

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2025
THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
LUKE 14:25-33 "ESTIMATE THE COST"



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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 LESSONS

Jeremiah 18:1-11 The message of the Lord to Jeremiah at the potter's house sets out the alternatives for Israel. The prophet declares the Creator's privilege of breaking and remaking a flawed nation.

Philemon 1-21 Paul's brief but moving letter to Philemon which exposes the tensions created when social relationships are redefined by the demands of the gospel.

Luke 14:25-33 In the cluster of Jesus' sayings collected by Luke in today's Gospel text, the cost of discipleship and the need to calculate that cost thoughtfully are addressed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER CONCERNS:

THE BELL IS RUNG:

PRELUDE: "Come, Now Is the Time to Worship"
Brian Doerksen

PENNIES FOR MISSION: Deaconess Parish Nurse Ministries

***RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP:**

(Inspired by Jeremiah 18 and Psalm 139)

One: We come into your house, Divine Potter. We are your clay.

Many: We praise you, O God. Wonderful are your works.
Mold us again!

One: We bring our burdens and concerns, our hopes and dreams, our doubts and our delights.

**Many: We praise you, O God. Wonderful are your works.
Hold us in your sure and righteous hand!**

One: We seek your wisdom. Reveal your direction and our path.

**Many: We praise you, O God. Wonderful are your works.
Rebuild and replant us!**

***INVOCATION:**

Sovereign God, you are the Potter who has fashioned us into being as a community. Dwell in our midst. Share your wisdom and open every point of receptivity within us. You are holy, gracious, and kind. As we gather, we recommit to accept the joys and the costs of discipleship. May you be glorified in our worship, and may we be transformed as we encounter you and your way anew this day. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN: 204 "Take up Your Cross**

***UNISON PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE**
Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
We pray in the assurance that your mercy, O God, is available and near to us. And, we also pray in hope that your mercy will release us from inaction, apathy, and overwhelm so that we may be your instruments of redemption, reparation, and restoration in the world. Forgive us, perhaps most of all, for simply seeking your mercy for the ills of the world rather than your miraculous power to rise in us to overcome them. Grant us grace to pray boldly with our words and our actions in your name.

***WORDS OF GRACE**

Beloved, God's mercy is available and so is God's power at

work in us. We do receive the grace of the Potter to be used to break down what needs to be deconstructed and reconstructed and to support what needs repair and restoration. A new world that reflects the realm of God is possible through 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 LESSONS: Jeremiah 18:1-11 From The Message
To Worship the Big Lie**

18 ¹⁻² God told Jeremiah, "Up on your feet! Go to the potter's house. When you get there, I'll tell you what I have to say." ³⁻⁴ So I went to the potter's house, and sure enough, the potter was there, working away at his wheel. Whenever the pot the potter was working on turned out badly, as sometimes happens when you are working with clay, the potter would simply start over and use the same clay to make another pot.

⁵⁻¹⁰ Then God's Message came to me: "Can't I do just as this potter does, people of Israel?" God's Decree! "Watch this potter. In the same way that this potter works his clay, I work on you, people of Israel. At any moment I may decide to pull up a people or a country by the roots and get rid of them. But if they repent of their wicked lives, I will think twice and start over with them. At another time I might decide to plant a people or country, but if they don't

cooperate and won't listen to me, I will think again and give up on the plans I had for them.

¹¹ "So, tell the people of Judah and citizens of Jerusalem my Message: 'Danger! I'm shaping doom against you, laying plans against you. Turn back from your doomed way of life. Straighten out your lives.'

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18 Page 715

EPISTLE LESSON: Philemon 1-21

Greeting

¹ From Paul, who is a prisoner for the cause of Christ Jesus, and our brother Timothy.

To Philemon our dearly loved coworker, ² Apphia our sister, Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church that meets in your house.

³ May the grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Paul's prayer for Philemon

⁴ Philemon, I thank my God every time I mention you in my prayers ⁵ because I've heard of your love and faithfulness, which you have both for the Lord Jesus and for all God's people. ⁶ I pray that your partnership in the faith might become effective by an understanding of all that is good among us in Christ. ⁷ I have great joy and encouragement because of your love, since the hearts of God's people are refreshed by your actions, my brother.

Paul's appeal for Onesimus

⁸ Therefore, though I have enough confidence in Christ to command you to do the right thing, ⁹ I would rather appeal to you through love. I, Paul—an old man, and now also a prisoner for Christ Jesus— ¹⁰ appeal to you for my child

Onesimus. I became his father in the faith during my time in prison. ¹¹ He was useless to you before, but now he is useful to both of us. ¹² I'm sending him back to you, which is like sending you my own heart. ¹³ I considered keeping him with me so that he might serve me in your place during my time in prison because of the gospel. ¹⁴ However, I didn't want to do anything without your consent so that your act of kindness would occur willingly and not under pressure. ¹⁵ Maybe this is the reason that Onesimus was separated from you for a while so that you might have him back forever— ¹⁶ no longer as a slave but more than a slave—that is, as a dearly loved brother. He is especially a dearly loved brother to me. How much more can he become a brother to you, personally and spiritually in the Lord!

¹⁷ So, if you really consider me a partner, welcome Onesimus as if you were welcoming me. ¹⁸ If he has harmed you in any way or owes you money, charge it to my account. ¹⁹ I, Paul, will pay it back to you (I'm writing this with my own hand). Of course, I won't mention that you owe me your life.

²⁰ Yes, brother, I want this favor from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹ I'm writing to you, confident of your obedience and knowing that you will do more than what I ask.

***GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 14:25-33**

Discipleship's demands

²⁵ Large crowds were traveling with Jesus. Turning to them, he said, ²⁶ "Whoever comes to me and doesn't hate father and mother, spouse and children, and brothers and

sisters—yes, even one’s own life—cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ Whoever doesn’t carry their own cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

²⁸ “If one of you wanted to build a tower, wouldn’t you first sit down and calculate the cost, to determine whether you have enough money to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when **you** have laid the foundation but couldn’t finish the tower, all who see it will begin to belittle you. ³⁰ They will say, ‘Here’s the person who began construction and couldn’t complete it!’ ³¹ Or what king would go to war against another king without first sitting down to consider whether his ten thousand soldiers could go up against the twenty thousand coming against him? ³² And if he didn’t think he could win, he would send a representative to discuss terms of peace while his enemy was still a long way off. ³³ In the same way, none of you who are unwilling to give up all of your possessions can be my disciple.

MESSAGE: “The Cost of Discipleship”

Well, our gentle Jesus did it again. He surprised us again with his straight-forward, tell-it-like-it-is, no sugar-coated truth. “If you want to be my disciple, you have to hate your family and give up all your possessions!” That’s hardly the way to make friends and influence people. But Jesus is not looking for just friends and influential people. He’s looking for people who will give up everything they have and everything they thought was valuable and necessary, to enter this kingdom Jesus is talking about.

Following Jesus is no walk-in-the-park; no lavish banquets with lots of food; no praise from people you don’t know; no rooms in the best inn; no victory parades through

town with you on a fancy float waving to the crowds and handing out candy; no pictures of you in the newspaper unless its pictures of you being hauled off to jail for demonstrating without a license.

Do you think that’s what those people thought it would be to just follow Jesus around? Although it’s true. He did feed them and give them free medical care. Perhaps these would-be disciples saw high priests and pharisees strutting around in their fancy robes and thought they would get to do that.

However, the truth is to be a disciple requires traveling by foot on dusty roads throughout the area; food is not guaranteed; sleeping out in the open where there are fleas and ticks and wild animals and there are no sleeping bags or extra cloaks or clothes. For some people, the hardest part of being a disciple is telling strangers about the good news of Jesus, teaching everything they have learned about the kingdom, and giving compelling sermons.

And here’s another sacrifice the followers must make; they must leave their family behind and know that they might never see them again. They must also leave behind their self; their old way of thinking; their old priorities; their “idols”; their old images of God. In other words, they must learn to hate them self.

And the most expensive cost of discipleship is being prepared for a shameful death on a cross, just like your hero, Jesus.

Now don’t everybody run for the door; there is good news here. Stop and think about it. All these things I listed that Jesus told the would-be disciples to give up, are they necessary in our lives? Do we need frequent banquets with

a seat at the head table? Do we need more clothes? Do we need the best hotel suites? Do we need limousines and chauffeurs to drive us around? Do we need family? That's a tough one. I think Jesus was referring to family as a distraction. Will they try to talk you out of being a Christian or going to church on Sunday? We don't need that.

What do we need? We need to know that God loves each and everyone of us. We need to love God and our neighbors. We need to treat others as children of God just as we are God's children. We need to take care of each other. We need to show others that because we learn about Jesus more and more each day, that it's a way to grow closer to God. We need to follow God's will for us and it will help prepare us for the kingdom of God which will be the greatest gift of all. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC: "O How He Loves You and Me" Video

PASTORAL PRAYER:

A request to my brothers and sisters of faith.

"Won't you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you? I pray that I might have the grace to let you be my servant, too. We are pilgrims on a journey, we are travelers on the road; We are here to help each other go the mile and bear the load. I will hold the Christ-light for you in the shadow of your fear; I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear. I will weep when you are weeping; when you laugh, I'll laugh with you. I will share your joy and sorrow till we've seen this journey through. When we sing to God in heaven we shall find such harmony, born of all we've known together of Christ's love and agony."

Our Gracious and loving God, we give you thanks for all your blessings as we strive to be ready for your kingdom. Strong One, without your help there is no way we can confront the forces of evil within us and around us. Without your enablement through the Holy Spirit, there is no way we can begin, continue, and complete the work you want us to do. Discipline our spirits and keep us in the way of a disciple.

Today we remember all those on our prayer list and all those in our hearts who need your loving arms around them. May they feel your strength and love through all challenges in life. May all our brothers and sisters around the world who need food, water, shelter, and peace in their surroundings. We pray for those affected by storms, floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes in our country. We pray for the people in our Capitol who lead this country. May they feel your love, strength, and wisdom to care for the rest of us. We pray these things in the name of your Son, Jesus . . .

OUR LORD'S PRAYER:

PRAYER 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:

Discipleship importantly includes sharing of our financial resources in support of the ministry of the gospel. Let us share materially in meeting the obligations of this church community.

OFFERTORY: "Living for Jesus" Thomas Chrisholm

***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:**
Generous God, receive our offerings and magnify them to
propel the ministry of this church. May the community
and the world benefit from our generous giving. In
gratitude, we pray with our contributions. Amen.

***COMMUNION HYMN: 343 "Jesus Took the Bread"**

HOLY COMMUNION

Liturgy written by Liz Miller

"It's Not the Same without You"

INVITATION:

There are too many places in our world where the price of admission is more than we can afford, where we are asked to leave pieces of ourselves at the door, where we are told there's no room for one more.

At the Communion table there's always room, room to spare. Yes, we will squeeze you in right over there. Take a seat, pull up a stool or your wheelchair or walker, settle in a pew or on a cushion square.

This is a table that is not just a table. It is the sign of God's love here on earth, an affirmation of your sacred worth.

This is a table that, whether we are many or few, would not be the same if it didn't include you.

THANKS AND PRAISE: We begin this way:

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

We give thanks to you, O God, for drawing us close, for feeding our bodies, for nurturing our spirits, for loving us exactly as we are. We carry within us memories of rejection and loneliness, shame and self-loathing, guilt and fear. And so we give thanks at your table we embody a different message:

We are beloved. We are enough. We are worthy.

We feast together with gratitude, hungry to build a world where every body is honored, where every bruised and broken spirit is healed, where everyone is invited to receive the gift of unconditional love.

REMEMBERING JESUS:

We remember that night in the upper room, Jesus at a table crowded with disciples. He knew their pasts, the places that had formed them. He knew their future, the pain and sorrow to come. He saw the places deep within that they tried to keep hidden, and still he offered them the cup of salvation and the bread of life, gifts to show them they are loved, always loved.

PRAYER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

Come, Holy Spirit, come, transform these ordinary things into sacred gifts.

Prepare our bodies to be fed. Prepare our hearts to receive a love that is more persistent than fear, and a life stronger than death.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE:

The table is ready. Come to feast, come to be known, come to receive God's grace.

SHARING THE ELEMENTS:

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

Let's say thanks for all we have received.

Thanks be to God whose name is Love.

Thanks be to God who hungers to know us and be known by us. As we leave this table, may we carry with us a taste of the inherent worth and dignity of every person, offering the same to all we meet. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN: 350 "Now in the Days of Youth"**

***BENEDICTION:**

Go, ready and committed

To accept the cost and joy of discipleship,

To be servants in the service of the whole human family

To proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil

To be the church in the world

BENEDICTION RESPONSE: "Let There Be Peace in Earth"

THE BELL IS RUNG:

POSTLUDE: "March in D" G.F. Handel