

## Order of Worship for October 12, 2025

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

### Opening Hymn: “Praise the Almighty” - Hymn #797

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

### Confession

#### Old Testament Lesson - Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

R: [Moses said] And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you. You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you. ... Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?

“Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children—

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

#### Confessing Our Sins and Receiving God’s Forgiveness (Based on Deuteronomy 4)

P: Lord God, You call on us to obey the statutes and rules that You teach us as we prepare each day to go into the “promised land” of living as Your people.

C: Yet we find ourselves adding to what You have given to us, making Your commands seem harsh and arbitrary, unfair and with our love, so that we can blame You when things go wrong in our lives.

P: We forget what You have placed before our eyes, the precious salvation You have given to us in Jesus, living our lives as if Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection had no connection to our lives. We neglect the gifts You have given us.

C: So we not only break Your rules, we live in a way so that other cannot see how near You are to us as Your people and how righteousness are Your laws.

P: We fail to share Your ways with our children,

C: Or with our children’s children. Forgive us, Lord.

P: Christ Jesus took on Himself the way that we should have lived and live it perfectly for us. He died on the cross with all our failure to be God’s people. Because of all He did I

therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen**

## **Service of the Word**

### **Entrance Psalm: (Psalm 24:1-6)**

P: The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof,

**C: the world and those who dwell therein,**

P: for He has founded it upon the seas

**C: and established it upon the rivers.**

P: Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?

**C: And who shall stand in His holy place?**

P: He who has clean hands and a pure heart,

**C: who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.**

P: He will receive blessing from the LORD

**C: and righteousness from the God of his salvation.**

P: Such is the generation of those who seek Him,

**C: who seek the face of the God of Jacob.**

**ALL: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and shall be forever. Amen.**

P: the Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray. Lord of all power and might, Author and Giver of all good things, graft in our hearts the love of Your name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen**

### **Epistle Lesson: 1 Timothy 4:1-16**

R: Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer. If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance. For to this end we toil and

strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

Command and teach these things. Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

### **Holy Gospel: Matthew 15:1-11**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter.

C: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

P: And Jesus called the people to Him and said to them, “Hear and understand: it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person.” Then the disciples came and said to Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?” Jesus answered, “Every plant that My heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit.” But Peter said to Jesus, “Explain the parable to us.” And He said, “Are you also still without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.”

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

### **Children’s Message: (8:30)**

### **Sermon Hymn: “Preach You the Word” – Hymn #586**

### **Sermon: “Unneglected Gifts” - 1 Timothy 4:1-16**

Every so often, I’ll look in a desk drawer and find one. I’ll find a piece of candy left over from last Halloween. I’ll find a gift card left over from last Christmas. I’ll find something that was given to me as a thoughtful gift. Instead, though, I put it away and forgot about it. I neglected the gifts.

Kids do it all the time. They spend days, weeks, months leading up to a holiday demanding something that they want. Yet once they get it, they play with it for a bit, and then it starts gathering dust. The cycle repeats itself. Gifts get played with, then ignored.

Of course, we don't just do that with physical gifts. We do that with other gifts, as well. Maybe you have a musical instrument gathering dust. Maybe you have a paint brush, or some knitting needles that you haven't picked up for a while.

Today, Paul reminds Timothy of the gifts that he has. He reminds Timothy to keep the gifts of God, the ways that God promises to be with His people, in the forefront of his mind and ministry. He is to focus on the public reading of Scripture, exhortation, and teaching.

What happens when we neglect those gifts? The beginning of the chapter reminds us. "Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared. (1 Timothy 4:1-2)."

It seems as though in our day many churches have drifted in what they teach about church, family, and social issues. We ignore the teachings warning us against pride and greed. We ignore the teachings telling us to love our neighbors and love our enemies. So, how do we know what is the truth when it comes to the plethora of issues where we have to decide what's right and what's wrong?

The first question to ask is, "What does the Bible say?" Sometimes the Bible is quite clear on the issues of our day and yet people will do gymnastics with Scripture in order to use the Bible to defend their position. Take for instance the question as to whether there are many ways to heaven. Jesus made it clear when He said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me," that there were not many ways to heaven, but one way. If you neglect the gift of the Bible, and what it says, and what you have learned, it's easier for you to be led astray.

A new study of the beliefs of evangelicals shows an alarming level of theological illiteracy. Ligonier Ministries, founded by the late Reformed theologian R. C. Sproul, has partnered with the Southern Baptist research organization Lifeway to study the State of Theology among American evangelicals.

Keep in mind that this study is of evangelical Christians, which Lifeway defines as people who strongly agree with the following statements:

The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe.

It is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin.

Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation.

Nevertheless, here is what the State of Theology study found:

64% of evangelicals believe that "Everyone is born innocent in the eyes of God."

53% affirm that "Everyone sins a little, but most people are good by nature."

53% believe that the Holy Spirit is a force but is not a personal being.

47% believe that "God accepts the worship of all religions, including Christianity, Judaism, and Islam."

When we neglect the gifts God has given us, we can get led astray. I mentioned a couple weeks ago, but it bears repeating. 90% of Americans have at least one copy of the Bible in their homes, but only 11% read the Bible daily. A great gift from God, to be able to have such easy access to the Bible, and yet we neglect such a gift. And when we do so, we can be misled. We can make ourselves little sinners, but that only means we need a little savior. But we are great sinners, and so we need a great savior. And in Jesus, that's what we have.

Focus your attention. Keep the first thing the first thing. Pastor Ted Kober worked for a group called Ambassadors for Reconciliation, that worked with churches in conflict. Ted Kober's recent book *Built on a Rock* indicates that increased participation in Bible study correlates with a decrease of congregational conflict. A recent study done by the American Bible Society found that increased engagement with Scripture correlated with stronger financial giving. Other studies show decreases in loneliness, anger, and bitterness with more engagement in Scripture, and increases in confidence in sharing your faith and helping others grow in their faith.

If you want your students to focus on what is written on the blackboard, focus on that blackboard with them. A good teacher knows the unspoken rule: a student's attention will naturally follow the teacher's own. Moreover, that also works for our lives of faith and service. That's why Paul wants Timothy to focus on those gifts, the public reading of Scripture, exhortation, and teaching.

While we may easily be tempted to focus on those whom we serve, our best modeling is to follow Jesus' lead. He always looked to God and invites us to do the same. Whether at work, raising children or ministering to others, Jesus invites us to look to him. What a gift we are given when we follow that example.

CS Lewis reminds us that we often forget about how wonderful the gifts of God are, and how they're beyond what we expect. "Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds

our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.”

Do not neglect the gift you were given. You may not have had hands laid on you, but you were anointed. You were set apart. You were called by God to be a part of His family in your baptism. At the beginning of the school year, like we do at the beginning of every semester, we reaffirmed our vocations. We said these words:

In Holy Baptism, you died with Christ Jesus to the forces of evil and rose to new life as members of His body. As we begin this academic year, will you endeavor to be faithful to our Lord Jesus through service, worship, and personal prayer? And will you strive to recognize the gifts that God has given you and discern how they may be used in the building of God’s reign of peace and justice?

Paul warns Timothy not to neglect the gifts he’s received. Timothy received a gift when they laid hands on him and installed him. You received a gift in your baptism, the gift of eternal life in Jesus and membership in God’s family.

We all have been given gifts from God. “As each has received a gift, use it” (1 Peter 4:10). “Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them” (Romans 12:6). Not only preaching and teaching but serving and giving, helping and healing, leading and administering are gifts “empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills” (1 Corinthians 12:11).

Why do we neglect the gifts? A few reasons. Sometimes we neglect our gifts because of sin: we don’t feel worthy to use our gifts in the service of God because of our failings.

Sometimes we neglect them due to false humility: We don’t want to use our gifts to build ourselves up. Sometimes we neglect them due to impatience – We don’t want to take the time to let our gifts mature.

We begin our stewardship emphasis today, which will continue over the next few weeks. We begin with the stewardship survey, which lists many of the ways you can use your gifts around church. As we think about how we’ve been blessed, as you think of the gifts of time, treasure, and talent you have, you can think of ways you can serve God, the church, your neighbor, and/or the community.

Faith begins with family devotions and bedtime prayers. And faith begins when children follow their parents’ example. When you drop off your kids at Sunday school, stay for adult Bible class so your children know that you value God’s Word. After you finish confirmation or New

Member Class, don't let your Bible or Catechism get dusty. Instead keep reading, so the gift of faith that God has given you will keep on burning! When you come to church on Sunday, praising God and hearing his Word, don't remain silent or keep it to yourself the rest of the week. Rather live out your faith and share it with someone else who doesn't know Jesus yet. Help them to hear the Word of Christ and receive it by faith.

"How can I repay the LORD for all his goodness to me?" the Psalmist asks (Psalm 116:12). The answer: You can't! You can't out-give God because he loves to bless you. And the greatest gift of all is Jesus Christ.

## **Confession of Faith: Apostle's Creed**

### **Prayer:**

### **Sharing Our Ministry**

### **Stewardship Survey**

(8:30 continues)

**Hymn:** *"Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me"*- **Hymn #683**

### **Lord's Prayer:**

### **Closing Prayer:**

P: Almighty and eternal God, You know our problems and our weaknesses better than we ourselves. In Your love and by Your power help us in our confusion and, in spite of our weakness, make us firm in faith, through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

### **Blessing:** (Pastor)

**C: Amen.**

**Closing Hymn:** *"Oh, That the Lord, Would Guide My Ways"*- **Hymn #707**

(11AM continues)

### **Offering/Voluntary:**

## **Service of the Sacrament**

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them up to the Lord.**

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

**C: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

P: We thank You, almighty Lord, that You are a God of all mankind, that You are not ashamed to be called our God, that You know us by name, the You keep the world in Your hands. For You have made us and called us in this life to be united with You. Blessed are You, Maker of all that exists. Blessed are You for giving us time and space to live in. Blessed are You for the light of our eyes and the air we breathe. We thank You for the whole of creation, for all works of Your hands, for You have done in our midst through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Therefore, we praise You with all Your faithful people and adore You with the words:

**C: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of all living. Earth and heaven are filled with your glory. We bless Your name. Blessed is he who comes in the midst of His people.**

**The Words of Our Lord:**

**The Lord's Prayer:**

**Distribution:**

Hymns: *"Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me"* - **Hymn #683**

*"O Living Bread from Heaven"* **Hymn #642**

**Dismissal:**

P: Go out into the world in peace; have courage; hold to what is good; return no man evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak; help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

**Closing Prayer:**

P: Almighty and eternal God, You know our problems and our weaknesses better than we ourselves. In Your love and by Your power help us in our confusion and, in spite of our weakness, make us firm in faith, through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

**Blessing: (Pastor)**

**C: Amen.**

**Closing Hymn: "Oh, That the Lord, Would Guide My Ways" - Hymn # 707**



