

the sixteenth sunday after pentecost | september 13, 2026



We are in the season of the Church Year after the day of Pentecost. Pentecost (from the Greek pentekoste, the 'fiftieth' day of celebration) has its roots in the Jewish Festival of Weeks, which was completed on the fiftieth day after Passover. In the Christian tradition, Pentecost is the seventh Sunday after Easter and commemorates God's sending the Holy Spirit to empower the church, the followers of Jesus, on a mission of healing, liberation, and love. It emphasizes that the church is understood as the body of Christ which is drawn together and given life by the Holy Spirit. The speaking in tongues, which was a major effect of having received the Spirit, is interpreted by some to symbolize the church's worldwide preaching, and many understand Pentecost to be the origin and sending out of the church into the world and refer to it as the birthday of the church! Pentecost reminds us that God comes through all modalities and to and through all people, from all ethnicities, races, and backgrounds. God's Spirit transcends all human-

made boundaries. God can be experienced in fire and wind, dreams and visions, prophetic words and preaching. We invite you to notice the presence of the Spirit of God moving in your life and in the world around us this day.

The Noon Service

at Christ Church Cathedral, Cincinnati, OH

Inclusivity Statement

Jesus' ministry invited people from all walks of life, and we strive to do the same.

You are welcome and celebrated here exactly as you are—bringing your faith, race, class, sexuality, gender identity, nationality, immigration status, life experiences, housing, abilities, age, personal history and all the qualities that make you who you are. It is important in this community to treat everyone the way they want to be treated. If there is an accommodation that would help you experience the service more comfortably, please let us know by contacting Kirsten Marron at kmarron@cccath.org.

Jesus showed love, healing, and reconciliation in different ways to each of his followers, and we strive to do the same. Practices that some might find comforting might inspire discomfort in others. For that reason, everything at the Noon Service is an invitation—if you don't feel comfortable with a part of it, you can always step away, no explanation required. Concerns brought to leadership will be heard without judgment and considered seriously.

Jesus called people of every kind to serve God through the gifts they were given, and we strive to do the same. We believe everyone has wisdom and gifts from God worth sharing, whether it's friendship, unique perspective, prayer, volunteering, financial support or something else. In God's eyes there are no small gifts. The Noon Service is collaborative and participatory. If you want to be a more active part of this community, we welcome you—and we welcome you to contribute in the way that you uniquely can.

Gather in the Lord's Name

Welcome

Community responses are in bold.

Creator of the world, eternal Light,
We have come from many places.

Redeemer of humanity, God-with-us,
We have come seeking common ground.

Spirit of unity, sustaining God,
We have come on journeys of our own.

So here, in this place where journeys meet, let us take time together. For when paths cross and pilgrims gather, there is much to share and celebrate.

In your name, God, the three-in-one and pattern of community, Amen.

Invitation to Silence

Gathering Song

Christ Be with Me

**Christ be with me, Christ before me, Christ to the right of me, Christ behind me,
Christ to the left of me, Christ above me, Christ below me, Christ within me**

The musical score is written for piano and voice. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has four measures, and the second system has five measures. The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words in bold to indicate community responses. The lyrics are: 'Christ be with me, Christ before me, Christ to the right of me, Christ behind me, Christ to the left of me, Christ above me, Christ below me, Christ within me. Christ is here, Christ is here, Christ is here, Christ is here, Christ is here.'

Opening Prayer

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lord of the church, you call a broken people around your table: in times of disagreement teach us to listen with curiosity, loose us from assumptions and suspicion, and bind us to your way of forgiving grace; through Jesus Christ, who stands at the heart of our gathering. **Amen.**

Proclaim and Respond to the Word of God

The First Reading

A Reading from the Book of Genesis

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.

Genesis 50:15-21 (NRSV)

Hear the stories of God active in the world.

Thanks be to God.

The Second Reading

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans.

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.

Romans 14:1-12 (NRSV)

Hear the stories of God active in the world.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Acclamation

Lead me, Lord

Please stand as you are comfortable, in body or spirit

**Lead me, Lord, lead me in thy righteousness,
Make thy way plain before my face.**

The musical score is written for a two-part setting in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first system covers the lyrics 'Lead me, Lord, lead me in thy right - eous - ness, -'. The melody in the treble clef begins on G4, moves to A4, then B4, and continues with a descending line. The bass line provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. The second system covers the lyrics 'Make thy way plain be - fore my face.' and concludes with a final cadence on a whole note chord in the treble and a whole note chord in the bass.

The Gospel

The Holy Gospel of Jesus according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Christ.

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. *Matthew 18:21-35 (NRSV)*

The Gospel of our Savior.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Community Reflection

Please be seated.

In community, we exchange our thoughts and reflections on scripture. The noon service community is a place where doubts and questions are honored and encouraged. This is also a multi-generational community so we ask that comments are shared in a manner appropriate for all ages. Examine your own assumptions and perceptions; be sensitive to differences in communication and cultural styles; tolerate ambiguity and difference. What is shared in our community is vulnerable and sacred – please do not share or refer to someone else's sharing outside of this holy space. Part of the strength of this community is that we listen as well as speak: we encourage you to give space for holy silence and space for everyone to reflect. Listening is a spiritual act.

Affirmation of Faith

This is the first and the great commandment:

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.

The second is like it:

Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.

Pray for the World and the Community

God, we know you hear our cries and concerns as you hear the prayers of all who suffer around our world.

Today we particularly remember in prayer all countries destabilized by war, violence, or natural disasters, that we name aloud or in our hearts. God of transformation, **hear our prayer of hope.**

We remember those in need in our own nation– for all without food, housing, legal protection, or social safety nets, and all struggling to survive as prices escalate.

God of transformation, **hear our prayer of hope.**

We pray for political leaders around the world including our own government, that they might have your wisdom and turn their hearts to caring for the world, its people, and all creation.

God of transformation, **hear our prayer of hope.**

We share with you both our concerns and our joys, those things that weigh us down and those things that lift us up.

You are invited to speak names of people, places, joys, or concerns you have either silently or aloud.

God of transformation, **hear our prayer of hope.**

God, you are our hope for the transformation of the world. Open our hearts in compassion and receive these petitions on behalf of the needs of the church and the world. **Amen.**

Confession & Absolution

We pray to you also for the forgiveness of our sins.

**God of Grace, We do not always recognize our belovedness;
We do not always recognize the belovedness of our neighbor;
We know we harm our relationship with you
And our relationships with each other
With words said and unsaid, with deeds done and undone
We ask for your unreserved forgiveness.
We ask for your unconditional love.
Help us to forgive without reservation.
Help us to love without condition.
In Jesus' name, Amen.**

First, we are loved, then we love. God loves us and forgives us.
Forgive others. Forgive yourself. Shame has no place here.

Exchange the Peace

As a community let us embrace the ongoing work of being reconciled.
**God makes peace within us. Let us claim it.
God makes peace between us. Let us share it.**

The peace of Christ be always with you.
And also with you.

You are invited to share peace with your neighbor.

During this time, the community may greet each other with a sign of Christ's peace and may say "peace be with you!" or something similar. You may remain at your seat and greet those around you, or make your way around the room greeting people. If you are feeling brave, you might introduce yourself to someone you don't know!

Announcements for the Community

Please be seated.

Share the Gifts of God

Offering & Song

God, How Can We Forgive

Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God

God, how can we forgive when bonds of love are torn?
How can we rise and start anew, our trust reborn?
When human loving fails and every hope is gone,
your love give strength beyond our own to face the dawn.

When we have missed the mark, and tears of anguish flow,
how can you still release our guilt, the debt we owe?
The ocean depth of grace surpasses all our needs.
A priest who shares our human pain, Christ intercedes.

Who dares to throw the stone to damn another's sin,
when you, while knowing all our past, forgive again?
No more we play the judge, for by your grace we live.
As you, O God, forgive our sin, may we forgive.





Make Eucharist

The Holy Eucharist (which means ‘thanksgiving’) is the sacred meal of the church, where we respond to the call of Jesus to continue to break bread and share the cup in his name. It is a way for us to be in communion with God and one another. We pray remembering all that God has done and noticing what God is doing even now.

God 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.

We thank you for calling us to an adventure of faith. You made us in your image to respond to your grace; your story came alive with the children of Israel, of Leah and Rachel, of Zilpah and Bilhah, and a promise was born that one day no face would be forgotten, no body enslaved, no spirit broken, but all would join the covenant of life. You sent your Son in solidarity with us, healing our sickness and confronting our demons; he bore the cross and rose again to disclose our true humanity.

Therefore, with all your unlikely saints, with the church of many times and languages, with those who have known you under different names, we sing the glorious liberty of all the children of God:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
 Heav'n 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. Hosanna in the highest.**

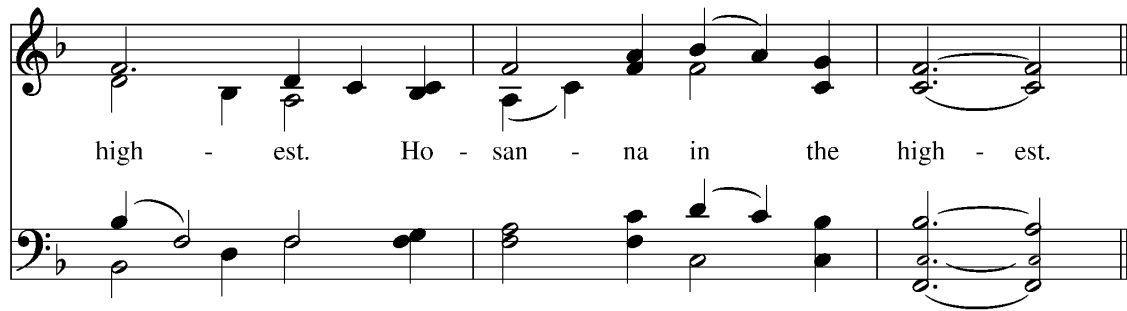
The musical score is written for a two-part setting in 6/4 time, featuring a treble and bass staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are in English and are aligned with the notes. The score is divided into four systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The lyrics are: "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the".

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and

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Blessed is our brother Jesus, who comes behind the doors we have closed, and breathes on our fears his peace; who on the night that he was betrayed, took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said: 'This is my body, which is for you. Do this to remember me.'

In the same way he took the cup, after supper, saying: 'This is the new covenant in my blood. Do this whenever you drink it, to remember me.'

**We remember Christ's death; we proclaim Christ's resurrection;
We await Christ's coming in glory.**

Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine that they may be to us the Body and Blood of your Christ.

Grant that we, burning with your Spirit's power, may be a people of hope, justice, and love. Giver of Life, draw us together in the body of Christ, and in the fullness of time gather us with all your people into the joy of our true eternal home. Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, we worship you our God and Creator in voices of unending praise. Blessed are you now and for ever. AMEN.

The Lord's Prayer

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 for ever. Amen.

Break the Bread

The bread we share is vegan and gluten-free. Individually wrapped gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

We who are many are one body, because we all share one bread.

The Invitation

The table of bread and wine is now made ready. It is the table of company with Jesus, and all who love him. It is the table of sharing with the poor of the world, with whom Jesus identified himself. It is the table of communion with the earth, in which Christ became incarnate. So come to this table, whether you have much faith or would like to have more; whether you have been here often or have not been for a long time or ever before; those who have tried to follow Jesus, and all of us who have failed. Come: it is Christ who invites us to meet him here.

Communion

Please be seated.

All are welcome to God's table! And that means everyone! If you wish to receive communion, please come forward as the spirit moves you. You can receive the bread and/or wine by extending your hands for the bread and taking a sip from or dipping your bread in to the wine. If you would like to receive a blessing instead, come forward and cross your arms over your chest. In addition to Communion, a priest will be available during this time for the ministry of healing prayer. You can also use this time for prayer or contemplation.

Communion Song

In the Singing

**Refrain: Je-sus Christ, Je-sus Christ, be the wine of grace:
Je-sus Christ, Je-sus Christ, be the bread of peace.**

**1 In the sing-ing, in the si-lence, in the hands ex-pec-tant, o-pen,
in the bless-ing, in the break-ing, in the Pres-ence at this ta-ble —**

Refrain

**2 In the ques-tion, in the an-swer, in the mo-ment of ac-cept-ance,
in the heart's cry, in the heal-ing, in the cir-cle of your peo-ple**

Refrain

Simply (♩ = 44-48)

1. In the sing - ing,
2. In the ques - tion,

in the si - lence, in the hands ex - pec - tant, o - pen,
in the an - swer, in the mo - ment of ac - cep - tance,

in the bless - ing, in the break - ing, in the Pres - ence at this
in the heart's cry, in the heal - ing, in the cir - cle of your

ta - ble— Je - sus Christ, Je - sus Christ,
peo - ple—

be the wine of grace: Je - sus Christ,

Je - sus Christ, be the bread of peace.

Prayer after Communion

Please stand as you are comfortable, in body or spirit

Let us pray together:

God revealed in the stranger's approach and the bread of hospitality, in the message of new life and the laughter of response: we thank you for this meal, this sharing in yourself, and we pray that our communion might be broken apart for the world. Amen.

Blessing

May we remain open to wonder and mystery, to what is strange and new and precious in each child of God, that with all the saints we might walk in the light of hope; and may the blessing of the undivided Triune God who created all people in Their image be with you and all you love, this day and always. Amen.

Closing Song

Lead with Love

Refrain (2X)

**You gotta put one foot in front of the other
And lead with love.
Put one foot in front of the other,
And lead with love.**

**Don't Give up hope, You're not alone
Don't you give up, Keep movin' on. *Refrain***

**Lift up your eyes, Don't you despair
Look up ahead, The path is there. *Refrain***

**I know you're scared, And I'm scared too,
But here I am, Right next to you. *Refrain***

REFRAIN (always sing twice)

You got - ta put one foot in front of the oth - er and lead with love.
(last time) We got - ta put

repeat several times for ending

Put one foot in front of the oth - er and lead with love.

Leader: All:

1., 4. Don't give up hope, (*Don't give up hope*) You're not a - lone. (*You're not a - lone*)

To Refrain:



Don't you give up, (Don't you give up) Keep mov - in' on. (Keep mov - in' on)

Leader: All:

2. Lift up__ your eyes, (*Lift up__ your eyes*) Don't you__ de - spair (*Don't you__ de - spair*)

3. I know you're scared, (*I know you're scared*) And I'm__ scared, too. (*And I'm__ scared, too*)

To Refrain:



Look up__ a - head, (*Look up__ a - head*) The path is there. (*The path__ is there*)
But here__ I am, (*But here I am*) Right next__ to you. (*Right next__ to you*)

Thanks be to God.



New to the Noon Service? We would love to get to know you! Please send your name and preferred contact information to Pr. Liesebet Gravley: lgravley@cccath.org. Prayer requests and questions about the Noon Service can also be directed to Rev. Gravley. Have a suggestion or want to get involved in Noon Service music? Contact Kirsten Marron: kmarron@cccath.org. More information about the ministries at Christ Church Cathedral can be found at cincinnati.cathedral.com.

If you would like to receive a weekly e-mail from the Noon Service and/or receive digital communications about service information (cancellations, road closures, etc.) please provide your e-mail address by either: scanning this QR code and entering it in google forms or e-mailing Rev. Gravley at lgravley@cccath.org.



Land Acknowledgement: Our Cathedral and Cincinnati occupy the ancestral lands of the Shawnee and Miami Indigenous Peoples. We acknowledge the painful history of colonization, genocide and intergenerational trauma that they have endured, and commit to working toward truth and reconciliation. We honor the perseverance and resiliency of Indigenous people, and we will continue to seek their guidance and participation in our efforts to build awareness of the history, traditions and contributions of Indigenous cultures.



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