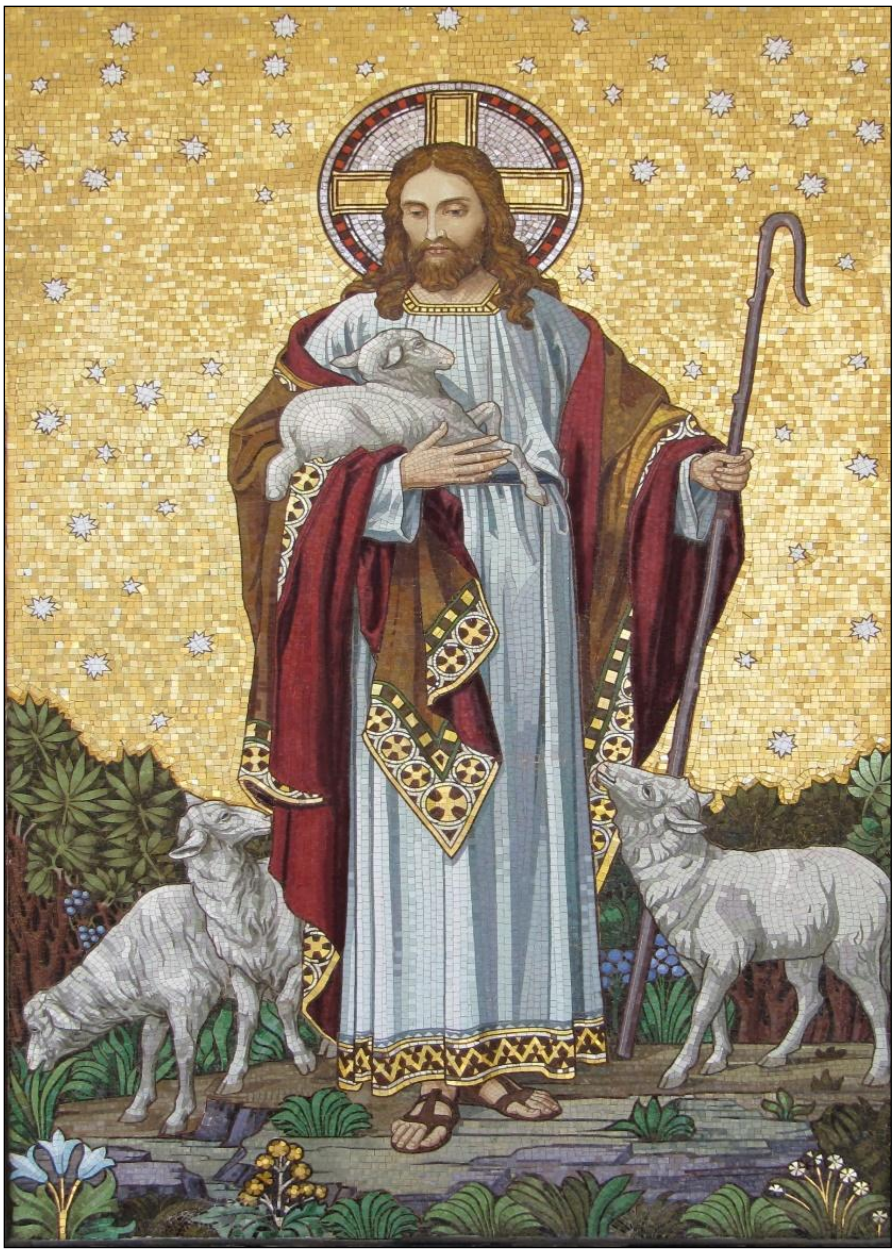


The Memorial Church of the Good Shepherd, Parkersburg

November 15, 2026 10:15AM

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
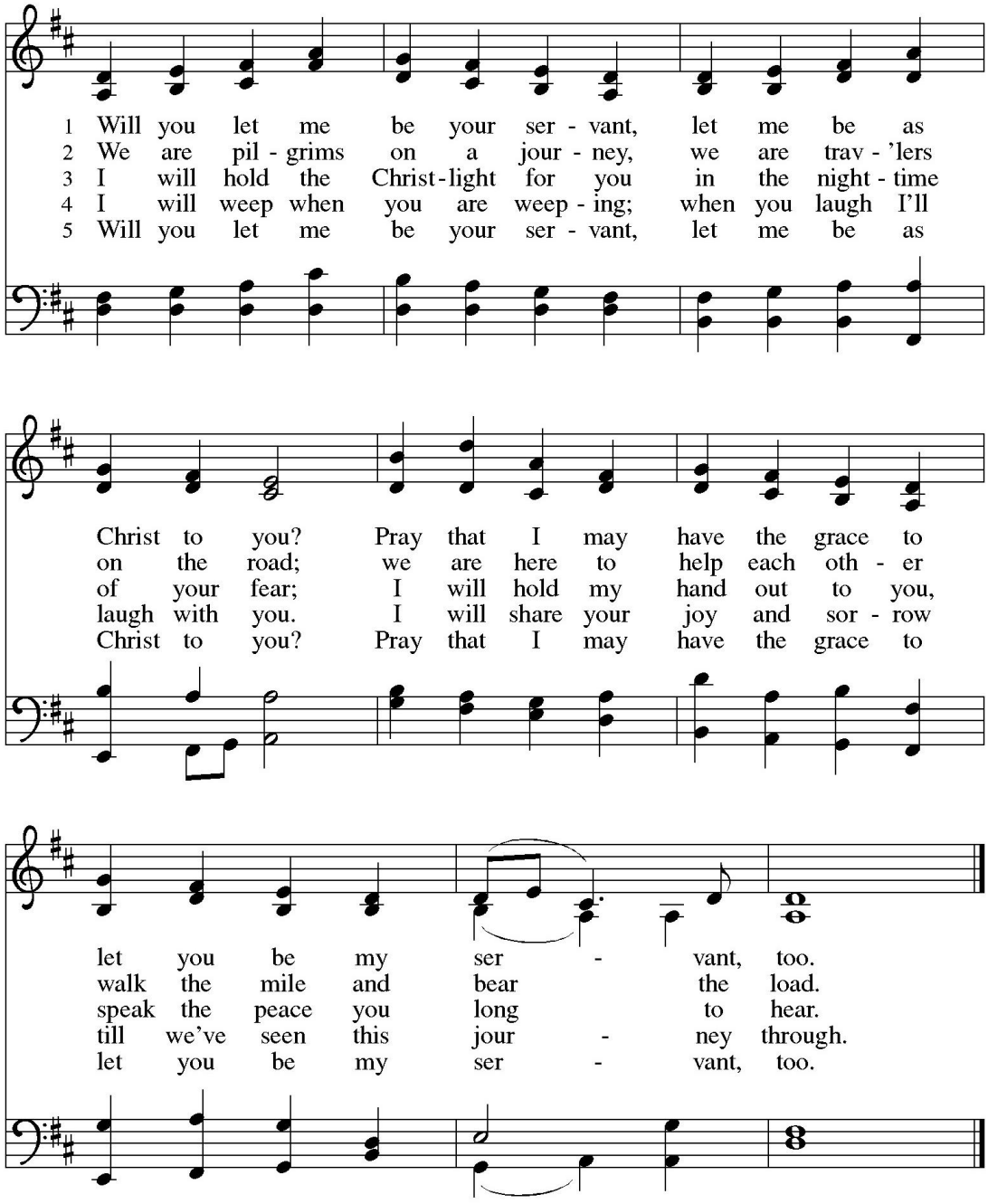
The Holy Eucharist: Rite Two

Participants in the service:

Celebrating & Preaching: The Rev. Jim Offenberger
Chalice: Carolynne Cooper
Welcome Center: Linda & Tom Simpson
Music Leader: Amber Hickman
Lector: Eva Crocker
Intercessor: Josie Wildi

The Word of God

Processional Hymn*(vs. 1-4)* "Will you let me be your servant?" Gillard, arr. Pulkingham



The people standing, the Celebrant says

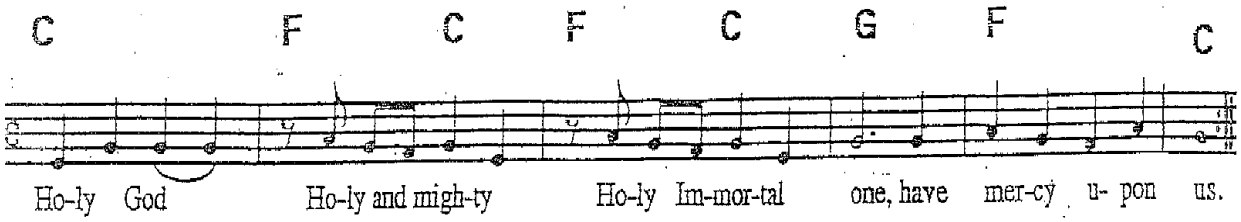
Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

Celebrant

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Trisagion *(3 times)* Peterkin



The Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Celebrant Let us pray.

The people remain standing

O God, whose blessed Son came into the world that he might destroy the works of the devil and make us children of God and heirs of eternal life: Grant that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves as he is pure; that, when he comes again with power and great glory, we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

The Lessons

A Reading from the Book of Joshua (24:1-3a, 14-25)

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many. "Now therefore revere the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God." But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good." And the people said to Joshua, "No, we will serve the Lord!" Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord, to serve him." And they said, "We are witnesses." He said, "Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel." The people said to Joshua, "The Lord our God we will serve, and him we will obey." So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem.

Reader The word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 78:1-7

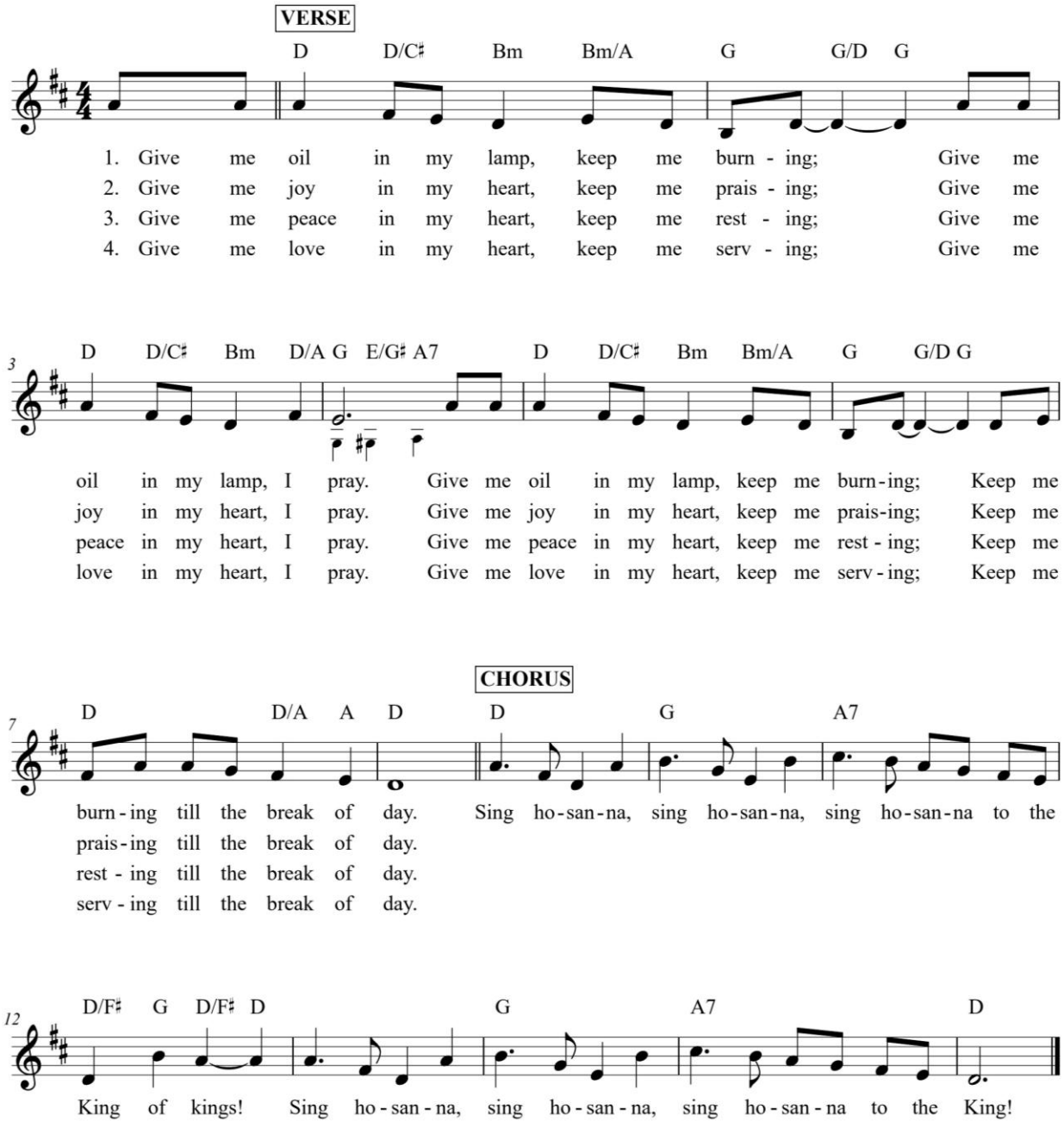
1 Hear my teaching, O my people; *
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
2 I will open my mouth in a parable; *
I will declare the mysteries of ancient times.
3 That which we have heard and known, and what our forefathers have told us, *
we will not hide from their children.
4 We will recount to generations to come the praiseworthy deeds and the power of the Lord, *
and the wonderful works he has done.
5 He gave his decrees to Jacob and established a law for Israel, *
which he commanded them to teach their children;
6 That the generations to come might know, and the children yet unborn; *
that they in their turn might tell it to their children;
7 So that they might put their trust in God, *
and not forget the deeds of God, but keep his commandments;

A Reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians (4:13-18)

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Reader The word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

The Sequence Hymn *(next page)* "Give me oil in my lamp"



Then, all standing, the Celebrant reads the Gospel, first saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew (25:1-13)

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and

those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

Reader The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Sermon The Rev. Jim Offenberger

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Please kneel
The Prayers of the People

Let us with confidence present our prayers and supplications to the throne of grace.

We pray for all those in positions of power, that they may govern with wisdom and integrity, serving the needs of their people. May your reign come; **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for the Church, the sign of your reign, that it may extend your welcome to people of every race and background. May your kingdom come; **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for Christians of every denomination, that together we may come to understand the royal priesthood you bestowed on us in baptism. May your dominion come; **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for those whose commitment to truth brings them into conflict with earthly powers, that they may have the courage to endure. May your rule come; **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for this community of faith, that attentive to your word we may always worship in spirit and in truth. We especially pray for:

Good Shepherd Parish Prayer List

Marcia Doyle – healing	Diane Cottrill – healing	Mary Gevas – healing
Ann Stevens– healing	Buck Harris – strength/healing	Peter Gevas – healing
Deb Hepburn-McKinney – healing	Kim Forrester - healing	Amanda Morris – healing
Jone Johnson – healing/strength	Gene Allander - healing	John Currey – healing
Nancy Werry – healing	Ian Israelsen – healing	Sophie Sun - healing
Paul Bostic – healing	Mona Busick - healing	

Safety for all those serving in the Armed Forces
Donovan Burns, Sterling Slusher, Peter Keiser

Those needing healing from cancer

Mirtala Smith	Alana Dailey	John Stevens	Lois Switzer
Everett Gilmore	Faith Beha	Gary Greer	Rudi Miksa
Charles Sterchak	Ellen Faymon	Ben Buskirk	Jeff Alkire
Courtney Rodriguez	Kira Mace	Buddy Lee	

May your reign come; **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We remember in your mercy all those gone before us, especially Mark Edwards, who have been well-pleasing to you from eternity. Preserve in your faith your servants on earth. May your reign come; **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Concluding Collect

Celebrant: Loving God, you have taught us that the power of the heart is greater than the power of wealth and might. Hear us as we pray for the fulfilment of your reign. We ask this through Jesus Christ our King; to him be glory and power for ever. **Amen.**

Confession

Celebrant: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Absolution

Celebrant: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

Announcements

The Holy Communion

Offertory Sentences

To crown all things there must be love, to bind all together and complete the whole. Let the peace of Christ, to which we were indeed called in one body, rule in our hearts.

Offertory Music

Doxology Hymn #380 (vs. 3) *Old 100th*

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving — Eucharistic Prayer D
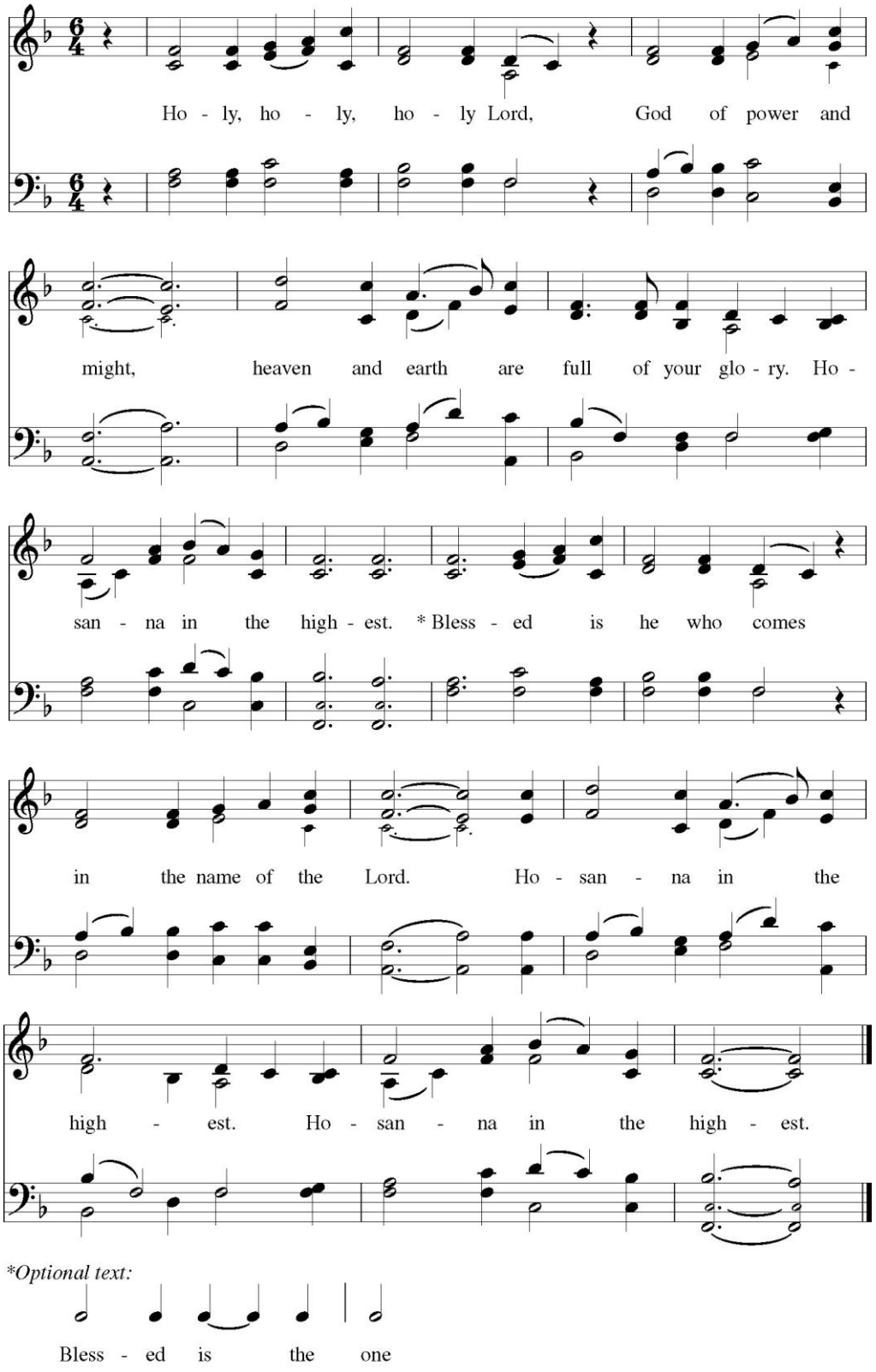
Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Celebrant Lift up your hearts.
People **We lift them to the Lord.**
Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Celebrant
It is truly right to glorify you, Father, and to give you thanks; for you alone are God, living and true, dwelling in light inaccessible from before time and for ever.

Fountain of life and source of all goodness, you made all things and fill them with your blessing; you created them to rejoice in the splendor of your radiance.

Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day; and, beholding the glory of your presence, they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them, and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we acclaim you, and glorify your Name, as we sing,

Celebrant and People
Sanctus *(next page)*



The people remain standing. Then the Celebrant continues

We acclaim you, holy Lord, glorious in power. Your mighty works reveal your wisdom and love. You formed us in your own image, giving the whole world into our care, so that, in obedience to you, our Creator, we might rule and serve all your creatures. When our disobedience took us far from you, you did

not abandon us to the power of death. In your mercy you came to our help, so that in seeking you we might find you. Again and again you called us into covenant with you, and through the prophets you taught us to hope for salvation.

Father, you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our Savior. Incarnate by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, he lived as one of us, yet without sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners, freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. To fulfill your purpose he gave himself up to death; and, rising from the grace, destroyed death, and made the whole creation new.

And, that we might live no longer for ourselves, but for him who died and rose for us, he sent the Holy Spirit, his own first gift for those who believe, to complete his work in the world, and to bring to fulfillment the sanctification of all.

When the hour had come for him to be glorified by you, his heavenly Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end; at supper with them he took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Father, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption. Recalling Christ's death and his descent among the dead, proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand, awaiting his coming in glory; and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us, this bread and this cup, we praise you and we bless you.

Celebrant and People
We praise you, we bless you,
we give thanks to you,
and we pray to you, Lord our God.

Lord, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us, and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ.

Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ, to the praise of your Name.

Remember, Lord, your one holy catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of your Christ. Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace.

And grant that we may find our inheritance with the Blessed Virgin Mary, with patriarchs, matriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs and all the saints who have found favor with you in ages past. We praise you in union with them and give you glory through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,
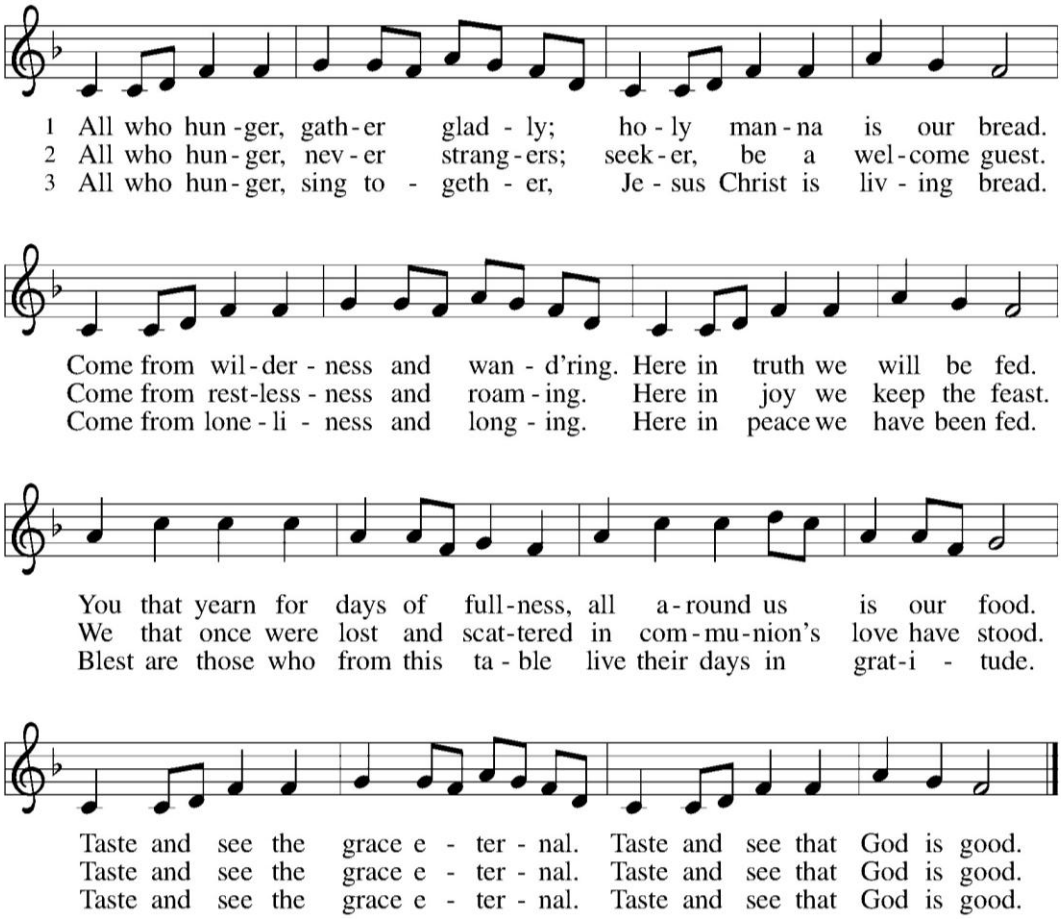
People and Celebrant

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
People **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

Fraction Anthem (vs. 1 only) "All who hunger gather gladly"



Prayer of Humble Access
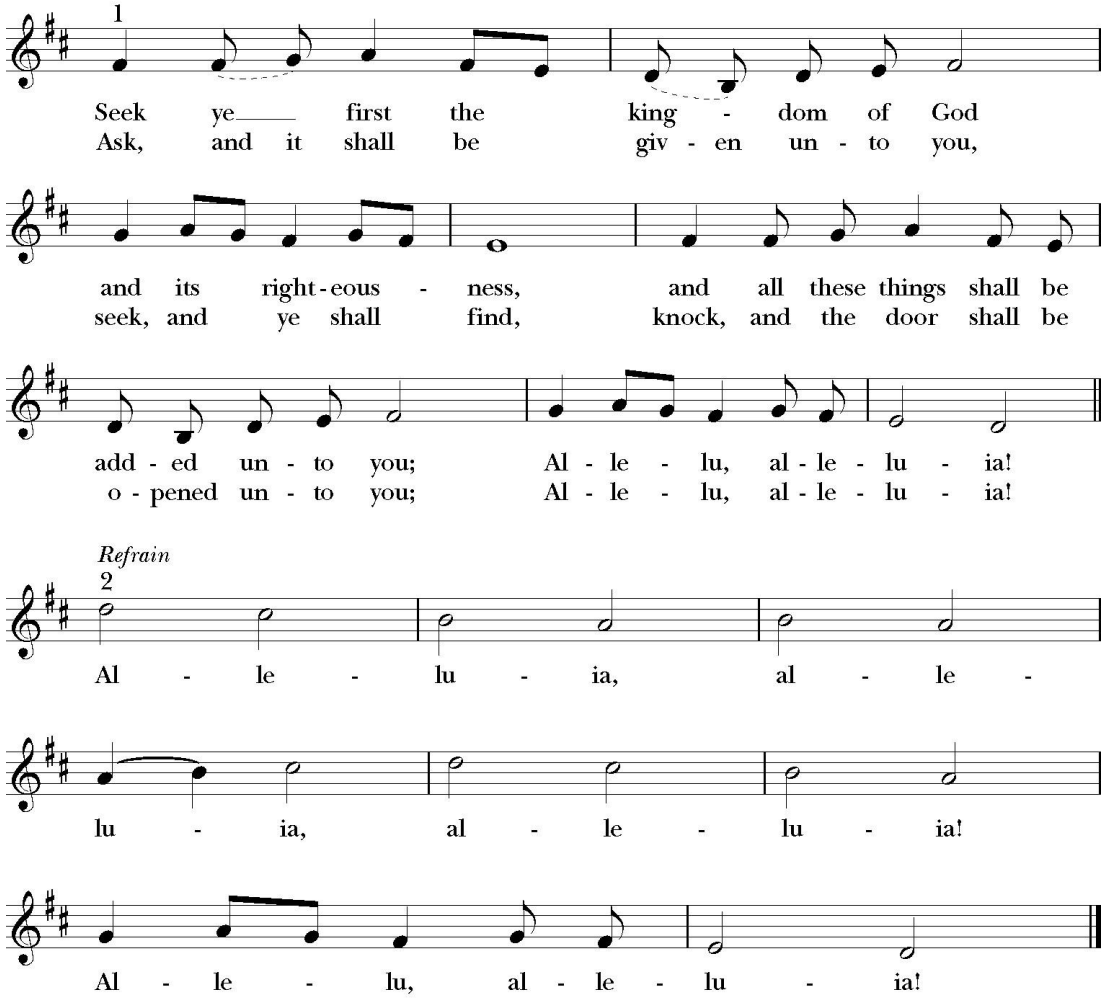
We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O Merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. **Amen.**

The Celebrant says

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

The ministers receive the Sacrament in both kinds, followed by those present.

Communion Music #711 "Seek Ye First" *Seek Ye First*



After Communion, the Celebrant says:
Let us pray.

Post Communion Prayer
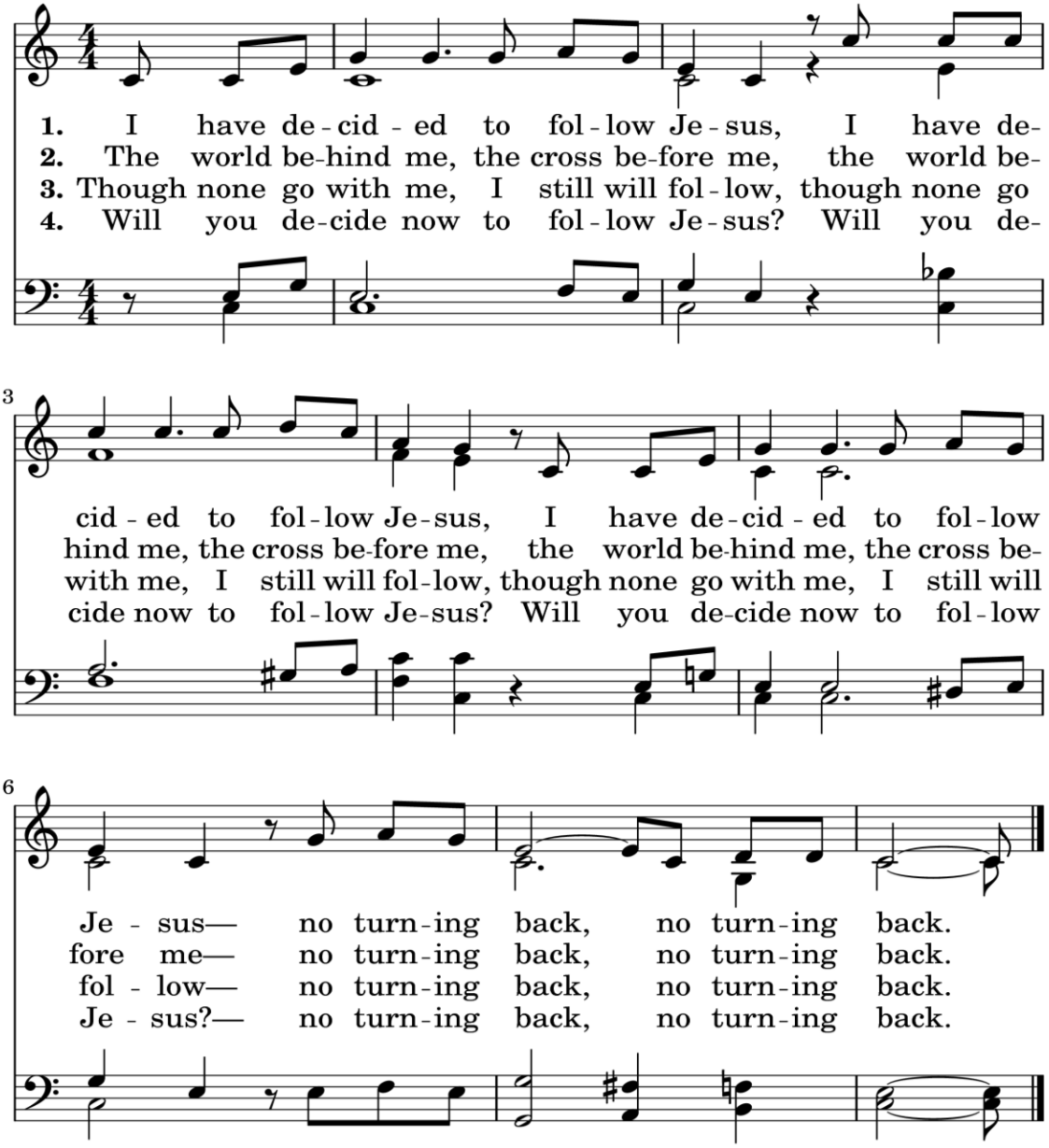
Celebrant and People
You have opened to us the Scriptures, O Christ, and you have made yourself known in the breaking of the bread. Abide with us, we pray, that, blessed by your royal presence, we may walk with you all the days of our life, and at its end behold you in the glory of the eternal Trinity, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

The Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Birthdays: Jone Johnson, Ashley Semones, Lili Smith

Closing Hymn *(pg. 15)* "I have decided to follow Jesus" *Assam*



The Dismissal

Celebrant Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

"Go Now in Peace" (sing 1 time together, first part of round high voices, second mid voices, third low voices)

Go now in peace;
go now in peace.
May the love of God surround you
everywhere, everywhere
you may go

No Postlude Today

Pastoral Letter
A sermon from The Rt. Rev. Matthew Cowden
to the Congregations of the Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia

Matthew 25:14-30, Proper 28, Year A

Dear Friends in Christ in the Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia,

Today, Episcopalians from all over our state are worshiping with our sisters and brothers at Saint Matthew's in Wheeling, as we conclude the 149th Convention of the Diocese at Oglebay Resort. Thank you for sending and for sharing your delegates and clergy. Just over two hundred of us have gathered, and our Convention has been, as always, a unique combination of the business of the Church, a family reunion, and a celebration of our life together. All of it has been held under our theme, "Thanks be to God."

In today's worship in Wheeling, we are ordaining Jacob Hall to the transitional diaconate. Please hold Jacob in your prayers. We are also grateful to Catherine Beemer, our keynote presenter, who has been with us to talk about stewardship and giving. She has been helping us to connect our sense of gratitude to our actions of giving. We give our treasure, our time, and our talents because we have an acute awareness of God's mercies in Christ Jesus, and are ever thankful. Thanks be to God. Please ask your clergy and lay leaders who attended to share the news of our Convention over coffee, or at your next meeting, or in your adult forum.

And just in case it helps to have a homily ready, here is a reflection on today's Gospel that you may also share from the pulpit today.

Know this:

Each and every time we say "Thanks be to God" we participate in a small act of noticing, in trusting, in giving our heart back to God from all that God has given us. Our heart's gratitude in saying, "Thanks be to God," is meant to lead us to an action, to an act of investing, giving, sharing our gifts with the Church.

As we hear in today's Gospel, it takes courage to move from fear to trust when it comes to investing your gifts for God; it can even feel risky to let go, to give even a little. But when we have a true sense, a true awareness of God's mercies, we may do so being truly thankful, and that little willingness on our part changes us. Our actions of gratitude have an impact. When we give of ourselves and of our treasure, yes, including when we make gifts of our money to the Church, the gratitude we experience has an impact on the Church; and also, on our physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

Take a look at today's Gospel from Matthew 25, the Parable of the Talents, an allegorical story that Jesus tells to teach his listeners about trusting God and investing even what little we feel like we have.

In English, a "talent" is a skill or a gift, so we often hear this parable as a lecture about using our abilities. But in Jesus' day a "talent" was money, and a great deal of it, many years of a laborer's wages. In this story, a man going on a journey hands over a fortune to three servants: five talents to one, two to another, one to the third. Even the servant with one talent is holding in his hands more than most of Jesus' listeners would ever see in a lifetime.

Notice first that none of it belongs to the servants. It is entrusted to them. Before the parable says a word about investing or risking, it tells us that these servants have been given something they did not earn and could not have made for themselves. That is where gratitude begins. "Thanks be to God" is not only what we say at the end of a reading. It is the truth about our whole lives. The life we have, the church we have

inherited, the buildings, the land, and the faith handed down to us by generations before us, all of it was entrusted to us by someone else.

Notice also, later in the story, that the first two servants hear exactly the same words: "Well done, good and trustworthy servant." The one who made five more and the one who made two more are praised alike. Jesus is not measuring the size of the return. He is measuring faithfulness. In West Virginia, where many of our congregations are small and our resources modest, that is good news. God does not ask of us what we do not have. God asks us to be trustworthy with what we do.

Then there is the third servant, and he is the one most of us understand best. He is not a thief. He is afraid. "I was afraid," he says, "and I went and hid your talent in the ground." He has already decided that his master is harsh, and out of that fear he chooses to do the safest thing he can think of. He buries it, and he gives back exactly what he was given… nothing lost, nothing gained.

Churches know how to bury talents. Even faithful Episcopalians know how to bury our talents, and we usually do so with good intentions. Please note: saving wisely is not a sin. But we choose to bury what we have been given when **fear**, not faith, decides what we can afford. We bury it when we count our losses and decide we can no longer be generous. We bury it when we call holding on tight as being "prudent" yet all the while ministry goes undone and neighbors fail to hear the good news that the Episcopal Church has to share here in the mountain state. Fear always says there is not enough, and the answer that fear gives, is always to hold on and hide it.

Gratitude is the answer to fear. Hear that. The answer to the fear is **Gratitude**. The two servants who put their talents to work did so because **they trusted the one who gave them**. They knew where the gift came from. Gratitude and generosity are two halves of one movement. When I remember that everything I have is a gift, I can hold it loosely and give it freely. When I forget, I begin to clutch it, as though it were mine to protect. That is why, at the end of every Eucharist, we are sent out with the words "Let us go forth in the name of Christ," and we answer, **"Thanks be to God."** We are not only saying thank you. We are being sent out to **spend** what we have been **given**, cheerfully and gratefully. Finally, listen to the reward. The faithful servants are not handed a bonus. They are given more responsibility, and an invitation: "Enter into the joy of your master."

Generosity is not a burden that God lays on us. Generosity is how we come to share in God's own JOY. Many of you know this already, from the first time you gave away something that cost you. And it feels good. Gratitude that leads to generosity, creates more gratitude.

Especially as your congregations look ahead to pledging and planning for the year to come, I invite you to ask what you are holding, who gave it to you, and what fear may be keeping you from using it. Do not bury what God has given you. Remember who gave it. Remember that it is more in your hands than you can imagine. And give, investing gratefully and joyfully, and engaging in God's gifts every time you say, "Thanks be to God."

Thanks be to God.

Gratefully yours in Christ Jesus,

Bishop Matthew Cowden

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Altar Flowers today are given to the glory of Almighty God in thanksgiving for the birthday of Denise Orem by her mother, Mary Gevas.

Stewardship Pledge – If you forgot your pledge card, please get it into the office as soon as possible so we may plan our budget for 2027. There are extra cards in the welcome center, if you don't have one.

Thanksgiving Offering – This year we are supporting Circles of the MOV. Circles helps families transition out of poverty. Read more in this week's "Shepherd's Staff" newsletter.

Rummage – If you are thinning out your collection of Christmas decorations, please get them to the Rummage Room by Dec. 1 (but earlier would be better!) The final sale of 2026 will be Dec. 4 & 5 followed by Adopted Families shopping Dec. 7-9.

Adopted Families – How to help this week:

- Pick up a toiletry bag and list of needed items, fill the bag and bring it back next week.
- Buy some adult size hats or gloves to donate
- Offer to shop for gifts for the children in 1 family (contact Linda Crocker)

Advent Formation Series – Dec. 2, 9 & 16, 6-8PM. Soup dinner provided followed by teaching on Learning to Walk in the Darkness by Barbara Brown Taylor (same author as our Lent series but different book). Followed by evening prayer with music.

Bell Tower Work – Phoenix Associates is still working on the Bell Tower repairs – the last part of our Capital Campaign. Pray that the stucco work will be done soon.

SAVE THE DATE:

Nov. 29 – Last Sunday Supper
Dec. 2 – 6-8PM Advent Formation Series
Dec. 9 – 6-8PM Advent Formation Series
Dec. 11 – 3-7PM Advent Open House @ Katie Beth Miksa's
Dec. 16 – 6-8PM Advent Formation Series

Please support our ministries →

Permission to reprint music from OneLicense A-740325 CCLI License #22171303