

SEPTEMBER 6, 2026

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord God, enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy. Without your help, we mortals will fail; remove far from us everything that is harmful, and lead us toward all that gives life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 33:7-11

So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life. Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

PSALM: Psalm 119:33-40

Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes,
and I shall keep it to the end.
Give me understanding, and I shall keep your teaching;
I shall keep it with all my heart.
Lead me in the path of your commandments,
for that is my desire.
Incline my heart to your decrees
and not to unjust gain.
Turn my eyes from beholding falsehood;
give me life in your way.
Fulfill your promise to your servant,
which is for those who fear you.
Turn away the reproach that I dread,
because your judgments are good.
Behold, I long for your commandments;
by your righteousness enliven me.

SECOND READING: Romans 13:8-14

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is

near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:15-20

Jesus said to the disciples: "If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

SEPTEMBER 6, 2026 PRAYERS

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

Hold us accountable, O God. Show your church where repentance is needed and lead us in paths of intentional compassion and listening. Help us extend hands of reconciliation and care, especially in relationships with other Christians and people of other faiths. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Reveal your miracles to us, O God. Move us to cherish you as we behold the wonders of creation. Renew the seas and the soil, the forests and the creatures that live in them. Turn us to ways of living that seek Earth's thriving. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Inspire us to lead with honor, O God. Guide judges and legislators, police, and government officials to create and uphold just laws. Move us to treat all people with dignity and guide our conversations with one another. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Help us comfort those who suffer, O God. Reassure any who are harmed by the wicked acts of others. Bring peace to all who are vulnerable, frightened, despairing, or sickly. Guard their waking and their sleeping. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Awaken us, O God. Challenge and encourage your people to value the vocation to which each is called. We pray for all discerning new possibilities or changing employment. In all our diverse callings, teach us to love our neighbor above all else. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Be our hope, O God. We remember with thanksgiving your disciples who died in faith. May their trust in your promise be our protection and our hope. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Let us pray for all the members of this congregation, especially Craig Kennedy.

Let us pray for all those in need;

The hungry, homeless, or unemployed;

The anxious and vulnerable

The sick and those recovering from illness or injury;

Those grieving over the death of loved ones;

Those celebrating birthdays and special occasions;

All our prayers, be spoken or unspoken. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15–21

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

PSALM: Psalm 103: [1–7] 8–13 Praise the Judge of the World

Bless the LORD, O my soul,

and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

Bless the LORD, O my soul,

and forget not all God's benefits—

who forgives all your sins

and heals all your diseases;

who redeems your life from the grave

and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;

who satisfies your desires with good things

so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

O LORD, you provide vindication

and justice for all who are oppressed.

You made known your ways to Moses

and your works to the children of Israel.]

LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,

slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;

you will not always accuse us,

nor will you keep your anger forever.

You have not dealt with us according to our sins,

nor repaid us according to our iniquities.

For as the heavens are high above the earth,

so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

As far as the east is from the west,

so far have you removed our transgressions from us.

As a father has compassion for his children,

so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1–12

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21–35

Then Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

SEPTEMBER 13, 2026 PRAYERS

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and healing to rivers clogged with pollution. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in positions of power to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, the disease of addiction, or otherwise afraid or in harm's way. Protect all who cry out for mercy. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We pray for this congregation. Open our hearts to practice intentional invitation. Help us to forgive each other, practice patience, and choose welcome over judgment. Move us to care for those in our community seeking refuge and safety. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We give thanks for the saints who died in faith. Show us how to live faithfully, creatively, and lovingly in your church and Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

Let us pray for all the members of this congregation, especially Ray Knutsen.

Let us pray for all those in need:

The hungry, homeless, or unemployed;

The anxious and vulnerable

The sick and those recovering from illness or injury;

Those grieving over the death of loved ones;

Those celebrating birthdays and special occasions;

All our prayers, be spoken or unspoken. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

September 20, 2026

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual loving kindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

FIRST READING: Jonah 3:10—4:11

When God saw what [the people of Nineveh] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it. But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. The Lord GOD appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live." But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

PSALM: Psalm 145:1–8 The Greatness and Goodness of God

I will exalt you, my God and king,

and bless your name forever and ever.

Every day I will bless you

and praise your name forever and ever.

Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised!

There is no end to your greatness.

One generation shall praise your works to another

and shall declare your power.

I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty

and all your marvelous works.

They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts,

and I will recount your greatness.

They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness;

they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.

The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,

slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

SECOND READING: Philippians 1:21–30

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well -since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

GOSPEL: Matthew 20:1–16

Jesus said to the disciples: "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

SEPTEMBER 20, 2026 PRAYERS

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

God who is gracious and merciful, teach your church to invite and welcome all. Lead us to be grateful for the blessing of community. Challenge your church to choose equity and compassion over judgment. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

God who sends the wind and the sun, you know every worm and bush by name. Help us remember that even the humblest parts of creation are precious to you. Show us how best to care for the earth and its creatures. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

God who is ready to relent from punishing, impart your compassionate wisdom to legislators, judges, members of the military, and law enforcement. Give them courage to serve their communities in times of uncertainty, stress, or exhaustion. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

God who saves, direct your people who are tempted by evil ways. Protect your children from calamity and disaster. Strengthen all who are incarcerated. Encourage all who are in despair or pain of any kind. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

God who is slow to anger, may we boast about the goodness of Jesus with the confidence of Paul in prison. Inspire us to find abundance in whatever vocation we are called to in the world and in service to our congregation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

God who abounds in steadfast love, we give thanks for the saints called to the kingdom of heaven. United with them in spirit, hold us firm as we labor in this life and look to the life to come. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Let us pray for all the members of this congregation, especially Buddy and Wanda Lobell.

Let us pray for all those in need:

The hungry, homeless, or unemployed;

The anxious and vulnerable

The sick and those recovering from illness or injury;

Those grieving over the death of loved ones;

Those celebrating birthdays and special occasions;

All our prayers, be spoken or unspoken. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

September 27, 2026

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.

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1–4, 25–32

The word of the LORD came to me: 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"? As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. 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 that shall die. 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? 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. Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. 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? 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. 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? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

PSALM: Psalm 25:1–9 Prayer for Guidance and Deliverance

To you, O LORD,

I lift up my soul.

My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,

nor let my enemies triumph over me.

Let none who look to you be put to shame;

rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

Show me your ways, O LORD,

and teach me your paths.

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.

Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,

for they are from everlasting.

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.

You are gracious and upright, O LORD;

therefore you teach sinners in your way.

You lead the lowly in justice

and teach the lowly your way.

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1–13

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23–32

When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."

SEPTEMBER 27, 2026 PRAYERS

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

We put our trust in you as we pray for the church. Give bishops, pastors, deacons, and teachers the gifts of wisdom and discernment. Be with them in bold truth and faithful witness. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Lead us in your truth as we pray for creation. Empower us to look to the interests of others as we make choices that impact the environment. Summon us to be advocates for healthy waterways, habitats, and air Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Lead us in justice as we pray for those in government, the military, and other positions of authority. Give them humble and willing hearts, looking to the needs of others. We pray also for our enemies. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Trusting your goodness, we pray for all caregivers and people who are sick or suffering in any way. Give them encouragement and consolation in your presence. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Teach us your paths as we pray for this congregation. Be at work in us and unite us in your love as we labor together for the sake of the gospel. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We give thanks for all the saints who died secure in the knowledge of salvation. Keep us fearless in our faith and certain of your resurrection. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Let us pray for all the members of this congregation, especially Bob and Judy Palm.

Let us pray for all those in need:

The hungry, homeless, or unemployed;

The anxious and vulnerable

The sick and those recovering from illness or injury;

Those grieving over the death of loved ones;

Those celebrating birthdays and special occasions;

All our prayers, be spoken or unspoken. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

Amen.