APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE REVEREND JAY SERAFIN
7092 Main Street, Gloucester, VA 23061
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TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

The story of the slaves entrusted with talents (Matthew 25:14-30)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2026 | 10:00 AM

Our Mission is to be a Caring Inclusive Christian Community responding to God's grace through Worship, Service, and Sharing the Gospel.

RECONCILING *in* CHRIST

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

WELCOME TO APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH!

It is an honor to worship God with you this morning. We pray you experience the Spirit's loving presence as we share our words, our actions, and the Holy Meal.

If this is your first time worshipping with us, please fill out a card in the pew rack with your contact info. A restroom can be found by exiting the rear door of the worship space. It is directly in front of you to the right. Additional restrooms can be found in the back corner of the fellowship area, near the Pastor's office.

RECONCILING *in* CHRIST

We, the people of Apostles Lutheran Church, follow Paul's message to the Galatians (3:28): "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Believing that because we are all one in Christ, and created in God's image, all are welcome as beloved children of God. We welcome into the full life of the church all those whom God sends us. **Rejoicing in God's amazing diversity, we welcome people of all ages, races, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, and physical and mental abilities.** Centered in Christ, we commit ourselves to racial equity, breaking down dividing walls and building a community where all are beloved.

FOR PASTORAL CARE

The Reverend Jay Serafin is our pastor. Pastor Jay's **schedule is noted in the calendar on the back of this bulletin.** Call Pastor Jay at 570-205-7506 or email him at j80j84@msn.com (preferred) or pastor.apostles@gmail.com. Messages can also be left on the Apostles answering machine 804-693-9098.

PRAYGROUND

Welcome to our youngest members! The area in the front of our sanctuary is for families and young children. There are quiet toys, books and drawing materials. **We ask two things: 1) sit in the front pews near your children** and **2) please sit with your children in the pews during the sermon.** They may return immediately after. Thank you and welcome!

NAME TAGS

Please wear your nametag! Guests: please fill out and put on a name tag before worship today. Blank nametags are in the baskets located in the pews.

GATHERING

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. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. 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.

Prelude and Silent Prayer

Martin Luther said of music: "Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world." Please take a moment to ***silence all cell phones.***

Welcome and Announcements

Temple Talk — Mission Outreach Fund

Pete Liljeberg

Please rise in body or in spirit. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

Confession and Forgiveness

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

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy God,

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.

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

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

ELW #715

"Christ, Be Our Light"



Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957
Music: CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT, Bernadette Farrell
Text and music © 1993 Bernadette Farrell.Published by OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.
All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Apostolic 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.

Kyrie



Canticle of Praise





Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. 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.

WORD

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

Sit

First Reading — Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18

Zephaniah (like the prophet Amos in last week's first reading) presents the day of the LORD as one of judgment and wrath. Descriptions of the last day in the New Testament include details taken from Old Testament accounts of the day of the LORD.

7 Be 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.

12 At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the people who settle like dregs in wine,
those who say in their hearts,
"The LORD will not do good, nor will he do harm."
13 Their 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.

14 The 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.
15 That 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,
16 a day of trumpet blast and battle cry
against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.

17 I 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.
18 Neither 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.

Response after the First Reading
The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm — Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12

1 Lord, you have | been our refuge
from one generation | to another.
2 **Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the | earth were born,**
from age to age | you are God.
3 You turn us back to the | dust and say,
"Turn back, O child- | ren of earth."
4 **For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when | it is past**
and like a watch | in the night; R

5 you sweep them away | like a dream,
they fade away suddenly | like the grass:
6 **in the morning it is | green and flourishes;**
in the evening it is dried | up and withered.
7 For we are consumed | by your anger;
we are afraid because | of your wrath.
8 **Our iniquities you have | set before you,**
and our secret sins in the light | of your countenance. R

[9 When you are angry, all our | days are gone;
we bring our years to an end | like a sigh.
10 **The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength | even eighty;**
yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow,
for they pass away quickly and | we are gone.
11 Who regards the power | of your wrath?
Who rightly fears your | indignation?
] 12 **So teach us to num- | ber our days**
that we may apply our | hearts to wisdom. R

Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Though we do not know and cannot calculate the day of Christ's return, we live faithfully in the here and now as we anticipate the day when we will be given eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

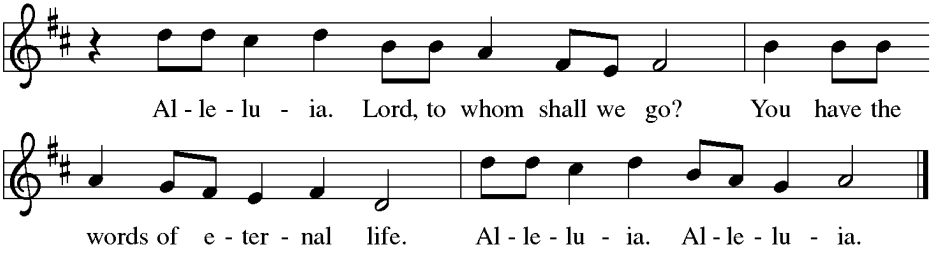
1 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have
anything written to you. 2 For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will
come like a thief in the night. 3 When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden
destruction will come upon them,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

Response after the Second Reading
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please rise in body or in spirit.

Gospel Acclamation



The gospel is announced. All are invited to make a small cross over your forehead, lips, and chest, inviting Jesus the Word into your heart, mind, and speech.
The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the 25th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel — Matthew 25:14-30

Jesus tells a parable about his second coming, indicating that it is not sufficient merely to maintain things as they are. Those who await his return should make good use of the gifts that God has provided them.

[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; 15 to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another
one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At once 16 the one who had received
the five talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents. 17 In the same
way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. 18 But the one who had
received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.
19 After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. 20 Then
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.' 21 His 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.' 22 And 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.' 23 His 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.' 24 Then 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, 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 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? 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I
would have received what was my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him, and give
it to the one with the ten talents. 29 For 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. 30 As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there
will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "

The gospel concludes:
The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon — Pastor Jay Serafin

Silence is kept after the reflection.

Please rise in body or in spirit.

Hymn of the Day — ELW #870

"We Praise You, O God"



Text: Julia C. Cory, 1882–1963
Music: KREMSER, A. Valerius, *Nederlandtsch Gedenckclanck*, 1626

Apostles Creed

With the whole church, let us confess our faith in the words of the 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 the
power of 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

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

Each portion of the prayers ends with these words:
God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

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

Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

*We share a sign of Peace with our neighbors saying **Peace be with you** to which we respond **And also with you**. Please know that it is fine if you do not want to shake hands but would rather just share a sign of peace.*

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Sit

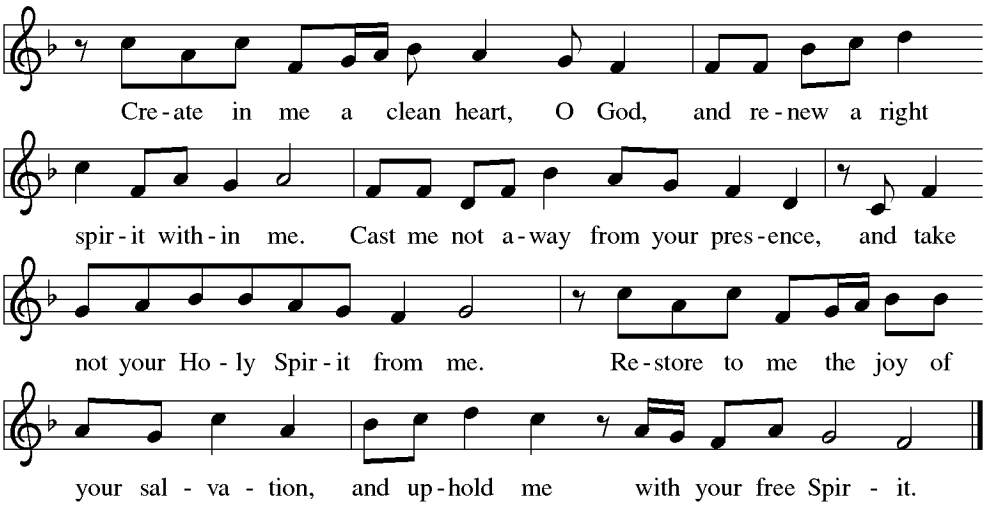
Offering

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.
To give online:

- **Visit apostles-elca.org/contributions**
- **From your mobile phone, text the word GIVE to 844-215-5453**

Please rise in body or in spirit.

Offertory Hymn — ELW #186



Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923
Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Offering Prayer

Let us pray. Eternal God, 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.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

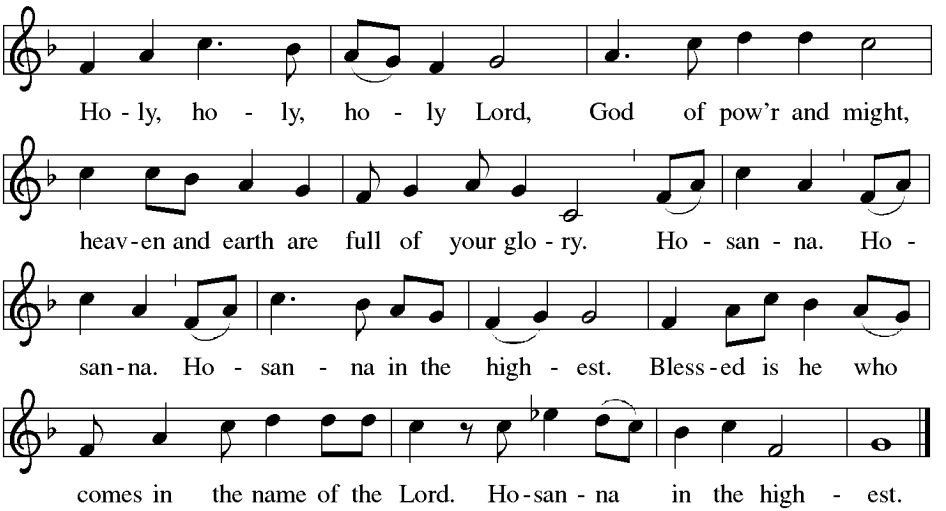
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



The great thanksgiving continues.

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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

In bread and cup the reign of Christ is breaking in.
Come, receive what Christ has prepared.

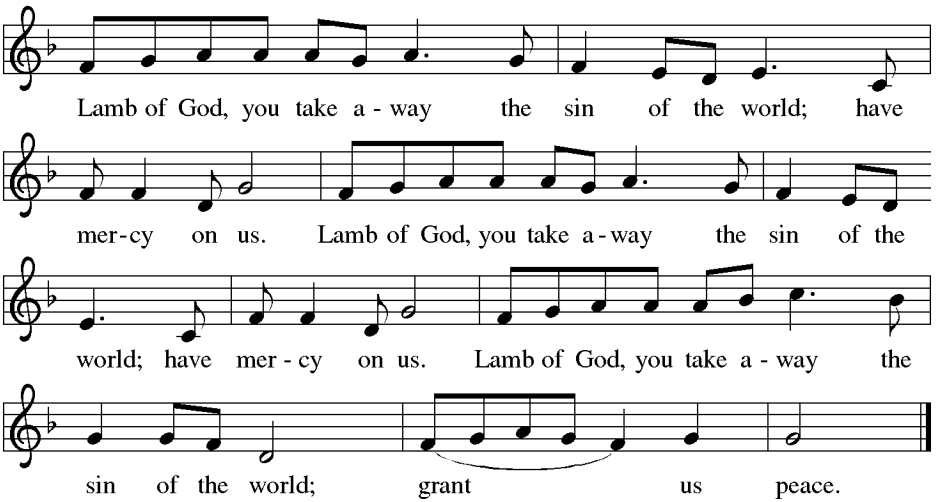
Sit

Communion

All are invited to join us at the Lord's table to receive the presence of Jesus through the bread and wine. Jesus himself invites you and Jesus turns no one away.

You will be invited to come forward either to receive the elements or to receive a blessing. For those receiving the elements, after receiving the bread, please take a glass from the tray held by the acolyte. There are pre-filled glasses of grape juice in the tray for those who do not drink wine. Gluten free wafers are also available upon request.

Lamb of God



Hymn During Communion — ELW #689

"Praise and Thanksgiving"



Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–1984, alt.
Music: BUNESSAN, Gaelic tune
Text © Oxford University Press. All rights reserved.

After all have returned to their places, all rise in body or in spirit.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray. Holy God, 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.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission back into the world.

Blessing

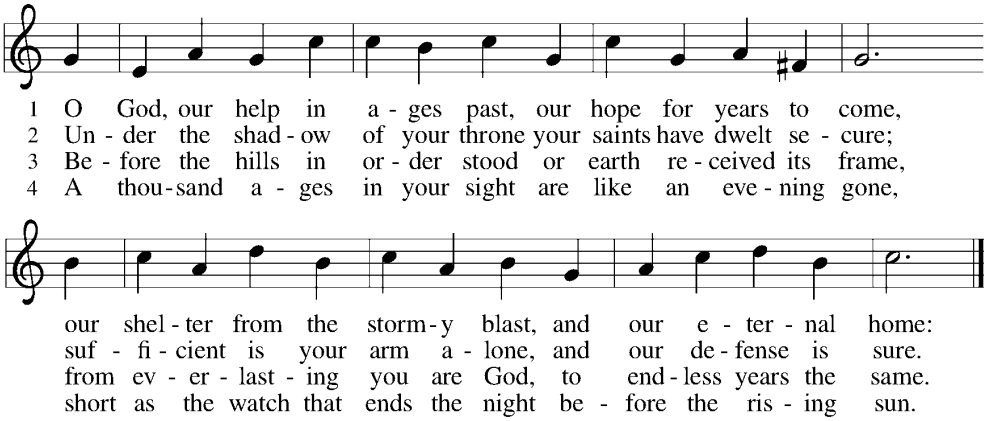
The holy Trinity, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you with wisdom to welcome the reign of God, today and always.

Amen.

Sending Hymn

ELW #632

"O God, Our Help in Ages Past"



5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
bears all our years away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream
dies at the op'ning day.

6 O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
still be our guard while troubles last
and our eternal home.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.
Music: St. Anne, William Croft, 1678–1727

Dismissal

Go in peace. Encourage one another.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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Worship Leaders

	Serving Today	Serving Next Week
Worship Leader	Pastor Jay	Pastor Jay
Preacher	Pastor Jay	Janet Gomez
Lay Assisting Minister	Chase Ambrose	Doug Dalager
Lector	Judy Wright	Doug Dalager
Acolyte	Tegan Goetz	David Muse
Accompanist	*(recorded)*	Janet Gomez
Altar Care	Alberts	Jamie Serafin
Communion Bread	Alberts	Janet Gomez
Flowers	Ingrid Peterson	Cyndi Lowe
Greeter/Usher	Judy Wright	Heinz Albert
Technology	Doug Dalager	Chris Hawkins

Servants for the Week

	Serving This Week	Serving Next Week
Cleaning Team	Gomezes	Liljebergs
Tellers	Barbara Runk/Linda Hodges	Daniel Gomez/Tonia Fallin
Fellowship Set Up	Caring Community	Jennie Hawkins
Fellowship Food	Donna Ambrose	Agape Meal
Fellowship Clean Up	Barbara Runk	Jamie Serafin

Readings For Next Sunday
CHRIST THE KING

First Reading: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24
God will shepherd Israel

Psalm 95:1-7a
We are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand.

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:15-23
The reign of Christ

Gospel Reading: Matthew 25:31-46
The coming of the Son of Man; the separation of sheep and goats

Prayer Chat
Thursday, 7:00 PM (Zoom)

Please join us on Thursday with a "prayer chat" with Pastor Jay on Zoom – invitation to join will be sent out by email.

Awake to the Grace of God

Linked with the reading from 1 Thessalonians and Psalm 90, Jesus' parable of the talents invites a full-hearted response to God's lavish gifts of faith and purpose: "Use 'em if you've got 'em!" The people of God are meant to be engaged, alert, and ready to share what we have received from our prodigally (wastefully) generous God. While the parable has sometimes been interpreted in the context of judgment, a careful reading also spotlights the beauty of the faith-generated response to God's lavish grace.

One word for this is *stewardship*. Presented in light of God's gift of faith and purpose, this "churchy" term can today be transformed to new understanding in the proclamation of the gospel text. Instead of the weight of obligation and duty we so often associate with religion, we are invited today to another way: What does it mean to be awake to the grace of God?

On the surface Jesus' parable is a simple premise: the contrast of workers who please and workers who disappoint their master. Psalm 90 sings to us to carefully treasure our lifetimes, for there is something at stake. First Thessalonians is a letter reminding people they have exactly what they need to survive and thrive.

What does it mean to be awake to the grace of God?

In a time when so many people are discouraged with work, home, life, and church, a word from Jesus' parables may be healing, enriching, and startlingly attractive. The gospel text today is an opportunity to remind the people of God that there is a depth to faith that is sustainable. In fact, beneath the parables of Jesus is a depth it will take a lifetime to unpack.

ELCA World Hunger Sunday – Today!!

Please remember your world hunger offering this morning. Did you know that our congregation has given over $1,600 this year to ELCA World Hunger—thank you so much!! **UNTIL ALL ARE FED**!!

Time And Talent
There Is Still Time!!!

If you didn't have a chance to fill out a Time and Talent survey for any of the 4 ministry teams (Administration, Caring Community, Service and Sharing and Worship), you can still do that. Forms are available in the narthex – just fill them out and put them in the offering plate. Thanks!

Congregational Meeting – Next Sunday, November 22nd

A congregational meeting has been scheduled for next Sunday, November 22nd, after the 10:00 AM worship service (around 11:00 AM) both in-person and via Zoom to discuss and approve a ministry spending plan for 2027. Please make plans to attend - we need your voice and vote!!! The proposed spending plan will be sent out by e-mail in the coming week from Apostles office. This meeting will take place after an "agape" worship service in the fellowship hall. **Please bring a brunch type dish for the agape male and make plans to stay for the meeting - thanks so much!!**

Lunch for GUEST

Apostles will be providing lunch for the clients of GUEST the week of November 22nd – lunch will be needed on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday for 15 people – lunch needs to be at the shelter by 11:30 AM. If you are interested in helping with this, please talk to Janet Gomez – thanks!!

Please Keep in Your Prayers

Rich Bitting, Don Garfield, Ellen Kendzierski, David Leunig, Cyndi Lowe, Ellen Quirk, Michael Schlemmer, Ray Scholz, Pastor Jay Serafin, George Thomas, Lena Woodlief, and **Judy Wright**

Our Family and Friends

Natalie Abu Dayyeh, Patricia Armentor (mother of Arlene, Executive Director of Gloucester Mathews Care Clinic)**, Paul Bauer**, **Karen Bell** (Pam Moore's sister), **Bob & Dixie, Calli Bonfey, Patricia Boyd & Brad Zelmer, Amanda Brown, David Brown, Dennis & Dorothy Brown, Sally Burkholder, Juan Carlos, Amy Carter, Pat Cartwright, Laura Clodfelter, Jackie Collier, Ben Davis** (friend of Donna Ambrose), **Tommy & Kathie Davis, Jenny DeSha, Linda Edwards, Colton Elliot** (Michael Schlemmer's cousin), **Teresa Floersheim-Miller** (Ingrid Peterson's mother), **Suzanne & Frank Gibson, Steven Godwin** (Juanita Sturdy's grandson), **Jimmy & Fay Gray** (Chris Hawkins' family), **Carl Greene, Karen Guire, Melvin Hawkins** (Chris Hawkins' father), **Chaneice & Daniel Hayden, Rosie Heins, Carl & Kaleb Hess, Aris Hibbs** (friend of Ray Scholz), **Ray Hughes, Scott Jeffery, Suzanne Kinkade** (friend of Ellen Quirk), **Terri Larsen, Marion Lucier, Wayne Mathews, Wayne McCormick, Sylvia Midgette** (Krystle McMahan's grandmother), **Debbie Minteins, Keith Morgan, Gary Mowery, Jamie Mullaney, Carol Pascale** (Lynn Jaeger's mother), **Chastity Perkins** (co-worker and friend of Donna Ambrose), **Brad Person** (Lilly Frost's uncle), **Dick Peterson & his brother, the Prusa Family, Joan Ritter, Glen Robertson, Pastor Wendy Roundy, Carol Schlemmer, Daniel Schmidt, Michael Scholz** (Ray Scholz's nephew), **Joseph Serafin** (Pastor Jay's father), **Kathy Shackleford, Shyla, Elana Sierson, Fred Smith, Tammy Smith, Jean Sterling, Skye Sulton, Rick Tucci, Marier Upshrie, Keegan Walls, Williams Walters, Chuck Webb** (Tina Britt's father), **Makenzie Webb** (Tina Britt's niece), **Elizabeth & Steven White, Vicki Williams, Cory Woodlief, Jim Wright** (Judy Wright's husband), **Logan & Shannon Wymer, Derek Zwiers** (friend of CK Ambrose)

Our sponsored children in Guatemala

Amayra, **Hugolino, Manuela,** and **Pablo**

Prayer Requests

There is a book located at the rear of the worship space for you to write any prayer requests you have for today. Fill out a "Prayer Request" (on the back of each pew) and place it in the offering plate to add a prayer request to the "Prayer List" included in the bulletin and the newsletter. **Please print legibly!**

THIS WEEK AT APOSTLES

November 15, 2026 – November 22, 2026

Today	**10:00 AM**	**Worship Service & World Hunger Sunday**
	11:00 AM	Coffee Fellowship
Monday	6:00 PM	Al-Anon/AA
Tuesday	6:00 PM	Al-Anon/AA
Wednesday	7:00 PM	Adult Choir Practice
Thursday	3:30 PM	Preaching Guild
	7:00 PM	Prayer Chat (Zoom)
Friday		
Saturday	5:30 PM	Young and Sober
Sunday	**10:00 AM**	**Agape Worship Service**
	11:00 AM	**Congregational Meeting**

Happy Birthday To...

John Mayer – Thu, Nov 19

Happy Anniversary To...

Shawn and April Anby – Wed, Nov 18

Happy Baptismal Anniversary To...

Marina and Nicolas Allen – Sat, Nov 21

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