

I have found the coin
that I had lost

LUKE 15:9



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

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Facebook: St. Paul's Lutheran Church York PA on Springettsbury & George

YouTube: St. Paul's Lutheran Church - South George St. York

WELCOME Thank you for being with us.

We are a Christian church within the Lutheran tradition (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) and we welcome people of all Christian traditions as well as people of other faiths and people of little or no faith. Christian worship has been offered to God in this congregation for 186 years. By worshipping with us today, you become part of that living tradition.

Restrooms are available in the Good Shepherd Room (Springettsbury lobby) and the narthex (George St). Baby changing stations are provided in these restrooms as well as in the nursery.

Our Communion is "open" to all believers who trust that the Risen Christ is present for his people in the Holy Eucharist.

The Nursery is accessed through the front right double doors. The 10:30AM liturgy is live-streamed into the Nursery. Currently, we are working to secure volunteer staff for the Nursery. Carrie Oberholtzer is coordinating a schedule. Please contact her to volunteer.

Guidelines for Worship during the time of COVID-19

Entering and Leaving the Church:

*Wearing a mask while in worship is optional, recommended or required based on the CDC guidelines. Green/Optional, Yellow/Recommended, Red/Required. **The instruction will be posted on the entry doors. Please be sure to bring a mask in the event of required/recommended masking. Disposable masks are available at the entrance to the church nave.***

Offerings:

Monetary offerings may be placed in the basins provided at the entrances to the nave prior to the service. You may also donate via our website at www.stpaulsyork.org

Communion Procedure:

- 1. Come to communion using the center aisle (about 10 adults per side).*
- 2. Communion glasses are placed on credence tables at the front pews (left and right side).*
- 3. Take a communion glass from the tray of glasses.*
- 4. Take your place along the chancel step. The ministers will bring the bread and wine to you.*
- 5. Extend your hands to receive the communion host.*
- 6. Consume the communion host before you leave the chancel edge.*
- 7. Hold the communion glass with both hands at chest height so that the communion assistant can easily pour the wine into the glass.*
- 8. Consume the wine before you leave the chancel edge.*
- 9. Place the used cup in an empty tray located on a credence table at the side aisle.*
- 10. Return to your pew using the side aisle.*

Our COVID-19 task force is assisting us as we remain open. Please thank Dr. Jessica Ericson, Sheridan Palmer, Deacon Harold Sargeant, Norma Shue, and Dr. Martha Thomas for their dedication and service.

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday, September 11, 2022
Holy Communion 8:00 & 10:30 AM
Musical setting 9 from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

TEMPLE TALK	Harvest Dinner	Jessica Ericson
PRELUDE	<i>Prayer for the Dead</i>	Jean Langlais

Stand turning towards the font.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; 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

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

ENTRANCE HYMN

What is This Place(ELW 524)



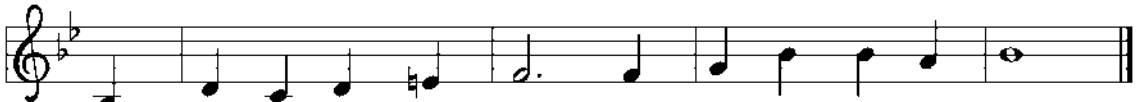
1 What is this place where we are meet - ing? On - ly a house, the
2 Words from a - far, stars that are fall - ing, sparks that are sown in
3 And we ac - cept bread at this ta - ble, bro - ken and shared, a



earth its floor. Walls and a roof shel - ter - ing peo - ple,
us like seed: names for our God, dreams, signs and won - ders
liv - ing sign. Here in this world, dy - ing and liv - ing.



win - dows for light, an o - pen door. Yet it be - comes a bod - y that lives
sent from the past are all we need. We in this place re - mem - ber and speak
we are each oth - er's bread and wine. This is the place where we can re - ceive



when we are gath - ered here, and know our God is near.
a - gain what we have heard: God's free re - deem - ing word.
what we need to in - crease: our jus - tice and God's peace.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

HYMN OF PRAISE *The congregation sings "the Refrain" and the concluding "Amen".
The verses are sung by the cantor.*



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

Continued on next page...



1 Lord God, heav'n-ly King, al - mighty God and Fa - ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

Refrain



2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of



God, you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.

Refrain



3 For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the



Lord, you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the



Ho - ly Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.



A - - men, a - - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

O God, you declare your almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity. Grant us the fullness of your grace, that, pursuing what you have promised, we may share your heavenly glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Sit

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FIRST READING

Exodus 32:7-14

(back cover)

PSALM

Chancel Choir

Create in Me a Clean Heart

Jeff Reeves

SECOND READING

1 Timothy 1:12-17

(back cover)

Stand

VERSE



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 15:1-10

(back cover)

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At the conclusion of the Gospel.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Pastor Stan Reep

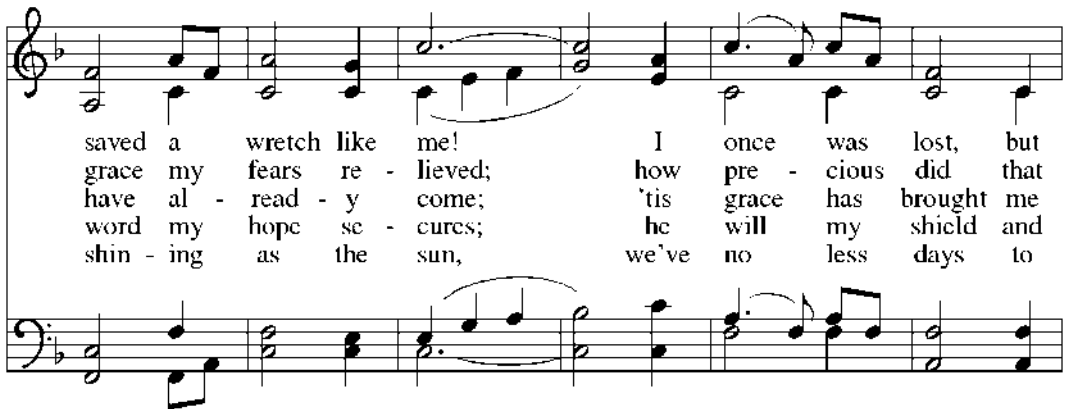
Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY

Amazing Grace (ELW 779) Please sing in 4 part harmony.



1 A - maz - ing grace! — how sweet the sound — that
2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his
5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and
shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to



now am found; was blind, but now I see.
grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.*

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

A brief silence.

Fill your church with faith and love, and give understanding hearts to those who work to strengthen our ecumenical and interreligious commitments. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

As the seasons change, renew in us the will to protect plants, animals, and habitats. Bless us with bountiful harvests. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Teach wisdom to our elected leaders so that there is peace in our world, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Seek out those who are lost, lonely, anxious, depressed, struggling with addiction or illness. Provide for those in any need (*especially Lynn Wicker, Kathryn Rose Wicker, Gary Bilbie, Janice Cromer, Michael Martin, Erin Bastian, Harry Harman, Peggy Jacobs, Katie Guyer, Amy Hollis, Heidi Glaudel, Kristine Gross, Rachel Barnes, Courtney Snell*).

God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Your work is done in this congregation with our hands, feet, voices, minds, and hearts.

Build up the ministries of this community, so that we serve our neighbors and welcome the stranger in your name. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Your blessed saints who have died now rest in your presence. Give us thankful hearts for those who have been examples of faith in our lives. Receive us with joy when we come to share eternal life with you. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Gathered together in the sweet communion of the Holy Spirit, gracious God, we offer these and all our prayers to you; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

The people share signs of peace. The ministers prepare the altar for Holy Communion.

OFFERTORY

Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow; praise him, all crea-tures here be-low;
praise him a - bove, ye heaven-ly host: praise Fa - ther, Son and Ho - ly Ghost.

WORDS: *Doxology*, Thomas Ken (1637-1711)
MUSIC: Louis Bourgeois (ca. 1510-1561), *Genevan Psalter*, 1551

OLD 100th
L.M.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Merciful Father,

we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Stand

DIALOGUE

☩ The Lord be with you. **☩** And al - so with you.
☩ Lift up your hearts. **☩** We lift them to the Lord.

Continued on next page...

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and
 might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, that by this Holy Communion we may know the unity we share with all your people in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray...

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

FRACTION *A brief silence is kept.*

AGNUS DEI



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you

Continued on next page...



take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.
 Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
 world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Sit

The pastor cleanses hands and prepares for the distribution of Holy Communion.

COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

Instructions for receiving the sacrament are on the inside front cover of the bulletin.

Stand

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Bless you now and forever. **Amen**

HYMN *Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us (ELW 789) next page*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Chorale in E

Gordon Young

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The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God

In loving memory of husband George and loving memory of son, Michael Kemper, by loving wife and mother, Ann Kemper



Flowers This Week

Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us



1 Sav-ior like a shep-herd lead us; much we need your ten - der care.
2 We are yours; in love be - friend us, be the guard-ian of our way;
3 You have prom-ised to re - ceive us, poor and sin - ful though we be;
4 Ear - ly let us seek your fa - vor, ear - ly let us do your will;



In your pleas-ant pas-tures feed us, for our use your fold pre-pare.
keep your flock, from sin de - fend us, seek us when we go a - stray.
you have mer - cy to re - lieve us, grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free.
bless - ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior, with your love our spir - its fill.



Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.



Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.
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Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.

Adult Discussion Session – Christ Hall Sundays September 18 & 25

This fall we begin the year with a discussion format to engage those new to Christian faith as well as those who have been involved for a life-time. Through discussion we hope that we will deepen our relationships with one another, develop a vocabulary reflective of our Christian faith, and be drawn more deeply into life in Christ Jesus.

September 18 *Attending to Others*, Peter W. Marty
Faith by Proxy, Brian Bantum

September 25 *The Gift of Tears*, Peter W. Marty
Communion Tears, Isaac S. Villegas

Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Communion Assistants	Greeters	Ushers	Altar Set-up & Altar Clean-up
9/11	8:00 AM	Bob Reed	Jennifer Ports	Cheryl Reifsteck	None needed	Norma Shue	Jeff Riese,	Kathleen Lemke, Pat Scarborough
9/11	10:30 AM	Tristan Ericson	Tonya Cave	Patty Snyder	Patty Snyder	Kem & Cindy Vaught	Kem Vaught, Larry Becker, *Steve Heistand, Dan Garber	Deb Becker, Janet Fitch

This Week at St. Paul's

Church office open 7:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m. Mon—Thurs

Sunday, September 11

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist
 9:15 AM God's Work Our Hands Project
 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist /Staff Recognition
 11:30 AM Second Sunday Fellowship
 6:30 PM AA meeting Community Rm

Monday, September 12

9:00 AM Weep & Rejoice Preschool Event Fellowship Hall
 7:00 PM Council Mtg.—Christ Hall

Tuesday, September 13

9:00 AM Weep & Rejoice Preschool Event Fellowship Hall
 9:00 AM Synod Conference Mtg.—Christ Hall
 9:30 AM Pantry
 6:00 PM CREATE—Art, Crafts and Music for Children age 2 through grade 6

Wednesday, September 14

10:30 AM Scripture Study—Christ Hall

Thursday, September 15

Newsletter Deadline
 6:30 PM Handbells—Christ Hall
 7:30 PM Chancel Choir—Music Rm

Saturday, September 17

10:00 AM Bridge of Hope Mtg —Christ Hall

Sunday, September 18

Presentation of Bibles
 Recognition of Sunday School Teachers
 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist
 9:15 AM Sunday School for all ages
 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist
 2:00 PM York Music Teachers Association Recital
 6:30 PM AA meeting Community Rm



Food Pantry—September

Items needed: Beans, corn, juice, jelly, macaroni, Rice (1 or 2 lb bags), dehydrated potatoes, powdered milk, canned tuna, tomato sauce and soup. We also need paper grocery bags with handles and plastic bags.

Anyone able to help can contact Teresa Rohrbaugh, Patty Snyder, or Janet and Larry Moore. . Money donations are gratefully accepted. Please place cash or check in a “special” envelope marked “Pantry”.

STAFF		
Pastor	Rev. Stanley Reep	prreep.stpaulsnyork@comcast.net
Youth Director	Kelly Moore-Spencer	kmoorespencer.stpaulsnyork@comcast.net
Organist, Choir Director	Victor Fields	vfields.stpaulsnyork@comcast.net
Bell Choirs Director	Leah McComas	lmccomas.stpaulsnyork@gmail.com
Secretary	Patee Pizzirusso	st.paulsnyork@comcast.net
Sexton	Ted Weikert	st.paulsnyork@comcast.net
Preschool Director	Deb Becker	director@stpaulspreschoolnyork.com

News and Updates:

Wednesday Scripture Study—Wednesdays, 10:30 AM—Christ Hall

God's Work Our Hands – TODAY from 9:15- 10:15 AM we will be assembling health kits for Lutheran World Relief. This event is for all ages and will be held outdoors on the South Lawn.

St. Paul's Staff Recognition Brunch. The Second Sunday Brunch TODAY following the second service, is hosted by the Mutual Ministry committee in celebration and recognition of our St. Paul's Church Staff.

Bibles – will be presented next week to children and youth who are entering Kindergarten, Fourth Grade and Seventh Grade during the liturgy.

Confirmation ministry – will be held on Sunday mornings at 9:15 AM with the first session on the Lord's Prayer beginning on September 18.

Food Pantry Workers – will be recognized in conjunction with the 40th anniversary of St. Paul's Food Pantry ministry on Sunday September 25.

Sunday school classes - for all ages begin on next Sunday at 9:15 AM. Primary, Confirmation and High School students meet on the upper level. An adult class will be held in Christ Hall on the main level. Pre-school and Kindergarten through Grade 2 children will be learning about many important Old Testament people including Adam & Eve, Joseph, Moses and others. Grades 3-6 will study one of the lessons being heard in worship. This will help them tie the stories from the Bible with worship and everyday life.

CREATE Tuesday evenings, 6:00 – 7:15 PM First Session September 13

We read in Genesis how God created all of the creatures, birds of the air, fish of the sea, and all of the things that creep and crawl and walk and hop and gallop on land! We will explore Bible stories referencing animals and see how many of them connect to stories we know from salvation history. Miss Kelly has prepared crafts that will lead to the creation of a beautiful Jesse Tree for the children to use for devotion during the season of Advent. **Miss Kelly will meet with students' grade 2 through 6 beginning at 6:00 pm and with children age 2 through grades 1 at 6:30 pm.** Pastor Reep has prepared a few animal songs for the children to sing during the music portion of the Tuesday evening CREATE. In late fall we will begin to work on the Christmas play which is scheduled for inclusion during the 10:30 am liturgy on December 18.

Harvest Dinner and Auction October 8th– Tickets are \$100 and are available for purchase through the Church office. All proceeds benefit the Food Pantry at St. Paul's. We are offering two tracks in hope of widening participation; craft beers paired with the menu as well as select wines. This should make for elevated conversation around the table, who likes what and why! Twelve original paintings by Pastor Reep that are featured in the 2022 calendar showcasing southern York county farms, and scenes from New England and Colonial Williamsburg will be auctioned live providing a huge amount of entertainment for the evening. And there are silent auction items donated to provide an additional source of funding for the food pantry. The American Heritage themed menu prepared by Chef Mummert features something that just about everyone will enjoy.



Eight AM is early for college age students. And yet there are dreaded 8:00 AM classes scheduled across the country at college and university campuses. A number of years ago three young men from York College claimed unoccupied pew real-estate here at St. Paul's at the 8:00 AM liturgy. The three men ran cross country together. The spring term of their freshman year, late January, the three men appeared at worship and shared openly with me their pact to abandon late night partying, partying that sunk their grade point averages and nearly put each of them on academic probation. They committed themselves to Sunday worship, 8:00 AM, and to enjoying coffee following the morning service. The three men acknowledged that the dining hall was not open early on Sunday morning. So this was a good place to be. None of them would have told you that they were lost. None of them would articulate that what they appreciated had anything to do with a loving God finding them, and making a way forward for them. In May when the academic year concluded, and in December at mid-year break, they would greet me at the George Street door; "see you next year Pastor!" And sure enough after Christmas holiday or summer break the three of them would be back in their pew. The pack made that freshman year sustained them through the remainder of their academic achievements.

I was not certain of how they heard or how they experienced God's gracious love made known through Christ Jesus. I was certain of what they heard proclaimed in scripture, liturgy and song, and what they received in the sacrament of Holy Communion; God's grace. God's grace is all about the lost being found, recovery, restoration, redemption, repentance, future. Stories about repentance and the rejoicing that accompanies such joy are told by Jesus. He tells of a lost sheep, a lost coin, and a lost son. This morning we hear the first two of the trilogy, the sheep and the coin. In the first story the Shepherd leaves the 99 sheep and goes in search of the one who is lost. When he finds it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. He invites those in his neighborhood to rejoice with him. In the second story a woman lost one of her ten coins. She lights a lamp, sweeps the house and searches carefully until she finds it. When she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors and invites them to rejoice with her.

Rejoicing punctuates these stories. But another theme present is repentance. It is more obvious in the third story, the familiar Prodigal Son story. But repentance is implicit in the parables. Repentance may be defined as our acceptance of being found. It is the work of grace among us. The three college men most likely wouldn't say that they were lost, or that they needed to repent. In fact it may seem that nothing out of the ordinary had taken place; simply three young men at worship early on a Sunday morning.

The same is true for us; repentance as our acceptance of being found. But that would mean that we would have to acknowledge that we were lost or are lost. If you didn't know that you were lost how would you know that you were found? And why on earth would you rejoice because it would seem that nothing out of the ordinary has taken place.

The Chief Priests and scribes I believe were in just such a category. Grumblers that they were, they couldn't dream of being in need of repentance. That was beyond their comprehension that they were lost. Repentance, that was something needed by others. They self-righteously had it all together. They were in the right place at the right time, and they were certain of their place. Repentance was something that sinners needed.

In each of us I believe there lurks a bit of the chief priest and scribal self-righteousness. Grumblers that we are, we can find fault with others, figure out what others ought to be doing, offer to tweeze out the splinter from a neighbors eye, or recline comfortably on the periphery critiquing the passionate efforts of others. All the while deluding ourselves into believing that repentance is something needed by “others,” someone other than you or me? Perhaps that college student over there needs repentance! Repentance is our acceptance of the reality that God has found us in Christ Jesus. This means, of course, that we acknowledge our own, for lack of a better word, “lostness.”

In the Brief Order of Confession and Forgiveness we acknowledge before God and one another that we are lost, that we are sinners, in thought, word and deed. And, that we are in need of God’s forgiveness and mercy. The liturgy is a corrective lens in which to view our true identity. The confession is a cry of repentance that we are lost and need to hear again the voice, the voice of the loving Shepherd, the One who from the cross seeks us out and finds us. Years ago at a National Youth gathering held in San Antonio Texas, Peter Mayer and the Cruzando House Band performed a Jeromy Deibler song. The lyric and tune are still stuck in my mind.

You, you found me

You found me and you called me from the wilderness

From my cave of emptiness

You found me in the places of my loneliness

Told me there was more than this

Captured me with tenderness

Yeah, you found me.

Jesus does indeed find us. Like the shepherd who finds the lost sheep, and the woman who finds the lost coin, Jesus finds us. The sheep most likely doesn’t know it is lost. And the coin has no idea that it is lurking in darkness. In the pit of despair, when we are all alone, when we think that we could never find our way, Christ Jesus comes and finds us. And when he finds us he throws a party because through him, with him, in him we are no longer lost but found. He throws a banquet and feeds us with his body and blood and promises us that this is a foretaste of the heavenly feast to come. Heaven, where Rejoicing punctuates the eternal celebration for all for whom Christ died. You are invited to share in just such a meal this morning in the Holy Communion, rejoicing in the knowledge that you are found.

Each Sunday morning we come to this place. We make a pack supporting one another in worship in order to keep us from being weighed down by things that draw us away, that draw us into darkness. We don’t speak of being lost, because in this place God’s grace abounds. We hear a new the voice of the One who seeks us out and finds us. “I have come to find those dead in sin” says the voice of Jesus. “I have come to find the lost, the grumblers, the self-righteous those who don’t think that they need me. I have come to find you, just you!” God’s heart overflows with joy when the lost are found. The Shepherd recovering the sheep and the woman recovering the coin can’t help but call together neighbors and friends to rejoice, because what was lost is found.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Exodus 32:7-14

The LORD said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; ⁸they 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!'" ⁹The LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. ¹⁰Now 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."

¹¹But 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? ¹²Why 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. ¹³Remember 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.'" ¹⁴And the LORD changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

Psalms 51:1-10**SECOND READING: 1 Timothy 1:12-17**

I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service, ¹³even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy

because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, ¹⁴and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. ¹⁶But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. ¹⁷To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

GOSPEL: Luke 15:1-10

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

³So 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? ⁵When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' ⁷Just 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? ⁹When 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.' ¹⁰Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Next Sunday's Readings: Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113; 1 Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13.

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