

WORSHIP FOR JULY 5TH, 2026 6TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST READING ZECHARIAH 9:9-12

In this reading from Zechariah, we learn that the coming messianic king will inaugurate an era of disarmament and prosperity. Because of God's covenant with Israel, the people are designated as "prisoners of hope." Here is the reading:

- ⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
See, your king comes to you;
triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
- ¹⁰ He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the war horse from Jerusalem;
and the battle bow shall be cut off,
and he shall command peace to the nations;
his dominion shall be from sea to sea
and from the River to the ends of the earth.
- ¹¹ As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
- ¹² Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope;
today I declare that I will restore to you double.

PSALM 145:8-14

- ⁸ The Lord is gracious and full ^l of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in ^l steadfast love.
- ⁹ **Lord, you are ^l good to all,
and your compassion is over ^l all your works.**
- ¹⁰ All your works shall praise ^l you, O Lord,
and your faithful ^l ones shall bless you.
- ¹¹ **They shall tell of the glory ^l of your kingdom
and speak ^l of your power,**
- ¹² that all people may know ^l of your power
and the glorious splendor ^l of your kingdom.
- ¹³ **Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; your dominion endures through- ^l out all
ages. You, Lord, are faithful in all your words, and loving in ^l all your works.**
- ¹⁴ The Lord upholds all ^l those who fall
and lifts up those who ^l are bowed down.

SECOND READING: ROMANS 7:15-25a

In this reading we learn that life captive to sin is a catch-22 existence in which we know good but do not do it and do things we know to be wrong. Through Jesus Christ, God has set us free from such a futile existence. Here is the reading:

¹⁵ I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ But in fact it is no longer I who do it but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that the good does not dwell within me, that is, in my flesh. For the desire to do the good lies close at hand, but not the ability. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it but sin that dwells within me.

²¹ So I find it to be a law that, when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, ²³ but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴ Wretched person that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ^{25a} Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

L: May the church hear what the Spirit is saying.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 11:16-19, 25-30

[Jesus spoke to the crowd saying:] ¹⁶ “To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

¹⁷ ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.’

¹⁸ “For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; ¹⁹ the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶ yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Prayers of the People

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray for the church and the needs of the world saying God of grace and responding hear our prayer.

God our unity, your church flourishes in different languages, cultures, and movements. Grant us wisdom to discern when our yokes are too heavy, that we may live and serve in the freedom of your rest. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our life-giver, we grieve the pains placed upon our common home through war and neglect. What you have lovingly crafted, guide us to lovingly tend. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our freedom, you are no tyrant but bring peace. As this nation marks its declaration of independence, teach us our part in announcing peace for future generations. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our comfort, liberate all in our community who are captive to fear, who have become isolated or ill, or who are in any need. We pray especially for Jose, Joan, Terri, Martha, Tim, Roxie, Alfred, Terry, Eleanor, Bea, Abdulaziz, Meryem, Aysa, Hasan, Alma, Sylvia, George, Harold, Orville, Byron and all those we carry in our hearts and minds this day, silently or named aloud at this time... (brief pause). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our guide, we do not always have the strength to do the good we wish to do. Free us from the cycles of violence that bind us, that all know your liberation. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**