

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 30:15-20

See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity.
¹⁶If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess.
¹⁷But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them,
¹⁸I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.
¹⁹I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live,
²⁰loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Psalm 1

SECOND READING: Philemon 1-21

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,
To Philemon our dear friend and co-worker,
²to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:
³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
⁴When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God
⁵because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus.
⁶I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ.
⁷I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.
⁸For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty,
⁹yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus.
¹⁰I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment.
¹¹Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me.
¹²I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you.
¹³I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel;
¹⁴but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced.
¹⁵Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever,
¹⁶no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.
¹⁷So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me.
¹⁸If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account.
¹⁹I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self.
²⁰Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ.
²¹Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

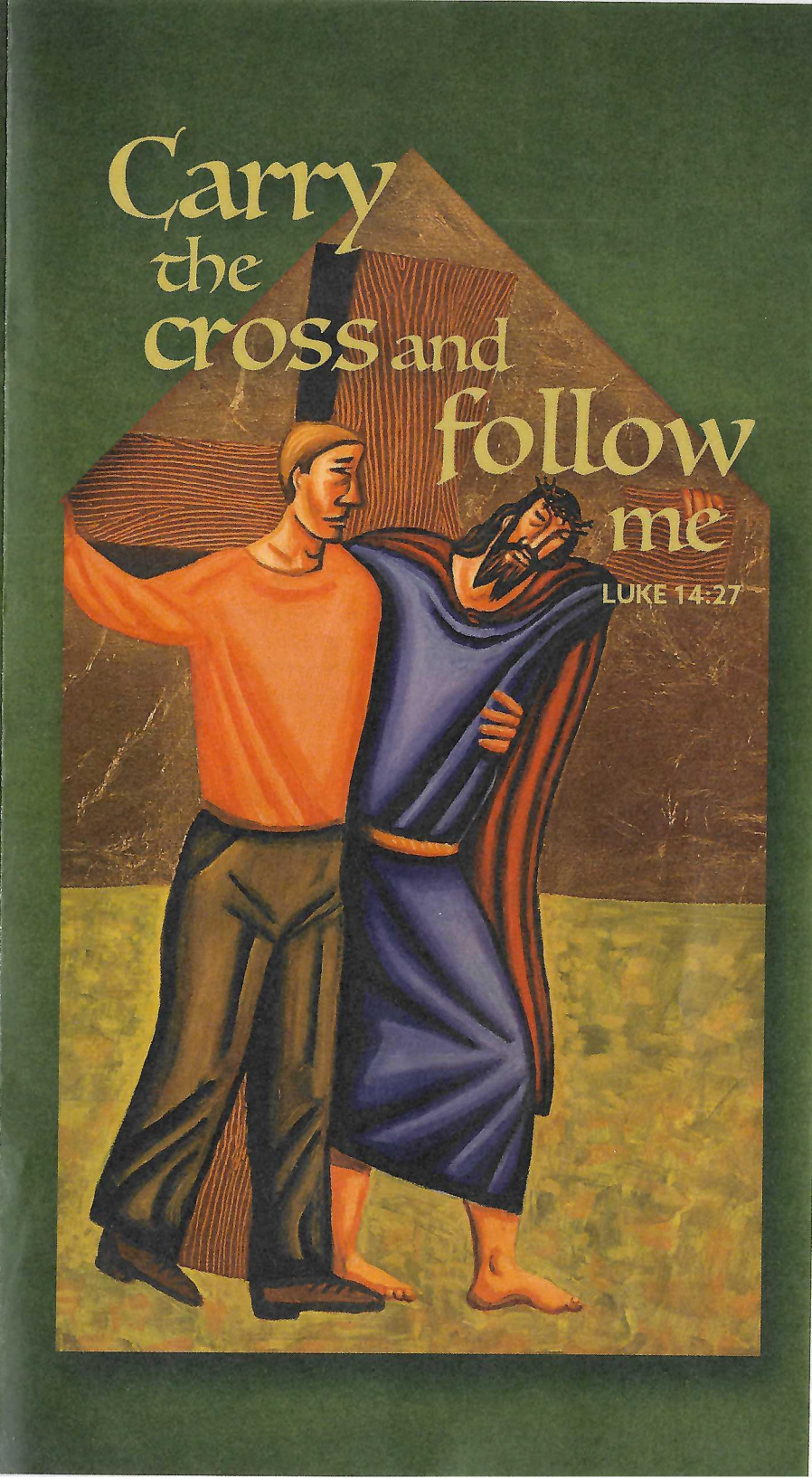
What Is Most Important

When someone comes to be baptized, they are often joined by family and friends who gather around the font and promise to love and support them as they grow in the faith. In the baptismal waters, God does something wonderful and profound: God connects us with Christ’s saving grace. In this moment we are made part of a new community that flows from God’s incredible love.
How dissonant it is to read Jesus’ words from Luke’s gospel today with this sort of an occasion in mind. “Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple” (14:26). How can hating family be a faithful response to God’s divine grace and love? How can this be the way to live into the baptismal promises of love and care?
We know that Jesus loves the whole world: every person, creature, and molecule reverberates with God’s own heart. Scripture and sermons and songs of the faith proclaim time and again: we all are recipients of God’s love! And when we are baptized, we are unapologetically claimed as God’s beloved. Such belovedness is the very foundation of our identity in faith.
Perhaps we can take Jesus’ words here seriously without taking them literally: Christ’s love for us is more important than even our closest ties to friends, family, or chosen family. Christ’s love is more important than any paycheck we receive or how much cash we keep in our pockets. Jesus prioritizes life-changing love over all other loyalties we might have. When we are baptized, our lives are grounded in this countercultural compassion, justice, and care. Our relationship with God may indeed strain some of our other relationships, but perhaps it is exactly the sort of love that renews our hearts and truly transforms our world.

GOSPEL: Luke 14:25-33

Now large crowds were traveling with [Jesus]; and he turned and said to them,
²⁶“Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple.
²⁷Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.
²⁸For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it?
²⁹Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him,
³⁰saying, ‘This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.’
³¹Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand?
³²If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace.
³³So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.”

Next Sunday’s Readings: Holy Cross Day Numbers 21:4b-9; Psalm 98:1-4 or Psalm 78:1-2, 34-38;
1 Corinthians 1:18-24; John 3:13-17 OR 14th Sunday after Pentecost Exodus 32:7-14; Psalm 51:1-10;
1 Timothy 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10.
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FRIEDENS LUTHERAN CHURCH

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost ✠ September 7, 2025

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE : *"Reflections"* by Edward Broughton

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, our maker, our helper,
and our keeper.
Amen.

Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of
God and of one another.

Merciful and loving God,
**we are your stiff-necked people. We trample on the
needy. We grumble about your grace to others.
We turn away from the poor. Have mercy on us and
forgive our sins. Rejoice over us as ones who were lost
and have been found.
Amen.**

Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful. Jesus Christ
came into the world to save sinners. You who were lost have
been found. In the name of ✠ Jesus, your sins are forgiven!
Amen.

***HYMN** "Precious Lord, Take My Hand" *Pg. 7*

***HYMN OF PRAISE** "*PRAISE TO THE FATHER*" Sung once
Praise to the Father for his loving kindness, tenderly
caring for his erring children; Praise him, all angels;
praise him in the heavens; Praise to the Father!

***PRAYER OF THE DAY** *Spoken in unison*
Direct us, O Lord God, in all our doings with your
continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued,
and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and
finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

FIRST READING DEUTERONOMY 39:15-20 Back of Bulletin
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 1

Spoken responsively

¹ Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the
wicked, nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of
the scornful!

² **Their delight is in the law of the LORD, and they meditate on
God's teaching day and night.**

³ They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in
due season, with leaves that do not wither; everything they do
shall prosper.

⁴ **It is not so with the wicked; they are like chaff which the
wind blows away.**

⁵ Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment
comes, nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

⁶ **For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of
the wicked shall be destroyed.**

SECOND READING PHILEMON 1-21 Back of Bulletin
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

***GOSPEL** LUKE 14:25-33 Back of Bulletin
The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN'S AND CONGREGATIONAL MESSAGE: *By Pastor
Barry Spatz.*

HYMN "*Just As I Am*" *Pg. 18*

***PRAYERS:** God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

*APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and
earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He
was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the
virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified,
died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third
day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at
the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the
living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy
catholic
Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the
resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen

OFFERING

OFFERTORY: *"The Faithful Heart Rejoices"* by Gerald Peterson

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, praise him, all

creatures here below; Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our
God. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**
It is indeed right and salutary...we praise your name and join
their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven
and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

*WORDS OF INSTITUTION

*LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

THE HOLY COMMUNION *Follow the instructions of the ushers.*

Prayer of Communion

O God, through this meal you have strengthened us and
appointed us to be your servants. Send us to do good and to
share our possessions with all in need. We ask this in Jesus'
name.
Amen.

*BENEDICTION

The God of righteousness, who gives justice to the oppressed,
who gives food to the hungry, who sets the prisoners free,
✠ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

***SENDING HYMN** "*God Be with You till We Meet Again*"
Pg. 8

*DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Do not lose heart.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

POSTLUDE *"The Power of the Word"* by David Paxton

FRIEDENS EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Designated Pastor: Pastor Lee A. Diefenderfer, 1295 Red Dale Road,
Orwigsburg, PA 17961, 610-858-4136

Council President: Damaris Merwine, 570-985-0644

Worship time – 10:30 AM

In the name of Jesus Christ, we strive to serve all people in our community and world. We extend a warm welcome to all visitors who are worshipping with us today. Please sign the guest register in the narthex and complete a visitor's pew card, placing it in the offering plate.

September 7, 2025 ✠ Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost



Called to contemplate the cost of discipleship, we might be helped by translating Paul's request to Philemon into our prayer of the day: Refresh my heart in Christ. Strengthened by the company and forgiveness of Christ in holy communion and recalling God's grace in remembrance of baptism, we can be strengthened in this hour to "choose life"—to choose life in God as our own.

Calendar

Today's Service, Pastor Barry Spatz with Holy Communion, 10:30 AM.

September 14, 2025 – Janet and Ron Radel with Harvest Home with auction and luncheon, 10:30 AM.

Announcements

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- **9/8/2025 –** WELCA Mtg., 6:30 PM.
- **9/9/2025 –** Worship and Music Mtg., 5:30 PM.
- **9/10/2025 –** Council Mtg., 6:00 PM.
- **9/14/2025 –** Harvest Home Sunday.
- **10/5/2025 –** Fall Sunday School begins. 9:00 – 10:15 AM

Leaders

Service, Pastor Barry Spatz **Organist,** Harold Morgan **Lay Assiustant,** Ron Radel **Head Usher,** Mike Deiter **Ushers,** Rodney Troutman, Ben Wetzels, Jason Wolfgang **Counters,** Jean & Gary Klinger **Greeters,** Jess & Dave Henninger.

Prayer Corner

August 31: Kailey Corado.

August 24: Cindy Bolton. Sympathy for Family and Friends of Betty Lenker.

August 17: Sympathy for Family and Friends of Dolores Hepler

We continue to pray for... Daniel Carl; Ron & Gloria Gutshall; Bailey Romberger, Ed Sipple; Avalyn Koppenhaver; Kandy Distefano; Tony Gaborik Jr.; Andrea Klinger; Marvin & Wenda Ruch; Carol & Kenny Dinger; Bill & Joan Loveland; Paul Bennick; Lee and Linda Kiefer; Larry Wetzel; Misty Rice; Angela Romberger; Dennis & Barbara Krammes; Deanna Dietz; Rev. Don Schwartz; Tracy Geist; Bruce Bonner; Jared Kiefer; Bill Wolfgang; Judy Barton; Gary Orner; Rev. Bill & Linda Danis, Diane Wehry; Denise Clark; Jane Pennypacker; Terry Schwartz; Dave Schriner; Donna Wolfgang; Brad Ludwig; Robert Schneider; Marcy Coleman; Missy Shomper; Wendy Kimmel; Lila Kiefer; Elaine Wert; Bobby Miller; Jean Morgan; Linda Warfield; Andrea Bixler; Mary Jane Allvord; Greg Readinger; Jim Fetterolf; Palmer Geist; Alex Snyder; Melanie Klinger; Jimmy Henningsen; Sue Richcrick; Dirk Klinger; Joe & Saralynn Grantz; Dirk Klinger; Andrea Klinger; John Wolfgang; Lori Koppenhaver; Mia Henningsen; Brielle Maurer; Rick Herring.

Date Saver:

Hepler's Church of God Fall Music Festival. Saturday, September 13th, 12:00 PM – 6:00 PM. Hepler's Church of God Grove, Pitman. Features Jared & Katie Wehry and The Seger Family with performances at 1:00 PM and 3:00 PM. Food Items and baked goods will be available for purchase beginning 12:00 noon. Homemade pot pie platters will be available for purchase from 4:30 – 6:00 PM.

Harvest Home, September 14th, following the service. Canned goods should be brought to the church by noon on Saturday, September 13th. Baked goods may be brought to the church on Sunday, September 14th. Money from the auction will be donated to "Helping Harvest". Lunch will be provided by WELCA.

The Chosen. Beginning September 16 through November 4 every Tuesday evening at 6:30PM we will be viewing season 4 and 5 of The Chosen. We will gather at St. Peter's United Church of Christ, 277 South Tulpehocken Street, Pine Grove. Parking is available in the rear of the church. Each week we will be viewing and discussing 2 episodes. We will attempt to conclude our time together by 9PM at the latest. Everyone is welcome.

Thanks

Bulletins - In loving memory of Rick Kline's birthday.

Flowers - In loving memory of Rick Kline's birthday.

Attendance: 32 (8/31/2025)

Offering. August 31, 2025 —	Current Exp.:	\$1,117.00
	Other Offering:	\$0.00
	Total:	\$1,117.00

Weekly Offering Needed: \$2,638.92

Volunteers the Week of 9/14/2025 - Service, Janet & Ron Radel
Organist, Harold Morgan **Head Usher,** Mike Deiter **Ushers,** Mike Allvord, Scott Allvord, Rick Herring **Counters,** Kathryn Otto and TBD
Greeters, Heather & Ed Hornung.