

JULY 26, 2026
NINTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST



The Spirit helps us in our weakness.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52	Parables of the kingdom
Monday	1 Kings 3:5-12	Solomon's prayer for wisdom
Tuesday	Romans 8:26-39	God's love in Christ Jesus
Wednesday	Genesis 29:15-28	Jacob marries
Thursday	Psalms 103:8-14	The Lord's wonderful love
Friday	Hebrews 4:14-16	Jesus the great high priest
Saturday	Psalms 119:129-136	The glories of God's law
Sunday	Matthew 14:13-21	Jesus feeds the five thousand

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. **Romans 8:26 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Come Holy Spirit, help us in our weakness and strengthen us with faith that trusts your never-failing care through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for daily food; as you restore our bodies with this meal, restore our souls with joy in your presence. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God's face shine on you with kindness. (Psalm 119:135)



The "Four Key Faith Practices"—Caring Conversations, Devotions, Service, and Rituals & Traditions—are a framework developed by the Rev. Dr. David Anderson. For a brief description, go to: <https://milestonesministry.org/history-of-the-four-keys/>.

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HYMN OF THE WEEK

For by Grace You

Have Been Saved

WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Think of a person who you consider to be wise. What makes them wise?
- When you are going through tough times, do you find prayer easy or difficult? Explain.

DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52 and 1 Kings 3:5-12.

Jesus tells five short parables: two about growth, two about valuing something very highly, and one about separating the good from the bad. There are details in these parables that have challenged Christians throughout the ages. Jesus asked the disciples if they "*understood all this*," and without hesitation they simply replied, "*Yes*" (Matthew 13:51). Perhaps there is a cautionary tale here. Whereas, Solomon simply wants wisdom and is praised by God for such a humble request (1 Kings 3:5-12), yet the larger story in 1 Kings reveals that Solomon ended up wanting and claiming much more than a humble quest for wisdom. Instead of preserving the kingdom of Israel, the twelve tribes became split into two realms because of Solomon's failures. The Apostle Paul acknowledges our human frailty by noting that we do not know how to pray and that the Spirit helps us in our weakness. In the midst of seeking a life of faithfulness and wisdom, it is good to be reminded, with humility, that our wisdom has its limits. Finally, what we need is a God who intercedes for us "*with sighs too deep for words*" (Romans 8:26).
Discuss: How has faith in God helped you during difficult times?
Pray: The Lord's Prayer.

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you help or support someone who is struggling with a health issue?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Many congregations are smaller today than years ago and may feel insignificant. The parable of the mustard seed teaches us that big things can happen from the smallest of things (Matthew 13:31-32). Growing the church involves being intentional about sharing our own faith story and passing the rituals and traditions we know and love onto the next generation. Think or talk about how you have told your faith story or passed on Christian rituals and traditions to others. How might you sow seeds of faith that grow into something great?

Pray: **Dear God, thank you for Jesus who teaches us about the kingdom of heaven. Help us to grow your kingdom and take time to learn and to tell others about what Jesus has taught us. Amen.**



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