

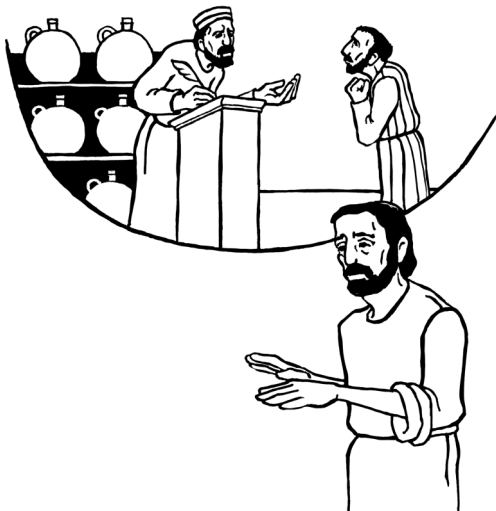
BETHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

You have a place here!

*"Joyfully we profess our faith through God's unconditional love.
Here and now God dwells in all of our lives,
bears our sins on the cross, and forgives us all."*

15TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 9:00 am Sunday, September 21, 2025

Pastor David Johnson



TODAY'S REFLECTION

As we are invited today to consider what it means to be managers (rather than owners) of all that we have, it is crucial to recognize that we are bought with a price. "Christ Jesus, himself human, . . . gave himself a ransom for all." Apart from the generosity of God we have nothing—we are nothing. By God's gracious favor we have everything we need.

All baptized and confessing believers are welcome to receive Holy Communion.

THE GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

*We hope that your worship experience is spiritually fulfilling
and your day begins with our Lord's gifts of peace and joy*

▼ **Prelude Reflections for Meditation**

▼ **Welcome Greeting—Prayers and Praises**

▲ **Opening Hymn**

"Humble Thyself/Awesome God", page 9

▲ **Confession & Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
our maker, our helper, and our keeper.

Amen.

Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin
in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for Reflection

Merciful and loving God,
we are your stiff-necked people.
We trample on the needy.
We grumble about your grace to others.
We turn away from the poor.
Have mercy on us and forgive our sins.
Rejoice over us as ones who were lost
and have been found.

Amen.

Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful.
Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

You who were lost have been found.

In the name of † Jesus, your sins are forgiven!

Amen.

▲ **Prayer of the Day**

God among us,

we gather in the name of your Son to learn love for one another.

**Keep our feet from evil paths. Turn our minds to your wisdom and
our hearts to the grace revealed in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.**

THE WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song

▼ **God's Word from the Scriptures (NRSV)**

The First Reading is from Amos 8:4-7

Hear this, you who trample on the needy, and bring to ruin the poor of the land, saying, "When will the new moon be over so that we may sell grain, and the Sabbath, so that we may offer wheat for sale? We will make the ephah smaller and the shekel heavier and practice deceit with false balances, buying the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals and selling the sweepings of the wheat." The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob: Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

▼ **God's Word from the Psalms (NRSV)**

Psalms 113

Praise the Lord! Praise, O servants of the Lord; praise the name of the Lord. Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time on and forevermore. From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the Lord is to be praised. The Lord is high above all nations and his glory above the heavens. Who is like the Lord our God, who is seated on high, who looks far down on the heavens and the earth? He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes, with the princes of his people. He gives the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children. Praise the Lord!

▼ **God's Word from the Scriptures (NRSV)**

The Second Reading is from 1 Timothy 2:1-7

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. This is right and acceptable before God our Savior, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself a ransom for all —this was attested at the right time. For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth; I am not lying), a teacher of the gentiles in faith and truth.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

▲ **God's Word from the Gospel (NRSV)**

The Holy Gospel according to Luke 16:1-13

Glory to you, O Lord.

Then Jesus said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. So he summoned him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.' Then the manager said to himself, 'What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.' So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.' Then he asked another, 'And how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.' And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone they may welcome you into the eternal homes. "Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. If, then, you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

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

▼ **Sermon—God's Word Applied to Life**

▼ **Hymn of the Day**

"Lord Whose Love In Humble Service", page 10

▲ **The Apostles' Creed**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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 the Church**

Let us pray in the name of Jesus to our heavenly Father for the Church, the world, and one another.

A brief silence

Dear Father, thank you for the prophets and evangelists who speak your holy Word, even when it makes us squirm. Thank you for being patient with us. Thank you for lifting us up when we fall away from your commands. Thank you for restoring us, when we have repented, to positions of trust and to the task of proclaiming the Gospel. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bless your Church throughout the world. Fill it with faithful teachers and preachers of your Word. Kindle its worship to be a living flame of praise to you. Make it wise as serpents and innocent as doves as it bears witness to Jesus. Give it grace to lavish the treasures of your Kingdom on all who need them. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord, we may smile or shudder to hear the parable of the dishonest servant – especially at a time of year when stewardship is often lifted up! And we remember that today is the feast of St. Matthew, himself a former tax collector! Bless this congregation in its stewardship of time, talents, treasures, and testimony. Help us to be honest, eager, and ingenious as we use whatever has been entrusted to us, for the sake of your Kingdom, and for the benefit of our neighbor. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Give faithfulness and wisdom to theologians, evangelists, missionaries, and seminarians. Raise up new pastors, deacons, and discipleship guides, for the need is great. And give courage and grace to your suffering and persecuted church throughout the world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Grant integrity and common sense to our earthly leaders. Make them honest stewards of the power and authority granted to them, for they must give an account of their stewardship to you, their Master and King. Be the shield and defender of first responders and those in the military. Use their labors to accomplish your will in places of chaos and violence. Help us all to have a heart for the poor, and the will to assist them effectively and graciously. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bless volunteers and workers, not only in this church, but throughout the world, who seek to serve you and neighbor. Multiply their gifts and talents, so that through their labors, many people receive mercy, comfort, and a clear sign of your providential care. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You raise the poor from the dust and care for all who cry out to you. Therefore with confidence and hope, we remember before you all who are afflicted in body, mind, or spirit, *especially we lift before you those we name before you now (either in silence or out loud).* Bring them out of darkness into your glorious light; and restore them to fellowship with all who love them. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious Father, receive into your Kingdom all the faithful departed, especially those dearest to us. Keep us steadfast in faith, diligent in service, truthful in word, and honest in deed. Bind us together in cords of love and compassion for one another. Bring us, with all whom you have redeemed, into the fullness of your presence. Give us hearts, minds, and voices, forever to adore and glorify you, in the blessed communion you share with your Son and the Holy Spirit. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the power of the Holy Spirit, we entrust our prayers and petitions into your hands, gracious Father, for the sake of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

▲ **Sharing of the Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

Greet each other with a sign of Christ's peace.

THE MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

▼ **Offering and Presentation of the Gifts**

July—September Mission Designation ~~ Good Samaritan Fund/Feeding America

▼ **Offering Prayer**

Lord of the harvest,

we return to you a portion of what you have given to us.

**Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches,
but on you, who richly provides for us.**

**Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are suffering and in need,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

▼ **The Great Thanksgiving and Words of Institution**

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, 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.

▼ **The 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.**

▼ **Invitation and Distribution of Communion**

Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them.

Come to this meal of mercy.

Let Us Break Bread Together



1 Let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees;
 2 Let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees;
 3 Let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees;



let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees.
 let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees.
 let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees.



When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing



sun, O Lord, have mer - cy on me.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: BREAL BREAD TOGETHER, African American spiritual

▼ **Post Communion Blessing**

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in His grace until He comes again.
In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

▼ **Post Communion Prayer**

O God,
**through this meal you have strengthened us
and appointed us to be your servants.
Send us to do good and to share our possessions
with all in need.
We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen.**

THE SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

▼ **Closing Hymn**

"Lord, You Give The Great Commission", page 11

▼ **Announcements**

Anyone is welcome to make announcements at this time.

▲ **Blessing and Dismissal**

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.
In the name of the Father and the † Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Go in peace. Do not lose heart.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

Humble Thyself In The Sight Of The Lord – Awesome God Medley 2x

Hum-ble thy-self in the sight of the Lord, Hum-ble thy-self in the sight of the

Lord; And He shall lift you

up high-er and high-er, and He shall lift you up.

Our God is an awe-some God, He —

reigns from — heav-en a - bove; With — wis - dom, — pow'r and love— our

God is an awe - some God. Our — God is an awe - some God, He —

reigns from — heav-en a - bove; With — wis - dom, — pow'r and love— our

God is an awe-some God!

Humble Thyself In The Sight Of The Lord

Awesome God

Words and Music by
Bob Hudson

CCLI Song # 26564

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Words and Music by
Rich Mullins

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Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service



1 Lord, whose love in hum-ble ser-vice bore the weight of hu-man need,
 2 Still your chil-dren wan-der home-less; still the hun-gry cry for bread;
 3 As we wor-ship, grant us vi-sion, till your love's re-veal-ing light
 4 Called by wor-ship to your ser-vice, forth in your dear name we go,



who up-on the cross, for-sak-en, worked your mer-cy's per-fect deed:
 still the cap-tives long for free-dom; still in grief we mourn our dead.
 in its height and depth and great-ness dawns up-on our quick-ened sight,
 to the child, the youth, the a-ged, love in liv-ing deeds to show;



we, your ser-vants, bring the wor-ship not of voice a-lone, but heart;
 As you, Lord, in deep com-pas-sion healed the sick and freed the soul,
 mak-ing known the needs and bur-dens your com-pas-sion bids us bear,
 hope and health, good-will and com-fort, coun-sel, aid, and peace we give,



con-se-crat-ing to your pur-pose ev-'ry gift which you im-part.
 by your Spir-it send your pow-er to our world to make it whole.
 stir-ring us to ar-dent ser-vice, your a-bun-dant life to share.
 that your ser-vants, Lord, in free-dom may your mer-cy know and live.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–1984

Music: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844

Text © Oxford University Press

Lord, You Give the Great Commission



1 Lord, you give the great com - mis-sion: "Heal the sick and
 2 Lord, you call us to your ser - vice: "In my name bap -
 3 Lord, you make the com - mon ho - ly: "This my bod - y,
 4 Lord, you show us love's true mea-sure: "Fa - ther, what they
 5 Lord, you bless with words as - sur - ing: "I am with you



preach the word." Lest the church ne - glect its mis - sion,
 tize and teach." That the world may trust your prom - ise,
 this my blood." Let us all, for earth's true glo - ry,
 do, for - give." Yet we hoard as pri - vate trea - sure
 to the end." Faith and hope and love re - stor - ing,



and the gos - pel go un - heard, help us wit - ness
 life a - bun - dant meant for each, give us all new
 dai - ly lift life heav - en - ward, ask - ing that the
 all that you so free - ly give. May your care and
 may we serve as you in - tend and, a - mid the



to your pur - pose with re - newed in - teg - ri - ty:
 fer - vor, draw us clos - er in com - mu - ni - ty:
 world a - round us share your chil - dren's lib - er - ty:
 mer - cy lead us to a just so - ci - e - ty:
 cares that claim us, hold in mind e - ter - ni - ty:

Refrain



With the Spir - it's gifts em - pow'r us for the work of min - is - try.

Text: Jeffery Rowthorn, b. 1934

Music: ABBOT'S LEIGH, Cyril V. Taylor, 1907–1991

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MORE SPECIAL WAYS TO GIVE THROUGH YOUR TIME AND TALENTS

Sunday Worship Lectors and Communion Assistants are needed

Service Assistant to advance projected bulletin slides

Maintenance chores around the facility

Christian Education Volunteers

BETHANY WEEKLY EVENTS CALENDAR

Sunday	9:00 am Worship, in the Great Room and Facebook Live-Stream/Video
Tuesday	9:00 am Community Coffee in Great Room 9:00 am Cover Girls in Classroom
Wednesday	10:00 am Women's Bible Study via ZOOM
Thursday	7:00 am Men's Breakfast and Bible Study in Great Room 10:00 am Bible Study in Conference Room

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