

Transforming God, you accompany all through changes and transitions. Help us to see where you are calling this community to new ways of living the gospel promise; assure us that even as change brings loss, it also brings hope and life. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Merciful God, you embrace us on our final pilgrimage from this life. Accompany all who have died, console those who mourn, and at the last, show us the way to eternal life in you. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We entrust these and all our prayers to you, holy God, in the name of your beloved child, Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

Sunday, September 22: 18th Sunday after Pentecost

Prayer of the Day

O God, our teacher and guide, you draw us to yourself and welcome us as beloved children. Help us to lay aside all envy and selfish ambition, that we may walk in your ways of wisdom and understanding as servants of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading: Jeremiah 11:18-20

¹⁸It was the LORD who made it known to me, and I knew; then you showed me their evil deeds.

¹⁹But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter.

And I did not know it was against me

that they devised schemes, saying,

“Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,

let us cut him off from the land of the living,

so that his name will no longer be remembered!”

²⁰But you, O LORD of hosts, who judge righteously, who try the heart and the mind,

let me see your retribution upon them,

for to you I have committed my cause.

Psalms: Psalm 54

¹Save me, O God, | by your name;

in your might, de- | fend my cause.

²Hear my | prayer, O God;

give ear to the words | of my mouth.

³For strangers have risen up against me, and the ruthless have | sought my life,

those who have no re- | gard for God.

⁴Behold, God | is my helper;

it is the Lord who sus- | tains my life.

⁵Render evil to those who | spy on me;

in your faithful- | ness, destroy them.

⁶I will offer you a | freewill sacrifice

and praise your name, O LORD, for | it is good.

⁷For you have rescued me from | every trouble,
and my eye looks down | on my enemies.

Second Reading: James 3:13—4:3, 7-8a

¹³Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom.

¹⁴But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. ¹⁵Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. ¹⁶For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. ¹⁷But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. ¹⁸And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

^{4:1}Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? ²You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures. ⁷Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ^{8a}Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Gospel: Mark 9:30-37

³⁰[Jesus and the disciples went on] and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it.³¹ For he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.” ³²But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

³³Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” ³⁴But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. ³⁵He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant

of all.” ³⁶Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷“Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.”

Prayers of Intercession

Drawn together in the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray with confidence for the church, God’s good creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Loving God, you welcome all at your table of grace. Instill in your church a spirit of humility and curiosity, that we embrace all who seek you. We pray especially for ministries of hospitality and faith formation (specific ministries may be named). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creating God, you shape the world so there is more than enough for all. Curb our habits of overuse, and guide us toward more sustainable sources of energy, food, and water. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Gracious God, your peace brings justice and solidarity. Encourage peace among peoples, tribes, and nations; heal divisions in our country and local communities, that together we might cooperate for the good of all. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Faithful God, you draw near to you all who are in need. Bring healing and wholeness to all who suffer (especially). Transform economic, political, and social systems that oppress vulnerable people, especially systems of structural racism and generational poverty. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.