

**Stewardship 2025  
United in Christ**



**Yesterday,  
Today and  
Tomorrow**

**Psalm 46:7 "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold."**

**WELCOME TO WORSHIP  
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost  
August 3, 2025  
9:00 AM Traditional Worship**

**Pastor:** Paula Geister-Jones    **Lay Ministry Administrator:** Jenny Hoffman

**Guest Preacher:** Kyla Betts

**Organist/Pianist:** Linda Kunz    **Lector:** Cindy Flory

**Acolytes:** Ben Foltz & Autumn Wendorf

**Ushers:** Todd Skavlen, Mark Wilberg, Eric Smedal & Roger Nitzsche

**Technical Support:** Thomas Lehr, Roger Slack

Are you occasionally overwhelmed by the "unhappy business" of life? In today's gospel Jesus urges us to take care and be on guard against all kinds of greed. We who have died with Christ in holy baptism have also been raised with him and are encouraged to elevate our thinking, seeking the "things that are above." To that end we seek the sustenance of the Lord's supper and the encouragement of God's word.

**CALL TO WORSHIP: "All Are Welcome" Haugen/Schmoltz**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**P:** Merciful God,

**C:** You free us to love others, but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way. You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace, but we turn away from the abundant life you offer. You surround us with patience, kindness, and generosity, but we grow weary in doing what is right. In your mercy, forgive us. Do not give up on us. Heal us, break our bonds, and show us the path of life. Amen.

**P:** You belong to Christ Jesus and you are God's children through faith. In the cross of ✝ Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation.

**C:** Amen.

*Stand*

**HYMN: "Gather Us In" ELW #532**

**Vs. 1:** Here in this place the new light is streaming,  
now is the darkness vanished away;  
see in this space our fears and our dreamings  
brought here to you in the light of this day.  
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,  
gather us in, the blind and the lame;  
call to us now, and we shall awaken,  
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

**Vs. 2:** We are the young, our lives are a myst'ry,  
we are the old who yearn for your face;  
we have been sung throughout all of hist'ry,  
called to be light to the whole human race.  
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty,  
gather us in, the proud and the strong;  
give us a heart, so meek and so lowly,  
give us the courage to enter the song.

**Vs. 4:** Not in the dark of buildings confining,  
not in some heaven, light years away—  
here in this place the new light is shining,  
now is the kingdom, and now is the day.  
Gather us in and hold us forever,  
gather us in and make us your own;  
gather us in, all peoples together,

**fire of love in our flesh and our bone.**

**GREETING**

**P:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C:** **And also with you.**

**LITANY**

**P:** You are a treasured people of the Lord,

**C:** **a people holy to the Lord our God**

**P:** Keep the words of the Lord in your heart: teach them to your children

**C:** **Talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.**

**P:** One does not live by bread alone.

**C:** **but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.**

**HYMN OF PRAISE: "When Morning Gilds The Skies" ELW #853**

**Vs. 1:** When morning gilds the skies, my heart awaking cries:  
may Jesus Christ be praised! When evening shadows fall,  
this rings my curfew call: may Jesus Christ be praised!

**Vs. 4:** Let all of humankind in this their concord find:  
may Jesus Christ be praised! Let all the earth around  
ring joyous with the sound: may Jesus Christ be praised!

**SALUTATION**

**P:** The Lord be with you.

**C:** **And also with you.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P:** Let us pray.

**C:** **Benevolent God, you are the source, the guide, and the goal of our lives.  
Teach us to love what is worth loving, to reject what is offensive to you, and  
to treasure what is precious in your sight, through Jesus Christ, our Savior  
and Lord. Amen.**

*Sit*

**FIRST READING: Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14, 2:18-23**

<sup>2</sup> Smoke, nothing but smoke. There's nothing to anything—it's all smoke.

<sup>12-14</sup> Call me "the Quester." I've been king over Israel in Jerusalem. I looked most carefully into everything, searched out all that is done on this earth. And let me tell you, there's not much to write home about. God hasn't made it easy for us. I've seen it all and it's nothing but smoke—smoke, and spitting into the wind.

<sup>2:18-19</sup> And I hated everything I'd accomplished and accumulated on this earth. I can't take it with me—no, I have to leave it to whoever comes after me. Whether they're worthy or worthless—and who's to tell?—they'll take over the earthly results of my intense thinking and hard work. Smoke. <sup>20-23</sup> That's when I called it quits, gave up on anything that could be hoped for on this earth. What's the point of working your fingers to the bone if you hand over what you worked for to someone who never lifted a finger for it? Smoke, that's what it is. A bad business from start to finish. So what do you get from a life of hard labor? Pain and grief from dawn to dusk. Never a decent night's rest. Nothing but smoke.

**L:** The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

**GOSPEL CANTICLE: "Halle, Halle, Hallelujah" ELW #172**

Halle, halle, halle- lu-jah. Halle, halle, halle – lu -jah.

Halle, halle, halle – lu- jah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

*The Gospel is announced...*

**P:** The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 12th Chapter.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

**GOSPEL: Luke 12:13-21**

<sup>13</sup> Someone out of the crowd said, "Teacher, order my brother to give me a fair share of the family inheritance." <sup>14</sup> He replied, "Mister, what makes you think it's any of my business to be a judge or mediator for you?" <sup>15</sup> Speaking to the people, he went on, "Take care! Protect yourself against the least bit of greed. Life is not defined by what you have, even when you have a lot." <sup>16-19</sup> Then he told them this story: "The farm of a certain rich man produced a terrific crop. He talked to himself: 'What can I do? My barn isn't big enough for this harvest.' Then he said, 'Here's what I'll do: I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll gather in all my grain and goods, and I'll say to myself, Self, you've done well! You've got it made and can now retire. Take it easy and have the time of your life!' <sup>20</sup> Just

then God showed up and said, 'Fool! Tonight you die. And your barnful of goods—who gets it?' <sup>21</sup> That's what happens when you fill your barn with Self and not with God."

**P:** The gospel of the Lord.

**C:** Praise to you, O Christ.

*Sit*

**SERMON**

*Stand*

**HYMN: "Build a Longer Table" ACS #1062**

**Vs. 1: Build a longer table, not a higher wall,  
feeding those who hunger, making room for all.  
Feasting together, stranger turns to friend,  
Christ breaks walls to pieces; false divisions end.**

**Vs. 3: Build a broader doorway, not a longer fence.  
Love protects all people, sparing no expense.  
When we embrace compassion more than fear,  
Christ tears down our fences: all are welcome here.**

**Vs. 4: When we lived as exiles, refugees abroad,  
Christ became our doorway to the reign of God.  
So must our tables welcome those who roam.  
None can be excluded; all must find a home**

**APOSTLE'S CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

**P:** In solidarity with all creation, we join our voice to the voice of the whole church and pray for the needs of the world.

*A Brief Silence*

**P:** Renew in your church a perspective of life beyond worldly pursuits. Build an enthusiasm to embrace life in Christ, so that Christ, the life of the world, is revealed to everyone. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**P:** Revitalize and protect the treasures of wild places. Teach all people to value the earth, winds, waters, trees, and animals, the gifts that make life possible on this planet. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**P:** Speak wisdom to any in positions of power, that they cease practices of divisiveness, insult, and oppression. Clothe all people in your image, and establish equity and peace. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**P:** Reveal your loving presence in the lives of people suffering hunger and need, illness and grief, pain and fear. Give strength to those who give care, and equip them with compassion as they make your love known. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**P:** Store up in this congregation a full measure of gratitude and generosity. Guide the work of treasurers and all who attend to financial matters. Support those whose work in our community is difficult and demanding; make us mindful of the toil that goes unnoticed. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**P:** Receive our thanks for the lives of your saints who now rest from their labors.  
Give us wisdom through their witness and encourage us in love as we continue  
our lives in the world. God of grace,

**C:** **hear our prayer.**

**P:** Trusting in your lovingkindness, we place our prayer and hope in you, in the  
name of Jesus Christ.

**C:** **Amen.**

### **THE SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**P:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C:** **And also with you.**

*Sit*

**OFFERTORY: "Truth From Above" set by Wente**

### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

**P:** Let us pray.

**C:** **In your wisdom you bring forth all that is good and the harvest is plentiful.  
Strengthen us at your table with these gifts of the earth and our labor, that  
we may work for the good of all; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**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,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

### **ANOUNCEMENTS**

*Stand*

**BLESSING**

**P:** The love of God abound in you; the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ fill your hearts; and the life of the Spirit ☩ bless you and give you peace.

**C:** Amen.

**DISMISSAL**

**P:** Go in peace. Live by the Spirit.

**C:** Thanks be to God.

**SENDING HYMN: “In Christ There is No East or West” ELW #650**

**Vs. 1:** In Christ there is no east or west,  
in him no south or north,  
but one community of love  
throughout the whole wide earth.

**Vs. 2:** In Christ shall true hearts ev'rywhere  
their high communion find;  
his service is the golden cord  
close binding humankind.

**Vs. 3:** Join hands, disciples of the faith,  
whate'er your race may be.  
All children of the living God  
are surely kin to me.

**Vs. 4:** In Christ now meet both east and west,  
in him meet south and north;  
all Christly souls are one in him  
throughout the whole wide earth.

**POSTLUDE: “The Church’s One Foundation” Wesley/Schmoltze**