

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 27, 2026



PRELUDE

“Thank God for Sunday Morning”

Pardo, West & Cochren

We arrive from many places as music gathers us into one shared moment in the Spirit.

Verse 1

Neon lights and stained glass windows
Old bar stools and back row pews
I ran to one more than the other
But I couldn't outrun You
Trying to fill up all the empty
Trying to numb the pain inside
Thinking You'd never forgive me
For all those Saturday nights

Chorus

(But) thank God for Sunday morning
Thank God for three sixteen
And the words in red that say You bled
And gave Your life for me
Thank God for a choir singing
And a voice saying come back home
Saturday night looked like the end of the story
(But thank God for Sunday morning)

Verse 2

Now I know that You're no stranger
To the broken hearts like mine
It's what You do yeah somehow You
Bring dead things back to life
And it might look like it's as over
As a stone over a grave
But I've seen You move I'm living proof
You still roll stones away
(Chorus)

Verse 3

Sunlight through the stained glass window
Feels like freedom on my face
Really is a new beginning
Really is amazing grace

(But) thank God for Sunday morning
Thank God for three sixteen
And the words in red that say You bled
And gave Your life for me
Thank God for a choir singing
And a voice saying come back home
Saturday night looked like the end of the story
Oh!

Ending

Saturday night looked like the end of the story
But thank God for Sunday morning
Thank God for Sunday morning

WELCOME STATEMENT

Everyone is invited into God's story and the life of this community.

TEMPLE TALK

Thanksgiving Challenge

LouAnn Gayan

PROCESSIONAL/SPECIAL MUSIC

"Come to Me"

Aaron Shust

Chorus

Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me
For I am gentle and humble in heart
And you will find rest for your souls

Verse 1

Come to Me all you who are weary and burdened
And I will give you rest

Verse 2

For My yoke is easy
And My burden is light

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GREETING

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

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.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

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: We have peace with God through ✠ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace. **Amen.**

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

FIRST READING

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

A reading from Ezekiel.

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 who 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.

Holy wisdom, holy word.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalms 25:1-9

Please read the psalm responsively.

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

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

A reading from Philippians.

If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection 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 empty 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 existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name that is above every other name, so that at the name given to 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 on 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.

Holy wisdom, holy word.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 21:23-32

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 according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

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.”

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

SERMON

Rev. Phillip Potaczek

Intro

Where You go I'll go
Where You stay I'll stay
When You move I'll move
I will follow
Oh oh oh

Verse 1

All Your ways are good
All Your ways are sure
I will trust in You alone
Higher than my sight
High above my life
I will trust in You alone

Chorus

Where You go I'll go
Where You stay I'll stay
When You move I'll move
I will follow You
Whom You love I'll love
How You serve I'll serve
If this life I lose
I will follow (You)

Interlude

Yeah I will follow You yeah

Verse 2

Light into the world
Light into my life
I will live for You alone
You're the One I seek
Knowing I will find
All I need in You alone
In You alone

Bridge

In You there's life everlasting
In You there's freedom for my soul
In You there's joy unending joy
And I will follow

Ending

Yeah I will follow You yeah
I will follow You yeah
I will follow You yeah

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PROFESSION OF FAITH: THE 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 Pontius 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

After each prayer petition, please respond: Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The peace of Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

From the goodness of the earth and the work of many hands, we have received much. Let us return our gifts in gratitude, joining God's renewing work in the world.

We offer ourselves and our gifts with joy, that all creation may know justice, peace, and abundant life.



Verse 1

Riches for rags glory for shame
What a wonderful exchange
My Savior made for me
His was the cross
Mine was the blame
What a wonderful exchange
My Savior made for me

Chorus

I will lift my eyes to Calvary
Where my Jesus died and covered me
You gave it all now it's paid in full
Lord I can't believe You did that for me
I just can't believe You did that (for me)

Verse 2

Beauty for ash, triumph for tears
What a wonderful exchange my Savior made
That he made for me
His was the loss
Mine was the gin
What a wonderful exchange
My Savior made
He made for me

Interlude 1

He really did it
He really did it

Bridge

My shame lost the battle
To my Savior's love
If it comes chasing after
I'm covered under the blood

Interlude 2

You really did it
You really did it
You really did it

Ending

The cross to remind me
My past is behind me
You really did it
Empty grave to remind me
Your grace redefines me
You really did it
Oh You really did it

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OFFERING PRAYER

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.

THE 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

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy, mighty and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory...to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Modern Version

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

All are welcome to God's table of grace, receiving Christ's presence as nourishment for the journey.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

All who wish to know the love of God in Jesus Christ are invited to Holy Communion. Inform a communion assistant if you need a gluten-free host. Grape juice is located in the center ring of the tray. If you are not receiving the sacrament today, please come forward with your arms crossed over your chest for a blessing.

COMMUNION HYMN

"I Need You Now"

Redman, Myrin, Ligertwood

Singing in response to God's gift, we enter more deeply into the presence of Christ.

Verse 1

On this thirsty desert ground
In a dry and barren land I bow down
I need You now
You are calling I will come
To Your river I will run I bow down
I need You now

Chorus

O Living Water O God my Savior
If I ever needed You I need you now
O Living Water O God my Healer
If I ever needed You I need You now

Verse 2

You're the start and You're the end
You complete what You begin I bow down
I need You now
You are calling I will come
To Your river I will run I bow down
I need You now

Bridge

Just like the desert needs the blessing of the rain
Just like the winter waiting for the sun again
I need You now
Just like a river as it reaches for the sea
Just like a song it needs the sound of melody
I need You now
(Repeat)

God I need You now
If I ever needed You I need You now
Just like the desert needs the blessing of the rain
Just like the winter waiting for the sun again
I need You now

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PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Sustaining God, with this bread and cup...in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind, in the body of Christ Jesus.
Amen.

The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit.
Amen.

The God of grace - Creator, ✠ Christ, and Spirit - bless you now and forever.
Amen.

Verse 1

I'm casting my cares aside
I'm leaving my past behind
I'm setting my heart and mind on You Jesus
I'm reaching my hands to Yours
Believing there's so much more
Knowing that all You have in store for me is good
It's good

Chorus 1

Today is the day You have made
I will rejoice and be glad in it
Today is the day You have made
I will rejoice and be glad in it
And I won't worry about tomorrow
I'm trusting in what You say
Today is the day today is the day

Verse 2

I'm putting my fears aside
I'm leaving my doubts behind
I'm giving my hopes and dreams to You Jesus
I'm reaching my hands to Yours
Believing there's so much more
Knowing that all You have in store for me is good
It's good

Bridge

I will stand upon Your truth
(I will stand upon Your truth)
And all my days I'll live for You
(All my days I'll live for You)
And I will stand upon Your truth
(I will stand upon Your truth)
And all my days I'll live for You
(All my days I'll live)

Chorus 2

Today is the day You have made
I will rejoice and be glad in it
Today is the day You have made
I will rejoice and be glad in it
And I won't worry about tomorrow
I'm giving You my fears and sorrows
Where You lead me I will follow
I'm trusting in what You say
Today is the day (5x)

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SENDING

Our Eucharist has ended. **Now it must be lived.**
Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE