

# Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

*(The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod)*



"THE PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL"

Part IIIa: "The Christmas Identity"

**Order of Worship Sunday December 7, 2025 – 10 AM**

**Rev. Dr. Matthew Cephus**

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612-781-1989**

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**Pianist: Susan Cvek**

# **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:** We are not the sum total of our possessions and accomplishments. Nor are we the sum total of our faults and failures. And yet, we often live as if that's the case. We believe our worth and our value comes from what we have or what we do. 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!

# Second Sunday of Advent

**AS WE GATHER:** Our identity is rooted in God, not in worldly standards. The story of Christmas shows that God's love is personal, coming to Earth as a humble baby to show He is with us, and demonstrating that our true worth comes from being a child of God.

+ *CONNECT* +

## WELCOME

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## OPENING HYMN

**"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"**

**LSB 357 v. 1-4**

*Text & Tune: Public Domain*

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high, who ord'rest all things mightily;  
To us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height  
In ancient times didst give the Law in cloud and majesty and awe.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree, free them from Satan's tyranny  
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

## 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

**"Holy, Holy, Holy"**

**LSB 507**

*Text & Music: Public Domain*

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;  
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!  
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,  
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea.  
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,  
Which wert and art and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,  
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see,  
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,  
Perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea.  
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!  
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

## **OLD TESTAMENT READING**

### **Deuteronomy 8:10-18**

And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.

"Take care lest you forget the Lord your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end. Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.' You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

**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      "How Deep the Fathers Love for Us"

*Stuart Townend, 1995 Thankyou Music; admin. EMI Christian Music CCLI # 1558110*

How deep the Father's love for us, How vast beyond all measure  
That He should give His only Son, To make a wretch His treasure  
How great the pain of searing loss, The Father turns His face away  
As wounds which mar the chosen One, Bring many sons to glory

Behold the Man upon a cross, My sin upon His shoulders  
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice, Call out among the scoffers  
It was my sin that left Him there, Until it was accomplished  
His dying breath has brought me life, I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything, No gifts, no power, no wisdom  
But I will boast in Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection  
Why should I gain from His reward? I cannot give an answer  
But this I know with all my heart, His wounds have paid my ransom

## MESSAGE

Rev. Dr. Matthew Cephus

### "The Parable of The Rich Fool" – Part IIIa: "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**

### **"Sent Forth by God's Blessing"**

**LSB 643**

*Text: © 1964 World Library Publications Tune: Public Domain*

Sent forth by God's blessing, our true faith confessing,  
The people of God from His dwelling take leave.  
The Supper is ended. O now be extended  
The fruits of this service in all who believe.  
The seed of His teaching, receptive souls reaching,  
Shall blossom in action for God and for all.  
His grace did invite us, His love shall unite us  
To work for God's kingdom and answer His call.



With praise and thanksgiving to God ever-living  
The tasks of our ev'ryday life we will face.  
Our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,  
Embracing His children of each tribe and race.  
With Your feast You feed us, with Your light now lead us;  
Unite us as one in this life that we share.  
Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving  
Give honor to Christ and His name that we bear.

## **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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### ***Last Call . . . for Holiday Gift Basket Names***

If you know someone who would enjoy a gift basket or simply could use some cheering up during this Holiday season, please leave their name, phone number and address in the Secretary's mailbox. The Social Ministry Committee will be assembling Holiday Gift baskets, filled with fruit, treats and goodies. These baskets will be delivered to our dear shut-ins on Tuesday, December 9.

### **Red Cross Community Blood Drive**

The Pritzker Hageman Law Firm will partner with the American Red Cross to host a community blood drive at its Northeast Minneapolis office, 100 University Avenue SE, Monday, December 8, 10 am-6 pm. The Red Cross bloodmobile will be parked in the firm's lot for easy access. Appointments can be made at [pritzlaw.us/donateblood](http://pritzlaw.us/donateblood). All presenting donors will receive a \$15 Amazon e-gift card from the Red Cross. For more information, contact [blooddonation@pritzkerlaw.com](mailto:blooddonation@pritzkerlaw.com).

## **OUR WEEKLY CALENDAR**

**12/07 Sun**

### **Second Sunday of Advent**

*Last Day for Salvation Army Gift Tree Donations*

**10:00 am**     **Worship with Holy Communion,  
w/Rev. Dr. Matthew Cephus**

11:45 am     Royal Family Worship

6:00 pm     NA

**12/08 Mon**

7:00 pm     Beginners AIAnon (downstairs)

7:00 pm     AIAnon (upstairs)

**12/10 Wed**

7:30 pm     SLAA Group Meeting

**12/12 Fri**

5:00 pm     Living Word Music Rehearsal

**12/13 Sat**

10:00 am     Living Word Worship & Fellowship

6:00 pm     Living Word Prayer Night

**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

## **SERVING TODAY**

**Elder:** Karmon Christopherson

**Reading:** Katie Beth Carlson

**Ushers & Altarcare:** Morell's

**Counters:** Sandy Westling and Tom Harris

**Attendance: 11/30/2025: 31**

*Thank you Vicki, Pam & Aaron, Patty & Tom, Dale, Shirley H, Julie, Verlayne  
and Gwen for all their help decorating the church for the holiday season.*

### **Christmas Cookie and Craft Sale**

St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church, 2201 Third Street NE, will hold a Christmas Cookie and Craft Sale Saturday, December 13, 9 am-4 pm. Check out assorted holiday baked goods (including nut and poppyseed rolls), Christmas decor, crafts and gift items. Specialty food items will also be available to enjoy while you shop. After your shopping spree, plan to attend Great Vespers at 4 pm.

<b>BIRTHDAYS:</b> None <b>ANNIVERSARIES:</b> None
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**ETERNAL CANDLE:** OPEN

**FLOWERS:** Tom and Patty Lyrenmenn, In memory of Patty's mom's birthday

### **PRAYER CONCERNS**

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

**Danielle Ohnstad** continued prayers as she struggles through 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 7**

**"Chosen for What?"**

**(Romans 15:7)**

Lutheran Hour Speaker: [Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler](#)

God calls believers to trust and follow Jesus--chosen, but chosen for what?

## **NEXT WEEK ON THE 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.

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](http://www.lutheranhour.org)

### **STEWARDSHIP:** *Advent 2 - Matthew 3:1-2*

"In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" John prepared the way for Jesus by preaching repentance. Then, when Jesus' ministry was complete and He was raised from the dead, He sent out His disciples to preach "repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Luke 24:47). We never outgrow the need for repentance — for examining our lives, turning away from our sins and turning toward Jesus in faith to receive his forgiveness and strength for a renewed life of godliness.

### **LUTHERANS FOR LIFE:**

"Children brightly signaled hope in our sin-infested world of old—consider the births of Seth, Isaac, Moses, Samson, Samuel, John, and, finally, of course and paramount, Jesus. And we, too, must become as children." *James M. Kushiner, Fellowship of St. James – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • [lutheransforlife.org](http://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 **"Stable Boy."** A manger scene comes to life and tells the story of the first Christmas. The worship service begins at 9:30 am with Rev. Jeffrey Williams from Trinity Lutheran Church in Slayton, MN, presenting a message titled **"He Is Coming: As Foretold"** based on **Matthew 3:1-12**. For more information or to watch the program, go to [www.mainstreetliving.com](http://www.mainstreetliving.com) select the "Twin Cities" tab.