

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

C: **And also with you.**

God Spottings

Canticle of Praise

“Glory Be to God” (vs. 1&3)

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Glory be to God in heaven; peace, goodwill to all the earth.
Mighty God of all creation, Father of surpassing worth;
We exalt you, we adore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
Saints and angels bow before you; here on earth our songs we raise.

Holy One we now acclaim you; Lord alone, to you we call;
Holy One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:
Jesus Christ, with God the Spirit, in the Father’s splendor bright.
For the peace that we inherit, glory be to God on high!

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray:

C: **O God, overflowing with mercy and compassion, you lead back to yourself all those who go astray. Preserve your people in your loving care, that we may reject whatever is contrary to you and may follow all things that sustain our life in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen**

Children’s Message

WORD

First Reading:

Exodus 32:7-14

While Moses is on Mount Sinai, the people grow restless and make a golden calf to worship. Today’s reading shows Moses as the mediator between an angry God and a sinful people. Moses reminds God that the Israelites are God’s own people, and boldly asks for mercy for them.

⁷ The Lord said to Moses, “Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; ⁸ they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it and said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’ ” ⁹ The Lord said to Moses, “I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. ¹⁰ Now let me alone so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, and of you I will make a great nation.”

¹¹ But Moses implored the Lord his God and said, “O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? ¹² Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he

brought them out to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. ¹³ Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, 'I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.' ” ¹⁴ And the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God!

Special Music “I’ll Walk with God” (Brotsky & Webster) Kathleen Cuvelier, piano; Terri Reid, bells

Second Reading:

1 Timothy 1:12-17

The letters to Timothy and Titus are called the pastoral epistles because they contain advice especially intended for leaders in the church. Here the mercy shown to Paul, who once persecuted the church, is cited as evidence that even the most unworthy may become witnesses to the grace of God.

¹² I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he considered me faithful and appointed me to his service, ¹³ even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, ¹⁴ and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. ¹⁶ But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience as an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. ¹⁷ To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation

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*Alleluia! Lord and Savior: open now your saving word.
Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred.
Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.*

P: The holy gospel according to

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel:

Luke 15:1-10

¹ Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and

eats with them.”

³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep.’ ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

⁸ “Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹ And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ ¹⁰ Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Message

“Lost ~ Found ~ Joy”

Pastor Tricia Lowe

Let us pray: Loving Father, Mother, creator of all things, thank you for seeking us when we are lost, and celebrating when we are found. Help us to know when we are lost so that we might turn our hearts back to you. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.

Jesus could really shake things up at a fine religious gathering. Three times in Luke's Gospel, Pharisees invite Jesus to their homes; and every time the gathering takes an unpleasant and unexpected turn. Once, Jesus skips the ritual washing before the meal. Instead of apologizing for the lapse, Jesus condemns them for their own impurity. At another dinner hosted by a Pharisee, Jesus scolds his host for judging a woman who wipes and kisses his feet. Well, the nerve of this small town Nazarene dude--invited by one of the elite to a dinner party, only to insult him in his own house! And now, at the home of a prominent Pharisee, Jesus attracts tax collectors and other sinners. These less than desirable characters are infiltrating the suburbs and, once again, the party is going south. And things get worse when they see Jesus welcoming and dining with the wrong folks.

Hearing the indignant sputtering of the Pharisees, Jesus responds not with condemnation or scolding, but with stories. He tells a threesome of parables, all of them with the same plot. A character is lost, that character is found and, to celebrate the finding, a party!

Now these are good stories--three back-to-back tales that remind us how God's ability to find us is greater than our talent for getting lost.

But based on popularity, the first two that we hear today, do not grab our attention the way that the final story does. Compared to the Prodigal Son, the stories of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin don't have a lot of detail.

They lack the drama and the conflict that make the Prodigal Son parable so appealing. These first two parables seem like a teaser, a mere movie trailer to the climactic scene of the lost son's return home. Maybe the most obvious reason that people connect with the final story best is that the subject of lost-ness is a person. Why does Jesus even bother with stories whose lost characters are a sheep and a coin? Why not launch straight into a story about a person?

Perhaps he begins with these kinds of characters because Jesus' listeners see the sinners with whom Jesus dines as less than human. I think we are often guilty of this, too. Maybe Jesus is stepping up to that high and holy pillar from which the "righteous" Pharisees gaze down on these lowlifes who are lowering the tone of the party. If that's the case, then why not use a sheep or a coin as metaphors for these second-rate souls?

Now maybe we should cut these Pharisees a little slack. It would not be out of the question for them to connect with the sheep story. After all, the other character in the story *is* a person. And the man in that parable is at least somewhat well off. He is not a lowly shepherd, but the owner of the sheep. And according to the story, he owns 100 of them and maybe more. One sheep gets separated from the flock, and the sheep owner leaves the 99 to go find the lost one.

I wonder what a Pharisee might be thinking to himself as he listens to this story? "Well, of course he goes back to find the sheep! That's how he makes a living. We know that sheep are not gold or land, but they do cost money. And certainly this wealthy businessman had hired help to watch the other 99 in the open field."

"Okay, Good for him," thinks the Pharisee, "good for him being persistent and diligent enough to hunt down that lost sheep. You know, I could see my friends and me making a stop by this man's celebration party. I wonder if they have a clue about what Jesus means when he finishes the story by saying that there will be more rejoicing in heaven over a repentant sinner than over 99 righteous persons who don't need to repent."

I wonder if we get it.

Jesus moves on to the second story about a coin. Here again, the other character is a person. But this parable had to be a bit more difficult for the Pharisees to connect with. Of the three parties at the end of each parable, this would be the one least likely for these holy men to attend. The person in this story is a poor woman. She is a lowly village peasant, living in a dark hovel (because she needs a lamp to search). The picture is of

someone of lower class than the sheep owner. Even the coin that she loses speaks to her being in a lower place. The subject of lost-ness is not a living, breathing creature but rather a thing, an inanimate object.

We might guess that the coin was a part of the family savings but, if so, it wasn't very much. The equivalent of ten day's wages at best. When compared to a sheep and a son, the coin is pretty trivial. But it is of great value to this woman, and she searches carefully until she finds it. And to celebrate her finding it, she invites her friends to come and rejoice with her.

But would Pharisees go to this party? Not likely. The soiree is hosted by a woman. We do not know whether she's married. She might be alone for some disgraceful reason. She might be a single mom. If nothing else, since she is poor, in 1st century Israel she would be thought to be cursed, she must have done something to incur God's disfavor. Go to her party? Not likely. Better to stay away from that one. Shouldn't be seen in her presence with her people and taint our social standing.

I wonder if they hear Jesus say that even angels rejoice with her. Do we hear that the angels are rejoicing with her?

I think this passage is about "finding" and about "joy." Look how many references there are to joy or "rejoice" - at least 5. The truth is, everybody's "lost" at some point - and God takes joy in restoration, reconciliation, and new beginnings. In God's eyes, we are all priceless treasure - so that God even does foolish, wasteful things to bring us back.

We in the church refuse to sink to God's level of foolishness to help retrieve the lost. That says something about our view of those "outside" the fold. If we aren't seeking the lost and welcoming the wandering then we are missing out on the rejoicing, the- JOY, JOY, JOY. If finding and reconciling can do that, maybe we should try it. Not only will heaven rejoice - maybe we will too.

A few years back at the while attending the Festival of Homiletics, I heard Jeremiah Wright preach on this text. I remember him saying that sheep can only see about six feet in front of them. So how did the sheep get so lost? Six feet at a time. The sheep did not mean to wander that far off, but a little here, a little there, and when you can only see six feet, you look back and suddenly it's not all that clear anymore. I know what it feels like to get lost six feet at a time. I suspect that you do, too.

I know what it means to be lost; emotionally, spiritually, and physically. We have been claimed as God's children in our baptism and God seeks for us when we stray. That's pretty good news and knowing that the heavens rejoice when we are found, is icing on the cake. Let the party begin. Amen!

Hymn of the Day

ELW 338

“Beneath the Cross of Jesus” (all verses)

Beneath the cross of Jesus I long to take my stand;
the shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land,
a home within a wilderness, a rest upon the way.
from the burning of the noontide heat and burdens of the day.

Upon the cross of Jesus, my eye at times can see
the very dying form of one who suffered there for me.
And from my contrite heart, with tears, two wonders I confess:
The wonder of his glorious love and my unworthiness.

I take, O cross, your shadow for my abiding place,
I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of his face;
content to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss,
my sinful self my only shame, my glory all, the cross.

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 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

L: Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

L: Merciful God, pour out your grace upon your church. Forgive us for the times when we have been unfaithful, and renew our commitment to your gospel of love. Empower us to live as a community of mercy. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

L: Merciful God, we ask forgiveness for the ways we have neglected and harmed this earth and its creatures. Confirm our commitment to care for all you have made, and grant us wisdom and strength to take action toward restoring your creation to its fullness. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

L: Merciful God, govern all who hold positions of power and authority. Instruct them to make just decisions that serve the common good. Make them instruments of your mercy in the world, working to heal divisions, promote peace, and protect all people from violence and starvation. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

L: Merciful God, we lift up all who suffer. Bring healing, comfort, and peace to those who are sick, grieving, anxious, in recovery or in pain. Give us compassionate hearts to accompany those who are hurting and courage to work for justice and mercy. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

L: Merciful God, bind us together as a community of forgiveness and love. Supply us with humility to seek forgiveness when we have wronged one another and generosity to extend mercy when we have been wronged. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

L: Please take this time to offer any other intercessions, either aloud or in your heart.

L: Merciful God, we remember in love those who have departed this life. Console those who mourn, and give them the hope of resurrection. We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend. **C: Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace (*Remember to ask for consent*)

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Offering

Offertory “*We Are An Offering*” (verse 1) **ELW 692**

We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering. Lord, use our voices, Lord, use our hands, Lord, use our lives, they are yours: we are an offering. All that we have, all that we are, all that we hope to be, we give to you, we give to you.
We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you:
we are an offering, we are an offering.

Offering Prayer

P: 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. **C: Amen.**

MEAL

The Great Thanksgiving (spoken) page 206

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also, with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Preface

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy “*sing*” page 207

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow’r and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest.
Hosanna in the highest.

Words of Institution

P: We praise you, all-holy God, our maker, our keeper, the breath that gives us life, and loves us beyond all imagining. ... And so we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

C: Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again

We pray for your Holy Spirit, your breath, your fire, your wisdom. We come to this table invited by Jesus, who offers healing and wholeness. Nourish us with the body and blood

of Christ, inspire your people for service, and renew the world with your mercy, justice, and peace. We praise you, all-holy God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, today, tomorrow, and forever. **C: Amen**

P: Gathered together by the Spirit we pray the words that Jesus taught us.

C: 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

P: Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. Come to this meal of mercy.

Lamb of God “sing” page 208

Lamb of God, you bear the sins of all the world away;
you suffered death our lives to save: have mercy now, we pray.

Lamb of God, you bear the sins of all the world away;
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mercy now, we pray.

Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;
eternal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

Communion Hymn *“Oh, Praise the Gracious Power”* (all verses) **ELW 651**

Oh, praise the gracious power that tumbles walls of fear
and gathers in one house of faith all strangers far and near:
We praise you, Christ! Your cross has made us one!

Oh, praise persistent truth that opens fisted minds
and eases from their anxious clutch the prejudice that blinds:
We praise you, Christ! Your cross has made us one!

Oh, praise inclusive love, encircling every race,
oblivious to gender, wealth, to social rank or place:
We praise you, Christ! Your cross has made us one!

Oh, praise the word of faith that claims us as God’s own,
a living temple built on Christ, our rock and cornerstone:
We praise you, Christ! Your cross has made us one!

Oh, praise the tide of grace that laps at every shore
with visions of a world at peace, no longer bled by war:
We praise you, Christ! Your cross has made us one!

Oh, praise the power, the truth, the love, the word, the tide.
yet more than these, oh, praise their source, praise Christ the crucified:
We praise you, Christ! Your cross has made us one!

Oh, praise the living Christ with faith's bright songful voice!
Announce the gospel to the world and with these words rejoice:
We praise you, Christ! Your cross has made us one!

Communion Blessing

Prayer after Communion

P: 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. **C: Amen.**

SENDING

Announcements

Council Update ~

Blessing

P: The God of righteousness, who gives justice to the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry, who sets the prisoners free, ✠ bless you now and forever. **C: Amen.**

Sending *"When I Survey the Wonderful Cross"* (vs. 1 & 4) **ELW 803**

When I survey the wondrous cross on which the
prince of glory died, my richest gain I
count but loss and pour contempt on all my pride.

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a
present far too small; love so amazing,
so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Do not lose heart.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude *"My Faith Looks Up to Thee"* (Lowell Masdon) Kathleen Cuvelier, piano

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**Mary will be on vacation until September 16.**  
*The Church Office will be staffed on weekdays from 9am to 1pm.*

**NAME TAGS** – please wear your name tags so that our guests and new members can put a face with a name.

**MISSION OUTREACH** for the month of September is Agape House of Prescott. Agape House provides long-term transitional housing for families who are without a residence. We actively seek to keep the families together while helping facilitate additional support services in order to equip the families for an independent and self-sustained future. Mentors are assigned to each family to assist with budgeting, life skills, and career coaching.

**NEXT INTERFAITH MEAL** is September 12. If you would like to help, please give the church office a call. Food costs are continuing to go up, if you have a Thrivent Action Card you would like to donate, it would be very much appreciated. Each member is allocated two \$250.00 cards per year. We are now looking for cards for the rest of the 2025 year.

**September is God's work. Our hands. Month!** Last year we were so successful collecting needed items for *A Safe Place*, that the Outreach Team has decided to do it again! *A Safe Place* is a homeless drop-in center right here in Prescott Valley. Open Tuesday, Wednesday and Fridays from 10am – 2pm, the center is open to anyone experiencing homelessness in Prescott Valley. It is a place of respite from the weather, a place to get refreshed with a shower or change of clothes, enjoy a light snack, read a book, study and fellowship with others, and to access a community advocate and get assistance locating and accessing helpful resources. [Click here for a list of items we will be collecting for the center.](#)

**WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY** meets each Tuesday at 10:00 am on zoom or in person. They are reading "The Gift of Hard Things" by Mark Yonconnelli, contact Pr. Tricia for more information.

**WEDNESDAY 9:45 AM BIBLE STUDY** meets in the Fellowship Hall and is led by Larry Gordon and retired Pastor Hal Vogelaar.

**THURSDAY 7:00 PM BIBLE STUDY** meets at Rebholz's. Come at 6:30 for dessert.

**CHINO VALLEY BIBLE STUDY** – Bible Study is on hiatus until fall.

**GRIEF GROUP** meets on the second and fourth Thursday of each month at 1:00 pm. Next meeting is September 25.

**KITCHEN COUNTERS** – Granite Innovations have asked us to move the kitchen counter renovation to November due to several large projects that are taking longer than anticipated.

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