

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

(The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod)



"THE PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL"

Part IIIb: "The Christmas Identity"

Order of Worship Sunday December 14, 2025 – 10 AM

Rev. Dr. Matthew Cephus

**3014 McKinley Street NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418
612-781-1989**

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Pianist: Karrie Kikeh

Welcome to God's House!

We strive to be the local church in the community of Northeast Minneapolis, who are here to help people come to KNOW Jesus, GROW in their faith and GO into the world equipped to SERVE others. GLORY TO GOD!

Today's Topic: In Luke 12, Jesus confronted this toxic perspective in the parable of the rich fool. But even more than that, he obliterated it in his coming at Christmas. And until we've understood and embraced the Christmas identity, we're going to struggle significantly, and miss out on one of the most foundational and freeing truths in life.

A special welcome to visitors and guests; we are pleased that you have joined us today! If you have no church family, and if we can be of any assistance to you, please speak with the Pastor after the service or via the church office. We pray you will feel God's love for you and be empowered to live as God's child this week. We look forward to seeing you again.

Is there something you'd like us to pray for today? If you have family members or friends who require our prayers, please use the prayer request cards found in each pew. They will be added to the Prayer list. You can hand your request to an usher before the service or during the offering. They will be given to the Pastor to be included in the prayers for today. **Other prayer requests can be made by contacting the church office at 612.781.1989.**

Children are welcome in worship!

The Lord's Supper is celebrated.

When we receive the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ,

- we express the belief that Jesus is the Son of God and Son of Man;
- that Jesus is our Savior and only way for salvation;
- that Jesus offers us His Body and Blood in a mysterious yet real way;
- that Christ's sacrificial death grants the forgiveness of our sins;
- and that God is strengthening us in this Sacrament to live a more godly life and to amend with the help of the Holy Spirit, those areas not in conformity with God's will.

We declare these statements because it is our concern for people to not be hypocritical between their faith and celebrate the blessings of God's Table at the Altar.

Wednesday bible study is on Winter Break. Join us when we resume on January 14, 2026. See you there!



Third Sunday of Advent

AS WE GATHER: Material possessions are tools that can enhance life, but they do not provide the fundamental emotional support, love, trust, and connection that humans need to thrive. True happiness is rooted in Christ Jesus and can be seen through shared experiences and mutual support, not things.

+ *CONNECT* +

WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN

"Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee"

LSB 803 v. 1, 2

Text & Music: Public Domain

Joyful, joyful we adore Thee, God of glory, Lord of love!
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before Thee, Praising Thee, their sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the gloom of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.

All Thy works with joy surround Thee, earth and heav'n reflect Thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around Thee, center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird, and flowing fountain call us to rejoice in Thee.

INVOCATION

L: Our worship begins the way our lives in Christ begin in baptism: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

CONFESSION OF OUR SINS

L: Let us confess our sins to God our Heavenly Father who truly loves us.

C: **Merciful Father, we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We also confess that we have not done all that is possible to promote peace and justice in our world. We have not loved**

you with our whole hearts; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

FORGIVENESS IS ANNOUNCED

+ NURTURE +

SONG OF PRAISE

"Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee"

LSB 803 v. 3, 4

Text & Music: Public Domain

Always giving and forgiving, Ever blessing, ever blest,
Well-spring of the joy of living, Ocean-depth of happy rest!
Loving Father, Christ our Brother, Let Your light upon us shine;
Teach us how to love each other, Lift us to the joy divine.

Mortals, join the mighty chorus, Which the morning stars began;
God's own love is reigning o'er us, Joining people hand in hand.
Ever singing, march we onward, Victors in the midst of strife;
Joyful music leads us sunward In the triumph song of life.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

1 Chronicles 29:10-13

David Prays in the Assembly

Therefore David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: "Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

EPISTLE READING

2 Corinthians 5:14-21

For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 12:13-21

L: The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

C: Glory to You, O Lord!

The Parable of the Rich Fool

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." But he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?" And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry."' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

L: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

LSB 379

Text & Tune: Public Domain

O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him born the King of angels:

**Refrain: Oh, come, let us adore Him, Oh, come, let us adore Him,
Oh, come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

Highest, most holy, Light of light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing!

Refrain

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest:

Refrain

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father now in flesh appearing!

Refrain

MESSAGE

Rev. Dr. Matthew Cephus

"The Parable of The Rich Fool" – Part IIIb: "The Christmas Identity"

CONFESSION OF FAITH: Apostles' Creed

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

And in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

GATHERING OF THE OFFERINGS

+ EMPOWER +

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

(Prayer response – P: Lord, in your mercy, C: Hear our prayer.)

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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.

PREFACE TO HOLY COMMUNION

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

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

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

PROPER PREFACE

L: It is our duty and delight at all times and everywhere to give thanks to You, O Lord, Holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for You have enlightened us by the working of the Holy Spirit. Grant that the Spirit, who has called and gathered us, would guide us in all things, that we be enabled to speak the Gospel to others and rejoice in sharing the gift of salvation that is our treasure. This we ask through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who, with You and the Holy Spirit, is one God, through whom with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take this, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you, Amen.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P: Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy, You would strengthen us through the same, in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

"Almighty Father, Bless the Word"

LSB 923

Text and Music: Public Domain

Almighty Father, bless the Word
Which through Your grace we now have heard.
Oh, may the precious seed take root, Spring up and bear abundant fruit!

We praise You for the means of grace
As homeward now our steps we trace.
Grant, Lord, that we who worshiped here May all at last in heav'n appear.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

BENEDICTION

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.

+ Silent Prayer +

POSTLUDE

+ WE DEPART TO SERVE +

+ + +

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OUR WEEKLY CALENDAR

12/14 Sun

Third Sunday of Advent

10:00 am

**Worship with Holy Communion,
w/Rev. Dr. Matthew Cephus**

11:45 am

Royal Family Worship

6:00 pm

NA

12/15 Mon

7:00 pm

Beginners AIAnon (downstairs)

6:00 pm

AIAnon (upstairs) meeting will include a Holiday Potluck

12/16 Tues

5:00 pm

GDLC Council Meeting

12/17 Wed

7:30 pm

SLAA Group Meeting

12/19 Fri

5:00 pm

Living Word Music Rehearsal

12/20 Sat

10:00 am

Living Word Worship & Fellowship

4:00 pm

Living Word Board Meeting

6:00 pm

Living Word Prayer Night

12/21 Sun

Fourth Sunday of Advent

10:00 am

**Worship with Holy Communion,
w/Rev. Dr. Matthew Cephus**

11:45 am

Royal Family Worship

6:00 pm

NA

SERVING TODAY

Elder: Karmon Christopherson

Reading: Verlayne Sather

Ushers: Dale Raschke and Wade Billmeyer

Altarcare: Tom and Patty Lyrenmann

Counters: Dale Raschke and Wade Billmeyer

Attendance: 12/07/2025: 32

Gloria Dei recently donated 90 pounds of food to the NE Salvation Army food shelf. All donations stay local and support community members facing food insecurity. Key needs include 100% juice, healthy cereal, canned chicken, salmon, pork, culturally specific foods (coconut milk, bamboo shoots, jasmine rice, fish sauce), and personal hygiene products like toilet paper and toothpaste. Please remember those less fortunate when you do your own shopping. Thank you!

BIRTHDAYS: 16th Delores Kluwe; 16th Pat Vogel; 20th Gwen Johnson
ANNIVERSARIES: None

ETERNAL CANDLE: OPEN
FLOWERS: OPEN

PRAYER CONCERNS

KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS: Karmon & Meridel Christopherson, Tom Farrell, Robert & Dolores Kluwe, Al Morelli, Roselyn Norman, Larry Schlais, Pat Scott, Alec Schwandt and all our shut-ins

Jennifer (Amy Rich's sister) recently treated for breast cancer, recovering
Danielle Ohnstad continued prayers as she struggles with breast cancer
Marie Padmore (Roselyn's sister) prayers for positive test results
Aaron Morelli upcoming testing

Pastor Martin Cornes' father-in-law, Dan, recently diagnosed with cancer; has undergone surgery. He is now staying in a transitional care facility; discussions regarding future treatment options are forthcoming

Roger Kropelniki (Ken Biebighauser's BnL) underwent esophagus surgery and is suffering from lung issues

Karen Charpentier (Ken Biebighauser's sister) going through cancer treatment
Diane Sharbono undergoing cancer treatment

Dorie (Shirley Holzinger's sister-in-law) addressing unexpected issues.

Roxie Johnson (Morelli's niece) heart issues (pacemaker), prayers as she gets stronger

Kim Morelli and Amy Rich (Morelli's DnLs) continued prayers for good health after cancer treatments

Mudy Mason dealing with an autoimmune disease. Pray for strength, peace, hope, believing in God, Family, Mindset.

James Norman, Sr. (James' dad) Continued prayers, prostate cancer seems to be getting worse, he is having increasing pain and decreased mobility

Nonie Wakeman (Shirley Slagle's SnL) diagnosed with Lung Cancer

Karen (Karmon's sister) Recently diagnosed with cancer (Warren's wife)

Kurt Nowacki (Bruce & Julie Cross' Brother-in-Law) recently diagnosed with 'myopathy,' a degenerative muscle disease

Bruce (Wenda Schwoch's BnL) has stage 4 prostate cancer and **Ashley** (Wenda's niece) continued prayers

Warren (Karmon's BnL) continued prayers as he continues treatment for Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma

Amy Price (Morelli's niece) dealing with continued health concerns

For First Responders/Health Care Workers, including James Norman, an ICU nurse

THOSE SERVING OUR COUNTRY IN DANGEROUS AREAS

TODAY'S LUTHERAN HOUR

December 14

"Pictures of Patience"

James 5:7-8

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

Patience can be practiced, tested, strained, and lost. Christians are called to return the patience God in His mercy has shown us, in Christ.

NEXT WEEK ON THE LUTHERAN HOUR

December 21

"Everybody Is Somebody"

Romans 1:7

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

God sends His people—the Church—to be His letters to the world, delivering His Word of promise.

On Sunday mornings, listen on 830 AM WCCO AM at 6:05 am, or 1110 AM, Omaha, at 6:30 am, or XM 170 Satellite Radio on Sundays at noon or listen anytime at www.lutheranhour.org

STEWARDSHIP: *Advent 3 - Isaiah 35:4*

"Say to those who have an anxious heart, 'Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.'" The return of our Lord at the Last Day is a cause of joy and anticipation for us believers. We know our Lord and His love, and we look forward to His Second Advent. Indeed, how we live our lives here and now flows from our certain hope of resurrection and eternal life.

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE:

"And every life matters to God. It is impossible to live—even for a few moments on this earth—and not influence somebody in one way or another. We are all always influencing somebody—either for good or for bad. Life matters. Your life matters. Lives of kings and lives of shepherds all matter. We all matter and are important to God." *Dennis D. Nelson, Lutheran CORE – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

Main Street Living airs each Sunday at 9 am on WFTC Channel 29/9-2 with an episode of *This Is the Life*. This week's episode is "**Christmas Is.**" The shepherd in a Christmas play learns the importance of Christmas. The worship service begins at 9:30 am with Rev. Brent Klein from Trinity Lutheran Church in Northfield, MN, presents a message titled "**Is Jesus the Savior?**" based on **Matthew 11:2-25**. For more information or to watch the program, go to www.mainstreetliving.com select the "Twin Cities" tab.

Heights Holiday City Tour

The Columbia Heights Fire Department's annual Holiday City Tour will take place on **Tuesday, December 16, 5-6:30 pm**. Columbia Heights Recreation will host Cookies & Cocoa with Santa from 6-8 pm at Murzyn Hall, 530 Mill Street. Toys and nonperishable food items will be collected along the route and at Murzyn Hall.

Holiday Train arrival

The Canadian Pacific Holiday Train will arrive Sunday, **December 14** at 37th Avenue and Stinson Blvd in Minneapolis at **8:15 pm**. American Authors and Pynk Beard will provide live entertainment during the half-hour stop. Monetary and heart-healthy food donations encouraged. Proceeds benefit East Side Neighborhood Services.

Advent Lessons and Carols: Splendor of Eternal Light

Holy Cross Catholic Church, 1621 University Avenue NE, invites the community to a special evening of sacred music and reflection at *Advent Lessons and Carols: Splendor of Eternal Light*, on **Saturday, December 20 at 7 pm**. This cherished Advent tradition weaves together scripture and song, illuminating the story of salvation through beloved seasonal music presented in both English and some Polish. The candlelit setting of Holy Cross will provide a contemplative atmosphere to prepare hearts for the coming of Christmas. A reception to follow in Kolbe Hall. Free and open to all, though a freewill donation is welcome.

Immaculate Conception Pancake Breakfasts

Enjoy a breakfast of sausage, potatoes, eggs, pancakes and beverages on **Sunday, December 21**. Breakfast is served downstairs in the Fellowship Hall from **8:30-11:30 am**. Adults \$13, ages 5-12 \$7, ages 4 and under free. Credit and debit cards accepted. All proceeds benefit Immaculate Conception Church, 4030 Jackson Street NE.

2025 Holiday Worship Schedule

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service:

December 24 at 5 pm, this joint service with Royal Family will include a short children's program and Holy Communion

Christmas Day Service:

December 25 at 10 am with Holy Communion

