

WELCOME TO WORSHIP
Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost
November 15, 2026
8:00 AM Traditional Worship

Pastor: Paula Geister-Jones **Lay Ministry Administrator:** Jenny Hoffman
Organist/Pianist: Linda Kunz
Guest Preacher: Sandy Grant
Lector: Bob Kluge **Acolyte:** Myles Rostowfske
Ushers: Jeffrey Morgan, Jerry Graffin, Jerry Buskager & Mark Holzhuter
Technical Support: Thomas Lehr, Roger Slack

Our readings during November speak of the end times. Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the Lord will be filled with wrath and distress. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread, and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Christ, Be Our Light" by Farrell

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

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, our dwelling place for all generations, whose compassion never slumbers.
C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Holy God,

C: we confess that we have trusted in our preparation instead of your invitation. We prioritize our piety over care for your beloved. We trust the voice of our shame and fear, which keeps us from entering fully into relationship with you and others. We are not awake to the coming of your reign. Rouse us and rescue us, that we may enter into your joy. Amen.

P: Inherit the riches of God's grace. ☩ Jesus, the good shepherd, feeds you with his mercy. You are forgiven. Blessed are you.

C: Amen.

Stand

HYMN: "Christ Be Our Light #751 ELW vss. 1, 2 & 5

vs. 1: Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Refrain: Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

vs. 2: Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice. *Refrain*...

vs. 5: Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
signs of your kingdom come. *Refrain*...

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.

KYRIE: page 120 ELW *(front of the hymnal)*
L: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.
C: Lord have Mercy

L: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the lord.
C: Lord, have mercy

L: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.
C: Lord, have mercy.

L: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.
C: Lord, have mercy.

L: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord,
C: Amen.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE: page 122 ELW *(front of hymnal)*

Refrain: This is the feast of victory for our God
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,

vs. 1: Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God.
Power, riches, wisdom, and strength,
and honor, blessing, and glory are his. Refrain…

vs. 2: Sing with all the people of God,
and join in the hymn of all creation:
Blessing, honor, glory, and might,
be to God and the Lamb forever Amen.

Refrain: This is the feast of victory for our God,
for the lamb who was slain has begun his reign.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia

SALUTATION
P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

C: Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Sit

READING: **Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18**

7 Quiet now! Reverent silence before me, God, the Master! Time's up. My
Judgment Day is near: The Holy Day is all set, the invited guests made holy.
12-13 I'll search through every closet and alley in Jerusalem. I'll find and punish
those who are sitting it out, fat and lazy, amusing themselves and taking it
easy, Who think, 'God doesn't do anything, good or bad. He isn't involved, so
neither are we.' But just wait. They'll lose everything they have, money and
house and land. They'll build a house and never move in. They'll plant
vineyards and never taste the wine. 14-18 "The Great Judgment Day of God is
almost here. It's countdown time: . . . seven, six, five, four . . . Bitter and noisy
cries on my Judgment Day, even strong men screaming for help. Judgment
Day is payday—my anger paid out: a day of distress and anguish, a day of
catastrophic doom, a day of darkness at noon, a day of black storm clouds,
a day of bloodcurdling war cries, as forts are assaulted, as defenses are
smashed. I'll make things so bad they won't know what hit them. They'll walk
around groping like the blind. They've sinned against God! Their blood will be
poured out like old dishwater, their guts shoveled into slop buckets. Don't
plan on buying your way out. Your money is worthless for this. This is the Day
of God's Judgment—my *wrath*! I *care* about sin with fiery passion—A fire to
burn up the corrupted world, a wildfire finish to the corrupting people."

P: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: "Alleluia!" page 124 ELW

Alleluia, alleluia,
alleluia, alleluia

The Gospel is announced…

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 25th Chapter

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 25:14-30

14-18 "It's also like a man going off on an extended trip. He called his servants together and delegated responsibilities. To one he gave five thousand dollars, to another two thousand, to a third one thousand, depending on their abilities. Then he left. Right off, the first servant went to work and doubled his master's investment. The second did the same. But the man with the single thousand dug a hole and carefully buried his master's money. 19-21 "After a long absence, the master of those three servants came back and settled up with them. The one given five thousand dollars showed him how he had doubled his investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.' 22-23 "The servant with the two thousand showed how he also had doubled his master's investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.' **24-25** "The servant given one thousand said, 'Master, I know you have high standards and hate careless ways, that you demand the best and make no allowances for error. I was afraid I might disappoint you, so I found a good hiding place and secured your money. Here it is, safe and sound down to the last cent.' 26-27 "The master was furious. 'That's a terrible way to live! It's criminal to live cautiously like that! If you knew I was after the best, why did you do less than the least? The least you could have done would have been to invest the sum with the bankers, where at least I would have gotten a little interest. 28-30 "'Take the thousand and give it to the one who risked the most. And get rid of this "play-it-safe" who won't go out on a limb. Throw him out into utter darkness.'

P: The gospel of the Lord.
C: Praise to you, O Christ.
Sit
SERMON
Stand
HYMN: "On Jordan's Stormy Bank I Stand" #437 ELW vss. 1, 2, & 3

Vs. 1: On Jordan's stormy bank I stand,
and cast a wishful eye
to Canaan's fair and happy land,
where my possessions lie.

Refrain: I am bound for the promised land,
I am bound for the promised land;
oh, who will come and go with me?
I am bound for the promised land.

Vs. 2: All o'er those wide extended plains
shines one eternal day;
there God the Son forever reigns
and scatters night away. *Refrain*...

vs. 3: No chilling winds or pois'nous breath
can reach that healthful shore;
sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
are felt and feared no more. *Refrain*...

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: United with the great cloud of witnesses, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence

P: You build up the church as a community of faithful witnesses throughout the generations. Enliven the worship, outreach, and service work of our congregations and ministries with the hope of your good news. God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: As the nights grow longer in the northern hemisphere, make us mindful of the earth's need for rest. Provide for fallow fields and hibernating animals; show us how to curb human impact on vulnerable lands and species. God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Rescue all nations and peoples from violence, displacement, or famine. Disrupt complacency among national and local leaders. Recommit our communities to transforming the systems that divide and oppress into those that empower and unite. God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: In your embrace, we find refuge from all trials and troubles. Care for families who are separated or estranged, accompany all undergoing medical procedures or mental health treatment, and reassure any who are ill or despairing. God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Bless all who serve in congregational leadership: council members, finance committees, volunteer coordinators, and property teams. Encourage healthy stewardship of time, talents, and resources for the mission of the gospel. God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: The faithful of every age trust in the hope of your saving grace. In thanksgiving for the ways our ancestors have journeyed before us, we remember all who have entered eternal life in you. God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Into your steadfast love, faithful God, we entrust all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus, your beloved.
C: Amen.

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE
P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C: And also with you.
Sit
OFFERTORY: "We Praise You, O God" Valerius/Franks and Wonacott

OFFERTORY PRAYER
P: Eternal God,
C: our time, talents, and treasures are gifts from you. Receive what we offer, and all that you entrust to us, until hungry no more, all the world is fed, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: In bread and cup the reign of Christ is breaking in. Come, receive what Christ has prepared. The body of Christ given for you. The blood of Christ shed for you.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

People are invited to sing while others come forward to commune. The hymns are: "Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory" ELW #561; "Here is Bread" ELW #483

COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace till life everlasting.

C: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: Holy God,

C: we have received your never-ending mercy in this meal. You continuously seek the lost, bind the injured, and feed your people abundantly. Now send us out, awake to your presence, now and forever. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stand

BLESSING

P: The holy Trinity, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you with wisdom to welcome the reign of God, today and always.

C: Amen.

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Encourage one another.

C: Thanks be to God.

SENDING HYMN: "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ" #674 ELW

vs. 1: Let us talents and tongues employ,
reaching out with a shout of joy:
bread is broken, the wine is poured,
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

Refrain: Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

vs. 2: Christ is able to make us one,
at the table he sets the tone,
teaching people to live to bless,
love in word and in deed express. *Refrain*...

vs. 3: Jesus calls us in, sends us out
bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
gives us love to tell, bread to share:
God (Immanuel) ev'rywhere! *Refrain*...

POSTLUDE: "Postlude on St. Anne" Croft/Callahan