

Church of the Divine Love

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PROPER 21

SEPTEMBER 28, 2025 10:15 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: **Amos 6:1a, 4:7-7**

Psalm 146 page 803

Second Lesson: **1 Timothy 6:6-19**

Gospel: **Luke 16:19-31**

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

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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:

Eucharistic Prayer B page 367

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The Communion of the People	
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Sermon Sunday September 28, 2025

Amos 6:1a,4-7; Psalm 146; 1 Timothy 6:6-19; Luke 16: 19-31

Sisters and brothers in Christ, exclusive communities, membership dues, railroad tracks, border walls, the other side of town; it seems there is always a gate between the rich and the poor. And so, it is in today's gospel (Luke 16:19-31).

On one side of the gate a rich man lives in splendor. He's well dressed in expensive clothes. He sits at his table and feasts every day. A poor man named Lazarus lays on the other side of the gate. He's dressed in sores and dog spit. He's hungry. He would gladly eat the scraps that fall from the table but the table is on the rich man's side of the gate. **For 2022** the government of the United States has defined poverty for a single individual, one Lazarus, as an annual income of less than **\$13,590**. For our government that is the gate that separates the rich man from Lazarus. By that standard maybe we are rich people. What do you think? Are you a rich man or a rich woman? And how do you feel about today's gospel and what happens to the rich man? It makes me a bit twitchy and anxious. And it should.

I think this story is supposed to make us twitchy and anxious but not for the reasons you might think. I don't think this gospel is about an arbitrary dollar amount that separates the rich from the poor. I don't think it means the poor go to heaven and the rich go to hell. I don't think it is about rewarding the poor and punishing the rich. And I don't think those of us who have an annual income of **\$13,590** or more are destined for torment and the agony of flames simply because of our income, there might be other reasons for that but income is not one of them. If I'm wrong about that and it is as simple as a dollar amount, then the solution is clear. We just reduce our annual income to **\$13,589.99**. Anyone in favor of that? No? Me either. I don't think it's that simple. Besides, the world doesn't need more poverty. So no, today's gospel is not about what will happen to us after we die. Now before you breathe a sigh of relief

let me tell you what I think this gospel is about. Today's gospel is about how we live today. Jesus is telling us that how we live today has consequences for tomorrow, not just for ourselves but for others too. Jesus is asking us, regardless of our income, to face the poverty in ourselves and the world. Lazarus doesn't just represent poverty in the world, he also represents the rich man's impoverishment. I suspect that's one reason why we set gates between the rich and poor. We don't want to look in the eyes of Lazarus and see ourselves. If we did, if we ever truly saw impoverishment in the world and in ourselves, it would ask something of us.

First, God is concerned about the poor and expects us to also be concerned. That is clear throughout scripture in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. We reveal God's presence in our lives by sharing God's concerns and by acting as God acts. That does not mean, however, that the poor are our ticket into heaven. We do not buy our way to heaven. We help the poor, feed the hungry, house the homeless, care for the sick, visit prisoners, and work for justice because that's simply who and how God's people are to be. The question isn't what's in it for me but what's in it for them. What does our Christianity, our faith, our experience of Jesus Christ offer them? Second, there is a relationship between this life and the next life. The choices we make, the words we speak, and the actions we take in this life have consequences in the next life. Now don't push that too far with this story. Today's gospel is not a systematic explanation or theological analysis of heaven and hell. The story is not a judgment that rich people go to hell and poor people go to heaven. This story isn't so much about our future but about our present lives. It's about how we live here and now. It's a reminder that that our lives are connected and intertwined in this world and in the next world.

Our choices matter. Our priorities set a direction for where we are headed. Our values and actions shape what is becoming of us. Isn't that what we see in the rich man in today's gospel? Jesus is warning us that today's gates become tomorrow's chasms. At some point the gates we use to shut out parts of ourselves or exclude another become the chasm that confines and isolates us. The chasm that now separates the rich man from Lazarus is not new. And it's not God's judgment or punishment of the rich man. It's always been there. It's a part of the rich man and a reflection of his impoverishment. The chasm is another version or manifestation of the gate that separated Lazarus from the rich man. The gate and the chasm are the same thing. Look at all the ways we set gates between ourselves and others; between rich and poor, the powerful and the powerless, black and white, gay and straight, Muslim and Christian, immigrant and citizen, neighbor and enemy, or any other category you might add to this list. Those gates are not a condition of circumstances or categories. They are a condition of the human heart. The gate that becomes a chasm always exists within us before it exists between us. It is a symptom of our impoverishment.

Maybe the rich man isn't as well off as he dresses and eats or looks and acts. Maybe you and I aren't either. What if the rich man would have opened his gate to Lazarus? What if we did? What if we open

the gates of compassion and concern for others, generosity and sharing, healing and wholeness, forgiveness and reconciliation, justice and peace, vulnerability and love? What would that take? And what would it mean for your life? I suspect it would change the way we pray, how we care for one another, the depth of our relationships, the significance of our lives, and what we hope for the future. Look at your life and world. What are the closed gates in your life today? What gates are separating you from yourself or another? What is impoverishing you today? It might be fear, anger, resentment, jealousy, indifference, guilt, grief, old wounds, loneliness, cynicism, prejudice, or a thousand other things. What gates do you need to open today in order to experience true wealth and abundance, to discover your true identity and worth, to live with true meaning and significance? What gates does our country need to open?

Let your gates be opened and your chasms filled. This is our work and the salvation of the world. It's what the kingdom of God looks like. We already have everything we need. That was Abraham's point in not sending Lazarus to the rich man's brothers. Abraham was not denying them anything. Nothing was lacking. They already had everything they needed. The word of God that opens gates and fills chasms is the same word of God proclaimed by Moses and the prophets; the very same word embodied in the person of Jesus Christ. He is the image of our opened gates and our filled chasms, the image of who we most truly are and who we are to become. **Amen.**

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

16 PENTECOST - PROPER 21	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS
MONDAY	8:00 PM	AA MEETING
TUESDAY	6:00 PM	BIBLE STUDY
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP
SATURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP
17 PENTECOST - PROPER 22	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

SATURDAY< OCTOBER 11th – CLEAN-UP DAY - 9AM

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Deb Giordano	Dana Kenn
Coffee Hour	Giordanos	Dave Treasure

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY - DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

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	Michael	

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.

The Faithful Departed: Donna Edwards

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

