

Order of Worship for October 19, 2025

Prelude

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Opening Hymn: *“Lord, Whose Love through Humble Service”* - Hymn #848

Confession and Forgiveness page 151

Service of the Word

Entrance Psalm

P: Praise the LORD!

C: Praise the LORD, O my soul!

P: I will praise the LORD as long as I live;

C: I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

P: Put not your trust in princes,

C: in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.

P: When his breath departs he returns to the earth;

C: on that very day his plans perish.

P: Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,

C: whose hope is in the LORD his God,

P: who made heaven and earth,

C: the sea, and all that is in them,

P: who keeps faith forever;

C: who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry.

P: The LORD sets the prisoners free;

C: the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.

P: The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;

C: the LORD loves the righteous.

P: The LORD watches over the sojourners;

C: He upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked He brings to ruin.

P: The LORD will reign forever,

C: your God, O Zion, to all generations. Praise the LORD!

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

P: Praise the LORD!

C: Praise the LORD, O my soul!

P: I will praise the LORD as long as I live;

C: I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

Kyrie (Lord, Have Mercy): pages 152-3

Hymn of Praise: *“This Is the Feast”* page 155

Salutation: page 156

Prayer of the Day:

P: Almighty God, You show mercy to Your people in all their troubles. Grant us always to recognize Your goodness, give thanks for Your compassion, and praise Your holy name; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

Old Testament Reading – Leviticus 19:1-3, 32

R: And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and you shall keep my Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God. You shall stand up before the gray head and honor the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.”

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Epistle Reading – 1 Timothy 5

R: Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.

Honor widows who are truly widows. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God. She who is truly a widow, left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day, but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives. Command these things as well, so that they may be without reproach. But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work. But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when their passions draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry and so incur condemnation for having abandoned their former faith. Besides that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not. So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander. For some have already strayed after Satan. If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are truly widows.

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,” and, “The laborer deserves his wages.” Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear. In the presence of God and of Christ

Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality. Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure. (No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.) The sins of some people are conspicuous, going before them to judgment, but the sins of others appear later. So also good works are conspicuous, and even those that are not cannot remain hidden.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Alleluia and Verse p. 156

Holy Gospel – Matthew 15:1-6

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 15th chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord. (sung)

P: Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, “Why do Your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat.” He answered them, “And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? For God commanded, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ But you say, ‘If anyone tells his father or his mother, “What you would have gained from me is given to God,” he need not honor his father.’ So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C. Praise to You, O Christ. (sung)

Sermon Hymn: “*O God of Mercy, God of Might*” - **Hymn # 852**

Sermon: “*A God for All Ages*” - **1 Timothy 5**

The number of Americans ages 65 and older will more than double over the next 40 years, reaching 80 million in 2040. The number of adults ages 85 and older, the group most often needing help with basic personal care, will nearly quadruple between 2000 and 2040.

The nation is aging. By 2040, about one in five Americans will be age 65 or older, up from about one in eight in 2000. Because younger people are much more likely than older people to work and pay taxes that finance Social Security, Medicare, and all other public-sector activities, population aging could strain government budgets. The number of workers sharing the cost of supporting Social Security beneficiaries will soon plummet unless future employment patterns change dramatically. The latest Social Security Administration projections indicate that there will be 2.1 workers per Social Security beneficiary in 2040, down from 3.7 in 1970.

This will put increasing pressure on our society to see the elderly not as human beings, but as a liability. There is certainly a different attitude towards the

elderly than there used to be and what still is in many cultures. The elderly were looked up to as wise and to be respected, not just taken care of. Proverbs 16:31 speaks of the “hoary head being a crown of glory.” There were the ones who had life skills to pass on to the next generations like how to cook with recipes in their heads, how to care for the farm, and how to fix things that got broken. But now with our constantly changing technology, the young have the advantage over the old because they adapt more quickly to the new stuff. Also, there is a changing attitude of what “old” means. The Social Security age of 65 years was set in the 1930’s when 65 was very old. Today 65 is more like 85.

St. Paul addresses to Timothy in our lesson today about care for the elderly: Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.

Within families that usually happened because you lived in or next door to your father’s house. The Old Testament Israelites lived in an Eastern culture where there is even today much more respect for the elderly than we have today. Just ask one of our volunteer English teachers how much respect they get from internationals. On top of that were the instructions from the Old Testament about care for the elderly. Men were commanded to marry their brother’s widows to care for them. Later their sons were supposed to do that. If there were no brothers or sons, then other close male relatives were to provide care. That attitude of respect is summed up in the words of our Old Testament lesson from Numbers:

Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and you shall keep my Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God. You shall stand up before the gray head and honor the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

We saw in our Gospel lesson how angry Jesus was when He said:

But you say, ‘If anyone tells his father or his mother, “What you would have gained from me is given to God,” he need not honor his father.’

He was speaking against those who used loopholes to get out of caring for their parents.

Paul puts it in his usual direct way in Timothy when he said:

If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Yet, all of that was in a world in which the “elderly” were much younger and less disabled. People used to talk about pneumonia being “the best friend of the elderly.” If you broke a hip, you died of pneumonia. Then with antibiotics, people survived that, but still have to deal with the pain of the broken hip. Replacement

hips can help deal with that, but what about stroke victims who cannot swallow, those who are so confused they don't remember what happened ten seconds ago, and those racked with pain from a bad back? How are we to care for the vast numbers of our population that are getting older?

One thought that keeps coming up in our world involves what we call "utility." That means to ask the question, "How useful is that person?" That not only affects the elderly, but the challenged and the unborn. It is what leads us to say about the elderly, "Is life a benefit to him or her?" We see that happen in making decisions about spouses and parents near death and ask, "What would he (she) have wanted?" I know as an aging parent my thoughts are centered on saying, "I just don't want to be a burden to my kids." We think of how we are encouraged not only to have advanced directives, but to assign someone who has durable power of attorney to make life choices for us. To help explain the advanced directives may say "do not resuscitate," the decision is left with doctors. A durable power of attorney gives the power to those we know best and trust. Make sure your older relatives have filled out those documents!

Yet, in doing all of that we are forgetting that our value lies not in usefulness or "utility" which we measure as humans, but in being created and redeemed by God, which God has measured with the infinite value of His Son, who died for us on the cross.

Because of that we are led not by human "utility," but by faith in the God who made and bought us back. So, with a dying relative we ask not, "Is life a benefit to him/her?" but "What can I do to benefit the life he/she still has?" In his book Taking Care of Strangers author Robert Burt talks about how those situations are made difficult because the people we are making decisions about have become "strangers" to us. We might say "I take care of him," but that can be a lot harder with someone who is now a "stranger" to us. Our attempts to make decisions easier can go against the God who allows those situations to happen so we have to talk, struggle, and put our trust in Him. As Lutheran theologian Gilbert Milander said:

In these decisions before death more than in any other sphere of life we are presented with unwanted and unexpected interruptions to our plans and projects. I do not like such interruptions any more than the next person; indeed, a little less, I rather suspect. But it is still true that morality consists in large part in learning to deal with the unwanted and unexpected interruptions to our plans.

Those situations cause us to put faith in God, which can be difficult, but is the greatest blessing to all. They also remind us that if we love, we are a burden to each other—even as I can be to my loved ones when I die.

Following Jesus is not about making life easier and decisions simpler. If we want that, let's be totally utilitarian. You don't have to be a Nazi Germany or a Soviet Russia to be that way. But Christ calls us to love not because it is useful, but it is the way of the God who loves us not because we are useful, but because He loves.

Creed: 4th Commandment and explanation

Prayer of the Church

P: Lord, in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

**Sharing Our Ministry
Offering & Voluntary**

Service of the Sacrament

Preface: page 160

P: It is good, right, and proper to give thanks to You, almighty God, heavenly Father, for You have made us all equally valuable by creating us and even more by buying us back with the price of Your only Son, Christ Jesus who died for us on the cross. Our true worth lies in His alone, not in what people think is important. Therefore with angels and all the army of heaven we praise and make great Your holy name, evermore praising You and singing. . .

Sanctus (*Holy, Holy, Holy*) page 161

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

P: Blessed are You, Lord God, King of the Universe who has made us and won us back by the blood of Christ. Send Your Holy Spirit so that we come to the holy supper of Jesus' true body and blood, trusting, not doubting, that by it our sins are forgiven. All this we pray as Christ Jesus has taught us. . .

Lord's Prayer and the Words of our Lord: page 162

Pax Domini (Peace of the Lord) Agnus Dei (*Lamb of God*) page 163

Distribution Hymns: "*Great Is Thy Faithfulness*" - **Hymn #809**

"Rise! To Arms! With Prayer Employ You" - **Hymn #668**

Song After Communion: "*Thank the Lord*") page 164

Prayer After Communion:

P: Lord God, You call us to use wisely what You have given to us. Set our hearts to our tasks in the work of Your kingdom, and help us to order our lives by Your wisdom, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen.

Blessing: page 166

Closing Hymn: "*How Firm a Foundation*" - **Hymn #728**

Postlude: