



Service of Worship for the Lord's Day September 20, 2026

Proper 20

Prayers written by Kellan Sarles.

PRELUDE "The Lone Wild Bird" Wilbur Held

CALL TO WORSHIP *lyrics from Hymn #405, verses 1-3*

Pastor: We gather as a small band of pilgrims, wanting to see and serve the Living Christ.

People: Many of us - but not all - have known Jesus from our birth.

Pastor: But it is the eleventh hour! Vast numbers of people have not heard or responded to God's call.

People: Then we must extend that call, for Christ's promise of eternal life is free to all - wherever and whenever we encounter Him.

Pastor: Praise God for His grace - unlimited, free, and perfect! Amen.

HYMN #36 For the Fruit of All Creation

PRAYERS OF ADORATION AND CONFESSION

Guide: You, O Lord, are our refuge and strength, the rock of our salvation. By Your word, the universe came into being; and by Your promise, Jesus, the embodiment of God and the Holy Spirit, walked among us. In Christ we see the perfection of God.

People: Though Christ lived among us, embodying perfection and modeling selfless grace, we have failed to follow his example. Let each person, then, be led to lift up and silently repent of our sins....

Compassionate Christ, I confess my selfishness and reluctance to get involved in

your Kingdom. Creator God, I confess my selfish desire to accumulate possessions, over-value money, and take more than what is my share. Spirit God, I confess that I pray selfishly and only when I need help, too busy to build the relationship that brings wisdom, joy, and deep connection. Triune God, help me to seek You above all else.

- Silent prayer -

Guide: The One who forgives us also calls us to be the family of God: Brothers and Sisters, bound through our love for Jesus and one another. As family together, we pray Christ's prayer: ***"Our Father.... The Lord's Prayer" (debts/debtors)***

PROMISE OF THE GOSPEL Romans 13

Guide: The promise of the gospel is bold - Though your body will die, You will live. For neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

CHORAL RESPONSE *(in unison)*

#582 "Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me"

ANTHEM "Walk with Me, Lord" by Wagner w/B-flat clarinet (Chloe Levering)

FAMILY SERMON Bo Corum, Lay Pastor

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Reader: What do You offer us in your Word today, O Lord? Whatever the gift, whether inspiration, compassion, wisdom, or clarity, we humbly seek your help. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Matthew 20:1-16

1-2 "For 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 a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3-4 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.

5-7 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.'

8-9 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 a denarius.

10-12 Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. 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.'

13-15 But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? 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?'

16 So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

All: This is the Word of the Lord. Amen.

SERMON "Better Than Fair" Bo Corum, Lay Pastor

THE APOSTLES' CREED Page #35 in Hymnal

HYMN #175 Seek Ye First

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: Christ said, "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." Let us, then, cast our burdens on Christ.

People: Gracious Lord, the burdens we carry are often self-imposed. We hold ourselves to a standard that is unachievable, we set our sights on what is of little lasting value, we anxiously try to fix what is not ours to mend.

Pastor: In our haste to have, belong, qualify, and afford, we bound over the beauty of the present - the tiny miracles, spectrum of light, muted tones of a forest, and the rhythm of the surf.

People: We ignore God's plan for a day of rest, ruining what little rest we take with thoughts of guilt, regret, anger, and fear. In other words, we find no time for God.

Pastor: This then is our fervent prayer: that You might show us how to live in the present, and trust God for the eternal. Teach us to taste our daily bread, to savor it, see it as God's provision, and share it.

People: Lord, fill our hearts and minds with absolute trust in our Good Father, who loves us unconditionally and hears and answers our prayers.

- Silent prayers for others and ourselves. A candle is lit. -

Pastor: When we pray for one another, we honor God. It is a sacred and selfless act that acknowledges the shared humanity of all, and the limitless mercy of God. In Christ, we can pray with confidence and be wholly certain of God's healing. Praise be to God! Amen.

OFFERTORY "If You But Trust in God to Guide You" Paul Manz

***OFFERING** (in unison) "God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending"

***God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store,
Nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door;
Open wide our hands in sharing as we heed Christ's ageless call,
Healing, teaching, and reclaiming, serving you by loving all.***

DEDICATION (unison)

Because Christ gave all, we give of ourselves. Whether our gift is time, talent, or money, may our gifts be received by God as manifestations of our gratitude. Bless this offering, Heavenly Father, and teach us to share. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #712 As Those of Old Their First Fruits Brought

BENEDICTION Bo Corum, Lay Pastor

DOXOLOGY (in unison) #606

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

POSTLUDE “Praise” Gilbert Martin

GUEST PASTOR BIO

Bo Corum is a sophomore at the University of Tennessee, studying Management in the Haslam College of Business with a minor in Religious Studies. A native of Elizabethton, TN, Bo is a resident of UKirk, the Presbyterian campus ministry at UT, and plays saxophone in the Pride of the Southland Band. He hopes to one day own and operate a Pal's Sudden Service location, with his sights set on Knoxville, while also pursuing part-time ministry within the PCUSA, potentially in youth or adult ministries.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

We know that Jesus Christ is our redeemer, and that we have not secured it for ourselves, but rather our redemption, salvation, and liberation are a free gift of God's grace. How can our lives show that good news? What practice can you begin this week that will move you a little closer, even just 1%, to living the love of God?

MONDAY Psalm 106:1-12

TUESDAY Acts 10:34-48

WEDNESDAY Proverbs 4:10-19

THURSDAY Romans 16:17-20

FRIDAY Isaiah 48:17-21

SATURDAY Matthew 18:1-5

SUNDAY Philippians 1:21-30