

**OCTOBER 12, 2025**  
**EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**  
**LUKE 17:11-19**



**ST. JOHN**  
**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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(NCH) New Century Hymnal - CCLI LICENSE #11164431  
Unless otherwise noted, all scripture texts  
are from the **Common English Bible (CEB)**  
\*Please stand if comfortably able  
and respond with words in **bold** print

**SUMMARY OF SCRIPTURE TEXTS**

**Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7** Jeremiah sends words of encouragement to the exiles in Babylon.

**2 Timothy 2:8-15** The resurrection empowers the apostle to accept imprisonment and hardship with confidence.

**Luke 17:11-19** Only one of ten lepers that Jesus healed – a Samaritan- ones back to thank Jesus for his new health.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER CONCERNS:**

**THE BELL IS RUNG:**

**PRELUDE: “Trust and Obey” Stewart Landon**

**PENNIES FOR MISSION: Neighbors in Need**

**\*RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP:**

**ONE:** Whether we live in an apartment or a house;  
if we reside in the suburbs or the city:

**MANY:** **God tells us to pray for the places where we live.**

Whether we are exiles or prisoners for the gospel;  
if we are young, old, insider, outcast:

**God says, 'when you search for me, you will find me.'**

Whether we have been wandering and lost;  
or if we have lived in the same place all our lives:

**God says, 'I will gather you from all your places and bring you home.'**

**\*INVOCATION:** God, you create a tabernacle for the sun, the moon, and all the lights of heaven and are present to all things in all times and yet never can be contained. We know you are not limited by the houses of worship we build, but rather that your love always shelters our worshipfulness. Bless and consecrate our gathering in this place and the love we share in this time. May your peace be upon our restless hearts, and may we always find you in our midst, especially in the least likely of our sisters and brothers. Amen.

**\*OPENING HYMN: 420 "We Praise You God"**

**\*CALL TO RECONCILIATION:**

Despite our foolish and angry words, God continues to speak of mercy to us. Despite our best efforts to be faithless in our living, God remains faithful in keeping the promise to forgive us and restore us to wholeness. Let us confess our sins to God, so that God's hope and grace might endure in our brokenness.

**\*UNISON PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS:**

**God beyond borders, we know that on our way to worship, we may not have noticed the exiles in our**

**neighborhoods. We admit how easy it is for us to wander down the streets of temptation, pausing at the corner of easy choices. We fall silent in the presence of those who speak words of anger and hate. We tolerate a culture that suspects all who are different from us.**

**Have mercy on us, O God, for surely you take the side of justice. Open our hearts to all the wonders you are performing in our lives. You gift us with those of other cultures, that our lives might be blessed. You send us friends out of places we least expect, that our community might be enriched. You call us to be generous with our blessings, so others might be graced with the gift of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.**

*Silence is kept*

**\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON:**

God challenges us, God encourages us. God confronts us, and God accepts us. God works wonders in our midst and gives us the eyes, the hearts, the souls to see such miracles.

**God forgives us, God guides us through the wilderness of the world, God leads us home. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**\*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 two more times.)

(end) **One God always here. One God always here.**

**SCRIPTURE LESSONS: Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7**

**From the “Message”**

29 <sup>1-2</sup> This is the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to what was left of the elders among the exiles, to the priests and prophets and all the exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken to Babylon from Jerusalem, including King Jehoiachin, the queen mother, the government leaders, and all the skilled laborers and craftsmen.

<sup>4</sup> This is the Message from God-of-the-Angel-Armies, Israel’s God, to all the exiles I’ve taken from Jerusalem to Babylon:

<sup>5</sup> “Build houses and make yourselves at home.

“Put in gardens and eat what grows in that country.

<sup>6</sup> “Marry and have children. Encourage your children to marry and have children so that you’ll thrive in that country and not waste away.

<sup>7</sup> “Make yourselves at home there and work for the country’s welfare.

“Pray for Babylon’s well-being. If things go well for Babylon, things will go well for you.”

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 66:1-2 Page 662**

**EPISTLE LESSON: 2 Timothy 2:8-14**

<sup>8</sup> Remember Jesus Christ, who was raised from the dead and descended from David. This is my good news. <sup>9</sup> This is the reason I’m suffering to the point that I’m in prison like a common criminal. But God’s word cannot be imprisoned. <sup>10</sup> This is why I endure everything for the sake of those who are chosen by God so that they too may experience salvation in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. <sup>11</sup> This saying is reliable:

“If we have died together, we will also live together.

<sup>12</sup> If we endure, we will also rule together.

If we deny him, he will also deny us.

<sup>13</sup> If we are disloyal, he stays faithful”

because he can’t be anything else than what he is.

**Speak, instruct, and act correctly**

<sup>14</sup> Remind them of these things and warn them in the sight of God not to engage in battles over words that aren’t helpful and only destroy those who hear them. <sup>15</sup> Make an effort to present yourself to God as a tried-and-true worker, who doesn’t need to be ashamed but is one who interprets the message of truth correctly.

**\*GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 17:11-19**

**Jesus heals a Samaritan**

<sup>11</sup> On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. <sup>12</sup> As he entered a village, ten men with skin diseases approached him. Keeping their distance from him, <sup>13</sup> they raised their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, show us mercy!”

<sup>14</sup> When Jesus saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” As they left, they were cleansed. <sup>15</sup> One of them, when he saw that he had been healed, returned and praised God with a loud voice. <sup>16</sup> He fell on his face at Jesus’ feet and thanked him. He was a Samaritan. <sup>17</sup> Jesus replied, “Weren’t ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? <sup>18</sup> No one returned to praise God except this foreigner?” <sup>19</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “Get up and go. Your faith has healed you.”

**MESSAGE: “Praise for ‘Outsiders’”**

Scholars agree that this story in Luke 17:11 has many contradictions and the point of the story may be difficult to perceive except that outsiders are not bad people. There must be something else in the story we need to take with us when we leave. So, let’s dig in and see what we can find.

First of all, this story is only in the Gospel of Luke. There are similar stories in Mark, but not exactly the same. Jesus is continuing his journey to Jerusalem. This pilgrimage was started back in chapter 9 of this gospel.

This story starts by saying the location; between Samaria and Galilee, which seems unusual for one going to Jerusalem., especially in view of Jesus’ having much earlier gone from Galilee into Samaria. This tells us that Luke is not following a chronological travelogue for this trip. It’s quite possible that Luke wanted his story to involve Jews and Samaritans so that’s why he back tracked and put the story on the border of Galilee and Samaria.

We can be impressed by the realistic detail of this account. Lepers tended to live in groups; they avoided contact with nonlepers; but they kept close enough to populated areas to receive charity. We must remember that in those days leprosy was very contagious. So they had to leave their homes and family. They could not work and they couldn’t go into the market place to shop for food if they did have any money. The idea of these groups is also interesting. There were Jews and nonJews, men and women of all ages. If they found charity they shared it with others in the group. It’s just like if there was a fire in a forest, animals who usually prey on each other, stick together in safety until the crisis is over. It’s sort of like “misery loves company”.

Another uncertain element in this text is Jesus’ command to show themselves to the priests. Did this apply also to the Samaritans who were outside the rituals of Judaism? Also, why reproach the nine for not

returning to thank Jesus when they had been told to go and show themselves to the priests? In fact, their healing occurred upon their going – their obedience apparently the expression of faith essential to their healing. Some commentators, sensitive to these questions we have, have taken the account as an idealized story joining faith, obedience, and gratitude.

It seems more natural to understand Luke 17:11-19 as a two-part story: verses 11-14 and 15-19. The first part is a healing story with all the elements of a healing: a case of evident need, a cry to Jesus for help; Jesus treats them as already headlined, as indicated in his sending them to the priests; their healing occurs in their act of obedient faith. The second part, verses 15-19, is a story of the salvation of a foreigner. It is the foreigner who praises God and gives thanks to Jesus. It is the foreigner to whom Jesus says, “Your faith has made you well”. Clearly, the expression “made you well” refers to some blessing other than the cleaning from leprosy that has been given to all including those who did not give thanks and who did not praise God. That additional blessing we usually term “salvation.”

Assuming that the other lepers were Jews, the story makes two points vital to Luke; the faith of the foreigners and the blindness of Israel. In a sense this story is a foreshadowing of Acts, (which Luke also wrote) the turning of the Christian missionaries from Jews to

Gentiles. It is very important to notice that Jesus did not reject the nine Jewish lepers. They were blessed with his healing. Neither did Jesus set aside Jewish law; he sent them to the priests as the law required. But by the time Luke was written (probably 60 years or more after Jesus returned to his father) such stories probably were told in abundance: the Gentile responds affirmatively; Jesus’ own people do not.

We cannot suppose that Luke told this story simply to paint a favorable picture of a Gentile and an unfavorable one of the Jews. Quite possibly the church in Luke’s day had begun to presume upon God’s favor and to take blessings for granted, without gratitude. If so, again it was, and is, the outsider who teaches the people of God what faith is, what praise is, and what thanksgiving is. Amen.

**SPECIAL MUSIC: “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” Video**

#### **PASTORAL PRAYER:**

Awesome Creator: you bring us together in this sanctuary, calling us from all those places where we live and work and play, so we can recognize you in faces lined with wisdom; so we can hear you in the questions of the smallest child; so we can sit up and notice all that you do in our midst.

Cradler of Grace: you speak your words, so we might hear the sighs of the outsiders of our world.

You walk the borderlands of our joys and sorrows,  
so we might embrace your healing.  
You enter our hearts, despite our best efforts to close  
them to your presence.

Enduring Spirit: when we are tempted to imprison the  
good news with our politics, our fears, our prejudices,  
our doubts - whisper that Word which shatters all chains,  
and sets us free to be God's people.

Today we especially remember all those on our prayer  
list and all others who are struggling with their health,  
are in pain, who are discouraged at their slow healing,  
who are mourning over lost loved ones, who are worried  
about the diagnosis their dr. may give them this week.  
Comforting God, be with them all so they might feel your  
presence.

We pause now to collectively meditate on one word –  
peace. There is power when groups of people pray on  
one word together. **Peace, peace, peace.** We pause  
now for 1 minute in our silent but very loud pray.  
All these things we pray in the name of Jesus. . .

#### **OUR LORD'S PRAYER:**

**PRAYER RESPONSE: Three-fold Amen 812**

**Amen, Amen, A – men.**

**INVITATION TO GENEROSITY:** As managers for God of  
the world's resources, we share the hurt of those who

are poor, sick, and in mourning. Our wealth is meant to  
bring good news to them in Jesus' name. We invest in  
the church's outreach, that our money may serve God,  
not trap us in idolatry.

#### **OFFERTORY: "Song of Trust" Bertha R. Frick**

**\*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 DEDICATION/OFFERING:**

May our gratitude be offered with these gifts in these  
moments, praying that what we share with others will  
bring them healing, hope, grace, and peace. We pray  
this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

#### **\*CLOSING HYMN: 397 "Thank Our God for Sisters, Brothers"**

#### **\*SENDING:**

Having prayed for the places where we live, we go forth.  
**God sends us into the apartments and homes,  
into the streets and playgrounds to bring hope.**  
Having gathered with God's people of every age, we go  
forth.

**We will join Jesus in serving folks whose birthdays are  
celebrated in decades,  
and newborns who are facing poverty and fear.**

Having shared prayers and songs with friends and  
strangers, we go forth.

**We will welcome those who the world forgets but who  
God loves, as surely as we have been embraced by the  
Spirit.**

**BENEDICTION RESPONSE: “Let There Be Peace on  
Earth”**

**THE BELL IS RUNG:**

**POSTLUDE: “Who Is on the Lord’s Side?”  
Robert J. Hughes**