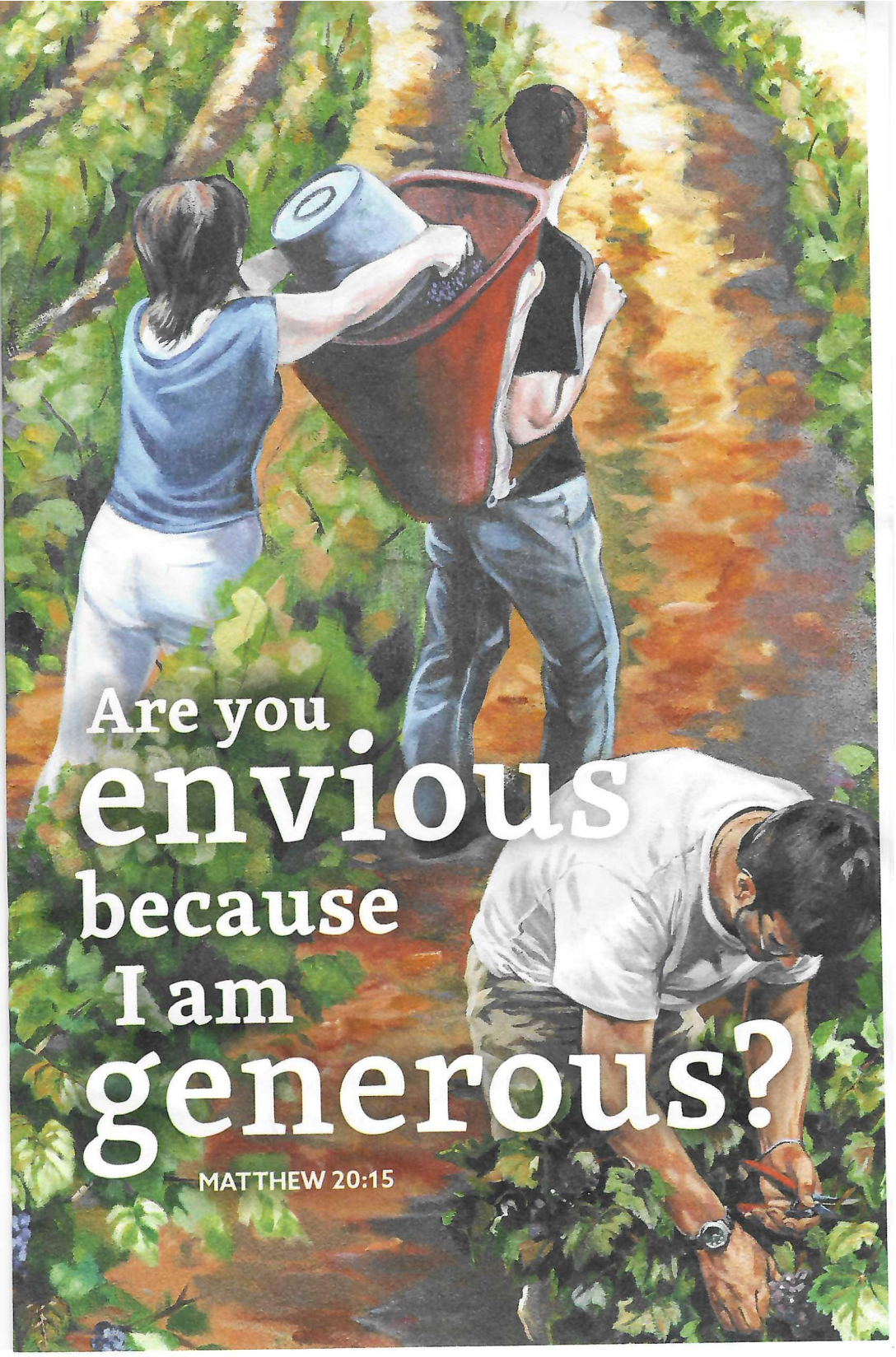




Are you
envious
because
I am
generous?

MATTHEW 20:15

FRIEDENS LUTHERAN CHURCH

17th Sunday After Pentecost ✠ September 20, 2026

*Indicates for the congregation to stand if you are able.

Congregation responses are printed in **bold print**.

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE "Flute Song" by Rachel Kутten.

CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth.

Amen

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin. Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,

we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Hear this good news:

We have peace with God through ✠ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive free this healing gift of grace.

*HYMN "Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive" P. 307

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

*HYMN OF PRAISE. "Praise to the Father" (Sung)

Praise to the Father for his loving kindness, Tenderly caring for his erring children; Praise him, all angels; praise him in the heaven; Praise to the Father!

First Reading: Jonah 3:10—4:11

° When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it. ^{4:1} But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. ³ And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴ And the Lord said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵ Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. ⁶ The Lord God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live." ⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." ¹⁰ Then the Lord said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?"
The word of the Lord. ***Thanks be to God.***

Psalm 145: 1-8

¹ I will exalt you, my God and king, and bless your name forever and ever.

² Every day will I bless you and praise your name forever and ever.

³ Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised! There is no end to your greatness.

4 One generation shall praise your works to another and shall declare your power.

⁵ I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty and all your marvelous works.

6 They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts, and I will recount your greatness.

⁷ They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness; they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.

8 The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

SECOND READING: Philippians 1:21-30

²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, ²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me. ²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ and in no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹ For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

The word of the Lord. ***Thanks be to God.***

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-6

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. ***Glory to you, O Lord.***
[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹ "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace,

⁴ and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷ They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹ When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³ But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius?' ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

The Gospel of the Lord. ***Praise to You, O Christ***

CHILDREN'S AND CONGREGATIONAL MESSAGE – Pastor Barry Spatz.

HYMN "O Jesus, I Have Promised" P. 503

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

***LORD'S PRAYER**

(Spoken)

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.

*SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. *And also with you.*

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY (Sung)

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.

*BLESSING

*CLOSING HYMN "Abide with Us, Our Savior" P. 263

*DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE "He Keeps Me Singing" by Luther B. Bridgers, arranged by Sid Richardson.



Are you envious because I am generous? Matthew 20:15

Website: [HTTPS://www.thefriedenslutheran.com](https://www.thefriedenslutheran.com)

Phone: 570-682-9690

Church e-mail: friedenslutheran4@gmail.com

Designated Pastor: Pastor Barry Spatz, 406 Musselman Road,
Fredericksburg, PA, 17026 484-332-0258

Council President: Ed Tietsworth, (570) 292-1061

Calendar

September 27, 2026 - Damaris Merwine

October 4, 2026 - Pastor Barry Spatz with Holy Communion.

October 11, 2026 - Pastor Barry Spatz.

October 18, 2026 - Carole Hepler

October 25, 2026 - Pastor Barry Spatz.

Announcements

September 23, 2026 - The Chosen Bible Study, 6:30 PM, with Pastor Barry.

October 3, 2026 - Fall Bazaar. Hoagie order sheets and volunteer sign-up sheets are in the Sunday School room. We need soup donations, baked goods, crafts as well as raffle basket sponsors/donations.

Prayer Corner

Rick Herring; Terry Schwartz; Saralinn & Joe Grantz; Linda & Lee Kiefer; Daniel & Mary Carl; Joan Smith; Judy Huntzinger; Melody Schwartz; Tim Koppenhaver; Linda Sanders; Kenneth Klingler; Unborn baby of Jory and Trisha Fetterolf.

Today's Leaders - Service, Pastor Barry Spatz Organist, Harold Morgan Lector, Damaris Merwine Counters, Christy Leiter & Melody Schwartz Head Usher, Rick Herring Ushers, Michael Allvord, Scott Allvord, Mike Deiter.

Flowers - Glory of God by June Boyer.

Bulletin - In honor of Scott's birthday, Love Heather.

Attendance: 30 (9/13/26) Offering:

Current \$980.00

Other \$150.00

Total \$1,130.00

Weekly Offering Needed: \$2,362.87

Leaders, 9/27/2026 - Service, Damaris Merwine Lector, Ann Miller Counter, Ann Miller & Vicki Troutman Head Usher, Rick Herring Ushers, Mike Deiter, Ed Tietsworth, Ed Hornung.

Scandalous Grace

Jesus loved to tell strange, unsettling stories to illustrate God's grace. Theologians and biblical scholars have wrestled with the parables of Jesus for centuries, trying to make them make sense. But perhaps the beauty of these strange illustrations is that they refuse to succumb to our need for logic or neat conclusions. They are wild, confusing, and often scandalous—much like God's love for God's people.

This parable is one such story that has the power to offend us with its backward-seeming logic. A landowner who keeps inviting new laborers to join the workforce, paying them the same amount for different amounts of work? To be sure, this is not a commentary on how to run a business or abide by fair labor practices. Instead, it is a reminder of the outrageousness of God's kingdom or reign and the scandal of God's grace.

The kingdom of God functions by its own rules: It is a table where there is always room for more people, and an endless supply of bread and wine. It is a font where all are welcome, where all are invited to splash in the waters of baptism and be named children of God. It is a realm where our rules of space and time no longer apply, as we enter into ancient story and liturgy alongside the saints who have come before us. It is a sanctuary where we find the courage to confess our sins and receive God's extravagant, scandalous forgiveness. It is a community where love and justice supersede force and greed. It is a safe place where the most vulnerable are the most cared for, and generosity abounds so that all have enough. And it is a kingdom where all are invited to participate. Much like how the landowner hired new laborers until the end of the day, it's never too late to be welcomed by God's mercy!