



Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost

23 October 2022

The Episcopal Church of the
Good Shepherd in Athens, Ohio

Seeking to know and serve Christ in
loving service to the campus, the
community, and the world.

Today's printed [Order of Worship](#)

Lessons

For the Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 25-Tract 2):

Apocrypha – Sirach 35: 12-17

Psalm 84: 1-6 (SUNG)

New Testament – 2 Timothy 4: 6-8, 16-18

Gospel – Luke 18: 9-14

<https://www.lectionarypage.net>

The Collect

ALMIGHTY AND EVERLASTING GOD, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Gospel

Luke 18:9-14

JESUS TOLD THIS PARABLE to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: "Two men went up to the



temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for

all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

Gospel Engagement Question:

What do you notice about the two prayers in the parable?

The Sermon

Amazing Lessons in a Parable

A good friend and colleague recently took his family – himself, his wife, their son, daughter-in-law and their two grandsons, both under the age of 10 - to a corn maze for a fun afternoon outing. For those of you who are not familiar with corn mazes, they are huge walking path puzzles cut into a farmer's corn field. Corn mazes vary in size, the one my friend took his family to is bigger than a football field. No matter the size, they are designed to get lost in and to find your way out of. Some, like the one my friend visited, have stations in the maze to help people find their way. This particular maze gave out maps at the beginning and had mailboxes strategically placed inside with additional maps to guide people through the whole maze.

My friend is well aware one of his stronger personality traits is he can be very competitive. He is also incredibly generous, encouraging, kind, and inclusive, but sometimes his competitive nature gets the better of him; like it did that afternoon with his family. My friend, whose name is Scott, thought he could expertly lead his family through the entire corn maze. So, into the maze they all went, confident he could lead them to the first mailbox in a matter of a few minutes.

However, that isn't what happened. It wasn't long before Scott realized he

had no idea where he was or where the mailbox they were looking for was. He was lost. On top of that, his family had gotten separated, and one of his grandsons became anxious he would never see his little brother again.

Fortunately for Scott and his family and friends, he has a good sense of humor and can laugh at himself, especially in moments like this. His sense of humor helped him realize the maze was not as easy to navigate as he thought. And it helped him do the right thing: he stopped, gathered his family together, asked for help, and let others take over the role of navigating. This changed everything. By asking for help, Scott learned there was a tower they could climb and look out over the whole maze to gain perspective. He also learned that if they stopped and listened, they could hear the sounds from a nearby road, which was south of the maze, to help orient themselves. All of this helped Scott and his family traverse the maze together. They did not reach every mailbox, like Scott had planned, but they did have a lot of fun. And they got out of the corn maze together. No one – especially no one's little brother- was lost or left behind.

Scott's wife said she realized it didn't matter if they found all the mailboxes because they were all together on a beautiful fall day, laughing, and having fun. A day like that might never happen again, and they made a good and joyful memory they can share for years to come.

This family outing could have gone much differently if Scott was not a humble person who, despite his strong drive to win, can laugh at himself when things don't work out, knows to regroup, step back, gain perspective, listen, and let others participate. Scott learned a long time ago; it isn't all about him.

You don't have to be lost in a corn maze to appreciate how Scott's experience resonates with the parable Jesus told in today's Gospel about two characters and their very different prayers. It's important to remember that unlike my friend, the characters in Jesus' parable are completely fictional, made up by Jesus for the purpose of bringing out the lessons in the parable.

Something to notice is how different the two characters' prayers are. Both are serious prayers, but I wonder if the story itself would have made people chuckle when they first heard it, because there is quite a bit of exaggeration going on. The pharisee boasts his practices of piety are above and beyond the expectation. His prayer is all about himself. What he couched as gratitude sounds more like bragging. He goes a step farther to lift himself by putting down others, including the other character in the parable.

It seems at the heart of his parable Jesus planted the lesson that if the only way a person can lift themselves up is by putting others down, then they failed to recognize or acknowledge the humanity of another. They trust their own judgement instead of trusting in the love of God by putting themselves in the place of God. This is the opposite of the virtue of being humble; we call it arrogance and it is one of the main causes of the many divisions in the world and in our lives today.

The other character in the parable, the tax collector, is also an exaggeration; he has to be in order to contrast with the extreme prayer of the Pharisee. Instead of lifting himself up, the tax collector beats his chest – an action some still use in worship as a sign of guilt – and asks God for mercy, for forgiveness.

So, in this parable we have two characters: one lifts himself up by putting others down. The other puts himself down by confessing his sin and asking for mercy. When Jesus says it is the latter who was justified, meaning God granted him forgiveness, we can forget this is a parable and these are not real characters, and mistake the lesson Jesus was teaching is to behave like the tax collector, beating our chest when we confess our sins in church only to go back into the world with no intention of changing or trying not to sin. But I am not sure that is what Jesus was getting at in this parable.

I wonder if Jesus was less concerned about how to pray in public and was trying to teach about how to live as one of his followers. Life and the people in it are a lot more complicated than a parable and its exaggerated characters. There are lots of twists and turns in life, many of them unexpected, like trying to navigate a corn maze. Sometimes, without meaning to, we can get lost. Take a wrong turn. Get separated from the ones we love. Other times, we might stumble upon something wonderful, like people who can help, or learn how to work together instead of competing against each other, that people can be funny, helpful, and kind. And when we aren't trying to be right or prove someone else wrong, there can be more opportunities for joy in life than we thought.

Getting through life with this kind of humility starts when we realize God is God and we aren't. This doesn't mean we don't hold ourselves or each other accountable for harm or wrongs done to each other, but it does mean recognizing how each of us makes mistakes, has flaws, and when we learn to laugh at ourselves, to not take ourselves too seriously, to practice gentleness and compassion with ourselves and others, to forgive and change, we can learn and grow.

Another lesson the parable and corn maze have in common is the value of perspective. Sometimes we need to step back to get a wider picture, to

remember nothing is isolated, and whether we like it or not, we are all connected to each other and to God. Like my friend Scott when he could see the whole maze, Jesus showed us two very different characters in the parable to help show a wider perspective of people and their prayers. Prayer isn't always about getting the words or the actions right; it is remembering God is always listening and always present to all of us. One of the many gifts God gave us is each other – not to compete against and not to create systems that pit us against each other economically, politically, racially, but to value, love, and care for each other.

Of course, following Jesus in life is much more complicated than his parable. That is one reason why Jesus gives us parables and lessons to help us. And when we listen for Holy Spirit that is Christ with us – like my friend learned to listen to the sounds of the road when he was lost in the corn maze, it can help us orient ourselves through the maze of life, even when feel lost, confused, frustrated, or tired. So that when those unexpected moments happen where our certainty melts away, instead of fighting each other or blaming each other, we can remember to turn to God and each other to help each other find our way through. In so doing, we may discover, like Scott and his family, more joy than we imagined.

A sermon by The Rev. Deborah Woolsey, the Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost, 23 October 2022, at The Church of the Good Shepherd, Athens, Ohio.

Sermon Engagement Questions:

Have you ever been in a situation where you were lost?
If so, what helped you find your way?

Please include in your prayers

IN OUR WORLD, we pray for Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, and for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; we pray for peace with justice throughout the Middle East. We pray for the victims of the coronavirus. We pray for all people affected by natural and environmental disasters. We pray for the people who are suffering from war, especially the people of Ukraine, and we pray for all asylum seekers, immigrants and refugees. We pray for Joe our President, Kamala our Vice-President, Mike, our Governor, the Supreme Court and the members of Congress.

IN OUR DIOCESE, we pray for our Provisional Bishop Wayne, the search process for a new bishop, and for Kenneth, Nedi, and Wendell our assisting bishops.

IN OUR PARISH, we pray for Good Shepherd's continued growth, for our Rector Rev. Deborah Woolsey, for our Associate Priests, Rev. Leslie Flemming, and Rev. David McCoy, for our ministry to students, the university, and the community. We pray for our friends at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Merida, Mexico.

THOSE WHOM OUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED: Bud and Carol, Chris L., Gloria R., Jean R., Miriam, Scott, Sharon, T.C., Baby William James, Dana Carlson, Zelma Coleman, Lee Kembell-Cook, Richard DeNune, Roy DePue, Jan Gault, Lindsey and Regina Golden, Debbie Hunsberger, Bob and Nancy Jackson, Peter Kachenko and family, Jeff Maiden, Julie Nehls, Betty Oltorf, Donald Oney, Sandy Oney, Dan and Nancy Reedy, Virginia Richards, Flo and Jack Roach, Michael Vaughn, Emily Woolsey and we pray for all who care for them. **

BIRTHDAY: Claire Sheehan (10/26), Ted Sherman (10/27), Carolyn Reilly Sheehan (10/29)

** Full names are normally not published online. However for the Sunday 10:30 service we will publish full names unless requested otherwise. If you have a name to be added to the prayer list, Lynn Graham maintains this information. Lynn may be reached at **740-593-5098** or grahammowery@aol.com.

At-Home Worship

Christ Church Cathedral Cincinnati live streams its services Sundays at 10 a.m. These are saved and can be watched anytime later.

<https://cincinnati.cathedral.com/ccclive-streams>

Washington D C -- there's much to explore at the the National Cathedral's online portal. <https://cathedral.org/worship/>

Coming up on the Calendar

Wednesday, October 26, 9:30 a.m. - - Prayer Shawl at Julie's

Sunday, October 30, 9:15 a.m. - - Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, October 30, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

Sunday, November 6, 9:15 a.m. - - Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, November 6, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

**Sunday, November 6, 3:00 p.m. - - Newly Refurbished Organ
Celebration**

Sunday, November 13, 9:15 a.m. - - Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, November 13, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

Thursday, November 17, 7:00 p.m. - - Vestry Meeting

Sunday, November 20, 9:15 a.m. - - Choir Rehearsal

**Sunday, November 20, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist
(Discretionary Sunday)**

Thursday, November 24 10:30 a.m. - - Thanksgiving Day service

**Thursday, November 24 1:30 p.m. - - Thanksgiving Meal for
parishioners**

Sunday, November 27, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, November 30, 7:00 p.m. - - Choir Rehearsal

Events Looking Forward

Nov. 6 (Sunday) Newly Refurbished Organ Celebration 3pm (first in a series)

Nov. 19 (Saturday) Diocese of Southern Ohio Convention Hybrid zoom and in person in Cincinnati

Nov. 24 (Thursday) Thanksgiving Day service 10:30 am

Nov. 24 (Thursday) Thanksgiving Meal for parishioners 1:30 pm

Dec. 24 (Saturday) Christmas Eve 7pm

Dec. 25 (Sunday) Christmas Day 10:30 am

A hearty thank you to everyone who helped with Steve's service on Saturday. His family is grateful for the beautiful service.

Here is the text of the homily - -[Homily for Celebration of Life of Steve Steward](#)





All Saints Necrology

All Saints Sunday will be celebrated on Sunday, November 6, 2022. If you would like the name of a deceased loved one added to the All Saints' Roll to be read during the service, please notify our Parish

Administrator, Barbara Martin, no later than

Tuesday, November 1 for inclusion in this year's Necrology. The Church Office telephone number is 740-593-6877, or you can submit names by email at barbara@chogs.org.

All Saints Sunday November 6, 2022 -- All the Company of Heaven --

In a few weeks we will be celebrating one of the major feasts of the Church and one of the pivotal days in the Church Year: All Saints Day. It is a day we remember all those who have gone before us in faith, everyone in the family of God.

To help us honor the day, Mother Deborah invites you bring a picture of a

family member who has died. This can be a blood relative or someone who inspired your faith, or someone a member of the parish who has died. The pictures will be displayed on the wooden table in front of the altar and is intended to be a visual representation of the Company of Heaven, all those loved ones who have gone before us.

Bring your pictures of loved ones Sunday, November 6 for All Saints Sunday. If you won't be with us in person, but still want to share a picture of a loved one, either drop it off at the church before Sunday, November 6 or email it to Mother Deborah at revdebwoolsey@gmail.com and she'll have it printed and put it on the table for you

**Newly Refurbished Organ Celebration
Sunday, November 6, 3:00 p.m.**

CELEBRATION CONCERT

SUNDAY, NOV 6

3:00 PM

Come hear the
restored 1952
Aeolian-Skinner organ

Marsha Reilly, organist



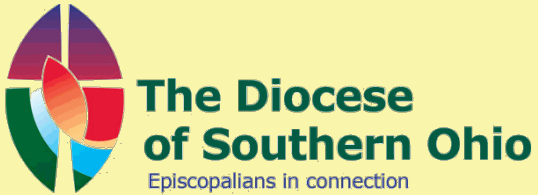
CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
64 UNIVERSITY TERRACE, ATHENS, OHIO
WWW.CHOGS.ORG (740) 593-6877



Diocesan Convention Saturday Nov. 19

This year's Diocesan Convention will be hybrid, both in person in Cincinnati and online. Please pray for our delegates and alternates and clergy who will be attending: Mother Deborah, Dana Carlson, Jack Flemming, Allyn Reilly, and Anne Walker (alternate for Alex Buckley). And please pray for all the people in the Diocese working to put the convention together and who will be

running convention. This is part of how the work of the whole Church is done, and whether or not you participate, you are still represented and are part of this work.



**From the Bishop
Nominating Committee:**

Focus Groups Begin Next Week

For more information follow this Link: [Register to attend in- person and online focus groups.](#)

Altar Flower Procedure

Email Lynn Graham (grahammowery@aol.com) or phone her (740-593-5098) to give her your dedication. Lynn will order flowers through Hyacinth Bean Florist and give your name and address for billing. The cost is approximately \$90.00 for the arrangement and delivery. Lynn will print your dedication so that it appears in the e-news and bulletin.

If you wish special flowers or a more elaborate arrangement you can call Polly Creech (740-594-9302), our florist, and make those arrangements with her. Keep in mind that this MAY increase the cost.

OPEN DATES FOR FLOWERS FOR 2022

October 30
November 13
December 4, 11, 18

For Bishop Transition News and Updates

[-- Follow this link --](#)

Diocese of Southern Ohio 80th General Convention

Saturday, November 19. Delegates and clergy may attend in person or via zoom. For more see the [DSO E-Connections newsletter](#). Keep up with the latest [Convention information HERE](#).

If you want to help the folks who have been negatively impacted by climate disaster and war anywhere in the world please consider contributing to [Episcopal Relief and Development \(ERD\)](#) which is the official ministry of the Episcopal Church.

Alex Buckley has been weeding the gravel in front of the church, but this little beauty she decided to leave for a while.



Quick Links

[Parish website](#)

[Sermons](#)

[Parish calendar](#)

[Staff](#)

[Campus Interest](#)

[E-News Guidelines
and Back Issues](#)

[Diocese Southern Ohio](#)

[Bishop Transition](#)

[\[E\]Connections](#)

[Episcopal News Service](#)

[Episcopal Journal & Café](#)

Pandemic Notes:

[Link to the DSO guidelines
for
returning to in-person
worship](#)

In light of local conditions we request all persons wear masks inside the church building **regardless** of vaccination status.

Office Hours: 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Masks are required.

The **Church Building** is not open for public meetings and gatherings but during office/CrossRoads hours the thrift shop and chapel are available for individuals. Masks are required.

CrossRoads Café -- Join us Sunday after the 10:30 service.

Contact Information

For pastoral needs, please contact The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at 937-689-8895 (cell) or 740-593-6877 (church), or by e-mail at revdebwoolsey@gmail.com.

[DONATE to Good Shepherd](#)

The above takes you to the Parish page where you can find instructions or donate on-line via PayPal, If you have a

To find out more about Good Shepherd and other matters, please contact Alex Buckley, Senior Warden, at 740-593-5513 or by e-mail at macbuck@yahoo.com.

For maintenance matters, please leave a note at the office or contact Dana Carlson, Junior Warden, at 740-664-2022 or by e-mail at carlsondana@hotmail.com.

For emergencies, please call The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at 937-689-8895.

NON-emergency messages can be left on the church's answering machine (740-593-6877).

The parish office administrator is Barbara Martin (740-593-6877) or barbara@chogs.org.

The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, 64 University Terrace, Athens OH 45701

740-593-6877
chogs@chogs.org
www.chogs.org

preference, please indicate on the the "Add special instructions to the seller" section the purpose of the donation -- e.g. organ fund, plate collection, etc.

Check out the Church's [YouTube Channel](#).

LIKE us on Facebook [Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd 45701](#)

Office Hours:
Masks are required.

10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Monday - Thursday
740-593-6877
chogs@chogs.org

Blessings !



Try email marketing for free today!