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Sep

Striving Side by Side

Pressing On

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, YEAR A

One of the key points to remember throughout this series is that we are not called to wear ourselves out. Pressing on is not about throwing ourselves against brick walls with no regard for our own well-being.

REFERENCES

Exodus 16:2-15

Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45

Philippians 1:21-30

Matthew 20:1-16

COLORS

Green

Liturgical Resources

CALL TO WORSHIP

In times of busyness and stress when we feel surrounded by challenges on all sides...

We gather to learn to strive side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel.

In times of joy and rest when we feel the goodness of God's provision and abundance deep in our bones...

We gather to learn to strive side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel.

In times of conflict and distress when we feel just how hard it is to live in unity together...
We gather to learn to strive side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel.

Disciples of Christ, come, let us worship God who empowers us to press on...
As we learn to strive side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel.

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, July 2026.

OPENING PRAYER

Mighty God, we enter your presence with thanksgiving and hope. You have formed us as your people. You join us on the journey of life through valleys, upon mountains, and on the plains. We set our attention and seek your wisdom, encouragement, and grace. Reveal your will and display your glory among your people as we worship your holy name. Amen.

Written by Rev. Dr. Cheryl Lindsay and posted on the Worship Ways website of the United Church of Christ at <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/after-pentecost-17a-september-24/>.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We continue to believe that we must earn our way into God's heart.
But God's grace is given to each of us,
for all of us,
freely, unconditionally, always.
Let us open our lives to this mercy as we pray, saying,

It seems we cannot decide, Cloud of Glory.
We say we will live to serve others,
but end up meeting only our needs.
We claim to live in a way that honors Christ,
but we do not take him to work, school, home.
We believe that the gospel can transform lives,
(at least, for those who need it - not us).
Forgive us, Presence of Peace.
Instead of grumblers,
may we be ambassadors of grace.
Instead of continual complaining,
may we carry compassion to the hurting.
Instead of whiners,

may we be workers with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior,
to reach out and bring the kingdom of God to everyone we meet.

Silence is kept

Assurance of Pardon

This is the good news:

there is no ranking in God's kingdom.

God graces everyone with the same gifts:

mercy, restoration, new life.

God has kept the covenant.

We have been forgiven,

we have been made new people.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Written by Thom Shuman, from [Lectionary Liturgies](https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2011/09/prayer-of-confession-september-18-2011.html). Reposted on the re:Worship blog at <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2011/09/prayer-of-confession-september-18-2011.html>.

BENEDICTION

As you go from this place, may God bless you with wisdom, courage, and perseverance to live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ as you work, rest, play, and strive side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel. Amen.

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, July 2026.

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