



Celebrate

Sunday, August 9, 2026
11th Sunday after Pentecost

Elijah finds the presence of God not in earthquake, wind, or fire, but in the sound of sheer silence. When the disciples face a great storm on the sea, they cry out with fear. Jesus says: "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." Amid the storms of life, we gather to seek the calm presence of Christ that soothes our fears. In comforting words of scripture and in the refreshing bread and cup of the eucharist, God grants us peace and sends us forth to be a sign of God's presence to others.

Prayer of the Day

O God our defender, storms rage around and within us and cause us to be afraid. Rescue your people from despair, deliver your sons and daughters from fear, and preserve us in the faith of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading

1 Kings 19:9-18

On Mount Horeb, where God had appeared to Moses with typical signs of God's presence—earthquake, wind, and fire—Elijah now experienced God in "sheer silence." God assured Elijah that he is not the only faithful believer. Seven thousand Israelites are still loyal. God instructed Elijah to anoint two men as kings and to anoint Elisha as his own successor.

At [Horeb, the mount of God,] [Elijah] came to a cave and spent the night there.

Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁰He answered, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

¹¹He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind, and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake, ¹²and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire, and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. ¹³When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and

went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁴He answered, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." ¹⁵Then the LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. ¹⁶Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel, and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. ¹⁷Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill, and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill. ¹⁸Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."



I will listen to what the LORD | God is saying;
for you speak peace to your faithful people
and to those who turn their | hearts to you.

⁹**Truly, your salvation is very near to | those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell | in our land. R**

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have | met together;
righteousness and peace have | kissed each other.

¹¹**Faithfulness shall spring up | from the earth,
and righteousness shall look | down from heaven.**

¹²The LORD will indeed | grant prosperity,
and our land will | yield its increase.

¹³**Righteousness shall go be- | fore the LORD
and shall prepare for | God a pathway. R**

A right relationship with God is not something we achieve by heroic efforts. It is a gift received in the proclamation whose content is Jesus Christ. This proclaimed word creates our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence Christian proclamation is an indispensable component of God's saving actions.

Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that "the person who does these things will live by them." ⁶But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷"or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸But what does it say?

"The word is near you,
in your mouth and in your heart"
(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim), ⁹because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For one believes with the heart, leading to

righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, leading to salvation. ¹¹The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." ¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. ¹³For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

¹⁴But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? ¹⁵And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Gospel

Matthew 14:22-33

Matthew's gospel typically portrays Jesus' disciples as people of "little faith," who fail despite their best intentions. In this story, Matthew shows how Jesus comes to the disciples when they are in trouble and sustains them in their time of fear and doubt.

[Jesus] made the disciples get into a boat and go on ahead to the other side [of the Sea of Galilee,] while he dismissed the crowds. ²³And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. ²⁵And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. ²⁶But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. ²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said,

"Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."

²⁸Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." ²⁹He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. ³⁰But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!"

³¹Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

³²When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

We pray for the servants of your gospel in every place, that your word may be heard. Where your voice is scorned and your people persecuted, strengthen the church in its faithful witness. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

For this world you have created, that all life may flourish. Preserve biodiversity in all its variety and help ecosystems to survive the extremes of a changing climate. Move our hearts with compassion to join in this work. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

For leaders of towns, states, nations, and organizations, and all who are in positions of authority, that they lead with justice and integrity. Teach us to respond with Christlike mercy to all who are afraid or in danger. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

For all who struggle amid the storms of life, that they find peace and hope in your loving presence. Comfort any who are lonely and grieving and all who suffer (*especially*). Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

For this congregation and its ministries, that they reflect your love and life amid a turbulent world. Guide council members, elders, and other church leaders with your still, calm voice. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for the faithful who have gone before us. Guide us in our earthly journey, that we may one day join them in your eternal kingdom. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday (commemoration of Lawrence, deacon, martyr, died 258) Psalm 18:1-19. **Tuesday** (commemoration of Clare, Abbess of San Damiano, died 1253) Romans 9:14-29. **Wednesday** Matthew 8:23-27. **Thursday** (commemoration of Florence Nightingale, died 1910; Clara Maass, died 1901; renewers of society) Psalm 67. **Friday** (commemoration of Maximilian Kolbe, died 1941; Kaj Munk, died 1944; martyrs) Isaiah 63:15-19. **Saturday** (Mary, Mother of Our Lord) Luke 1:46-55. **Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost** Isaiah 56:1, 6-8; Psalm 67; Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32; Matthew 15:[10-20] 21-28.

CELEBRATE August 9, 2026 (Lectionary 19)

Volume 57, Number 3

CELEBRATE (ISSN 1083-3242, USPS 763-460) is published quarterly by Augsburg Fortress, 411 Washington Avenue North, Third Floor, Minneapolis, MN, 55401. Periodicals postage paid in St. Paul, MN and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to Celebrate, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, P.O. Box 1553, Minneapolis, MN 55440-1553. Printed in U.S.A. Price per weekly part \$5.79 per 100 copies; price in Canada subject to exchange rates. Minimum order 50 copies of each issue; all orders must be in multiples of 50. Copyright © 2026 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. May not be reproduced. Revised Common Lectionary © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts. Readings from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Prayer of the day, psalm, and readings during the week from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* © 2006, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Refrain music by Ray Makeever. Refrain accompaniment is