

# THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 7th, 2022



## CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

140 Russell Avenue  
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1  
Church: 905-685-8294  
[www.christlutheransc.ca](http://www.christlutheransc.ca)

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**Office Hours:** Tuesday to Friday—9 a.m. – 12 noon  
**Bulletin Announcements:** Please send to [secretary@christlutheransc.ca](mailto:secretary@christlutheransc.ca).  
Deadline for submission is Thursday at 9 a.m.

**Pastor:** Pastor Todd Hoeffs (289-362-0113) [pastortoddhoeffs@gmail.com](mailto:pastortoddhoeffs@gmail.com)  
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**Prayer:** Grant us, Lord, the Spirit to think and do always such things as are pleasing in Your sight that we, who without You cannot do anything that is good, may by You be enabled to live according to Your will; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Monday: Matt. 5: 13-16                      Wednesday: Jas. 2: 14-17                      Friday: Phil. 1: 6-11  
Tuesday: Gal. 6: 7-10                      Thursday: 1 Cor. 12: 12-26                      Saturday: Matt. 21: 18-22

**SCRIPTURE MEMORY MOMENTS:** A fun way to help with memorization is to use ‘**sign language**’. We focus on learning to ‘sign’ the Lord’s Prayer. There are 3 separate videos to help you learn it step by step.

- PART 1: <https://youtu.be/I92GlnwSPOs>
- PART 2: <https://youtu.be/k8vy2IPuQGg>
- PART 3: <https://youtu.be/u2OoDacXTsw>

**Musician:** 10 a.m. – Mayumi Munoz  
**Reader:** 10 a.m. – Paul Mason  
**Greeter:** 10 a.m. – Judy Slingerland

**BAPTISM THIS MORNING:** We are pleased to welcome into God’s family by Holy Baptism today, **Frank Jonathan Thiessen Gall**, born May 28, 2022, third son of Steven & Lisa Gall, grandson to Twila Gall and great-nephew to Frank & Ivy Parkhouse. Godparents are Nathan & Victoria Kendall. May God bless and keep him always.

**YOU ARE INVITED:** Former members and friends are invited to honor Pastor Ray Kirk as he celebrates 50 years in the ministry. He was ordained at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Beamsville. A special service at Emmanuel with Pastor Kirk officiating will be held **Sunday, August 7, 2022 at 11 a.m.** with a potluck to follow.

<b>Last Sunday Attendance: July 31st, 2022    Attn: 10 a.m. – 78</b>					
	<b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>Weekly Need</u></b>	<b><u>Last Sunday</u></b>	<b><u>Year To Date</u></b>	<b><u>+ or – (--)</u></b>
Current:	283,291.00	5,554.73	2,016.40	119,750.16	(38,239.05)
LCC Missions	20,000.00	392.16	342.50	8,632.00	( 2,521.85)
Property Improvement:			146.50	3,977.00	

**Notice to Church Extension Fund Depositors:** The Church Extension Fund (CEF) is winding down its operations and as of now all depositors with current addresses have received their deposited funds plus the interest owing. However, we have a number of unclaimed savings accounts and savings certificates as we do not have current contact information for these. If you or someone you know thinks they may have a CEF account which has not been redeemed, please contact Darryll Holland at: 800-465-8179 ext4 or [dholland@lcceast.ca](mailto:dholland@lcceast.ca). Also if you are in possession of God Bank Savings Stamps or Tracky Stamps, these too can be redeemed by returning the books or stamps to: Lutheran East District, 275 Lawrence Ave., Kitchener, ON N2M 1Y3.

**PASTOR TODD & FAMILY** will be away on vacation from August 14-24. Rev. John Makey will lead the services on August 14 & 21. Please phone the church office or email: secretary@christlutheransc.ca for any inquiries or pastoral emergencies. Thank you!

**Post-Covid we want to blow our doors open  
with activity.  
We need YOUR input to provide “WHAT” activities.**

**Our goal is to:**

1. Crack the door
2. Open a little wider
3. Blow the doors off!



**We want YOU to brainstorm:**

**What activities do you feel would engage members, families and friends?**

Consider activities for different ages:

- ✓ babies / toddlers / children
- ✓ tweens / youth / young adults
- ✓ singles / married
- ✓ mid-life / seniors

In-person “**POST IT**” Brainstorming will be held:

**Sunday, September 11th**  
**Sunday, Sunday 18th**

**For more information contact:**

Louise 905-329-8579 (parish.assistant@christlutheransc.ca)  
or Kathy (k.kuhl@gmx.com)

# LSB DIVINE SERVICE SETTING ONE

August 7, 2022 + 10 AM Worship

BAPTISMAL SONG:

*"Baptized in Water"*

*"Praise & Thanksgiving" tune*

**Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, cleansed by the blood of Christ our king:  
Heirs of salvation, trusting his promise, faithfully now His praises we sing**

**Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, dead in the tomb with Christ our king:  
One with His rising, freed and forgiven, thankfully now His praises we sing.**

**Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, marked with the sign of Christ our king:  
Born of the Spirit, we are God's children; joyfully now His praises we sing.**

*Words: Michael Saward (1932-); © by Jubilate Hymns, Ltd. (admin. by Hope Publishing Co., Carol Stream, IL 60188). All rights reserved. Used by permission. <http://www.oremus.org/hymnal/b/b001.html>*

## **+ Baptism of Frank Jonathan Thiessen Gall +**

*Parents: Steven & Lisa Gall*

*Godparents: Nathan & Victoria Kendall*

### **ORDER OF HOLY BAPTISM**

*The Lutheran Church of Australia Worship Resources*

#### **SCRIPTURAL COMMAND:**

Our Lord Jesus Christ says: All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to keep everything I have entrusted to you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. Through baptism God graciously forgives us our sins and unites us with our Lord Jesus Christ, so that we share in His death and resurrection.

#### **GOSPEL ADDRESS**

As people brought children to Jesus that He might touch them, the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this He was extremely angry. He said: Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them, because the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth; unless you receive the Kingdom of God like a little child you shall never enter it.

#### **PRESENTATION:**

Who brings this child for holy baptism? **I/we do.**

How is this child named? (Name is spoken)

#### **ADMONITION:**

Since you as parents and sponsors have brought (Name) to be baptized, you are responsible for his/her upbringing in the Lutheran Church. Remember him/her in your prayers. Bring him/her to the services in God's House and teach him/her the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the Ten Commandments. Remind him/her of her baptism, set him/her a good example, and provide for his/her instruction in the faith that he/she may join you and all believers around the Lord's Table to feast on Jesus' Body and Blood. Do you intend to joyfully do this? **Yes, I/we do.**

#### **MARKING OF THE CROSS:**

(Name), receive the sign of the holy cross †, upon your forehead and upon your heart, to mark you as one redeemed by Christ the crucified.

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Let us ask the blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ on (Name) and pray together the prayer He has taught us:

**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.**

#### PUBLIC CONFESSION OF THE FAITH:

I ask you now to publicly speak your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the Church, the faith in which we baptize.

Do you renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways?

**Yes, I do renounce them.**

Do you believe in God, the Father almighty?

**Yes, I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord?

**Yes, I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty, from thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**Yes, I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the + life everlasting. Amen.**

#### BAPTISM:

(Name), I baptize you in the name of the Father † and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit †. Amen.

May God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has given you the new birth by water and the Spirit and has forgiven you all your sins, strengthen you with His Spirit, so that you receive eternal life. **Amen.**

#### PRESENTATION OF CANDLE:

Receive this burning light. Live always by the Light of Christ and be ever watchful for His coming that you may meet Him with joy and enter with Him to the Marriage Feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom, which has no end.

Let your light so shine before others, that they see your good works and glorify Your Father Who is in Heaven.

#### PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, we join with (Name's) parents in thanking you for giving them this child and for adopting him/her as Your own child in holy baptism. Strengthen him/her faith by Your Holy Spirit, so that his/her sinful self may die each day and he/she may rise to new life with Christ forever. As You have written his/her name in the book of life and have made him/her a member of the body of Your Son, guide him/her, so that, with all Your saints, he/she may one day abide in Your Heavenly Home; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### PRESENTATION OF BAPTIZED:

Through Baptism, God has added this new brother/sister a member of the Priesthood we all share in Christ Jesus, that we may proclaim the praise of God and show forth His creative and redeeming Word to all the world:

**We welcome you into the Lord's family. We receive you as fellow members of the body of Christ, children of the same Heavenly Father, and workers with us in His Kingdom.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**SPOKEN KYRIE: O Lord, have mercy on us; O Christ, have mercy on us;  
O Lord, have mercy on us and give us Your peace. Amen.**

**HYMN OF PRAISE:**



**A** Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His peo - ple on earth.

**G** Lord God, heav-en-ly king, al-might-y God and Fa - ther:

We wor-ship You, we give You thanks, we praise You for Your glo-ry.

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.

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.

### **SERVICE OF THE WORD**

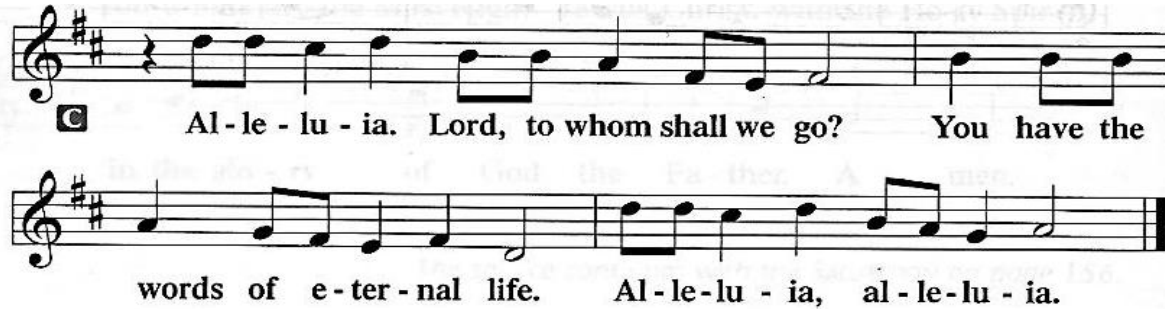
**The Old Testament:** *Genesis 15:1-6* After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.' But Abram said, 'O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' And Abram said, 'You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.' But the word of the Lord came to him, 'This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.' He brought him outside and said, 'Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness. This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

**The Epistle :** *Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16*

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible....By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old—and Sarah herself was barren—because he considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, 'as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.' All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

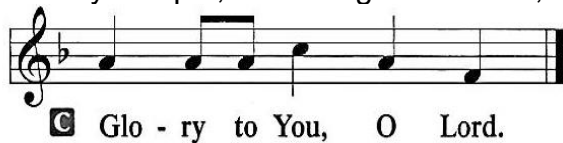
**ALLELUIA**



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

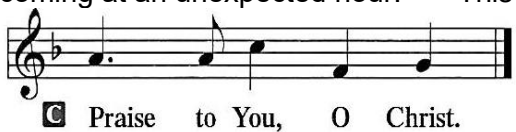
**The Holy Gospel** *St. Luke 12: 32-40*

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke, the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter:



Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

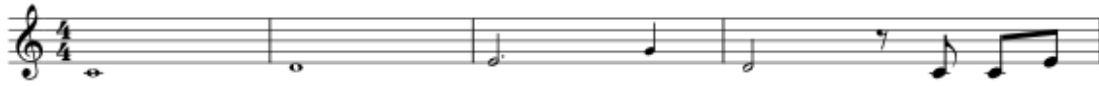
[Jesus said:] 'Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 'Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves. 'But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.' This is the Gospel of the Lord. **-4-**



Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY:

“Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me”



- 1. What gift of
- (2. The night is)
- (3. No fate I)
- (4. With ev - 'ry)



grace is Je - sus, my Re - deem - er. There is no more for heav - en now to  
 dark, but I am not for - sak - en, for by my side the Sav - iour, he will  
 dread, I know I am for - giv - en, the fu - ture sure, the price, it has been  
 breath I long to fol - low Je - sus, for he has said that he will bring me



give. He is my joy, my right - eous - ness and free - dom, my stead - fast  
 stay. I lab - our on in weak - ness and re - joic - ing, for in my  
 paid. For Je - sus bled and suf - fered for my par - don, and he was  
 home. And day by day I know he will re - new me un - til I



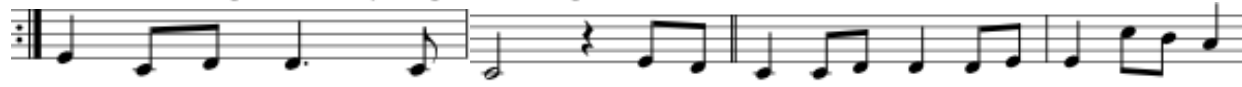
love, my deep and bound - less peace. To this I hold: my hope is on - ly  
 need, his pow - er is dis - played. To this I hold: my Shep - herd will de -  
 raised to o - ver - throw the grave. To this I hold: my sin has been de -  
 stand with joy be - fore the throne. To this I hold: my hope is on - ly



Je - sus. For my life is whol - ly bound to his. Oh how  
 - fend me. Through the deep - est val - ley he will lead. Oh the  
 - feat - ed. Je - sus now, and ev - er, is my plea. Oh the  
 Je - sus. All the glo - ry ev - er - more to him. When the



strange and di - vine, I can sing: all is mine! Yet not I, but through Christ in me.  
 night has been won, and I shall o - ver - come! Yet not I, but through Christ in me.  
 chains are re - leased, I can sing: I am free! Yet not I, but through Christ in me.  
 race is com - plete, still my lips shall re - peat: Yet not



I, but through Christ in me. When the race is com - plete, still my lips shall re - peat:



Yet not I, but through Christ in me. Yet not I, but through Christ in me.

CLI Song # 7121852 -- Jonny Robinson | Michael Farren | Rich Thompson © 2018 CityAlight Music (Admin. by Integrity Music);  
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MESSAGE

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Jesus tells us in Matthew’s Gospel, that when you are offering your gift at the altar,  
**And if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you,**



leave your gift there before the altar and go;

**first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.**

Friends in Christ: let us confess our sins to God our Father, and ask Him to forgive us through Jesus Christ our Saviour. *[Brief prayerful silence]*

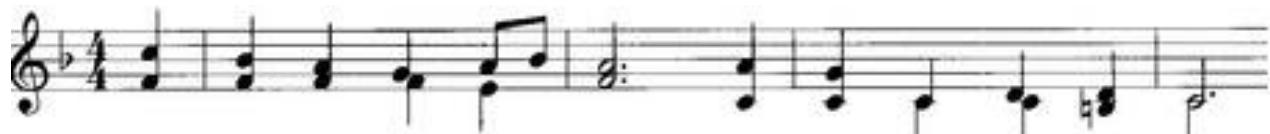
Dear God of peace,

**We confess that we are not a people at peace—with others or with ourselves. We bring to you all that tears us apart: discord in our lives and families, violence in our community and world, even our own conflicted hearts. In your mercy, mend us. Cast out our sin. Re-join us to one another and to you. Let peace reign over all the earth, through the Prince of peace, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.**

In the place of Jesus Christ and by His Holy Command, as His called and ordained servant, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**OFFERINGS** *are gathered*

**OFFERING SONG:** *"We Give Thee But Thine Own"*



1 We give thee but thine own, What-e'er the gift may be;  
2 May we thy boun-ties thus As stew-ards true re-ceive



All that we have is thine a-lone, A trust, O Lord, from thee.  
And glad-ly, as thou bless-est us, To thee our first-fruits give.

6 And we believe thy Word  
Though dim our faith may be:  
Whate'er for thine we do, O Lord,  
We do it unto thee.

Text: William W. How, 1823-97  
Tune: William H. Monk, 1823-89

ENERGY  
SM

## THE PRAYERS

Eternal God, our Fatherly Protector, as we travel on through life, teach us to trust in your loving direction, blessed with faith in your dear Son, knowing that you will bring us safely home to you;

Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Be with our parishes, our Synod and her leaders. We commend to you our Synod President, our Regional Pastor, and all the hands, feet, hearts, minds and mouths, young and old, who serve all in Your name. Uphold them in their daily callings with true faith and a lide of renewal.

Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Bless our country, Canada, and help those in authority to strive for harmony, honesty and justice. Remember our Queen, Elizabeth, our Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, our Premier, Doug Ford, those in our local government, and all who maintain order and safety.

Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Guide our industry, our education, our arts, culture and leisure activities, our mass media, our science and technology. Be with the unemployed and the overworked, the sick and the aged, the poor, the needy and the lonely. We especially remember today (*names added here...*).

Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Help us to care for the land and protect its fragile environment, so that the blessings you give can be passed on to future generations. Bring unity among the different peoples of our land; those born here and those from overseas; the rich and the poor, the creative and the pragmatic, the visionaries and the planners.

Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Since You have given us grace at this time with one faithful voice to make our common concerns to You and have promised that when two or three are gathered in Your name You will give help in Your own time and fulfill the prayers of Your servants, as may be best for them; giving us in this world knowledge of Your truth, and in the world to come, everlasting life; through Jesus Christ we pray, Who lives and rules with You, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**BLESSING:**

Let us bless the Lord – **Thanks be to God.**

**BENEDICTION:**

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord upon you with favour, + and give you peace. **Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN:**

*“All Creatures Of Our God”*

*[Tune: Now All The Vault]*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1. All creatures of our God and king,<br/>lift up your voice with praises sing:<br/>Alleluia, alleluia!<br/>Bright burning sun with golden beam,<br/>soft shining moon with silver gleam,<br/>O praise him, O praise him,<br/>Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!</b></p>          | <p><b>4. Earth ever fertile, day by day<br/>bring forth your blessings on our way,<br/>O praise him, alleluia!<br/>All fruit and crops that richly grow,<br/>all trees and flow'rs God's glory show;<br/>O praise him, O praise him,<br/>Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!</b></p> |
| <p><b>5. People and nations, take your part,<br/>love and forgive with all your heart;<br/>Alleluia, alleluia!<br/>All who long pain and sorrow bear,<br/>trust God and cast on him your care;</b></p> <p><b>O praise him, O praise him,<br/>Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!</b></p> |  |

*Jubilate Hymns version of a hymn by W H Draper (1855 – 1933) after the poem 'Laudato sia dio mio', St Francis of Assisi (1182 – 1226). © in this version Jubilate Hymns 8 8 4 4 8 8 and alleluias*

**REV. TODD HOEFFS**

**Pentecost 9**

**Luke 12: 32-40**

**“Keep Searching For A Heart Of Gold...”**

**August 7, 2022**

One of the most unhelpful phrases to tell someone who's anxious is – DON'T WORRY. You don't tell a sad person: stop crying; You don't tell an ill person: stop being sick. Doesn't work, does it? It's also very uncaring. One summer I worked part-time at a hotel in my university days. Phil was a part-time desk clerk on the same shift with me. About 60 years old. VERY NERVOUS person. Arrived for work with a tote bag of snacks. Every time a customer arrived, he'd run to the back room for a few seconds And run back to the counter to assist. One time I went back to see what he did. He'd grab a handful of popcorn, shove it into his mouth, eat it rapidly, swallow, Then come out to the counter. THIS MADE HIM CALM DOWN before serving people. That's serious worry. Afterward, still chewing popcorn, Phil asked me if I worry. “Sure” I said. “What helps you?” “I usually pray.” “I pray” he responded. “I'm Episcopal, I should know that!” Well, if faith life was only about what we SHOULD know, we wouldn't need Jesus. Jesus isn't uncaring when He says “do not be afraid, little flock.” Speaking kindly to His own chosen disciples. Sitting around them is a crowd listening in on Jesus' words. We as Christians tend to think being good at our faith life is believing in things. Maybe certain Biblical stories, or doctrine, or church teachings—But that's not really what faith life is. It's good to believe things, To understand total forgiveness and never-ending love in Christ; But faith life is more than believing; It's trusting. Trusting God. And by trusting God, we trust reality. Trusting reality means We live in the present peace that RIGHT NOW we are in God's capable hands. We trust in reality because God comes to us in the here and now. God isn't just a past story. God isn't just some future hope we will maybe one day see. He is NOW. He is present. His Kingdom is here. In His Church. In you, His people. Simply because it's His GOOD PLEASURE to make this a reality. This reality is hard at times. The past is sentimental. The future always seems brighter. The present is unsatisfying. Stale. Only what we know [or think we know]. We are uncomfortable with the unknown. As unknown as the outcome of “selling your possessions and giving alms.” Alms? Which BTW is biblical charity. How do I make a purse that won't wear out? It's not a test of skill or loyalty here. He isn't expecting you to become handy garment makers. Jesus isn't challenging you to drain your bank accounts Or empty your piggy banks. I can assure you, that won't make you trust God more But trust Him even less and make you uncontrollably worried sick! It's about what we DO with what we've been given because ALL that we have is from God anyway. With what He gives we can trust what He moves us to do with it. All the world belongs to God, we are simply caretakers of it. While we all have homes and family they do not belong to us. Jesus is lessening our grip on our earthly stuff So we can live trustingly in Him, for He is not only our reality, but HE IS our identity. Christ has made His home in our hearts right from the time of our Baptism. We have what He has. He is our treasure. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. We always assume God's Heavenly Kingdom on earth is about being holier than Thou or influential or powerful or feeling extra blest somehow. If the Kingdom is here now shouldn't I feel good or have better health or more friends. Such an attitude fixates on protecting the Kingdom rather than growing it. If we are so called to be “dressed for action and have lamps lit” Then it looks like we're supposed to be willing to get ready. Which means

the Kingdom will be visible in all of the things we say or do. This means everyone we encounter gets a personal view of God's Kingdom. We are not preserving a keepsake for our own enjoyment--But sharing a wonderful treasure. This is God's good pleasure. Time here and now is spent welcoming people into the Kingdom, Helping them find a seat with us before Jesus returns. He'll be coming from the Wedding Banquet. He's going to be happy, joyous and looking forward to seeing you waiting for Him. Waiting and living in reality trusting He will be there. AS PROMISED.

This is how we release our grip on what we have and know. None of what we have matters in the end. Whatever we stand to lose of our earthly objects Doesn't matter when receiving entry into the Heavenly Feast! Where food and drink and welcome and joy never ends. The part that makes us antsy now is just waiting in the reality we have and not letting the daily grind we see get us down. The dominant culture then, like now, operates out of the fear of scarcity; that there's not enough and one must compete for scarce resources. It's true that we can run out of resources. Shortages of items we rely upon. Focusing on what's lacking creates anxiety because deep down, we're afraid we could lose what we have, which in turn could jeopardize our futures! God's Kingdom always gets misunderstood, Always seems irrelevant. Unhelpful. Even Jesus, The One ushering in this Kingdom, is always under-valued. His contemporaries didn't see anything very "remarkable" about him; Someone's always testing to see if he could deliver either a Roman political-upset or some spectacular product. Jesus' brings abundance where there's plenty for everyone. 5000 are fed with 5 loaves and 2 fish. Blind have sight with mud and divine spit. A widow's 2 thin copper coins is a better offering than immense pharisaical dollars.

Jesus doesn't offer the Kingdom many want, So when he wouldn't deliver to their expectations, the religious leaders simply write him off And plot His demise. Jesus our Priceless Treasure is emptied out at Calvary. Blood is spilled. A cross becomes His throne. Thorns His crown. Open wounds mark His shoulders not any rank. No privilege. No Angel army. Just suffering, death and burial. A death setting into motion this great wonderful Heavenly Kingdom now until He returns again. He's arriving in our own little worlds ready to bring us into His Banquet Pleased to wait on us.

WOW! Talk about a role reversal!?! From Him Who has called us to support those in need, He Who is almighty comes right up to us and serve us! Our needs are met. An example we emulate. This is why the loosening up of our grip on things is so beneficial. Jesus doesn't want to risk us missing this great event if we've over protected our lives He'll never get in. Jesus comes like a THIEF, A DIVINE CUNNING THIEF Arriving unexpectedly. Luke here uses a Greek term literally "an hour that seems like nothing." He doesn't bother trying to tear down our defenses. He sneaks around them instead. In the middle of the night of our lives. He comes when we are most vulnerable, and needy of love and hope, When nothing else can prop up our lives. For then we are really ready and trusting and hands ready to receive. Like when our hands are ready receive the Holy Communion Feast. When our hands are ready to fold and pray for someone. That's how we forgive and are kind and have mercy and love As God comes to us, So we go to others. With more than enough love in our hearts -- In this great big kingdom--on earth as it is in heaven—There is only the reality of God's goodness And hearts full of Jesus' treasure. Amen.