:21-35; John 8:2-11)

MUSIC: Hebrew melody, *Sacred Harmony*; harm. from *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, alt.

Words © 1996 The Pilgrim Press

LEONI

66.84 D

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† Benediction

Voluntary

Assisting with Worship today:

Liturgist:

Ariane Ludwig

Video and Sound Engineer:

John Wilderman

Cover Image:

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Altar Flowers:

In Celebration of Dan & Jen Saucier Anniversary given by their kids and Grandkids.

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***Liturgical Elements: "Ministry Matters"

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Looking Ahead

Readings for September 20, 2026

Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost

[Exodus 16:2-15](#) / [Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45](#)

[Philippians 1:21-30](#) / [Matthew 20: 1-16](#)



[First United Methodist Church](#)

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By Feeding the Body, Mind, and Soul

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