

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

120 W. Park Ave. Tallahassee, Florida
850-222-1120 | www.tumct.org

Vol. 46

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

No. 37

THE WORSHIP OF GOD

Services at 8:30, 9:45, and 11:00 a.m.

† Please rise in body or in spirit.

CHAPEL SERVICE

8:30 a.m.

CHIMING OF THE HOUR Douglas Chaplow

WELCOME AND MISSION STATEMENT
**"Because of God's love for us through Jesus Christ,
we exist to worship, grow, and serve."**

PRELUDE "Prelude in B-Flat" Alexander Ward
Douglas Chaplow, organ

† PROCESSIONAL HYMN Hymnal #121
"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy"

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH Hymnal #881
The Apostles' Creed

† GLORIA PATRI Hymnal #71

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER Hymnal #895

OFFERTORY/STEWARDSHIP TESTIMONY
"Growing Toward the Future, Rooted in Our Past"
Frank Mercer

† DOXOLOGY Hymnal #94

† GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 18:21-35
*"So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if
you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."*
The Gospel of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams
"The Core Message of the Bible"

† RECESSIONAL HYMN Hymnal #389
"Freely, Freely"

† BENEDICTION AND BLESSING

† POSTLUDE Carl August Kern
"Nachspiel C-Dur"

CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

9:45 a.m.

† WORSHIP SONG "Firm Foundation (He Won't)"

† WORSHIP SONG "Glorious Day"

WELCOME AND MISSION STATEMENT Alex Taylor

† PASSING OF CHRIST'S PEACE

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PASTORAL PRAYER

STEWARDSHIP TESTIMONY
"Growing Toward the Future, Rooted in Our Past"
Frank Mercer

OFFERTORY HYMN "As the Deer Panteth"

† GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 18:21-35
*"So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if
you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."*

SERMON Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams
"The Core Message of the Bible"

† WORSHIP SONG "Holy Forever"

† WORSHIP SONG "Graves Into Gardens"

† BENEDICTION

*During the worship songs, you are invited to utilize the Prayer Station
by the stained-glass window and light a candle as you pray.*

Large-print bulletins are available from the ushers upon request.

LITURGICAL SERVICE
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
11:00 a.m.

† Please rise in body or in spirit.

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

Douglas Chaplow

WELCOME AND MISSION STATEMENT

Rev. Dr. Ivy Smith

"Because of God's love for us through Jesus Christ, we exist to worship, grow, and serve."

PRELUDE

"Prelude in B-Flat"
Douglas Chaplow, organ

Alexander Ward

INTROIT

"Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now"
Chancel Choir

Daniel E. Gawthrop

† PROCESSIONAL HYMN

"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy"

Hymnal #121

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed

Hymnal #881

† GLORIA PATRI

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.**

Hymnal #71

† PASSING OF CHRIST'S PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

† SONG OF PEACE

"Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus"

Hymnal #349

**Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face,
and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.**

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Congregational Response:

Rev. Dr. Ivy Smith

Members of the household of God,
I commend these persons to your love and care.
Do all in your power to increase their faith,
confirm their hope, and perfect them in love.

**We give thanks for all that God has already given you
and we welcome you in Christian love.
As members together with you
in the body of Christ and in this congregation
of The United Methodist Church,
we renew our covenant faithfully to participate
in the ministries of the Church by our prayers, our presence,
our gifts, our service, and our witness,
that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.**

ANTHEM

"Praise His Holy Name"
Chancel Choir

Keith Hampton

Crucifer | Michael Plagens | **Ushers** | John Koehler, Karen Russell, Melanie Etters,
Rev. Patty Daniels, Rob Wicker, James Hunt, Rebecca Plagens

Altar Guild | Renée White, Mary Jane Portwood

Club Car Drivers | Edward Young, Ben Gilleland, Jimmy Henderson, Ed Dowell

Call the church office at 850-222-1120 to reserve altar flowers for the Sunday services in the sanctuary.

PASTORAL PRAYER OF COMMISSIONING

Rev. Dr. Ivy Smith

Prayer for the Camino de Santiago Trip

O God, you called your servant Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees, watching over him in all his wanderings, and guided the Hebrew people as they crossed the desert. Guard these your servants who, for love of your name, make a pilgrimage to Compostela. Be their companion on the road, their guide at the crossroads, their strength in weariness, their defense in dangers, their shelter on the path, their shade in heat, their light in darkness, their comfort in discouragement, and their steadfastness in purpose; so that, under your guidance, safe and unharmed, they may reach the end of their journey and, strengthened with gratitude and grace, may return to their homes filled with lasting joy. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Hymnal #895

PRAYER RESPONSE

"Lead Me, Lord"
Chancel Choir

Daniel E. Gawthrop

Children ages 3 through 2nd grade are invited to Kids' Praise in Room 205.

GIVING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS/STEWARDSHIP TESTIMONY

"Growing Toward the Future, Rooted in Our Past"

Frank Mercer

OFFERTORY

"Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal"
Trinity Ringers

arr. Cathy Moklebust

†DOXOLOGY

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below:
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Hymnal #94

**Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

†GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 18:21-35

"So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."
The Gospel of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

"The Core Message of the Bible"

Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams

†RECESSIONAL HYMN

"Freely, Freely"

Hymnal #389

†BLESSING

†CHORAL BENEDICTION

"God Be in My Head"
Chancel Choir

Daniel E. Gawthrop

†POSTLUDE

"Nachspiel C-Dur"
Douglas Chaplow, organ

Carl August Kern



*The flowers adorning the altar today are given with gratitude to God for Joy Williams
by her husband, Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams, in celebration of their 23rd anniversary.*



Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams, Senior Pastor
Rev. Dr. Ivy Smith, Associate Pastor | Rev. E. Wayne Curry, Minister of Pastoral Care
Alex Taylor, Director of Contemporary Music | Gregory Hilliard, Director of Traditional Music
Douglas Chaplow, Organist

WELCOME

Welcome to worship today! We're glad you are here. If you're visiting, fill out a Visitor Connect Card or scan the QR code, and on your way out, be sure to see one of our ushers for a small gift to thank you for joining us!



PRAYER REQUESTS

May we pray for you? Prayer cards can be found in the Welcome Center and Narthex. Prayer requests are listed by **name** only. Please lift up in prayer...

Chris Wright	Kevin Krebs
Family of Lisa Boyd	Erma Lynn
John and Eileen Fleming	Frank Leonard
Stefan, Jazz, Ethan, and Corey Naglee	

MONTHLY COLLECTION

During September, Local Missions is collecting socks and underwear for Leon County Schools. Any and all sizes are needed for males and females in pre-k through high school. Donations can be left in the collection bins in the Welcome Center and Narthex.

2027 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

"Growing Toward the Future - Rooted in Our Past" is the theme of our 2027 Stewardship Campaign. An informational packet and pledge card is being mailed out to church members, and additional pledge cards will be available at church. If you prefer to use our convenient online pledge card to submit your pledge for 2027, simply scan the QR code. Thank you for helping us grow toward our future!



LUNCH WITH PASTOR IVY

All are invited to join Pastor Ivy for lunch Friday, September 18, at Starbucks, 222 S Magnolia Drive. She'll be there from 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Just drop in, no reservation needed, and simply enjoy some conversation and fellowship with Ivy.

THIS WEEK AT TRINITY

Sunday, September 13

8:30 a.m.
8:30 a.m.
9:45 a.m.
8:30/9:45/11:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
4:00 p.m.
5:00 p.m.
5:00 p.m.
6:15 p.m.

Monday, September 14

9:30 a.m.
11:00 a.m.
12:00 p.m.
1:30 p.m.
6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, September 15

7:00 a.m.
9:45 a.m.
11:00 a.m.
12:15 p.m.
1:00 p.m.
6:30 p.m.
7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, September 16

3:15 p.m.
4:15 p.m.
4:30/6:15 p.m.
4:30 p.m.
5:30 p.m.
5:30 p.m.
6:15 p.m.
6:15 p.m.
6:30 p.m.
7:30 p.m.

Thursday, September 17

10:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.
12:15 p.m.
6:00 p.m.

Friday, September 18

10:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY

Chapel Service
Yates Heritage Center Open
Contemporary Service
Sunday School
Liturgical Service
CAJM Listening Circles/Lunch
Youth Praise Band
Steel Pans
UMYF
Jubilation Bells

Women's Bible Study
Snack Pack Distribution
JOY Club Luncheon
Mary Martha Circle
Centering Prayer

Men's Daybreak
BFC Staying Strong
BFC Variety Mix
BFC MoveWell
Heavenly Chimes
Celebrate Recovery
Young Adult Bible Study

NETKids
Richard Andrews' Bible Study
Holy Homework
Love in Action
Dinner
Yates Heritage Center Open
Lay Academy/Parenting Village
Trinity Ringers
Praise Band/Prayers and Squares
Chancel Choir

Funeral - Lisa Roche Boyd
Snack Pack Distribution
BFC Variety Mix
BFC Staying Strong
BFO Pickleball

Friday Study Group
Lunch: Pastor Ivy at Starbucks

SCAN THE QR CODES FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON AT TRINITY



Sunday School



Serving



Fellowship



Giving

Our Vision

The vision of Trinity United Methodist Church is to be a diverse Christian community that leads as a shining beacon of God's love, actively engaging as the heart, hands, and feet of Christ in the world.

Our Mission

Because of God's love for us through Jesus Christ, we exist to worship, grow, and serve.



The Core Message of the Bible

A Personal Bible Study in Matthew 18:21-35

Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams

September 13, 2026

A Bible Study

Matthew 18:21-35

Before you begin, find a quiet space and read Matthew 18:21-35. Let the numbers in the parable sit with you before you move into the study below.

Opening Reflection

Peter asks Jesus how many times he must forgive someone, and offers seven as a generous ceiling. Before reading further, take a moment to notice your own instinctive number. Is there an offense in your life where you have quietly decided you have forgiven enough, or reached your limit? Write it down honestly. This study is not meant to shame that instinct. It is meant to help you see what Jesus reveals underneath it.

Digging Into the Text

Read Matthew 18:23-27. The servant owes an amount so vast that scholars note it represented the largest possible number paired with the largest unit of currency in that world, a debt no lifetime of labor could repay. Ask yourself: have I ever tried to calculate what I owe God? Not out of guilt, but honestly. What would it mean to stop trying to do that math?

Read Matthew 18:28-30. The same servant who was released from an impossible debt turns and seizes a fellow servant over a comparatively small one. Sit with the discomfort of that turn. Where in your own life has something you received freely become something you now withhold from someone else?

Read Matthew 18:31-35. Notice the phrase in verse 35, “from your heart.” Forgiveness in this parable is not a legal transaction performed with the lips. It reaches into the gut, the same place the king’s compassion came from in verse 27. Ask yourself where in your body you carry the offense you named earlier. Many people can point to it physically, a tightness in the chest, a knot in the stomach.

That physical dimension is not incidental. Psychologist Charlotte vanOyen Witvliet and her colleagues, in a landmark study published in *Psychological Science* in 2001, found that when people simply rehearsed a grudge in their minds rather than acting on it, their bodies responded as though the offense were happening again. Their own words describe it plainly: “Unforgiving thoughts prompted more aversive emotion,” along with measurable increases in heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle tension, while imagining forgiveness produced the opposite pattern. Ask yourself: what is unforgiveness costing me physically, right now, that I have not named as a cost?

Tracing the Thread From Genesis to Revelation

This parable does not stand alone. Read the following passages slowly, one at a time, and simply notice the shape of forgiveness in each.

Genesis 50:15-21, Joseph and his brothers.

Psalms 103:8-12, as far as the east is from the west.

Isaiah 53:4-6, the suffering servant.

Micah 7:18-19, casting our sins into the depths of the sea.

Luke 23:32-34, Father, forgive them.

Romans 5:6-8, while we were still sinners.

Colossians 2:13-14, the record that stood against us.

Colossians 1:19-20, reconciling all things.

Revelation 21:1-5, the former things have passed away.

As you move through these, ask yourself where you see debt language, where you see liberation language, and where the two overlap. N.T. Wright has written that the cross is “the surest, truest and deepest window on the very heart and character” of God. If that is true, what does the sweep of these passages, from a garden to a new creation, tell you about the size of what God has already forgiven, and the size of what God is asking you to release in return?

Sin Larger Than Ourselves

It is easy to read this parable and think only of private offenses, a debt owed to me personally, a wrong I alone carry. Scripture will not let the story stay that small. Sin is also collective. It lives in systems, in nations, in patterns of cruelty passed down through generations, in the quiet complicity of people who never personally lifted a hand yet benefited from what someone else's hand did. Read the following passages with that larger scope in mind.

Genesis 6:5-6, the corruption of the whole earth.

Romans 3:23, all have sinned and fall short.

Romans 8:19-22, creation itself groaning under brokenness.

Ephesians 2:1-3, the condition we were all born into.

Hebrews 9:26, once for all at the end of the age.

1 John 2:2, an atoning sacrifice for the whole world.

Revelation 5:9, ransomed from every tribe, language, people, and nation.

Notice the phrase in Hebrews, once for all. The cross was not a transaction repeated for each new generation of sinners. It happened once, in a single moment of history, and its reach was never confined to that moment. It reached backward to cover every sin already committed before Christ ever hung on that tree, and it reached forward to cover every sin not yet committed by people not yet born. This is what gives the parable in Matthew 18 its full weight. The debt the servant owed was not simply his own private failure. It was bound up in a much larger brokenness, the corruption of whole systems and whole peoples that Genesis names as early as chapter six. And the King's compassion in the parable is a small window into a mercy that Colossians says reconciled not just individual sinners but all things, whether on earth or in heaven.

Ask yourself: where have I only thought of sin and forgiveness as personal transactions between myself and God? What might it mean to also grieve, and to also trust God's mercy for, the collective brokenness of the systems and histories I am part of, the ones I inherited and the ones I still benefit from? What does it change to know that the same cross covers a sin committed a thousand years before Christ and a sin not yet committed a thousand years from now?

Personal Application

Sit with these questions honestly, without rushing to answer them the way you think you should.

Is there a name that surfaced for you at the beginning of this study? What would it look like this week to name that debt before God specifically, rather than in general terms?

Where have you, like the unforgiving servant, held someone to a standard you yourself were never held to?

What would change in your body, not just your soul, if you set this down?

Where do you see collective brokenness, in a system, a history, or a pattern larger than yourself, that you have not yet brought before God?

Closing Prayer

Close your time by praying honestly, in your own words, naming what you are carrying and asking God to help you release it from your heart. You do not need polished language. The parable makes clear that God is not waiting for eloquence. God is waiting for your heart.

