

Triune Lutheran Church



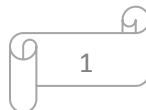
Bread for the world: a world of hunger. Wine for all peoples: people who thirst. May we who eat be bread for others. May we who drink pour out our love.

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.



*We thank you for joining us here
at Triune Lutheran Church, a
family united by our Risen Lord,
Jesus Christ!*



In order to make you feel more at home, here are a few notes about the service. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. We hope to make your time here as meaningful as possible!

Worship

- We are taking extra precautions to ensure your safety and health as we worship together, including asking you to please, **please** wear a mask the entire time you are in the building.
- Everything is printed in the bulletin (no hymnals will be used). Based on many published scientific studies, we are asking you to refrain from singing. Instead, please use the included text to the hymns in the bulletin as a prayer to God.
- There will not be a separate time for an offering to be collected during worship. If you wish to do so today, you may place your offering in the offering plate at the back.
- The Communion elements are placed by your chair in small containers with lids. We ask you leave them as is until we reach the celebration of holy Communion during worship, when you will be asked to remove the lids and consume the bread (wafer), then the wine. If you need a gluten-free wafer, please let the pastor know before worship. We believe the body and blood of Christ is meant for everyone, regardless of your church affiliation, and so feel free to participate, if you feel so moved.
- Bathrooms are available in the hallway. Please wash your hands, and use a paper towel to open the bathroom door to exit.
- The pastor will not be standing for a receiving line after worship.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved.

Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy One,
we confess that we are not faithful in using your gifts.
We forget the least of our siblings.
We do not see your beautiful image in one another.
We are infected by sin
that divides your beloved community.
Open our hearts to your coming,
open our eyes to see you in our neighbor,
open our hands to serve your creation. **Amen.**

Beloved, we are God's children,
and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us.
Through † Jesus you are forgiven,
by Jesus you are welcome,
in Jesus you are called to rejoice!
Let us live in the promises prepared for us
from the foundation of the world. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

“O Zion, Haste”

ELW 668

- 1 O Zion, haste, your mission high fulfilling,
to tell to all the world that God is light;
that he who made all nations is not willing
one soul should perish, lost in shades of night.

Refrain

Publish glad tidings, tidings of peace,
tidings of Jesus, redemption, and release.

- 2 Publish to ev'ry people, tongue, and nation
that God, in whom they live and move, is love;
tell how he stooped to save his lost creation
and died on earth that we might live above. *Refrain*

- 3 He comes again! O Zion, ere you meet him,
make known to ev'ry heart his saving grace;
let none whom he has ransomed fail to greet him,
through your neglect, unfit to see his face. *Refrain*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Righteous God, our merciful master, you care for the earth and all the 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.**

FIRST READING

Zephaniah 1:7,12-18

⁷Be silent before the Lord GOD!

For the day of the LORD is at hand;
the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,
he has consecrated his guests.

¹²At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the people
who rest complacently on their dregs,
those who say in their hearts,
“The LORD will not do good,
nor will he do harm.”

¹³Their wealth 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 warrior cries aloud there.

¹⁵That day will be a day of wrath,
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,
¹⁶a day of trumpet blast and battle cry
against the fortified cities
and against the lofty battlements.

¹⁷I will bring such distress upon people
that they shall walk like the blind;
because they have sinned against the LORD,
their blood shall be poured out like dust,
and their flesh like dung.

¹⁸Neither their silver nor their gold
will be able to save them
on the day of the LORD's wrath;
in the fire of his passion
the whole earth shall be consumed;
for a full, a terrible end
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalm 90:1-8, 12

¹Lord, you have been our refuge
from one generation to another.

²Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and
the earth were born,
from age to age you are God.

³You turn us back to the dust and say,
“Turn back, O children of earth.”

⁴For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday
when it is past
and like a watch in the night;

⁵you sweep them away like a dream,
they fade away suddenly like the grass:

⁶in the morning it is green and flourishes;
in the evening it is dried up and withered.

⁷For we are consumed by your anger;
we are afraid because of your wrath.
⁸Our iniquities you have set before you,
and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.
¹²So teach us to number our days
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

¹Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When they say, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! ⁴But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; ⁵for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. ⁶So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; ⁷for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**



*GOSPEL

Matthew 25:14-30

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹⁴“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. ¹⁹After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ ²¹His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ²²And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ ²³His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ ²⁶But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave!

You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ”

This is the holy Gospel of our Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

“By Your Hand You Feed Your People”

ELW 469

- 1 By your hand you feed your people,
food of angels, heaven’s bread.
For these gifts we did not labor,
by your grace have we been fed:

Refrain

Christ’s own body, blessed and broken,
cup o’er flowing, life outpoured,
given as a living token
of your world redeemed, restored.

- 2 In this meal we taste your sweetness,
bread for hunger, wine of peace.
Holy word and holy wisdom
satisfy our deepest needs. *Refrain*
- 3 Send us now with faith and courage
to the hungry, lost, bereaved.
In our living and our dying,
we become what we receive: *Refrain*

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, let us pray to see God's power in the church and in the world, responding to each petition with the words, "hear us and help us."

A brief silence.

God of us all, watch over your church in our community and throughout the world. Raise up and sustain all your precious children to use their talents in aiding those near and far away during this difficult time. O God, you are the Temple of your people: **hear us and help us.**

Creator God, we stand in awe at the works of your hands and praise you for the beauty of nature. During this autumn season, give to plants and wild animals a time of rest. Bless the earth for your glory and restore its integrity where

exploitation has caused ruin. O God, you are the Maker of the heavens and the earth: **hear us and help us.**

God of peace, bring an end to war and terrorism. Cultivate a worldwide spirit of cooperation that will seek just international agreements and shared human rights. Rescue humankind from the worship of wealth, and give a homeland to migrants. O God, you are the Haven we seek: **hear us and help us.**

God of all nations, we lift up our country. Quell attempts at violence, and restore national good will. End prejudice of all kinds, and lead us into a unity that embraces diversity. Comfort those who live in fear of the future. O God, you are our Mighty Fortress: **hear us and help us.**

Healing God, visit with health and good medical care all the sick, especially the thousands who each day are contracting the coronavirus. Prepare a vaccine to save our world from COVID-19. Give food, employment, and housing to the countless who are struggling to live. We also lift up Bev Deitrick, Hazel Schwab, Martha Wasson, Mardell Weiss, Dave & Clara Wilcox, Cathy Gallagher, John & Jean Kurtz, Matthew Loede, Donna Matter, George Tomaselli, Karen Schroedel, Gerry Praizner and all those we name in our hearts now... O God, you are our holy Physician: **hear us and help us.**

We remember before you all the saints who have lived and died in the faith. At the end of time, bring us all into your peace. O God, you are the Light perpetual: **hear us and help us.**

Receive these prayers, and in your gracious mercy grant your strength to our neediness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, 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.

***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.**

COMMUNION

MUSIC INTERLUDE (use for meditation and prayer)

Lord Jesus,
in this simple meal you have set a banquet.
Sustain us on the journey,
strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children,
and give us glad and generous hearts
as we meet you on the way. **Amen.**

BLESSING

May the God of all creation,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved,
who strengthens us for service,
give you reason to rejoice and be glad!
The blessing of God, Sovereign, † Savior, and Spirit,
be with you today and always. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

“Thine the Amen”

ELW 826

- 1 Thine the amen thine the praise
alleluias angels raise
thine the everlasting head
thine the breaking of the bread
thine the glory thine the story
thine the harvest then the cup
thine the vineyard then the cup
is lifted up lifted up.

- 2 Thine the life eternally
thine the promise let there be
thine the vision thine the tree
all the earth on bended knee
gone the nailing gone the railing
gone the pleading gone the cry
gone the sighing gone the dying
what was loss lifted high.

- 3 Thine the truly thine the yes
thine the table we the guest
thine the mercy all from thee
thine the glory yet to be
then the ringing and the singing
then the end of all the war
thine the living thine the loving
evermore evermore.
- 4 Thine the kingdom thine the prize
thine the wonder full surprise
thine the banquet then the praise
then the justice of thy ways
thine the glory thine the story
then the welcome to the least
then the wonder all increasing
at thy feast at thy feast.
- 5 Thine the glory in the night
no more dying only light
thine the river thine the tree
then the Lamb eternally
then the holy holy holy
celebration jubilee
thine the splendor thine the brightness
only thee only thee.

DISMISSAL

Beloved of God,
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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Ministers: **All People**
Pastor: **Brad Ross**
Organist: **Edith Schatt**
Office Manager: **Jan Piskac**



Given coronavirus realities, we will **not** be collecting items for our annual angel tree this year. However, we are asking for gift cards through the local Adopt-a-Family program, specifically for parents to purchase Christmas gifts for their children. We are hoping to collect \$450 of gift cards to support six local children (\$75 per child), but you are welcome to provide whatever increment you like (or cash/check if you prefer for us to get the gift cards for you). Walmart, Target and the like are preferred for the most options for parents. Please see Pastor Brad for donating the gift cards and any questions you may have. Deadline is November 18.

Lectionary Blog: Don't Bury the Kingdom!



I'm not great at investing. I majored in economics and business management, among other things, so I understand how the economy works. But I have a more difficult time understanding how people work. And the stock market is just a collection of humans buying and selling based on what they think other people are going to do—it isn't a rational process. For this reason, the financial markets and I aren't exactly friends. The parables on

investing talents have always scared me because I thought (and actually heard preached a time or two) that we had to literally make economic gains for the kingdom. But I've become convinced that little else could be further from the point that Jesus was actually trying to make.

This parable is situated among several others toward the end of Matthew's Gospel that all address how to be ready when Jesus returns. Like we read last week, Jesus is again telling his hearers that they need to be doing the work of the kingdom while he is away so they will be ready for his return. I'm grateful for the parable of the talents for the additional nuances that Jesus gives in making largely the same point.

The first thing to pay attention to is that the number of talents (five, two or one) is given to bondservants according to their abilities (Matthew 25:15). The one with the least ability to make a profit wasn't given an enormous task, and the one who was most able to see a return was given the most talents. In the parable, the lord knew his servants' capabilities and treated the men accordingly, not expecting the same result out of each.

We all know how the parable progresses. The one who was in charge of five talents earned five more. The one in charge of two talents earned two more. The one in charge of one talent dug a hole and buried it. According to slightly later rabbinic law, if the man buried money in the earth, even if it was later stolen, the servant wouldn't be responsible for the loss because he had done his best to keep the talent safe (BT. *Bava Metzia* 42a). In burying that which was entrusted to him, the man was declaring that he didn't want to be responsible for it, one way or another—neither for its increase nor its disappearance.

Unsurprisingly, the master commends the first two servants and even invites them into his "joy" (presumably a feast). But when the last servant was called to account, he blamed his inaction on his master. He said the master was a hard man, reaping and gathering where he had not worked. We have to read this as the appalling critique it was

meant to be. The servant said the master was gaining wealth too quickly and succeeding too much! Therefore, he purposefully chose to inhibit the increase of his master's estate by burying the money to ensure that it would not bear any profit. He pointedly tells the master to take (only) what is his.

The furious master responds that the slave, knowing that the estate is growing rapidly, should have done the very least and given the talent to bankers so they would make a profit for the master. Instead, the wicked and delaying (probably a better translation than "lazy") servant worked extra hard to dig a hole to hide the massive amount of money to ensure that the master didn't profit off of it at all.

Some Christians make a point of refusing to engage in good works of (social) justice, righteousness and charity because they think it detracts from Jesus' salvific work. So they rest on his salvific work and refuse to do any work for the kingdom. This is exactly the behavior that that the parable of the talents warns against.

For other Christians, Jesus' salvific work—saving us because we could never save ourselves—is the cause of great joy and gratitude. That gratitude and joy can't help but spur us to loving acts of good works on behalf of God and neighbor. That is all Jesus is after here: the natural response of sharing the love that God first gives us with our neighbors, *according to our abilities*. It's actually more difficult work to shut off the love that God intends to flow through us into God's world than it is to simply let the kingdom increase through the love of God in us. You don't have to be an investing genius, just don't bury the kingdom!



Cory Driver is a minister of word and service, and the director of the Transformational Leadership Academy in the Indiana-Kentucky Synod. He earned his doctorate in Jewish religious cultures from Emory University, Atlanta. Cory lives with his family in Indianapolis.