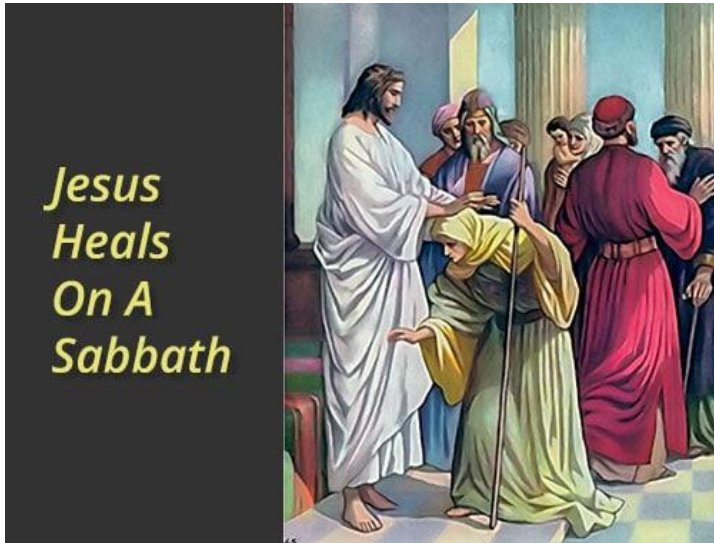


SUNDAY, AUGUST 24, 2025
ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
LUKE 13:10-17 | "ON THE SABBATH"



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(NCH) New Century Hymnal - CCLI LICENSE #11164431
*Please stand if comfortably able
and respond with words in **bold** print

SUMMARY OF SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Jeremiah 1:4-10 The book of the prophet Jeremiah begins with an account of his call to the prophetic office despite feelings of inadequacy.

Hebrews 12:18-29 The gospel of Jesus Christ has brought a new approach to God, but reverence is still appropriate.

Luke 13:10-17 Jesus flies in the face of tradition to perform a miraculous healing on the Sabbath.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER CONCERNS:

THE BELL IS RUNG:

PRELUDE: "People Need the Lord"

Phill McHugh & Greg Nelson

PENNIES FOR MISSION: Our Church's Wider Mission

***CALL TO WORSHIP (Inspired by Psalm 71)**

One: Let us worship the Holy One, our refuge, hope and trust. Our praise is continually of our God!

Many: God will not put us to shame. God is our rock!

One: Turn to the God who saves and delivers. Our praise is continually of our God!

Many: God's righteousness redeems. God is our shelter!

One: Find rest and delight in the Holy One. Our praise is continually of our God!

Many: We lean upon the Holy One. God is our sure foundation!

***INVOCATION**

God of the Sabbath, you make this day holy. As we gather in your name, redeem the days when our focus wandered and draw us back to you. Let your wisdom, justice, and compassion guide us. Slow our pace to attend to those things that matter. Open our understanding to the good that needs to be done. Sustain us for the challenges we face. Make your name known among us and through us. We glorify and honor you in spirit and in truth, in Word and in deed, in season and out of season. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN: 531**

“God, Speak to Me, That I May Speak”

***UNISON PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE**

Holy God, we confess that we have trampled the sabbath. We claim your name and not your way. We cling to excuses to avoid discomfort or sacrifice in service of our neighbor. We turn from human suffering. We keep silent in the face of wickedness. Transform us, O God, that we might be saved from the vise of evil and the lure of inaction. Rebuild us with righteousness and hope and redeem us for your kingdom. Amen.

***WORDS OF GRACE:**

Beloved, in Isaiah 58:9, the Voice assures, “Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and God will say, “Here I am.” God’s abiding presence never leads us; God’s transforming love will empower you to live the just and righteous life. Receive grace for participation

and belonging in the kingdom. God’s mercies are renewed for us.

***GLORIA:**

**Glory to the Creator,
and the Christ and the Spirit so near.
As it was from the start so it shall be forever,
One God always here. (repeat twice)
(end) One God always here. One God always here.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON FROM THE FIRST TESTAMENT:

Jeremiah 1:4-10 From the Message

Demolish, and Then Start Over

1 ¹⁻⁴ The Message of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah of the family of priests who lived in Anathoth in the country of Benjamin. God’s Message began to come to him during the thirteenth year that Josiah son of Amon reigned over Judah. It continued to come to him during the time Jehoiakim son of Josiah reigned over Judah. And it continued to come to him clear down to the fifth month of the eleventh year of the reign of Zedekiah son of Josiah over Judah, the year that Jerusalem was taken into exile. This is what God said:

⁵ “Before I shaped you in the womb,

I knew all about you.

Before you saw the light of day,

I had holy plans for you:

A prophet to the nations—

that’s what I had in mind for you.”

⁶ But I said, “Hold it, Master God! Look at me.

I don’t know anything. I’m only a boy!”

⁷⁻⁸ God told me, “Don’t say, ‘I’m only a boy.’
 I’ll tell you where to go and you’ll go there.
 I’ll tell you what to say and you’ll say it.
 Don’t be afraid of a soul.
 I’ll be right there, looking after you.”
 God’s Decree.

⁹⁻¹⁰ God reached out, touched my mouth, and said,
 “Look! I’ve just put my words in your mouth—hand-
 delivered!
 See what I’ve done? I’ve given you a job to do
 among nations and governments—a red-letter day!
 Your job is to pull up and tear down,
 take apart and demolish,
 And then start over,
 building and planting.”

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 71:1-6 Page 666

EPISTLE LESSON: Hebrews 12:18-29

Priestly service in heavenly Jerusalem

¹⁸ You haven’t drawn near to something that can be touched: a burning fire, darkness, shadow, a whirlwind, ¹⁹ a blast of a trumpet, and a sound of words that made the ones who heard it beg that there wouldn’t be one more word. ²⁰ They couldn’t stand the command, *If even a wild animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned.* ²¹ The sight was so frightening that Moses said, “I’m terrified and shaking!”

²² But you have drawn near to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, to countless angels in a festival gathering, ²³ to the assembly of God’s firstborn

children who are registered in heaven, to God the judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous who have been made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks better than Abel’s blood. ²⁵ See to it that you don’t resist the one who is speaking. If the people didn’t escape when they refused to listen to the one who warned them on earth, how will we escape if we reject the one who is warning from heaven? ²⁶ His voice shook the earth then, but now he has made a promise: *Still once more I will shake not only the earth but heaven also.* ²⁷ The words “still once more” reveal the removal of what is shaken—the things that are part of this creation—so that what isn’t shaken will remain. ²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that can’t be shaken, let’s continue to express our gratitude. With this gratitude, let’s serve in a way that is pleasing to God with respect and awe, ²⁹ because our God really is a consuming fire.

***GOSPEL LESSON Luke 13:10-17**

Healing on a Sabbath

¹⁰ Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹ A woman was there who had been disabled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and couldn’t stand up straight. ¹² When he saw her, Jesus called her to him and said, “Woman, you are set free from your sickness.” ¹³ He placed his hands on her and she straightened up at once and praised God.

¹⁴ The synagogue leader, incensed that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, responded, “There are six days during which work is permitted. Come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath day.”

¹⁵ The Lord replied, “Hypocrites! Don’t each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from its stall and lead it out to get a drink? ¹⁶ Then isn’t it necessary that this woman, a daughter of Abraham, bound by Satan for eighteen long years, be set free from her bondage on the Sabbath day?” ¹⁷ When he said these things, all his opponents were put to shame, but all those in the crowd rejoiced at all the extraordinary things he was doing.

MESSAGE: “But we’ve Never Done it That Way”

Let’s imagine, for a change, that you are on the edge of the crowd that has followed Jesus so far. You haven’t heard everything and haven’t understood all you’ve heard, but you think you’ve got the general drift of it all and find it both compelling and alarming.

In you go with Jesus to the synagogue o this sabbath. What do you see, and what sense does it make to you? You and everybody else sees the poor woman. She was probably a well-known local character. In a village where everyone’s life was public, people would know who she was and how long she’d been like this. The author of the Gospel of Luke says she had “a spirit of weakness,” which probably means simply that nobody could explain medically why she had become bent over. No one knows.

In the synagogue you can see an unspoken power struggle going on. There is a synagogue president in charge of the meeting, but all eyes are on Jesus – which puts both of the in an awkward spot in terms of protocol. Jesus, however, doesn’t wait. He doesn’t need any “protocol.” A word, a touch, and the woman is healed. The synagogue president thoroughly upstaged, lets his anger take refuge in

an official public rebuke, rather as if a policeman tried to arrest someone because their football team had just beaten his.

You, as the observer, understand all this. It’s bound to be difficult for the local village hierarchy when someone like Jesus comes into town, and when he does extraordinary things in the synagogue it will inevitably cause a fuss. But listen to Jesus’ answer. Think about what you’ve heard on the journey up to this point: the devastating analysis of what was wrong with the area and people of Israel as a whole, the warnings of what lay ahead. Now hear what Jesus has to say, and ponder what it might mean.

“Double standards!” Jesus declares. “You do one thing yourself and yet want to stop me from doing something which is no different, and even more appropriate. This is just play-acting. You are quite happy to untie an animal that needs water; how much more should I untie this woman, a daughter of Abraham, from the grips of satan?” We all know that Jesus knew what was legitimate sabbath practice and what wasn’t.

You, as the observer and student, get the point about untying the animal and untying the woman. But what is Jesus saying about this woman? First, she’s a daughter of Abraham; second, she has been tied up for 18 years by satan, the one who has Israel as a whole in his grip, the one against whom Jesus has won an initial victory! Suddenly new light dawns. What Jesus is doing for this poor woman is what he is longing to do for Israel as a whole. The enemy, the accuser, has had Israel in his power these many years, and Jesus’ kingdom-message is the one thing that can free her. But Israel’s insistence on tight boundaries, including

the rigid application of the sabbath law, is preventing it happening. Unless the kingdom-message heals her, there is no hope.

Maybe, you think, Jesus is still hoping that there is time; that Israel, bent over, unable to see anything expect feet, unable to stand upright, will be untied from her bondage in a great sabbath celebration, a great act of liberation. Maybe, you think, Jesus intends that by going to Jerusalem this will all come to pass . . .

And then Jesus tells another story. The kingdom is like a tiny seed producing a huge tree – which can then accommodate all the birds in the sky. One action in one synagogue on ne sabbath; what can this achieve? But when Jesus sows the seed of the kingdom, nobody knows what will result. Or the kingdom as small helping of leaven, hidden apparently in the flour. It seems insignificant and ineffectual; but before long the whole mixture is leavened. (Have you ever seen bread dough rise?) One healing of one woman – but every time you break the satanic chains that have tied people up, another victory is won which will go on having repercussions.

Can we compare this story of the seed to church? Unfortunately, the mantra of some churches is “we’ve never done it that way.” The church and the people get stuck doing the same things over and over. They are afraid to make changes because then their particular church building will cease to be THEIR church.

Since I’ve been here, I’m delighted to say I have ever heard that mantra even once here at St. John. The faithful people of this church are willing to do different things and try different things, all to help the kingdom come to our

small congregation. The little bit of leaven that we have is making the Holy Spirit alive and rising. Thanks be to God. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC: “Amazing Grace”

Flute (Stacie)/Piano (Sharon) duet

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Today I would like to share with all of you a prayer written by Rev. Cameron Trimble. Following the prayer, she provides some spiritual practices to try.

Rooted in the Quiet

*Spirit of all truth,
Anchor me in the quiet integrity
That resists the tide of convenience.
When I am tempted to cut corners,
Whisper me back to alignment.
When I feel unseen or uncelebrated,
Remind me that the sacred sees.
Let me be faithful in small things—
Invisible things—
Because they shape the world I long to help create.
Make me whole in the hidden places. Amen.*

Reclaiming Your Invisible Faithfulness by Rev. Cameron Trimble.

Today, pause and reflect on the choices you make that no one notices—your quiet faithfulness. Set a timer for 15 minutes. In stillness, ask yourself:

What are the acts of integrity I've practiced without recognition?

Write them down. Let yourself see and honor them. These small acts—refusing gossip, picking up trash, returning the extra change, speaking up even when your voice shakes—are sacred. They are the stitching in the fabric of the world. Then ask: *Is there any place in my life where I've gone quiet, where I've compromised?*

Gently, without shame, make a commitment to begin again. You do not need to be perfect. You only need to be aligned.

OUR LORD'S PRAYER:

PRAYE RESPONSE: 769

**Hear our prayer, O God, Hear our prayer, O God.
Incline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.**

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY:

We invite you to participate in the kingdom of God through generous giving of time, talent, and treasure. Our financial contributions enable this church to meet the needs of our community and spread the love of God. Let us give in grateful expression of our faith and gratitude for our generous God.

OFFERTORY: "To a Wild Rose" Edward MacDowell

***DOXOLOGY:**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above you heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen**

***UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION:**
Gracious and Generous God, receive these gifts in faith and trust. Help us to be good stewards of the resources you have given to us and bless our generosity for your glory. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN: 319 "Wonderful Words of Life"**

***BENEDICTION:**

On the sabbath, Make God's Name known
Love our neighbors Spread the good news
Do justice Seek Righteousness And live in hope

BENEDICTION RESPONSE: "Let There Be Peace on Earth"

THE BELL IS RUNG:

POSTLUDE: "Unto Thee Do We Give Thanks" James Denton

PRAYER LIST: Ingrid Alexiou, Becky Ballard, Mary Lou and Urban Baum, Ronald Bopp, Marilyn Paul, Pam Safriet, Syd Safriet, Yvonne Weber

MORE FROM Rev. Cameron Trimble.

camerontrimble@substack.com If you are interested in any of these events, send an email to Cameron.

Upcoming Events That Might Be of Interest...

September 4, 5:30pm ET - I will be collaborating with the Anderson Forum for Progressive Theology to host a conversation with Thomas Jay Oord on Open and Relational theology. It's a FREE event. [Register here.](#)

October 15-18, 2025 - Converging 2025: Sing Truth Conference (all musicians invited!) at Northwest Christian Church in Columbus, OH. [Register here!](#)

October 23, 30, November 13, 20 2025, 7pm ET - In Search of a New Story: Reimagining What Comes Next, *A 4-Part Online Series with Dr. Matthew Fox, Cameron Trimble, Ilia Delio, Diana Butler Bass, Caroline Myss and other Special Guests.* We are living through the unraveling of many old stories—about who we are, why we're here, and how we are meant to live together on this Earth. As these inherited narratives collapse under the weight of climate crisis, social fragmentation, and spiritual disconnection, the question becomes clear: What story will guide us now? [REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!](#)