# The Advocate
# Grace Episcopal Church and Pantry, Mansfield
# Diocese of Ohio

The Rt. Rev. Anne B. Jolly, *Bishop of Ohio*
The Rev. Christopher D. Hofer, *Priest-in-Charge*
The Rev. Daniel Orr, *Associate for Pastoral Care and Community Outreach*
Lori Turner, *Music Director*
Thomas Palmer, *Organist*
Pam Armstrong, *Church Administrator*
Michael Blue, *Sexton*
Tom Dornbusch, *Social Media Coordinator*

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**9th Sunday after Pentecost**
**July 26, 2026 – 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.**

**Our Mission: To Nurture Our Members and Feed Our Neighbors**

## 8:00 a.m. Morning Prayer: Rite II

BCP = *Book of Common Prayer*

### The Word of God


| | |
|---|---|
| Opening Acclamation | Page 3 |
| The Collect for Purity | Page 3 |
| Gloria in excelsis | BCP 356 |
| The Collect of the Day | Page 5 |
| First Lesson: 1 Kings 3:5-12 | Page 5 |
| Psalm No.119: 129-136 | Page 6 |
| The Epistle: Romans 8: 26-39 | Page 7 |
| The Holy Gospel: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52 | Page 8 |
| The Sermon: Matt Moser Miller | Page 9 |
| The Nicene Creed | Page 9 |
| The Prayers of the People | Page 10 |
| The Confession of Sin | Page 11 |
| The Peace | Page 12 |
| Prayers Commemorating Special Occasions | |
| Announcements | |
| The Lord's Prayer | Page 13 |
| The General Thanksgiving | Page 13 |
| A Prayer of St. Chrysostom | Page 13 |
| The Blessing | Page 14 |
| The Dismissal | Page 14 |

## 10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer: Rite Two

Prelude:
Ringing of the Church Bell

*Please stand as you are able.*

Processional Hymn No. 601 "O day of God draw nigh" *St. Michael*

## Liturgy of the Word

Officiant: Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.
People: **Glory to God for ever and ever.**

Officiant: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Song of Praise: "We Have Come Into His House" Bruce Ballinger

Words: Bruce Ballinger (b. 1945)
Music: Bruce Ballinger
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Officiant: God be with you.
People: **And also with you**.
Officiant: Let us pray.

*Please kneel as you are able.*

The Collect (Officiant): O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.. **Amen**.

First Lesson: 1 Kings 3:5-12

Lector: A reading from the first book of Kings

At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you." And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. And now,
O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people,

able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?"

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you."

Lector: The Word of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God**.

Psalm No. 119:129-136

129 Your decrees are wonderful; *
therefore I obey them with all my heart.
130 When your word goes forth it gives light; *
it gives understanding to the simple.
131 I open my mouth and pant; *
I long for your commandments.
132 Turn to me in mercy, *
as you always do to those who love your Name.
133 Steady my footsteps in your word; *
let no iniquity have dominion over me.
134 Rescue me from those who oppress me, *
and I will keep your commandments.
135 Let your countenance shine upon your servant *
and teach me your statutes.
136 My eyes shed streams of tears, *
because people do not keep your law.

Second Lesson: Romans 8:26-39

Lector: A reading from the letter of Paul to the Church in Rome

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. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

> "For your sake we are being killed all day long;
> we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that 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.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God**

Gradual Hymn No. 615 "Thy Kingdom Come" *St. Flavian*

The Holy Gospel

Officiant: The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ
According to Matthew.

Matthew 13:31-33,44-52

Jesus put before the crowds another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the

righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

"Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

Officiant: The Gospel of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

*Please be seated and the instructions of the preacher.*

Sermon: Matt Moser Miller
*Please stand, as you are able.*

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*Please kneel, as you are able.*

**Prayers of the People for the Shared Ministries of Ashland and Richland Counties**
**Ninth Sunday after Pentecost — July 26, 2026**

Celebrant: Compassionate God, move our hearts to respond to human need and to see your face in those who hunger and thirst, that your loving presence be known. **Amen**.

Intercessor: For the Church called to serve the hungry and the poor, we pray for Sean our Presiding Bishop, Anne our Bishop, Christopher our Priest-in-Charge, Daniel, Grace's Priest Associate and David, Grace's Rector Emeritus; inspire them and our congregations to model radical welcome and compassionate service. Lord, **hear our prayer**.

Intercessor: For those with civic responsibilities: Donald our President, Mike our Governor, Matt, Mayor of Ashland, and Jodie, Mayor of Mansfield; guide them to create policies that reduce hunger and expand social supports. Lord, **hear our prayer**.

Intercessor: For the welfare of the world: for children and families facing food insecurity, for effective humanitarian responses, and for movements that address the root causes of poverty. Lord, **hear our prayer**.

Intercessor: For local outreach: bless Grace Church and Pantry, St. Matthew's, and Shared Ministries in their work of meeting physical need—may those they serve also find dignity and spiritual care. Lord, **hear our prayer**.

Intercessor: For those who suffer from illness, deprivation, or isolation. (A brief silence is kept for names spoken silently or aloud.) Meet their needs and send helpers who ease their burdens. Lord, **hear our prayer**.

Intercessor: For those who have died. (A brief silence is kept for names spoken silently or aloud.) Grant them rest and grant hope to those who remember them. Lord, **hear our prayer**.

Celebrant: Lord of abundance, transform our scarcity into generosity, that all may know your provision and presence; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen**.

Officiant: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*A moment of silence for reflection follows.*

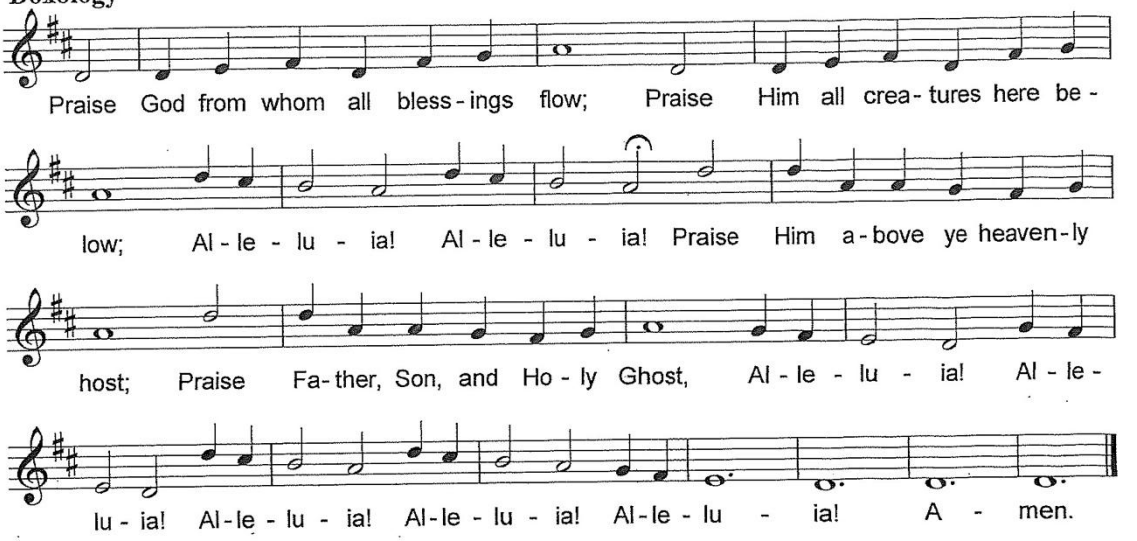
People: **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Officiant: Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. Amen.
*Please stand, as you are able.*

Officiant: The Peace of the Lord be always with you.
People: **And also with you.**

Prayers Commemorating Special Occasions
Announcements
Offertory Sentence

**Doxology** tune - *Lasst uns erfreuen*




*Please kneel, as you are able.*

Officiant: And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say

**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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

The General Thanksgiving

Officiant and People:

**Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made.**

**We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.**

**And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.**

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Officiant: Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and

petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

The Blessing:

Be still and know that the One who promised "I am with you" holds you; let silence be a doorway to the abiding presence that steadies your soul. The blessing of the Trinity surround you: Creator, Christ, and Spirit. **Amen.**

*Please stand, as you are able.*

Recessional Hymn No. 530: "Spread o spread thou mighty word"
*Gott Sei Dank*

Officiant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude:

From the Desk of Father Christopher

**Welcome to Grace Episcopal Church and Pantry**

Again, this Sunday, as last Sunday, we hear parables of Jesus concerning God's Kingdom. The Kingdom is characterized as hidden, yet being revealed; as small now but destined to grow large; as so precious that those who discover it will give all in order to attain it; as open to all who will accept it.

The first reading from 1 Kings is Solomon's prayer asking God for wisdom. It was Solomon's desire for wisdom rather than riches and power, which revealed him as a righteous king. This is a prefiguring of God's Kingdom in which all of God's people are a royal priesthood, enlightened by the spirit and wisdom of God.

Our continued reading of the Epistle to the Romans leads us to Paul's great outburst of praise and assurance of the certainty of God's love for us. Here Paul is certain that even our weakest and most elementary striving towards God is proof that God is leading us and has destined us for glory.

The Church is not the Kingdom of God. It is, in the words of Alexander Schmemann, the world in the process of becoming the Kingdom. When we gather to celebrate, our movement toward the Kingdom is revealed. In the Eucharist God reconstitutes us as the Church and we discover ourselves growing toward the Kingdom.

**Vestry**

Jenny Blue – Senior Warden  Deb Landin - Junior Warden
Joanne Mudra– Clerk  Larry Von Blon – Treasurer
Betty Diemer, Rita Glaser, Matt Moser Miller,
Stephen Myers, Ann Stump, Jason Whitehead

**Grace Church Prayer List**

Michael Blue, Charis Bower, Curtis Carter, Diane Carter, Ron Clinage, Philip Crane, Jeanette Dickerson, Michael Diemer, Zach Diemer, Dorothy Duckworth, Ellen Gleason, Gabe Godwin, Pamela Henney, Deja-Naya Jones, Ron Lemmon, Brenda McGregor, Lavina Messimer, Pat Newcomer, Larry Oakley, Carol Palland, Logan Prater, Richard Rohm, Sally Rohm, Bob Smart, Nancy Smith, Paris Stewart, Jake Tyler, Paige Waeiss, Charlene Weishaupt, Doris Williams, Sabrina West, Jim Wilson, Priscilla Wilson

**The Flowers on the Altar**
**Are given today by Steve and Linda Schumacher**
**In Honor of Family**

**Eye Glasses for Lions Club!**

If you have any eye glasses that you are no longer using please bring them in and put them in the box on the table outside the office. They are in need of more glasses. Thanks!

## Serving This Week

| | 8:00 a.m. | 10:00 a.m. |
|---|---|---|
| Acolyte: | | Tabitha Reed |
| Lectors: | Joanne Mudra | Carol Loveless |
| | Rita Glaser | Karen Davis |
| Altar Guild: | Rita Glaser | Karen Davis |
| | Holly Carter | Carol Burton |
| Counters: | | Rita Glaser |
| | | Jason Whitehead |
| Officiant: | Amanda Dove – Both Services | |
| Preacher: | Matt Moser Miller – Both Services | |

## This Week at Grace

Sunday: 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m. – Morning Prayer
9:15 a.m. – Christian Formation
Monday: Office Closed
Tuesday: 9:30 a.m. – Yoga
10:00 a.m. – AA
4:30 a.m. – Supper Club – Wokano Grill
Wednesday: 9:00 a.m. – Healing Mass
10:00 a.m. – Food Truck
10:00 a.m. – AA
11:00 a.m. – Pantry set up
Thursday: 9 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. - Food Pantry
Friday: Office Closed
Note: Father Christopher on vacation all week!

## Greater Grace — Kitchen & Bath Pantry

First Christian Church and Grace Episcopal are partnering to open a Kitchen & Bath Pantry at First Christian to serve Grace Food Pantry clients. Items needed (gently used): pots, pans, toasters, crockpots, skillets, dishes, glasses, silverware, dish rags, kitchen towels, bath towels, washcloths. Crafters: pot holders and dish rags welcome. Volunteers needed. Donate: Drop off at First Christian Fellowship Hall (rear, off Dickson Ave) Thursdays, 9–11 AM, beginning April 25. Pantry hours: First & third Thursdays, 9–11 AM, beginning May 7 (shoppers enter via Bowman St.). From May, donations may be left at the Bowman St. door during pantry hours. Questions/volunteer sign-up: Deacon Beth Weisbrod, 614.333.9647.

## Summer Christian Formation

This summer join us each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. in Sipes Fellowship Hall for our Christian Formation Program as we explore the Gospel for the day. Led by Fr. Christopher alongside various parishioners, these sessions offer a chance to dig deeper into the day's text—so you can enter worship with richer understanding or step out to reflect further equipped to apply the Gospel in daily life.

Aaron and Connie Zhu!
If anyone would like their address to send them a card I have it in the office.
Just contact me by phone or email. Thanks
Pam Armstrong
Church Administrator

**Fr. Christopher Hofer's On-site Office Hours**

Mondays (@ St. Matthews) 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Tuesdays (@ Grace, Mansfield) 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Wednesdays (@ Grace, Mansfield) 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Thursdays (@ Grace, Mansfield) 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

*Kindly refrain from contacting Fr. Christopher from 8:00 p.m. on Thursday evening until 10:00 a.m. on Saturday morning each week, as this period is designated as his Sabbath time of rest. Please also avoid texting or calling between 8:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. In the event of a pastoral emergency, please promptly text or call him at 516.456.9420.*

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