

**Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost
September 13, 2026, 9:30 am**



Grace, Seventy-Seven Times

Little Prairie United Methodist Church
2980 130th ST E, P.O. Box 276, Dundas, MN 55019
507.663-6150
www.littleprairieumc.org

Our Vision:

Creating a welcoming community that worships well, disciples well and serves well;
transforming the world for Jesus Christ.

WELCOME AND GATHERING

Gathering Music

Dan Dauner

Welcome

Pastor Penny Bonsell

Centering Time

Dan Dauner

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.

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, May 2026.

Hymn

All Praise to Thee, for Thou, O King Divine *UMH #166*

All

Opening Prayer

Liberating God, we worship you. We praise you for delivering your people of old from enslavement in Egypt by opening up a new and unexpected future before them.

They experienced your grace and mercy in awesome and life-sustaining ways, which must have been like an impossible dream coming true.

Through these acts, you showed your compassion for the weak and powerless of this world.

We praise and adore you for opening up a new future for us when your love and compassion, your mercy and grace became enfleshed in Jesus Christ.

He delivered us from the bondage of evil and sin through his death on the cross.

The impossible once more became reality when love defeated evil once and for all.

We pray that this time of worship will be a true offering of our wonder and praise **that you should care for us so deeply and so faithfully.**

This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Written by Moira Laidlaw on Liturgies Online. Re-posted on the re:Worship blog at <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2011/09/opening-prayer-exodus-14-19-31.html>.

Sharing the Peace

Children's Moment

THE WORD

Romans 14:1-12

Do Not Judge Another

14 Welcome those who are weak in faith^[a] but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ 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. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord^[b] is able to make them stand.

⁵ 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. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷ For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ 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. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ 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.^[c] ¹¹ For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to^[d] God.”

¹² So then, each one of us will be held accountable.^[e]

[Read full chapter](#)

Footnotes

- a. [14.1](#) Or *conviction*
- b. [14.4](#) Other ancient authorities read *for God*
- c. [14.10](#) Other ancient authorities read *of Christ*
- d. [14.11](#) Or *confess*
- e. [14.12](#) Other ancient authorities add *to God*

Matthew 18:21-35

Forgiveness

²¹ Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²² Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven^[a] times.

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

²³ “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ 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.’ ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ 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. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

[Read full chapter](#)

Footnotes

- a. [18.22](#) Or seventy times seven

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God**

Message

Grace, Seventy-Seven Times

Pastor Penny Bonsell

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Hymn

My Hope is Built

UMH #368

All

Joys and Concerns/Prayers of the People

O God, we seek your mercy...

yet we ourselves look for payback when we are wronged.

We think it “only fair” and “what is right” when we retaliate and use harsh words and withdraw from relationship.

The forgiveness you offer on our account is larger than we can comprehend; still, we withhold forgiveness and carry the grudge over petty items.

We are eager to do your judging.

And the worst: we conspire our inner thoughts to secure your forgiveness while avoiding honest repentance. Forgive us, Lord, for the sins we know in our hearts. Save us, Lord, from the sins we hide.

Silent prayer of confession

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.

Adapted from Bill Wessner and posted on Confession RCL blog. Re-posted on the re:Worship blog at <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2011/09/confession-matthew-18-21-35.html>.

Offering

Dan Dauner

Doxology

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow (UMH #95)

All

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Merciful Deliverer, you part the waters when we feel trapped and forgive debts too great to repay. In the face of fear and brokenness, you lead us with compassion and grace. May the gifts we bring today reflect our deep gratitude for your mercy. Let them support ministries of reconciliation and acts of healing, justice, and welcome. Teach us to lead not with judgment, but with generosity, recognizing that what we have, we hold by your mercy. Bless these offerings and bless us as stewards of your kingdom, *your kin-dom*, always seeking to build a world where grace is not rare but abundant. Amen. ([Matthew 18:21-35](#))

And the prayer in which Jesus unites us...

The Lord’s Prayer

All

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. Amen.

Hymn

Freely, Freely *UMH #389*

All

Sending

Followers of Christ, go now in the blessing and assurance that you are a forgiven people empowered by grace to forgive and heal the divisions that keep us from truly loving God, self, neighbor, and all creation with the fullness of our beings. God sends you. The Spirit fills you if you let it. Christ goes with you and you with Christ, always and everywhere... even when you feel unsure...Jesus is with you. God Bless! **Amen.**

God Bless! Go in hope, love, joy, and peace. Shalom. Amen.

Postlude

Dan Dauner

INFORMATION

See our website for more details at www.littleprairieumc.org.

New Member Sunday September 27th, 9:30 am (at Cowboy Church)