THE TWENTYFIFTH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST OR STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY
November 15th, 2026 – 9:30 AM

WELCOME



Our readings during November speak of the end times. Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the LORD will be filled with wrath and distress. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread, and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.

- ✞ Officiant & Preacher – The Reverend Wes Smith
- ✞ Liturgists – Dar Duricek & Bob Durham

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✢ one God, our dwelling place for all generations, whose compassion never slumbers. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy God, **we confess that we have trusted in our preparation instead of your invitation. We prioritize our piety over care for your beloved. We trust the voice of our shame and fear, which keeps us from entering fully into relationship with you and others. We are not awake to the coming of your reign. Rouse us and rescue us, that we may enter into your joy. Amen.**

Inherit the riches of God's grace. ✢ Jesus, the good shepherd, feeds you with his mercy. You are forgiven. Blessed are you. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN: ELW#678 - Lord, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

Prayer of the Day - Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

GOD'S HOLY WORD

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18



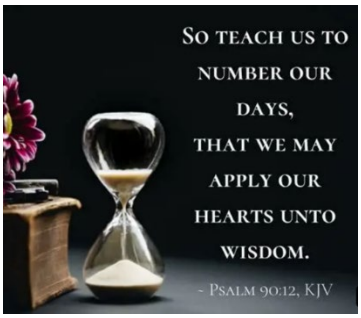
7 Be silent before the Lord GOD, for the day of the LORD is at hand! The LORD has prepared a sacrifice; he has consecrated his guests.

12 At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people who settle like dregs in wine, those who say in their hearts, "The LORD will not do good, nor will he do harm." 13 Their wealth shall be plundered and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them.

14 The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter; the warrior cries aloud there. 15 That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, 16 a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.

17 I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against the LORD, their blood shall be poured out like dust and their flesh like dung.
18 Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the LORD's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed, for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth. The Word of the Lord…**Thanks be to God!**

Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12



1 Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.

2 **Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the earth were born, from age to age you are God.**

3 You turn us back to the dust and say, "Turn back, O children of earth."

4 **For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past and like a watch in the night;**

5 you sweep them away like a dream, they fade away suddenly like the grass:

6 **in the morning it is green and flourishes; in the evening it is dried up and withered.**

7 For we are consumed by your anger; we are afraid because of your wrath.

8 **Our iniquities you have set before you, and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.**

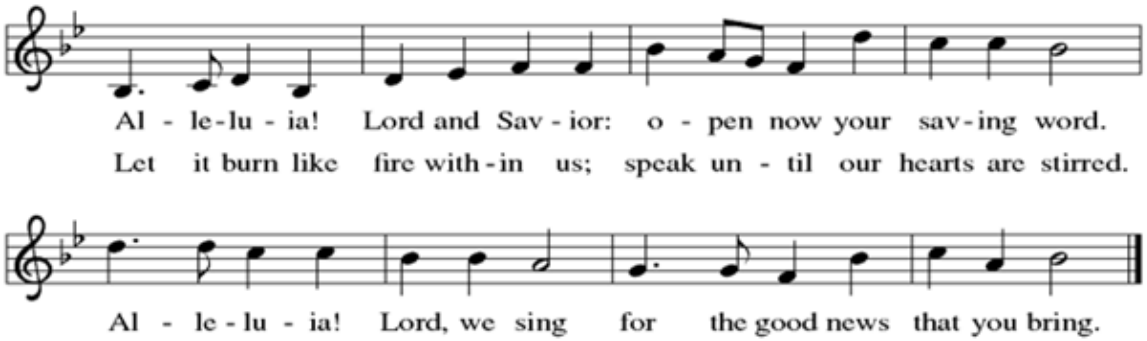
9 When you are angry, all our days are gone; we bring our years to an end like a sigh.

10 **The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength even eighty; yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow, for they pass away quickly and we are gone.**

11 Who regards the power of your wrath? Who rightly fears your indignation?

12 **So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



HOLY GOSPEL

A Reading from the Holy Gospel of Matthew 25: 14 - 30; **Glory to You, O Lord!**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] 14 "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; 15 to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At once 16 the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents. 17 In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. 18 But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

19 After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. 20 Then
the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying,
'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' 21 His master
said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few
things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' 22 And the
one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two
talents; see, I have made two more talents.' 23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and
trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many
things; enter into the joy of your master.' 24 Then the one who had received the one talent also
came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not
sow and gathering where you did not scatter, 25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent
in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' 26 But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy
slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not scatter?
27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would
have received what was my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him, and give it to
the one with the ten talents. 29 For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will
have an abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken
away. 30 As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be
weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "

The Gospel of the Lord…**Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!**

SERMON – Investments for Life

The Reverend Wes Smith

HYMN: ELW#679 - For the Fruit of All Creation

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

✞ *We recognize all joining us virtually and give voice to any greetings or prayer requests.*

United with the great cloud of witnesses, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation. *A brief silence.*

You build up the church as a community of faithful witnesses throughout the generations. Enliven the worship, outreach, and service work of our congregations and ministries with the hope of your good news. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

As the nights grow longer in the northern hemisphere, make us mindful of the earth's need for rest. Provide for fallow fields and hibernating animals; show us how to curb human impact on vulnerable lands and species. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Rescue all nations and peoples from violence, displacement, or famine. Disrupt complacency among national and local leaders. Recommit our communities to transforming the systems that divide and oppress into those that empower and unite.
God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In your embrace, we find refuge from all trials and troubles. Care for families who are separated or estranged, accompany all undergoing medical procedures or mental health treatment, and reassure any who are ill or despairing. Grace those from our families and community that we now name silently in our hearts, or out loud, with our prayers and your blessings. *(Please name silently or out loud)*. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bless all who serve in congregational leadership: council members, finance committees, volunteer coordinators, and property teams (*other specific leaders or groups may be named*). Encourage healthy stewardship of time, talents, and resources for the mission of the gospel. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Guide us in our search for a shepherd to lead Zion with humility, love, and grace. Lord, bless our search process, our call committee and open doors to reveal the right candidate to us. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The faithful of every age trust in the hope of your saving grace. In thanksgiving for the ways our ancestors have journeyed before us, we remember all who have entered eternal life in you. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your steadfast love, faithful God, we entrust all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus, your beloved. **Amen.**

OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to offer, the fruit of our labor and of the skills you have given us. We ask that you use them and us in the service of you kingdom here in this world to the glory of your name. **Amen.**

Blessing - The holy Trinity, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you with wisdom to welcome the reign of God, today and always. **Amen.**

***CLOSING HYMN*: ELW#689 - Praise and Thanksgiving**

Dismissal: Go in peace. Encourage one another. **Thanks be to God.**

Notes:

Church of the Light

Zion Lutheran Church LBI

18th Street & Central Ave
PO Box 152
Barnegat Light, NJ 08006
(609) 494-8676
ZionChurchLBI@gmail.com

www.ZionLBI.com