

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

In the Meantime
November 18 & 19, 2023

AS WE GATHER

The Last Day may come soon, but in the meantime, many people are neglecting to use their abilities and opportunities for God's purposes. Zephaniah writes that it will be a day of wrath and mourning. But for those who have realized God's blessings over the years, as Psalm 90 recalls, though the times are mean, each day is an opportunity to "encourage one another and build one another up" (1 Thessalonians 5:11). Today is an opportunity to hear God's very gracious Word, "well done!" and be strengthened to respond by using the talents He has loaned to us.

Reception of Holy Communion: If you are planning to receive Christ's supper today, please read through the words of exhortation in the fellowship folder. For members, it is a good review of important spiritual matters for gathering at the table. For guests, it explains our stance on confession of faith, doctrinal unity, and proper spiritual preparation to receive the Supper for your benefit.

WELCOME

MINISTRY MOMENT – Groundwork Guatemala Student Support

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

HANDSHAKES & HUGS

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN #338 "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

Come, Thou long expected Jesus, Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us; Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art,
Dear desire of ev'ry nation, Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver; Born a child and yet a king!
Born to reign in us forever, Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

(Rise)

INVOCATION & OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: The LORD has prepared a sacrifice

People: and consecrated His guests.

Pastor: Encourage one another

People: and build one another up.

Pastor: To everyone who has will more be given,

People: and he will have an abundance.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

People: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Pastor: Let us in all honesty hear His Word again and confess our sins. The Lord has consecrated His guests,

People: but we have been more attentive to the things of this world. Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us.

Pastor: Build one another up,

People: but we are used to the darkness of this world and fear His coming like a thief in the night. Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us.

Pastor: To everyone who has will more be given,

People: but we seldom recognize the abilities and opportunities He has given. Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us.

Pastor: The favor of the Lord is on you! Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

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

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God. **Refrain**

Power, riches, wisdom, and strength,
and honor, blessing, and glory are His. **Refrain**

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**

For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia.
This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty and ever-living God, you have given exceedingly great and precious promises to those who trust in you.

People: **Dispel from us the works of darkness and grant us to live in the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, that our faith may never be found wanting;**

Pastor: through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

(Be seated)

10:30 BAPTISM SONG #744 “Amazing Grace”

Amazing grace how sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see!

The Lord has promised good to me, His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be, As long as life endures.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares I have already come;
His grace has brought me safe thus far, His grace will lead me home.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail And mortal life shall cease,
Amazing grace shall then prevail In heaven’s joy and peace.

When we’ve been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun,
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise Than when we’d first begun.

✂ WORD ✂

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Zephaniah 1:7–16* (A day of wrath is coming.)

⁷Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is near; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests. ⁸And on the day of the LORD's sacrifice—"I will punish the officials and the king's sons and all who array themselves in foreign attire. ⁹On that day I will punish everyone who leaps over the threshold, and those who fill their master's house with violence and fraud.¹⁰ "On that day," declares the LORD, "a cry will be heard from the Fish Gate, a wail from the Second Quarter, a loud crash from the hills. ¹¹Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar! For all the traders are no more; all who weigh out silver are cut off. ¹²At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are complacent, those who say in their hearts, 'The LORD will not do good, nor will he do ill.' ¹³Their goods shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them." ¹⁴The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there. ¹⁵A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *1 Thessalonians 5:1–11* (Encourage one another to live in God’s light.)

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. ⁴But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. ⁵For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. ⁶So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. ⁸But since we

belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 25:14–30* (God gives talents, expecting them to be used for His purposes.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-fifth chapter.

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁴ “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. ¹⁵ To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶ He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. ¹⁷ So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. ¹⁸ But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹ Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ ²¹ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ ²² And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ ²³ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ ²⁴ He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, ²⁵ so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ ²⁶ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? ²⁷ Then you ought

to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸ So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. ²⁹ For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰ And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Be seated)

CHILDREN’S SONG & CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

“Rejoice in the Lord Always” (AGPS 203)

Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice.

Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice.

Rejoice, rejoice, and again I say rejoice.

Rejoice, rejoice, and again I say rejoice. *Repeat song*

SERMON HYMN #827 “Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling”

Hark, the voice of Jesus calling, “Who will go and work today?
Fields are white and harvest waiting Who will bear the sheaves away?”
Loud and long the Master calleth Rich reward He offers thee.
Who will answer, gladly saying, “Here am I, send me, send me?”

Some take up His task in morning, To their Lord responding soon;
Some are called in heat of midday, Others late in afternoon;
Even as the sun is setting, Some are sent into the fields,
There to gather in the bounty That God’s Word so richly yields.

For as rain and snow from heaven Water seeds in dusty soil,
Causing them to bud and flower, Giving bread to those who toil;
So the Lord sends forth His promise, Words of life and joy and peace
Never void to Him returning, Bearing fruit with great increase.

Hearken to the Lord whose coming Marks the time when grace shall end,
When with His angelic reapers He in glory shall descend.
Soon the night, the final harvest; Soon the time for work shall cease.
Then the souls His grace has garnered Shall enjoy His Sabbath peace.

SERMON

“Working to the End”

Matt. 25:14-30

(Rise)

5:00 & 8:00 APOSTLES’ CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

(Be seated)

OFFERINGS As your offering is collected, **please sign our fellowship folder** located at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone. After you are finished, please pass the folder along to others in your pew, and return it to the center aisle. You may check the folder to see names of those to greet after the service.

(Rise)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Lord God, enter not into judgment with your servants, for no one living is righteous before you by their own merits.

People: Have mercy on those haunted by guilt and shame, and faithfully convince them of your grace and holiness for them in Christ Jesus.

Pastor: Teach us to do your will, for you are our God. Strengthen pastors to meditate on all you have done and proclaim your Word in its truth and purity.

People: Fill us with your good Spirit to lead us on level ground, holy and righteous before you.

Pastor: Lord of the church, bless all who work in the mission field, especially our Together in Mission partner, Pastor Chuck Ferry and family.

People: By your Spirit, open the hearts of many to believe, repent, and be saved.

Pastor: Father in heaven, you have made us children of the light and of the day. Bless our families and homes.

People: Empower parents as they teach their children your ways, that your people may walk in your ways as those armored in faith, love and salvation.

Pastor: Merciful God, we rejoice in the extension of Christ’s kingdom and give you thanks for baptizing Oliver Moravec- Osinski and bringing him into your family.

People: We ask that you be with him all the days of his life, and that you guide Mike and Stephanie as they raise him. Give them wisdom as they teach him about you and all the wonders you have done.

Pastor: Ever-present God we thank you for being with all of our girls who are participating in the basketball tournament this weekend. We thank you for the volunteers, the coaches and the players for making this weekend a time of wonderful fellowship.

People: Bless and protect these girls as they compete. Let the winners show humility, and the losers show grace all to your glory.

Pastor: Holy God, a nation that despises you will be as a sacrifice to others, for it has rejected you as its strength and shield.

People: Grant repentance in our land, that our laws may be just, our transactions honest and our love for others fervent.

Pastor: Almighty God, give ear to our pleas on behalf of the afflicted including Danielle, Marlene, RoseMarie, Dorothy, Janice, Marga, Chris, Ardis, Noah, Guy, Mike, Jill, Don, Pat, Janet, Norma, Vern, Amy, Cathy, Cindy, Helga, June, Shirley and Sarah. Bless and be with them all.

People: For Your name’s sake, preserve their life and grant them healing according to your will. In your righteousness, strengthen their faith through all trials and bring their souls out of trouble.

Pastor: Blessed Lord, we thank you for the parents of Larry and Carol Hoffman as they remember their anniversary.

People: We thank you Lord for their example of a faithful marriage, for blessing them by your love, and providing for all their needs even throughout eternity.

Pastor: Ever watchful God- guard and protect the children of Guatemala. Lord, though they may not have much you still bless them and provide for them.

People: Let our offerings here today be a blessing to them, that all of their needs will be provided for and that they will be able to grow up and serve you all the days of their lives.

Pastor: Holy God, you have not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord, Jesus Christ. Until the day of His coming in glory, grant that we may worship Him at the altar.

People: Grant us faith that we are welcomed by Him, receiving His body and blood for our forgiveness.

Pastor: God of life, your Son died for us so that, whether awake or asleep, we might live with Him. Receive our thanks for your kindness to all who have died in the faith.

People: Comfort those who mourn with the consolation that all who die in Christ live with Him forever.

Pastor: God of grace, preserve us from the temptation to consider you a hard and unmerciful master. Keep us mindful that you give us every good thing in abundance, most of all a place in your household; for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

5:00 & 8:00 THE LORD'S PRAYER

People: 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.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

(Be seated)

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

HYMN

“How Beautiful”

How beautiful the hands that served
the wine and the bread and the sons of the earth.

How beautiful the feet that walked
the long dusty roads and the hill to the cross.

How beautiful... how beautiful...

how beautiful... is the body of Christ.

How beautiful the heart that bled,
that took all my sin and bore it instead.

How beautiful the tender eyes
that chose to forgive and never despise.

How beautiful... how beautiful...

how beautiful... is the body of Christ.

Bridge: And as he laid down His life we offer this sacrifice
that we will live just as He died;

Willing to pay the price, willing to pay the price.

How beautiful the radiant Bride
who waits for her Groom with His light in her eyes.

How beautiful when humble hearts give
the fruit of pure lives so that others may live.

How beautiful... how beautiful...

how beautiful... is the body of Christ.

How beautiful the feet that bring
the sound of good news and the love of the King.
How beautiful the hands that serve
the wine and the bread and the sons of the earth.
How beautiful... how beautiful...
how beautiful... is the body of Christ.

HYMN #563 “Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness”

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

Bold shall I stand in that great day,
Cleansed and redeemed, no debt to pay;
Fully absolved through these I am
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

Lord, I believe Thy precious blood,
Which at the mercy seat of God
Pleads for the captives’ liberty,
Was also shed in love for me.

Lord, I believe, were sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
Thou hast for all a ransom paid,
For all a full atonement made.

When from the dust of death I rise
To claim my mansion in the skies,
This then shall be my only plea:
Jesus hath lived and died for me.

Jesus, be endless praise to Thee,
Whose boundless mercy hath for me,
For me, and all Thy hands have made,
An everlasting ransom paid.

HYMN #832 “Jesus Shall Reign”

Jesus shall reign where’er the sun Does its successive journeys run:
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

To Him shall endless prayer be made, And endless praises crown His head;
His name like sweet perfume shall rise With ev’ry morning sacrifice.

People and realms of ev’ry tongue Dwell on His love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim Their early blessings on His name.

Blessings abound where’er He reigns: The pris’ners leap, unloose their chains,
The weary find eternal rest, And all who suffer want are blest.

Let ev’ry creature rise and bring Honors peculiar to our King;
Angels descend with songs again, And earth repeat the loud amen.

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. We give thanks to you, heavenly Father, that you have
assured us of sins forgiven,

**People: so that with joy we may share your love each day until your Son
returns to usher us into your eternal presence;**

Pastor: through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION & DISMISSAL

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you
and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give
you peace.

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #829 “Christ the Eternal Lord”

Christ the eternal Lord, Whose promise here we claim,
Whose gifts of grace are freely poured On all who name Your name;
With thankfulness and praise We stand before Your throne,
Intent to serve You all our days And make Your glory known.

Christ the unchanging Word To ev’ry passing age,
Whose timeless teachings still are heard Set forth on Scripture’s page;
Transform our thought and mind, Enlighten all who read,
Within Your Word by faith to find The bread of life indeed.

Christ the redeeming Son, Who shares our human birth,
And by His death salvation won For ev’ry child of earth;
Inspire our hearts, we pray, To tell Your love abroad,
That all may honor Christ today And follow Him as Lord.

Christ the unfading Light Of everlasting day,
Our Morning Star in splendor bright, The Life, the Truth, the Way;
That light of truth You give To servants as to friends,
Your way to walk, Your life to live, Till earth’s brief journey ends.

Christ the ascended King Exalted high above,
Whose praise unending ages sing, Whom yet unseen we love;
When mortal life is past Your voice from heaven’s throne
Shall call Your children home at last To know as we are known.

Preacher
Liturgist
Lectors
Organist

Pastor Harold Bender
Pastor Joshua Grotelueschen
Russell Hurst, Debbie Nier, Don Horn
Deaconess Carole King

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