

24th Sunday After Pentecost
Adaptive Worship Service
November 15, 2020



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Welcome! Our readings during November speak of the end times. 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.

This is a special bulletin for Grace Lutheran Church. This bulletin is designed to be used at home by anyone who is baptized serving as the Worship Leader. If you use this bulletin for worship, either by itself or alongside our service on YouTube, please fill out the Attendance Record Form on our website: GraceCLW.com

ADAPTIVE SERVICE OF THE WORD

GREETING

Worship Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Congregation: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Worship Leader: 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.

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Introduction to the Lesson: *In the days of Amos, people thought that the day of the LORD would be a time of great victory, but Amos announced that it would be a day of darkness, not light. He said liturgy is no substitute for obedience. The LORD demands justice and righteousness in the community.*

Reader: There is no need to write you, friends, about the times and occasions when these things will happen. 2 For you yourselves know very well that the Day of the Lord will come as a thief comes at night. 3 When people say, “Everything is quiet and safe,” then suddenly destruction will hit them! It will come as suddenly as the pains that come upon a woman in labor, and people will not escape. 4 But you, friends, are not in the darkness, and the Day should not take you by surprise like a thief. 5 All of you are people who belong to the light, who belong to the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. 6 So then, we should not be sleeping like the others; we should be awake and sober. 7 It is at night when people sleep; it is at night when they get drunk. 8 But we

belong to the day, and we should be sober. We must wear faith and love as a breastplate, and our hope of salvation as a helmet. 9 God did not choose us to suffer his anger, but to possess salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us in order that we might live together with him, whether we are alive or dead when he comes. 11 And so encourage one another and help one another, just as you are now doing..

After the reading...

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 25:14-30

Introduction to the Gospel: *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.*

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew in the 25th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Worship Leader: 14 “At that time the Kingdom of heaven will be like this. Once there was a man who was about to leave home on a trip; he called his servants and put them in charge of his property. 15 He gave to each one according to his ability: to one he gave five thousand gold coins, to another he gave two thousand, and to another he gave one thousand. Then he left on his trip. 16 The servant who had received five thousand coins went at once and invested his money and earned another five thousand. 17 In the same way the servant who had received two thousand coins earned another two thousand. 18 But the servant who had received one thousand coins went off, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master's money.

19 “After a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them. 20 The servant who had received five thousand coins came in and handed over the other five thousand. ‘You gave me five thousand coins, sir,’ he said. ‘Look! Here are another five thousand that I have earned.’ 21 ‘Well done, you good and faithful servant!’ said his master. ‘You have been faithful in managing small amounts, so I will put you in charge of large amounts. Come on in and share my happiness!’ 22 Then the servant who had been given two thousand coins came in and said, ‘You gave me two thousand coins, sir. Look! Here are another two thousand that I have earned.’ 23 ‘Well done, you good and faithful servant!’ said his master. ‘You have been faithful in managing small amounts, so I will put you in charge of large amounts. Come on in and share my happiness!’ 24 Then the servant who had received one thousand coins came in and said, ‘Sir, I know you are a hard man; you reap harvests where you did not plant, and you gather crops where you did not scatter seed. 25 I was afraid, so I went off and hid your

money in the ground. Look! Here is what belongs to you.’ 26 ‘You bad and lazy servant!’ his master said. ‘You knew, did you, that I reap harvests where I did not plant, and gather crops where I did not scatter seed? 27 Well, then, you should have deposited my money in the bank, and I would have received it all back with interest when I returned. 28 Now, take the money away from him and give it to the one who has ten thousand coins. 29 For to every person who has something, even more will be given, and he will have more than enough; but the person who has nothing, even the little that he has will be taken away from him. 30 As for this useless servant—throw him outside in the darkness; there he will cry and gnash his teeth.’

After the reading...

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

A Significant Trust

On one level we can read the parable of the talents and see a simple lesson: A property owner entrusts property to his workers and goes away. The workers respond in different ways to this trust, and he responds to them in different ways upon his return. The third is paralyzed by fear. We ought not fear putting the gifts God has given us to work for good in our world.

There is another depth to this story found in the property entrusted to the workers: One is given five talents, the second two talents, and the third only one talent. We are told this is according to their ability. How much was a talent? In our culture, where we have coins and bills for our currency, this last worker seems to be entrusted with pocket change. A talent, however, was not a denomination of currency in the way we might understand. A talent was more than fifteen years’ wages for a laborer. Fifteen years!

For illustration purposes, let us assume a laborer today makes \$10 an hour. If a person works forty hours per week with two weeks of vacation, a year’s wages would be \$20,000. Fifteen years of wages would be \$300,000. This would be one talent. Two talents would be \$600,000; five would be \$1,500,000.

Why all this math? What we see in the value of the talents are significant amounts of property entrusted to the workers—even the one with the least ability. What is beautiful in this story is the trust the property owner has in his workers. His disappointment with the third shows the trust to be sincere. What if this one had trusted himself as much as the property owner did?

Psalm 139 tells us we are “fearfully and wonderfully made.” Perhaps this parable is an invitation for us to believe in ourselves as much as God believes in us, and thus experience the joy our loving Creator already has for us.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death vs. 1 & 2



- 1 A - wake, O sleep-er, rise from death, and Christ shall give you light;
- 2 To us on earth he came to bring from sin and fear re - lease,
- 3 There is one bod - y and one hope, one Spir - it and one call,
- 4 Then walk in love as Christ has loved, who died that he might save;
- 5 For us Christ lived, for us he died, and con- quered in the strife.



so learn his love, its length and breadth, its full - ness, depth, and height.
to give the Spir - it's u - ni - ty, the ver - y bond of peace.
one Lord, one faith, and one bap - tism, one God who made us all.
with kind and gen - tle hearts for - give as God in Christ for - gave.
A - wake, a - rise, go forth in faith, and Christ shall give you life.

Text: F. Bland Tucker, 1895–1984

Music: AZMON, Carl G. Gläser, 1784–1829

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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

Prayer Leader: Lord of the church, ignite your people with the passion of your love. By the fire of your Holy Spirit, unify us across ministries, congregations, and denominations, and refine us to participate in your activity throughout the world. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Lord of the nations, sound forth your justice in the ears of all leaders. Increase concern for those who are most vulnerable, especially as international leaders forge trade agreements and cooperate to end human rights abuses. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Lord of all in need, search out all who cry to you in distress. Scatter the heavy clouds of depression, chronic illness, unemployment, and loneliness with your radiant light. Send us as encouragement and signs of your healing. Awaken in us your

call to serve all who suffer (especially Marc Calhoun, Linda Almond, Barbara Haseley, Duke Tieman, Betty Biddle, Cathi Adams, Michael Morales, Wade Buehler, Gloria Holtzclaw, Betty Daege, Dianne William, Rosemarie & George Smith, Gary Neal, Karen Bates, Rev. Lydia Villanueva and family, Don Eunis, Lorraine Reinhard, Bonnie Redler, Kathy Leotta, Brytt Mathis, Joseph Valentin, Rita Burneik, Bobby Schlegel, Hilda Taylor, George Clark, Jill Grote, Larry Timmons, Carl Stone, Neftali Garcia & family, Kelly Sullivan, Susan Gunn, Roy Pruitt, Iris Valentin, Deacon Connie Puls, Joan Keeton, Steve Davis, Rose Marie Piff, Gary Mostrum, Vicki Kennedy, Gail Elder, Valerie Smutko, Jason Meadows, Missy, Penny, & Henry, Lisa & Ty Hauschild, Rob Rodriguez & family, Marcus de Souza Lima, Maria de Nazare & Michele Rios, Ana Agramonte, Bishop Pedro Suarez, Pastor Courtney Erzkus and family, Ralph Burson, Luanne Sekel, Lorraine Chavez, Seve Chacon, Pat Fredell, Skylar Favos, the family and friends of of Ethan Burgess, and all those suffering from natural disasters [including all those impacted by COVID-19, Hurricanes Laura, Sally and Delta, and Western wildfires], violence, & terror, and the family & friends of the 240,000+ people in the US & the 1.2 million+ people worldwide who have died from COVID-19). Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Worship Leader: Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

OFFERING

Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at GraceCLW.com (look for the "Donate" button), or (for now) by mailing a check to Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Ave. Clearwater FL 33755. Thank you for your continued financial support during these uncertain times. You can fill out your attendance form on our website as well.

OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Worship Leader: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in the language closest to our hearts.

Congregation: 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.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Worship Leader: Let us pray. O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Congregation: Amen.

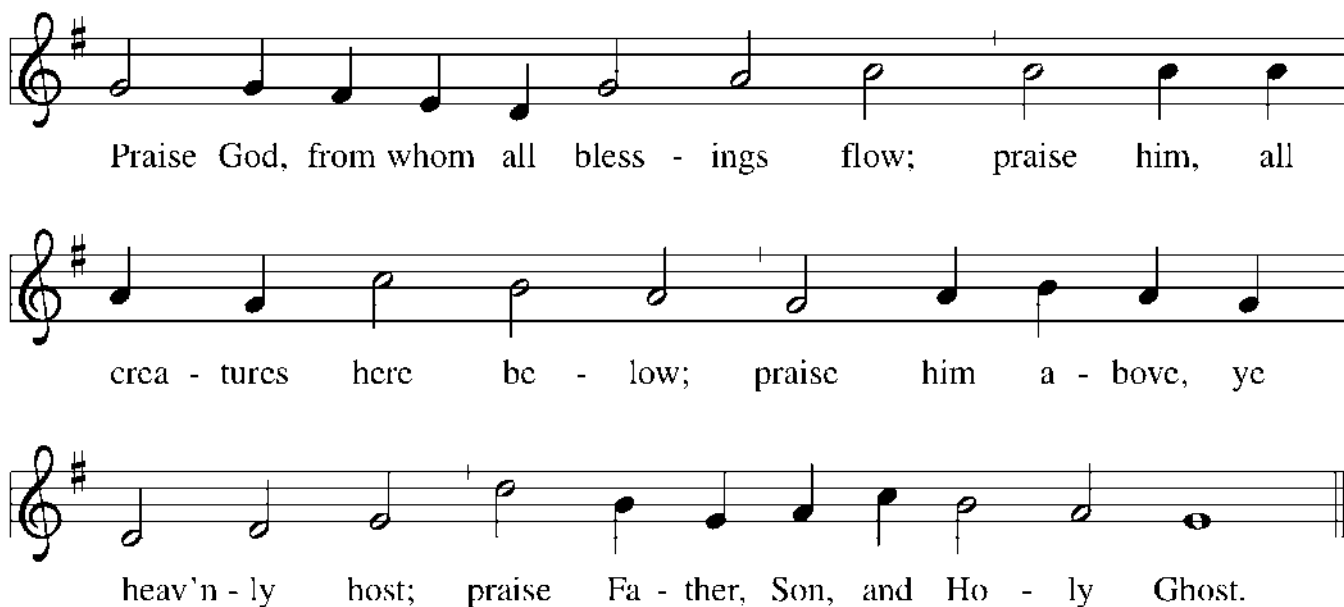
BLESSING

Worship Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace .

Congregation: Amen.

SENDING SONG

The Doxology



The musical notation consists of three staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God's Word and joined in prayer, we have given and have been forgiven. Now our service of worship has ended, and our service to the world begins! Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

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