

CREATED, SAVED AND GIFTED BY GOD,
WE SEEK, SERVE AND SHARE JESUS CHRIST.



FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SEPTEMBER 21, 2025
10:30 AM

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
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INTRODUCTION

As we are invited today to consider what it means to be managers (rather than owners) of all that we have, it is crucial to recognize that we are bought with a price. “Christ Jesus, himself human, . . . gave himself a ransom for all.” Apart from the generosity of God we have nothing—we are nothing. By God’s gracious favor we have everything we need.

Love or Money?

A rich landowner tells his unsatisfactory manager he’s going to fire him. We don’t know how long the employee had to clear his desk, but apparently it was long enough to win friends and influence the people who had accounts with his boss. The manager called them in and reduced their debt. When the boss heard about it, for some reason he didn’t call his lawyer but sat back and laughed in admiration.

How could Jesus tell a story where the main character is a crook? Why did the boss commend the bad manager? What is Jesus trying to tell us? This parable can be difficult for us to interpret. One possibility: Dr. Audrey West, in the 2004 Lutheran Woman Today Bible study, described a parable as a story about something ordinary, with a surprise or twist that leads us to experience reality in a new way, so that it may even transform our daily living. The surprise in this parable is not the manager’s self-serving behavior, as we’ve seen for ourselves in some corporate accounting scandals in the news. The surprise is the boss showing mercy.

Does this boss remind you of someone? Maybe the landowner in another parable who pays a full day’s wage to farm workers who spent barely one hour in the vineyard? The father running out to welcome a shamed and destitute, long-lost son? Or someone who’s been in the news lately? Is there any way that he reminds you of God?

In God’s economy, people matter more than profits. The prophet (first reading), the psalmist, and Jesus, telling the parable, agree on this. The epistle writer adds a prayer for “a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity” for everyone, boss and beggar alike.

*** indicates to stand as you are able.*

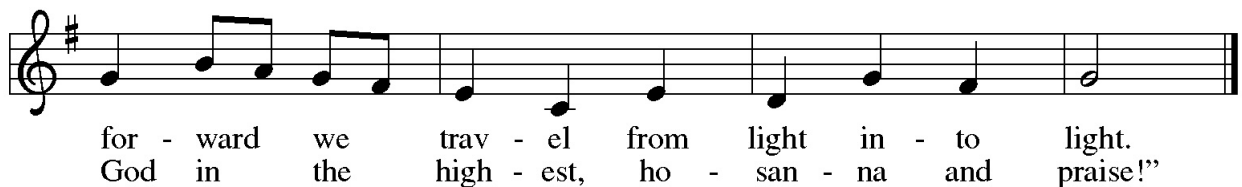
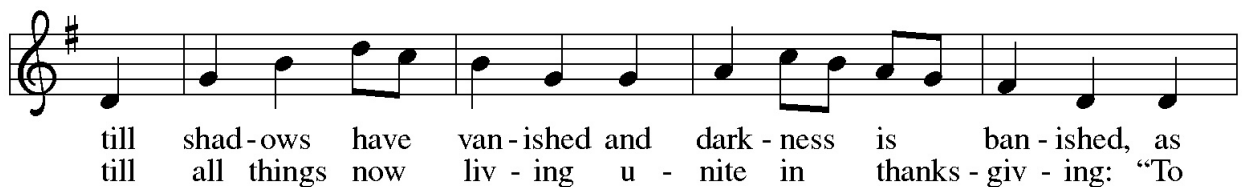
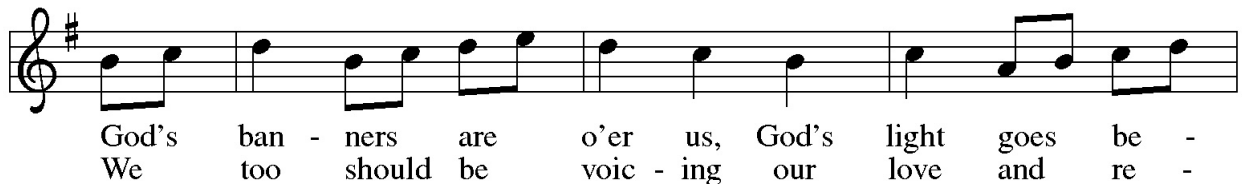
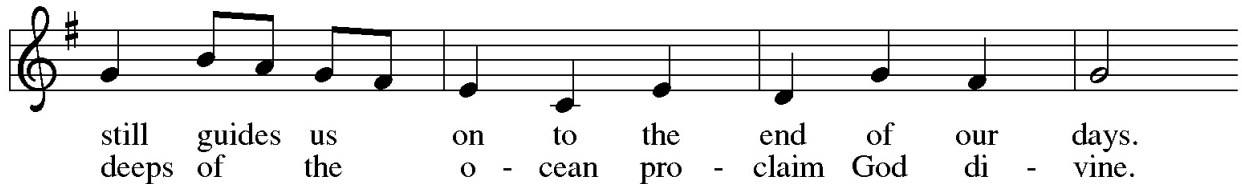
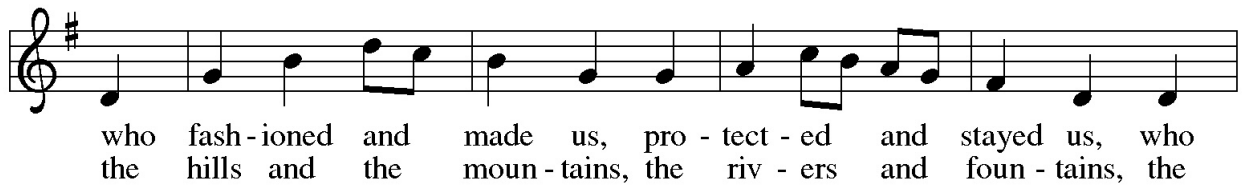
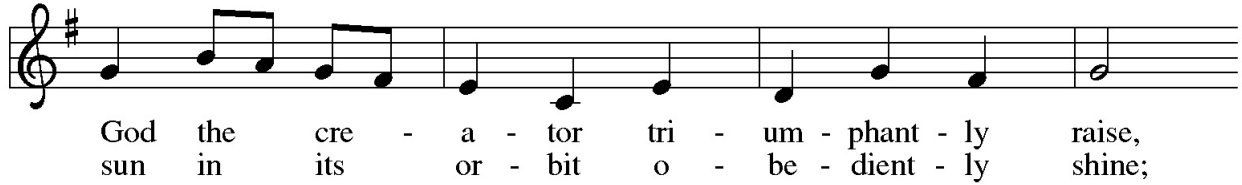
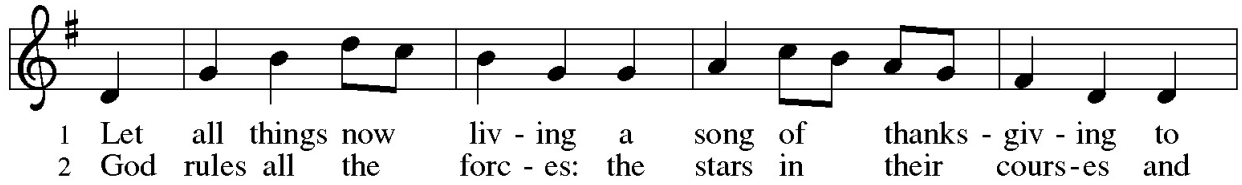
GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

"Let All Things Now Living" (ELW 881)

From the survey of favorite hymns.



WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Judy Treadway

** CONFESSION

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
our maker, our helper, and our keeper.

Amen.

Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin
in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful and loving God,
we are your stiff-necked people.
We trample on the needy.
We grumble about your grace to others.
We turn away from the poor.
Have mercy on us and forgive our sins.
Rejoice over us as ones who were lost
and have been found.
Amen.

** FORGIVENESS

Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful.
Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.
You who were lost have been found.
In the name of ☩ Jesus, your sins are forgiven!
Amen.



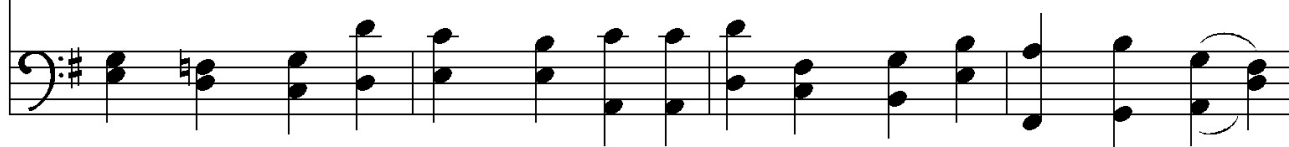
1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,
 2 As you, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, so may we for oth - ers live.
 3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and Prince of peace;
 4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,



Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race,
 Free - ly have your gifts been grant - ed; free - ly may your ser - vants give.
 hush the storm of strife and pas - sion, bid its cru - el dis - cords cease.
 Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race:



you our head, who, throned in glo - ry, for your own will ev - er plead:
 Yours the gold and yours the sil - ver, yours the wealth of land and sea;
 By your pa - tient years of toil - ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,
 by your pray - ing, by your will - ing that your peo - ple should be one,



fill us with your love and pit - y, heal our wrong, and help our need.
 we but stew - ards of your boun - ty held in sol - emn trust will be.
 quench our fe - vered thirst of plea - sure, stem our self - ish greed of gain.
 grant, oh, grant our hope's fru - i - tion: here on earth your will be done.



**** GREETING**

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

**** PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Assisting Minister

God among us, **we gather in the name of your Son to learn love for one another. Keep our feet from evil paths. Turn our minds to your wisdom and our hearts to the grace revealed in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**** PASSING OF THE PEACE**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

FIRST READING

Amos 8:4-7

Amos was called by God to prophesy in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Peace and prosperity in Israel led to corrupt business practices and oppression of the poor. The prophet declares that God will not tolerate such a situation.

Hear this, you who trample on the needy,
and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
saying, "When will the new moon be over
so that we may sell grain,
and the Sabbath,
so that we may offer wheat for sale?
We will make the ephah smaller and the shekel heavier
and practice deceit with false balances,
buying the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals
and selling the sweepings of the wheat."

The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 113

The Lord lifts up the poor from the ashes. (Ps. 113:7)

Hallelujah! Give praise, you servants of the Lord;
praise the name of the Lord.

**Let the name of the Lord be blessed,
from this time forth forevermore.**

From the rising of the sun to its going down
let the name of the Lord be praised.

**The Lord is high above all nations;
God's glory above the heavens.**

Who is like the Lord our God,
who sits enthroned on high,

**but stoops to behold
the heavens and the earth?**

The Lord takes up the weak out of the dust
and lifts up the poor from the ashes,

**enthroning them with the rulers,
with the rulers of the people.**

The Lord makes the woman of a childless house
to be a joyful mother of children. Hallelujah!

SECOND READING

1 Timothy 2:1-7

The pastoral epistles offer insight into how early Christians understood many practical matters, such as church administration and worship. The church's focused prayer for others is an expression of the single-minded passion God has toward us in Jesus.

A reading from 1 Timothy.

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. This is right and acceptable before God our Savior, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For

there is one God;

there is also one mediator between God and humankind,

Christ Jesus, himself human,

who gave himself a ransom for all

—this was attested at the right time. For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth; I am not lying), a teacher of the gentiles in faith and truth.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God

**** GOSPEL READING**

Luke 16:1-13

Jesus tells the curious story of a dishonest manager who cheats his employer and then is commended by him for having acted so shrewdly. Jesus wonders why his own followers are less creative and diligent in their stewardship given that they are managers of a far more valuable household.

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Then Jesus said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. So he summoned him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.' Then the manager said to himself, 'What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.' So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.' Then he asked another, 'And how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.' And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

"Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. If, then, you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

YOUTH MESSAGE

MESSAGE

Pastor Steve Kimpel



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,



naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!



thou my best thought both by day and by night,
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,
 thou and thou on - ly, the first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
 still be my vi - sion. O Rul - er of all.

**** APOSTLES' 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 power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell.

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**

Assisting Minister

Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Each petition concludes:

God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend. **Amen.**

GATHERING OF THE GIFTS

OFFERING PRAYER

Assisting Minister

Creator God, 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.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

**** DIALOGUE**

Lift up your heads; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your voices; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your hearts; **we lift them up to God.**

**** THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

And so we gather at the table. We come from many different places in life. And as we come together around the table we discover that our differences are not something we just tolerate, but that our differences are indeed a blessing. So come, children of God, just as you are. Wherever you are on this journey of life and faith, you are welcome here - here in this place, here in this community, here at this table. Come, children of God, come and remember. Remember the stories that Jesus' friends tell: Stories of bread broken and shared to feed a multitude; stories of gathering both enemy and friend together around a common table; stories of unlikely guests revealing the face of the sacred.

On a night of both celebration and betrayal Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it; gave it to his disciples and said, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Then Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to his disciples saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

And so we pray: Lord, bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be open, and that we might recognize the risen Christ in our midst, indeed in one another.

**** LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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**

Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them.

Come to this meal of mercy.

For those communing at home or in the pew:

COMMUNION — *Receiving the Lord's tangible presence*

The body of Christ given for you.

The blood of Christ shed for you.

Each person may respond: **Amen.**

Communion Statement ~ If you believe in your heart that Jesus Christ is your Savior and Redeemer and would like to receive Holy Communion, then come forward to receive the elements. If you would just like to come forward and receive a blessing, then you may do that also.

NOTE: We invite everyone to come forward for Holy Communion. If you have a gluten allergy, gluten-free wafers are available upon request when receiving Communion. Also, if you prefer not to receive wine at Communion, apple juice is available upon request. For those choosing to remain in the pews, there are communion all-in-one cups containing grape juice available in the Narthex.

REFLECTION DURING COMMUNION

As we prepare to receive the sacrament today, may we quietly take this time to center ourselves on Christ, and reflect the amazing gifts of grace and forgiveness that we have been given. As we receive the body and the blood of our Lord, let us reflect upon His sacrifice. Finally, may we take this time to ask the Holy Spirit to enter our hearts, and then to work in us and through us each and every day.

COMMUNION HYMN

"We Are an Offering" (W&P 146)

F/G G C² Dm⁷ C²/E C/E
 We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our

F C/E 3 Dm⁷ F/G G C² Dm⁷
 lives up to you: we are an offering. Lord, use our voices, Lord, use our

C²/E C/E F C/E 3 Dm⁷ F/G G/F
 hands, Lord, use our lives, they are yours: we are an offering.

Em⁷ Em⁷/A A Dm⁷ Dm⁷/G Esus D/F# E/G# Am
 All that we have, all that we are, all that we hope to be, we

Dm⁷ C²/E Bb/C Dm^{7sus2} Dm⁷ F/G
 give to you, we give to you.

G C² Dm⁷ C²/E C/E
 We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our

F C/E 3 Dm⁷ Dm⁷/G 3 C
 lives up to you: we are an offering, we are an offering.

**** TABLE BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you and always keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

**** PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Assisting Minister

O God, through this meal you have strengthened us and appointed us to be your servants. Send us to do good and to share our possessions with all in need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

**** SENDING OF COMMUNION**

*Communion ministers may be sent to take the sacrament to those who are absent.
The presiding minister may lead this prayer of sending.*

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick, homebound, and imprisoned. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**** BLESSING**

The God of righteousness, who gives justice to the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry, who sets the prisoners free, ✠ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

**** SENDING HYMN**

"Rising"

(Music Ministers)

From the rising of the sun 'til the sun goes down,
Let the name of the Lord be praised;
From the rising of the sun 'til the sun goes down,
Let the name of the Lord be praised.

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)

We've gathered to worship,
Becoming a choir to sing your praise;

Lifting our voices,
Joining our hearts in this house today,
People of God,
In the power of God,
For the kingdom of God, we sing:

(Refrain - All)

**From the rising of the sun 'til the sun goes down,
Let the name of the Lord be praised;
From the rising of the sun 'til the sun goes down,
Let the name of the Lord be praised;
From the sky to the depths,
From the east to the west,
We give you praise.**

(Verse 2 - All)

**We're gathered to go out
To cities and towns; We'll take your name
Into the nations,
Shining your light in the darkest place;
People of God,
In the power of God,
For the kingdom of God we live!**

(Refrain - All / Music Ministers)

**From the rising of the sun 'til the sun goes down,
Let the name of the Lord be praised;
From the rising of the sun 'til the sun goes down,
Let the name of the Lord be praised;
From the sky to the depths,
From the east to the west,
We give you praise. We give you praise.**

Instrumental

**From the rising of the sun 'til the sun goes down,
Let the name of the Lord be praised;**

From the rising of the sun 'til the sun goes down,
Let the name of the Lord be praised;
From the sky to the depths,
From the east to the west,
We give you praise. We give you praise.
Lord, we give you praise; We give you praise.

From the rising of the sun 'til the sun goes down,
Let the name of the Lord be praised!

**** DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Do not lose heart.

Created, saved and gifted by God,
we seek, serve and share Jesus Christ. Hallelujah, thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

“W + 2” = WORSHIP PLUS TWO

MAKE A COMMITMENT NOT ONLY TO WORSHIP EACH WEEK,
BUT ALSO TRY TO FIND A WAY TO SERVE IN THE CONGREGATION
AND SEEK OUT A WAY TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY.

YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist

Sunday, September 21, 2025

Matthew (or Levi) was a tax collector in Capernaum for the Roman government. Tax collectors were frequently despised for dishonesty and for assisting the occupiers. Jesus nevertheless showed love for them, and chose Matthew to be a disciple.