

Church of the Divine Love

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PROPER 17

AUGUST 31, 2025 9:00 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

A Morning Prayer – on insert

THE WORD OF GOD

Opening Acclamation page 355

Gloria page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson:

Psalm 112

Second Lesson: **Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16**

Gospel: **Luke 14:1, 7-14**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze – printed on insert

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form VI page 392

The Confession page 393

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

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Sanctus	page 362
The Lord's Prayer	page 364
The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer	page 337
The Communion of the People	
Post Communion Prayer	page 365
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Dismissal	

Sermon Sunday August 31st, 2025

Sirach 10:12-18; Psalm 112; Hebrews 13:1-8,15-16; Luke 14:1,7-14.

Sisters and brothers in Christ, “do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it” (**Hebrews 13:2**).

I remember when I was a Deacon, I was in the middle of teaching Sunday School when the outside door of our classroom opened and a man stepped in. He was unexpected, unannounced, and uninvited. He just showed up and asked what time church started. I don't know if we were entertaining an angel that day, but I do know that he was a stranger. He was not a stranger in the sense that he was unknown and unfamiliar to me. I had dealt with him before. He was, however, a stranger in the sense that he was different from me and the others in the class. His look, smell, and way of life were strange to us. I welcomed him, invited him to have a seat, told him that the service would begin in about forty minutes, and that after class I would take him into the church.

I said all the right things, at least out loud I did. But the ideas, thoughts, and conversation inside me were a bit different. My first thought was that the vestry decided to keep that door unlocked so we could get out in case of an emergency, not so a stranger could just walk in. I admit that wasn't one of my better thoughts. There was more neglect than hospitality in it. And it doesn't sound much like the kind of hospitality Jesus is talking about. When I picture his face now, I can't help but think about a couple of verses from **Matthew 25: Verse 35** in which Jesus said, “I was a stranger and you welcomed me,” and

Verse 43 in which he said, “I was a stranger and you did not welcome me.” Welcomed or not welcomed, the mark of God is on the face of the stranger, on the other, not the same. That’s not just about an unexpected Sunday School visitor. It’s also about the migrant and refugee, the pregnant welfare mother, a black teenager, a Muslim man. The mark of God is on the face of the stranger, the one who isn’t like you and me. That’s true about all those who look, act, and live differently from us. It’s true about those whose religious or political beliefs are not anything like our own. And it’s true about us and all those times we’ve felt like a stranger in our skin.

What came to your mind when I listed those different types of strangers? What feelings, thoughts, ideas did you have? Were you heart open or closed? Over and over Jesus opened his heart, spirit, and life to the stranger: lepers, prostitutes and tax collectors, the blind and lame, the poor and powerless, widows and orphans, the hungry and sick, Gentiles and foreigners, the lost and outcast, the weary and burdened, the ones on the edge and the ones hanging on by a thread. No one was excluded. All were welcomed. That’s how I want to live and yet I struggle with the stranger. I think we all do. We’re not sure what to do, what to say, or how to act. We fear the one who is different from or unknown to us. We resist being vulnerable and opening ourselves to the stranger. Here’s what I mean: How often do you answer the phone when the caller ID says, “Unknown caller?” I suspect most of us don’t. We want to know who is calling. We don’t want surprises. We want the option, the control, of deciding when and for whom we’ll answer the phone. When the doorbell rings do you first look to see if you recognize the car in the driveway? Have you ever asked your spouse, are you expecting someone? Have you ever looked out the window or peep hole and then pretended you weren’t there? Who was the last person you invited to lunch or supper? I’m guessing it was someone you already knew when you invited him or her. We typically invite friends and family, those who are already known to us, those with whom we are comfortable, those who can serve our interests or pleasure, those whose favor we seek, those who will reciprocate or pay us back. In short, we welcome those who are already welcome, not those who are unwelcome. Think about the lessons we teach our children about strangers. Stranger danger was what I grew up with and passed on to my daughters. That doesn’t sound much like Jesus either. The world’s hospitality is always conditional. The guests are already known, vetted, and welcome. Their names are on our invitation list. Other names are not. We take the initiative. We extend the invitation. And we decide in advance the terms and conditions of the invitation. That’s not, however, hospitality in the kingdom. In the kingdom, hospitality is unconditional. We have lost the initiative. Hospitality in the kingdom is not an invitation we initiate but a visitation we did not see coming, hoping against Hope, like an unexpected Sunday School visitor, a migrant family, a beggar asking for a cup of cold water.

Biblical hospitality, the kind Jesus offered and taught, means welcoming into our house and life the other, the one who is different from us, the stranger. For Jesus, hospitality extends beyond your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors. It’s about the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, those who are different from us and have no power, ability, or resources to reciprocate, pay back, take us

out to dinner, or serve our interests. Kingdom hospitality leaves us feeling vulnerable and at risk. And for good reason. Kingdom hospitality tells us to open the door even before we know who is there. Let me be clear, however. I am not suggesting that we open the door to just anyone at any time of night. Jesus is not asking us to be reckless with our safety or the safety of others. And I don't want our children running up to any and every stranger they see on the street. That's not hospitality, that's foolishness. Hospitality does not begin with opening the door of our house. It begins with opening the door of our heart. Hospitality challenges me to face the ways I've closed and locked the door of my heart. When we shut the door of our heart and exclude the stranger, we also imprison ourselves. Strangers have a way of showing us ourselves and the doors we have closed. Hospitality isn't so much about who the other is or isn't but who I am and how I want to be. Instead of making a guest list of who is welcome maybe we should take an inventory and make a lot of our own fears, prejudices, judgments, skepticisms, cynicisms, and profiling of others. Those are the locks on our heart's door. What does hospitality look like in your life today? To whom is your heart open and to whom is it closed? What locks are on your inventory? Who are the strangers in your life? In what ways have you become a stranger to yourself?

Brothers and sisters, let us heed the call of Jesus and the exhortations in Hebrews. May we walk in humility, embody hospitality, and live out our faith in love and service to others. As we approach the banquet of life, may we choose the lowest seat, extend our table to the marginalized, and offer our hearts in praise. Let us be known as a community that reflects the love of Christ in all we do. Let's start now unlocking and opening the door of our heart. **Amen.**

All baptized Christians, regardless of age, are welcome to receive communion in the Episcopal Church.

12 PENTECOST - PROPER 17	9:00 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS
MONDAY	8:00 PM	AA MEETING
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP
SATURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP
13 PENTECOST - PROPER 18	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Deb Giordano	Dana Kenn
Coffee Hour	Dana Kenn	Erika Febres

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Barbara Curran	Betty Curley	Martin
Bob Curley	Steve Curley	Joseph
Chris Dickson	John Roccoo	Deb P.
John Mulligan	Marjorie Guerrier	Bobby
Donald Edwards	Robert Hosey	Ryan
Sister Eddie	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Beverly Noel	Phil Ryder	Warren
Anthony Paribello	Jonathan	Del
Donna Amundsen	Kate Jones	Jan
Shannon & Family	Vincent & Barbara	Sandy
Mary & Family	Wendy	James
Nathan Treadwell	Gladys Hadija	Sophia
Michael & Family	Brooke & Kylee	Mo

Michelle & Family

Christopher

Annie

Timothy Treasure

Donna A.

Aika

Moises Parra

Misael Varas

Kristen

Scottie Credendino

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disaster.

The homeless and food insecure.

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.

Bring us, with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

To add or make changes to the prayer list during the week,
email Janet Croft at jmc220@optonline.net.

A Morning Prayer

Father in heaven, I stand ready to receive Your wisdom and guidance. In each decision, big or small, lead me to discern your will and to act accordingly. Help me to understand the depth of Your wisdom, finding guidance in Your word and through prayer. Teach me to be patient as I wait for Your direction, trusting that Your timing is perfect. May I navigate this day with the assurance that Your wisdom is a treasure far greater than any earthly

knowledge. Guide my thoughts and actions, that they may
be a reflection of Your discernment and love. In Your
guidance, I find the path to a life of purpose and peace.
Amen

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,
Lay my life before you,
How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus
And third verse starting with Spirit.

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn
but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So
mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that
all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince
of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions
and glory, now and for ever. Amen

