Church At Home
St. Timothy's Lutheran Church – Pembroke, Ontario
Pentecost 26 November 22, 2026
Christ the King Sunday

Prayer of the Day
O God of power and might, your Son shows us the way of service, and in him we inherit the riches of your grace. Give us the wisdom to know what is right and the strength to serve the world you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46
"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Homily

I greet you in the name of Jesus, our risen Saviour. Amen.

Professor Paul Bosch, former Dean of Keffer Memorial Chapel (Waterloo Lutheran Seminary) once read this particular passage during a chapel service. He finished the reading,

"And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

and didn't say the words: "The Gospel of the Lord" but paused and said, "Have a nice day!"

We have this beautiful picture of Jesus in our minds: children around his feet, sitting on a grassy hillside telling others of the presence of the kingdom of God, coming to the cry of two sisters and raising a good friend from the dead.

Yet, here in Matthew, sits King Jesus in final judgment; and whose interests does he represent? "All the nations will be gathered before the Son of Man," Jesus says. "And he will separate the people like a shepherd separates sheep from the goats." To the ones on his right hand, the sheep, the King will say, "Come, you who are blessed of my Father, for I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me a drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you gave me clothing. Whatever you did to the least of these you did to me." Then to those on his left, the goats, he will deliver to eternal punishment, saying, "I was hungry and you gave me no food or drink nor did you welcome or visit me. Whatever you did not do for the least of these, you did not do to me."

Then comes the judgement piece, “And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” Here we can all sigh!

I can’t but help recall the climate of the world during Jesus’ day. I am not referring to the temperature or the weather or not if it rained days on end, I am speaking about the social economic climate. Matthew, one has to believe, is describing the situation of his community – hungry, thirsty, lonely, imprisoned and promising that judgment of the nation will turn on how those in power respond to the needs of the community. This promise most likely would have been a powerful, comforting, and encouraging to those early Christians beleaguered by oppression and persecution.

If we can, for a moment, leave the judgement piece to God, we will find that there is a surprise in the parable. The surprise of both groups actually. Think about these words:

“when did we” and “when didn’t we”.

Neither group denies its behavior, did you notice this. One group did indeed feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, visit the imprisoned and so on. Yet, they didn’t think much of it. And the other group.....well they didn’t do these things and they too didn’t think much of it either. So, they are not surprised by the report from Jesus of their actions. Rather they are surprised that the Son of Man was present. Jesus was present as he uses the first-person singular; that is I.

And there is something else that is going on here and that is; the promise that God regularly shows up in those places and persons we least expect God to be. Both groups, remember, gave next to no thought to their treatment of “the least of these” and are surprised to discover that their actions (or lack of action) matter simply because it never crossed their mind that God was present. They gave next to no thought to their behavior or disposition toward “the least

of these" because those persons just did not matter. And so along these lines, another way to think about "the least of these" is "those of no account," "those who do not matter," "those to whom we give little thought," perhaps even "those whom we scorn."

One of the central views of Luther's theology – often named "a theology of the cross" – is that God regularly, even relentlessly, shows up just where we least expect God to be. Not in Jerusalem or Rome, but in backwater Bethlehem. Not in armor but in the vulnerable flesh of a babe. Not in conquest but in crucifixion. Not in power but in weakness. Again and again, God in Jesus shows up where we least expect God to be to surprise us, overturn our expectations and judgments, all in order to invite us to give up our attempts to redeem ourselves.

Which means that the surprising element of this week's Gospel doesn't only apply to first-century Christians who felt like the world was against them. It may just serve to remind any and all Christians that God regularly shows up in those to whom we give little thought, those whom we tend to scorn, those who seem beyond our attention or good judgment. There is no doubt that this passage invites us to recognize the presence of God in the need of those around us.

My friends in Christ. Where do you see Jesus: in the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, the imprisoned, the poor, the distraught, the homeless and the underprivileged?

You see when it comes down to it; we are all poor to something whether it's feeling loved or having confidence. We are all prisoners to something – some things we are too embarrassed to share. We are all hungry for the purpose of true lives. The truth is we meet the God we know in Jesus the moment any relationship begins because God is with us. God is there! It may not be where we expect God to be or to show up, but – **surprise** – it is just where we need God to be.

Amen.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit let us pray as Jesus taught us……..

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.

Benediction
The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you,
The Lord look upon you with favour and give you (+) peace. Amen.

Dismissal
Go out in Joy. Encourage one another.
Thanks be to God.

STTLC Communique

In Our Prayers Today..... Casey Wierzbicki, Joanna Spencer, Marie Lenser, Mike Harrington, Lila Martinat, Irlavere Tubbe, Tracy Schori and Christa Reitlingshoefer.

NOTICE OF MEETING

Fall Congregational Business Meeting
Sunday, November 22nd, 2026
Jubilee Hall
Following the Morning Service

Purpose of the Meeting:

- Update from Council Chairperson
- Treasurer's Report
- Elect members to Church Council vacancies and other positions
- Other Business
  - Bequest Update
  - Call Update

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