

Grace Presbyterian Church
Fort Wayne, IN – July 26, 2026
9th Sunday After Pentecost



The Sacred Slowdown: Summer invites us to slow down, breathe deeply, and notice God's presence in ordinary life. In a season shaped by vacations, neighborhood gatherings, longer evenings, walking, rest, and reconnection, this series explores how God continues to speak—not always through noise or urgency, but through presence, attentiveness, community, and grace.

Service Notes: Prayer cards are available in your pews for the sharing of Joys and Concerns. You can give them to Sandy Garcia. We invite you to join in the liturgy by speaking the parts in **BOLD**. *Indicates when to stand in body or spirit.

Worship Volunteers: Worship Leader: Pastor Sandy Garcia – Lay Leader: Jill Werling – Ushers: Jen Mahoney, Nancy Current, & Sue Creager – Tech: John Current & Jen Mahoney – Counters: Kevin Mahoney & Jon Wolf – Pianist: Sue Creager – Choir Director: Tom Callahan.

Prelude — *Amazing Grace* arr. by Raney

Welcome — Rev. Sandy Garcia

*Call to Worship —

Give thanks to the Lord and call upon God's name.

We remember the wonderful works God has done.

God has been faithful through every generation.

God's covenant of love endures forever.

Though the kingdom often begins in small ways...

God's grace is always growing.

Come, let us worship the God who is patiently making all things new.

*Opening Hymn — #714 “God of the Fertile Fields”

*Call to Confession —

Throughout this summer we have been learning to slow down—to notice God's presence in ordinary moments, to trust God's timing, and to remember God's faithfulness. Yet how often do we rush ahead? We become impatient with ourselves, with others, and sometimes even with God. We long for immediate answers when God is patiently growing seeds we cannot yet see. The good news is that our God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. God invites us not only to confess our sins but also to lay down our hurry, our anxiety, and our need to control the future. Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin together.

***Prayer of Confession —**

Patient God, We confess that we often measure life by speed instead of faithfulness. We want immediate answers, instant growth, and visible results. Forgive us for overlooking the quiet ways your Spirit is working within us. Forgive us for becoming impatient with ourselves, with others, and even with you. Teach us again to trust that your kingdom often grows slowly, quietly, and faithfully. Help us become people who notice your presence in ordinary moments. In Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Time for silent confession

***Assurance of Pardon —**

Hear the Good News. The God who planted faith in Abraham, who saw Hagar in the wilderness, who met Jacob at Bethel, and who planted the kingdom like a mustard seed, has not stopped working. In Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven, our lives are being renewed, and God's grace continues its quiet work within us.

Thanks be to God!

Song of Assurance #583 "Glory to God"

***Passing the Peace**

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another. The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Please take a moment to greet your neighbor and others with the peace of Christ.

Time for Music & Meditation

Prayer for Illumination

Lord, As we hear your Word today, slow our minds, quiet our hearts, and open our eyes. Help us remember your faithfulness, recognize your presence, and trust the slow work of your grace. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hebrew Bible Reading – Gen. 29:15-28

p.45

15 Laban said to him, “Just because you are a relative of mine, should you work for me for nothing? Tell me what your wages should be.”

16 Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel had a lovely figure and was beautiful. 18 Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, “I’ll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel.”

19 Laban said, “It’s better that I give her to you than to some other man. Stay here with me.” 20 So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her.

21 Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to make love to her.”

22 So Laban brought together all the people of the place and gave a feast. 23 But when evening came, he took his daughter Leah and

brought her to Jacob, and Jacob made love to her. 24 And Laban gave his servant Zilpah to his daughter as her attendant.

25 When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn’t I? Why have you deceived me?”

26 Laban replied, “It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older one. 27 Finish this daughter’s bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work.”

28 And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading: Matt. 13:31-33, 44-52

p.1518

31 He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. 32 Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.”

33 He told them still another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.”

44 “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

45 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

47 “Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. 48 When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away.

49 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous 50 and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

51 “Have you understood all these things?” Jesus asked. “Yes,” they replied. 52 He said to them, “Therefore every teacher of the law who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.”

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Message

The Slow Work of Grace – Rev. Sandy Garcia

In a world that urges us to move quickly and define ourselves by what we accomplish, the church invites us to slow down and remember who we are and whose we are. Let us join our voices with the communion of saints as we proclaim the faith of the church:

Affirmation of Faith: *The Apostle's Creed

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by
the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius
Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the
third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and
sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence
he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy
Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the
forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life
everlasting. Amen.**

***Hymn of Response — #771 “What is the World Like”**

Prayers of the People & The Lord's Prayer

Faithful God, throughout this summer you have invited us to slow down, to remember your faithfulness, and to notice your presence in ordinary moments. As we come before you now, we lift our prayers with grateful and trusting hearts.

Lord, help us trust the slow work of your grace.

We pray for your Church throughout the world. Plant seeds of hope where there is discouragement, unity where there is division, and joy where there is weariness. Help us to remember that your kingdom often grows quietly, one faithful act at a time.

Lord, help us trust the slow work of your grace.

We pray for our community, our neighborhoods, our schools, and those who serve others each day. Bless teachers as they prepare for a new school year, students returning to classrooms, first responders, healthcare workers, and all who work for the good of others.

Lord, help us trust the slow work of your grace.

We pray for those who are waiting—for healing, for employment, for reconciliation, for answers, or simply for hope. When the days feel long and progress seems slow, remind them that you are still at work, even when they cannot yet see the harvest.

Lord, help us trust the slow work of your grace.

We remember those who are grieving, those living with illness, those recovering from surgery, those facing anxiety or depression, and all who carry burdens known only to you. Be their strength and their peace.

Lord, help us trust the slow work of your grace.

We thank you for the many ways we have witnessed your presence during our Sacred Slowdown journey this summer. Thank you for the moments of surprise, for quiet reminders of your love, for unexpected encounters with grace, and for the assurance that you are always nearer than we imagine.

Lord, help us trust the slow work of your grace.

God of mustard seeds and hidden treasure, continue shaping us into a congregation that notices your presence, welcomes our neighbors, serves with joy, and trusts your timing. Help us to remember your faithfulness in the past, recognize your presence today, and walk confidently into the future you are preparing. **Lord, help us trust the slow work of your grace.**

(Invite prayers from the congregation.)

Holy God, we now lift before you the prayers spoken aloud and those held silently within our hearts.

(Pause for spoken and silent prayers.)

Gathering these prayers and the unspoken prayers of our hearts into one, we pray as Christ taught us, saying,

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Call to Offering

Jesus reminds us that the kingdom often begins with the smallest of gifts—a seed, a pinch of yeast, a hidden treasure discovered by someone paying attention. Every gift we offer today is another seed planted in hope. May we give generously, trusting that God will continue the work long after we have left this place.

Offertory — *When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder* by Black

*Doxology — #606 “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

*Prayer of Dedication —

Let us pray: Gracious God, Receive these gifts. Multiply them beyond what we can imagine. May they become signs of your kingdom, bringing hope, healing, justice, and hospitality to our community and beyond. Continue your slow work of grace through us. In Christ’s name. Amen.

Announcements

*Closing Hymn — #833 “O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go”

*Charge & Benediction

Postlude — *Postlude on "Kingsfold"* arr. by Rodriguez

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NHNA Block Party: The North Highlands Block Party is just around the corner, August 9th - 12:00 to 2:00 PM. Grace is planning on attending with our bright faces and a table with treats or games. There’s a sign-up in the narthex for anyone able to assist with our table. You can volunteer for one or both time slots. The more faces the better.

Share a Baptism Blessing: On Sunday, August 30, we are excited to celebrate the baptisms of Myles Hochstetler and Rosalind Lilly! Please help us welcome Myles and Rosalind into our church family by writing a brief note of encouragement, a prayer, a blessing, or a favorite Scripture verse.

Blank cards are available in the narthex. After writing your message, please place it in the designated basket. The cards will be presented to each family in a keepsake

baptism box as a reminder that Grace Presbyterian surrounds them with love, prayer, and support as they grow in faith.

Please return your card by Sunday, August 23, so we have time to prepare the baptismal keepsake boxes before the celebration.

Sandy's Thursday Office Hours: Sandy's Thursday office hours will now be 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

Fiber Arts Fridays: Do you knit? Crochet? Have another craft you'd like to work on while having some fellowship? Then join us on Fridays, at 11:00 AM, in the conference room.

Prayer Requests

- Prayer of peace and comfort for the family of Donna Syndram.
- Prayers for Tammy's health and recovery.
- Prayers for Tom, Tim Bauman's brother, and his medical needs.
- Prayers for Jenny, JoAnn's niece, with her cancer treatments.
- Prayers of peace and comfort for Butch, as he deals with his cancer.
- Prayers of safety for the members of our armed services as conflict continues.

Birthdays

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Anniversaries

Bill & Kathy Graney

July 29, 1995

-

Worship Volunteers for August 2, 2026

Lay Leader – Cindy Bowers

Ushers – Jen Mahoney, Nancy Current, & Sue Creager

Technology – Bill Werling & Kevin Mahoney

Counters – Kevin Mahoney & Jill Werling

God of the Fertile Fields 714

1 God of the fer - tile fields, shap - er of
 2 We would be stew - ards true, hold - ing in
 3 As grows the hid - den seed to fruit that
 4 God of the coun - try - side, dear to the

earth that yields our dai - ly bread: forth from your
 trust from you all that you give; help us in
 serves our need, so your reign grows. Let all our
 Christ who died to make us one: we pledge our

boun - teous hand come gifts your love has planned,
 love to share, teach us like you to care
 toil be used, no gift of yours a - bused,
 lives a - new in faith - ful love to you.

that all in ev - ery land be clothed and fed.
 for peo - ple ev - ery - where, that all may live.
 no hum - ble task re - fused your love be - stows.
 Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.

Greater awareness has enlarged Christian stewardship to develop new dimensions of concern for people in all parts of the world. Because we believe that it is God's will that the gifts we have received should be shared, this hymn concludes with that phrase from the Lord's Prayer.

TEXT: Georgia Harkness, 1955, alt.
 MUSIC: Felice de Giardini, 1769, alt.
 Text © 1955, ren. 1983 The Hymn Society (admin. Hope Publishing Company)

ITALIAN HYMN
 6.6.4.6.6.6.4

What Is the World Like 771

Capo 1: (G) A^b (Em7) Fm7 (C) D^b (D) E^b



1 What is the world like when God's will is done?
 2 What is the world like when God's will is done?
 3 What is the world like when God's will is done?
 4 What is the world like when God's will is done?
 5 These are the sto - ries that Je - sus im - parts,

(Em) Fm (C) D^b (Am) B^bm (B7) C7



Mus - tard seeds grow more than we can con - ceive;
 Wit - ness the wan - der - ing child com - ing home;
 No more is neigh - bor just al - ly or friend;
 Read - y for feast - ing, we watch through the night,
 filled with the Spir - it who joins us as one.

(Em) Fm (Am) B^bm (D) E^b (G) A^b



roots thread the soil; branch - es reach for the sun.
 watch as the par - ent breaks in - to a run.
 peace thrives in plac - es where once there was none.
 tend - ing our lamps till the new day's be - gun.
 Born through our voic - es, our hands, and our hearts,

(C) D^b (Em7) Fm7 (Am7) B^bm7 (D) E^b (G) A^b



This is how God moves us each to be - lieve.
 This is how God longs for us when we roam.
 This is how God works when ri - val - ries end.
 This is how God read - ies us for the light.
 this is a new world where God's will is done.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

This text and tune were written to conclude a hymn festival at the 2009 Annual Conference of The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada. Four parables framed both the festival and the hymn: the Mustard Seed, the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, and the Ten Bridesmaids.

TEXT: Adam M. L. Tice, 2009
 MUSIC: Sally Ann Morris, 2009
 Text and Music © 2009 CJA Publications, Inc.

NEW WORLD
 10.10.10.10

O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go 833

1 O Love that wilt not let me go, I rest my
 2 O Light that fol-lowest all my way, I yield my
 3 O Joy that seek - est me through pain, I can - not
 4 O Cross that lift - est up my head, I dare not

wea - ry soul in thee; I give thee back the life I owe, that
 flick-ering torch to thee; my heart re-stores its bor-rowed ray, that
 close my heart to thee; I trace the rain-bow through the rain, and
 ask to fly from thee; I lay in dust life's glo - ry dead, and

in thine o - cean depths its flow may rich - er, full - er be.
 in thy sun-shine's blaze its day may bright - er, fair - er be.
 feel the prom - ise is not vain that morn shall tear - less be.
 from the ground there blos-soms red life that shall end - less be.

This intense hymn of commitment to God (addressed as Love, Light, and Joy) closes with an invocation of the ultimate testimony to those attributes (the Cross). The composer, a Scotsman, named this specially-composed tune for the 11th-century patroness of Scotland.

TEXT: George Matheson, 1881, alt.
 MUSIC: Albert Lister Peace, 1884, alt.

ST. MARGARET
 8.8.8.8.6

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