



The kingdom of heaven
is like yeast

MATTHEW 13:33

TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
2340 State Street, East Petersburg, PA 17520
717-569-1632

Website: www.trinityeastpete.org E-Mail: secretary@trinityeastpete.org

The Rev. Dr. Christopher M. Rankin, Pastor

The Rev. Harry G. Royer, Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr. Carolyn Call, Covenanted Minister of Mission

Mr. Michael Slechta, Director of Music/ Sounds of Trinity Choir Director

Mrs. Christine Oetama, Organist

Mrs. Carmen Richards, Pianist

Mrs. Carol Kratz, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Sean McKelvey, Preschool Director

Celebrating 175 Years: Honoring Our Heritage, Moving Forward in Faith!

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

7:45 A.M. SERVICE

Today's Theme: As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasure pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!

Welcome all visitors! We welcome all who worship with us. May the joy of Christ's presence and the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with peace and hope! We are honored by your presence and trust that you will join us in the praise and worship of God. Please sign our guest book in the narthex. If you are interested in church membership, please give your name and telephone number to Pastor Rankin.

Welcome to the Eucharist! All who seek to follow Jesus and who seek the gifts Jesus offers us are invited to share in this sacrament of Holy Communion.

Children are invited to receive communion at the discretion of their parents/guardians. If a child wants to receive a blessing, they are asked to fold their hands.

Prayer As You Enter: *Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.*

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION MOMENT

East Petersburg Fire Company

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

CALL TO WORSHIP

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM AND INVITATION TO THE TABLE

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Let us call on our God and give thanks.

Let our hearts rejoice as we sing God's praise.

Glory be to God in whose covenant we find life.

Let all the people tell of God's wonderful works.

Who can separate us from the love of God?

Will hardship, distress, or peril overcome us?

Nothing can separate us from God's love.

We can face all things, knowing God cares.

In the Acts of the Apostles we read that as the church was gathered, often in the homes of believers, Christians devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and community, to the breaking of bread, and to prayers.

Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life, we gather at your table to know you in the breaking of the bread.

All people are called to Christ's table. Come, eat what is good.

CONFESSION OF SINS

CALL TO CONFESSION

Jesus said: You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, but we fear the Spirit's power.

Let us confess our slowness to embrace the new life of the Spirit.

(SEATED OR KNEELING)

SILENT CONFESSION OF SINS

CONFESSION OF SIN

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of our neighbors.

We confess that we have sinned. We have failed to be honest. We have lacked the courage to speak. We have spoken falsely. In the name of Jesus, forgive us and grant us your mercy. Amen.

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

ADORATION AND PRAISE

ACT OF PRAISE

O God, open my lips.

And my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

COLLECT FOR THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Let us pray the collect together.

We do not know how to pray as we ought, O God, but as Christ intercedes on our behalf we are emboldened to come before your throne of grace. You make us mindful of your bountiful care as each morning we arise to greet the dawn of a new day. As your Word is read and proclaimed we hear how you have been faithful throughout the ages. Be pleased with our offerings of praise and thanksgiving as we respond to your goodness in thought, word, and deed; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

THE WORD OF GOD

THE FIRST LESSON

1 Kings 3:5-12

Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people well.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

THE PSALTER

Psalm 119:129-136

Your decrees are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them.

The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple.

With open mouth I pant, because I long for your commandments.

Turn to me and be gracious to me, as is your custom towards those who love your name.

Keep my steps steady according to your promise, and never let iniquity have dominion over me.

Redeem me from human oppression, that I may keep your precepts.

Make your face shine upon your servant, and teach me your statutes.

My eyes shed streams of tears because your law is not kept.

THE SECOND LESSON

Romans 8:26-39

These words celebrate the depth of God's actions for us. Through Christ's death for us and the activity of the Spirit praying for us, we are fused to God's love poured out in Jesus Christ. Nothing, not even death itself, is able to separate us from such incredible divine love.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

THE HOLY GOSPEL

St. Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Throughout Matthew's gospel, Jesus and his disciples proclaim the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near!" Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people's lives.

Glory be to You, O Lord.

THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD

Praise be to You, O Christ.

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

SERMON

"The Depth of God's Love"

Pastor Rankin

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, and has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PEOPLE'S OFFERING

OFFERING DEDICATION

Bountiful God, treasures lose their luster, and riches are easily spent, but your kingdom endures forever. We approach you, O God, trusting your will for our lives. You give us assurance of your abiding presence. You provide us with confidence as we follow Christ's call. Accept now the gifts that we offer, so that your truth may be known throughout the land. We pray in the name of Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord!

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth. From everlasting to everlasting, you have revealed your mighty presence to us. Have we not heard? Have we not known? In the beginning, you swept across the earth with your Spirit of life and renewal. When we forgot or neglected your truth, you redeemed us and renewed us. From the earth's first gardens to the mountaintop storms, you have spoken to us, and entrusted us to be your people. From laws on tablets to warnings from prophets, you have spoken your truth and renewed your covenant with us, reviving us and reclaiming us through your grace and love. And so, with your people on earth, with all of creation, and with all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn of praise, saying:

Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God, Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

Holy are you and blessed is your holy name. In the fullness of time, you sent your son, Jesus Christ to reveal your powerful love for the world. Healing and teaching, proclaiming and prophesying, welcoming any and all, Christ continues to reveal your presence, renewing our souls even now. Through Christ's powerful love and endless grace, we are invited into your presence, rescued from our sins, and led onto your path of justice and righteousness. In Christ's grace, you renew and reclaim us as your holy people, children of mercy and truth. As children of your covenant of love, sealed by water and the Spirit, welcome now with joy and gratitude, remembering how Jesus shared bread and wine, renewing and reviving the lives of his closest friends, his most faithful disciples, even as they faced their deepest fears and their greatest sins.

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

THE PRAYER OF OUR LORD

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

BREAKING OF THE HOST & POURING OF THE CUP

As this grain was once scattered in the fields, and has come together in one bread, so we, with different needs and hopes, come together as one, for we share one bread.

The Bread of Life, broken for us.

The cup which we share is the cup of the New Covenant written in our hearts and witnessed by Jesus.

The Cup of Blessing, poured out for us and for the many.

*(Those who wish to come forward will be invited by the pastor. The pastor will serve you the host, saying, "The Body of Christ." You reply, "Amen!" The assistant will present you with the cup, saying, "The Blood of Christ." You reply, "Amen!" Grape juice is in the chalice with the cross and wine is in the other chalice. If you need the pastor and assistant to come to you, please indicate that to someone near you or the pastor. If you do not wish to come forward, you are invited to use the packaged elements in the narthex and commune in your pew. The pastor will offer a blessing after everyone has communed. **Children are***

invited to receive communion at the discretion of their parents/guardians. If a child wants to receive a blessing, they are asked to fold their hands.)

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

POST COMMUNION PRAYERS

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Confident that God receives our joys and concerns, let us offer our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

Almighty God, we pray for the church and all servants of the gospel. Equip authorized ministers to proclaim that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Form confirmands and catechumens into disciples. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Gracious God, we pray for the well-being of creation. Safeguard the environment, clean polluted rivers and lakes, preserve the mighty tree and the tiny mustard seed, and send advocates for sustainable practices. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate God, we pray for the nations. Instill in all who govern the ability to discern between good and evil, free those who are oppressed, and protect those facing danger. Promote peace across the world and in our towns and neighborhoods. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy God, we pray for this congregation, both those gathered today and those absent from our community. Grant safety to travelers and refreshment and safety for children attending summer camps or community programs. Give direction to any experiencing life transitions. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Merciful God, we pray for all in any need. Protect those fleeing from war, shelter any who are in poverty, clothe the naked, soothe all who grieve, and heal the sick. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

SILENT PRAYER

Let us pray together.

We thank you, generous God, for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table. Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

CLOSE OF WORSHIP

BENEDICTION

★ CATCH THE VISION & SHARE THE JOY ★

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chancel Flowers are given by Sue Bowman in memory of Donald Bowman & in honor of Lois Bowman.

The Worship Aids are given by the Himelwright family in loving memory of Robin McComsey.

Ministering Today

Pastor/Celebrant	Rev. Dr. Christopher Rankin
Lector/Assistant	Diane Rice
Money Counters	Diane Rice, Karen Olley, George DeLong, Jodi Keller, Denise Pfeiffer
Altar Guild	Nancy Enders, Anita Rohrer, Charlene Cristy
Building Trustee	Pat Sensenig
Ministries	Card Deacons (Denise Pfeiffer) Called to Care Nancy Enders Visitation Noreen Trostle, Betsy Bailey

This Week at Trinity Church

(Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.-2 p.m.)

Monday-Friday Work being done in Isenberg Hall

Monday 6:00 PM – Executive Committee—Classroom

7:00 PM – Evangelism Committee—Library

Wednesday 7:00 PM—Finance Committee

Saturday 7:00 PM – Alanon/8:00 PM - AA

Sunday 7:45 AM – Eucharist

9:30 AM – Worship

Rev. Jack Esbenshade, Guest Preacher

STAFF VACATIONS: Carol Kratz will be on vacation from July 31-August 3. Pastor Rankin will be away from August 2-8. **The Rev. Jack Esbenshade will be preaching on August 6.** The Rev. Bob Bistline will be covering pastoral emergencies during this time. You can reach Rev. Bistline at 717-917-9716.

Attendance for Sun., July 23

7:45–19 9:30–66 TOTAL – 85

Happy Birthday!

Today – Rev. Susan Sokolowski, Bob Kilgore

Tuesday – Ken Hoshauer, Paige Martin

Wednesday – Ron Denlinger, Rev. Thomas Busted

Friday – Elene Keares

Saturday – Larry Brown, Kelsey Minnich Burgo

PRAYERS FOR GOD'S HEALING PRESENCE

MEMBERS

Dr. Blaine Connor

Scott & Jane Owens

Dr. Becky Wagner

The Lehman family

Mike Wagner

Mary Lou Shaab

Rev. Dave & Mid Gockley

Rev. Bob & Nancy Musser

Betty Tyndall and family

Rev. Bob & Judie Bistline

Rev. Jere & Judy Chapman

Joann & Dawn Garvin

Don & Pat Miller

Lee Bossert

Dave Trostle

John Shelsky

Donna Wolf

Joann Peck

Ron Becker

Donna Zirkel

Sam Minder III

Hank Fox

Nancy Patton

Mary Witmer

Erika Otthofer

Ken & Phyllis Zimmerman

Dr. Carrie Call

Dorothy Fasnacht

Dr. Janet Harriger

Deb Lichtenwalner

Eugene Hartenstine

Stan & Pat Seachrist

Carmen & Jerry Richards

Lainie Christensen

Charles & Betty Booraem

Bob & Marlyn Wible

Kathleen Sensenig Adams

Danielle Huggins Holbein

FAMILY & FRIENDS

The family of Robin McComsey (neighbor of Himelwrights)

Dr. Lee Barrett (Lancaster Seminary Professor)

Jaden Allen (nephew of Carol Kratz)

Cindy Commero Cook and family (friend of Sarah Paulukow)

Gina McCarty (daughter-in-law of Bud & Kathy McCarty)

The Bruno family (friends of Blaine Connor)

Jessica Brown (niece of Mike & Shelley Wagner)

Janice Zimmerman (sister of Ken Zimmerman)

Jack & Sandy Neal (friends of Trinity members)

Larry Gerlach (brother of Dolly Barr)

James Michaud (Sevi Keares' teacher)

John Martin (brother-in-law of Dolly & John Barr)

Kelly Quick (friend of Rev. Dr. Rich & Lainie Christensen)

Marianne Gibble (friend of Trinity)

James Malone & family

Tom & Elaine Lichtenwalner (parents of Mike Lichtenwalner)
Janet Owens (sister-in-law of Scott & Jane Owens)
Chad Zirkel (son of Donna Zirkel)
Jordan Sensenig (grandson of Pat & Joan Sensenig),
Don Pfeifer (husband of Denise Pfeifer)
Rev. Phyllis Baum (former member of Trinity Church)
Jake & Jean Otthofer (parents of Dan Otthofer)
The Martin family
Robert Richards (brother of Jerry Richards)
Ronald Himelwright (grandson of Brenda & Harry Himelwright)
Barry Richards(son of Jerry & Carmen Richards)
Tyler Miller (grandson of Iris DeMaio)
Joan Kalbach (mother of Dr. Cathy Hoshauer)
Jim & Kathy Long (friends of Jerry & Carmen Richards)
John Siebern (Bob Siever's brother-in-law)
Jo Jo Richards & family (Carmen & Jerry's granddaughter-in-law)
The Bonilla-Rodriguez family (friends of Trinity Church)

THE JULY/AUGUST PARISH POST is available on both floors of the church building.

VBS MISSION PROJECT: This year's VBS mission project is the Hempfield Power Packs. You can donate to the offering by marking the special designation box on your offering envelope with "VBS Mission".

TRINITY PRAYER BOOK: In the spring, participants in the Adult Sunday School Class were sharing prayers that were meaningful to their family. Anne Rankin thought it would be good to compile these prayers and create a Trinity prayer book as part of our 175th anniversary. You can submit prayers to Pastor Chris or Anne.

SHARE YOUR STORIES/MEMORIES OF TRINITY CHURCH: The 175th Anniversary Committee invites members of the congregation to share your stories and memories of Trinity Church for our November Echoes of the Past article. What are some of the things you remember from our past? Who are some of the people you remember? For some of our newer members, what drew you to Trinity Church? Whether you have been here 50 years or you recently joined, we want to hear from you!! **Please submit your stories/memories to the church office by October 6.**

DEVOTIONALS: The July-September edition of These Days are available on the table across from the church office or on the lower level by the portico entrance.



We still have a few openings for Musical Offerings over the summer and if anyone is interested in offering their gifts, they should contact Mike & Dina Slechta at music@trinityeastpete.org.



**Hempfield Fire Department Park
19 Main Street, Landisville**

(parking is in the lot behind the fire department)

SIGN-UP SHEET FOR PICNIC & CAKE WALK ON TABLE ACROSS FROM OFFICE

Look for more information in the coming weeks!!!

TRINITY PRESCHOOL FUNDRAISER: It is not too late to buy S. Clyde Weaver sub coupons to support the Trinity Preschool. The cost is \$8 per coupon. Look for the sign-up sheet on the table across from the church office.

2023 CHANCEL FLOWERS AND WORSHIP AID SPONSORS: Upcoming dates for chancel flowers are: August 13 & 27. Upcoming dates for worship aids are: August 13 & 20. The price for flowers is \$60. The price for worship aids is \$26. Look for the charts on the bulletin board in the narthex or call Carol in the church office.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

Greeter /Ushers Needed



If you would like to volunteer as a Greeter/Usher for the 10:30 a.m. service please contact the church office. We recently had some vacancies as ushers, so we are in need of help!!!



Assist with the worship service or to just read the scripture lessons at the 7:45 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. services. Please contact Pastor Chris or Carol Kratz if you are willing to volunteer!



Mt. Gretna Tabernacle

MT. GRETTNA BIBLE FESTIVAL 2023

Summer at the Tabernacle | *Worship, Speakers and Concerts*

All Programs are in the Historic Tabernacle • 3rd St. & Glossbrenner Ave. Parking GPS Address: 41 Boulevard St, Mt. Gretna PA 17064

Please visit MtGretnaTabernacle.org for any program cancellations. A freewill offering will be received at each program.



July 30 Sunday 7 p.m. Concert

Choir Festival Internationally renowned composer Robert Lau, retired church musician and college professor, directs over 150 voices in a joyous concert. Sponsored by *Loser's Music*. Concert made possible by the Estate of Douglas Troutman.

August 2 Wednesday 7 p.m. Hymn Sing

Led by **Bob Kettering and Dr. Rod Shearer**. Congregational favorites from the Celebration Hymnal.



August 5 Saturday 7 p.m. Concert

Handbell Festival Under the direction of Dr. Shawn Gingrich, Hershey, Pa., ringers from the area will ring the praise and glory of God.

HARTMAN CENTER HOMECOMING CAMP (July 31-August 5)

The Rankin family will be at Hartman Center throughout this week. You can send notes to them at the follow address:

5725 Old US Highway 322

Milroy, PA 17063

SUMMER CHURCH CAMP: You can still register for summer camp at Kirchenwald & Nawakwa! There are a wide range of camps this summer for all ages — kindergarteners through high schoolers, families, adults, and older folks. Below is a list of the camps this year! **Contact Pastor Chris or Anne Rankin for more information!**

As you know, Penn Central Conference paid for 50% of camp registration fees last year. It is wonderful to be able to announce that that same generous offer stands again this year! **You can help send campers from Trinity by contribution to our Camp Scholarship Fund. Place your contribution in your weekly offering envelope and mark the special designation box with “Camp Scholarship”.**

CAMP WEEK	EXPLORERS Grades K-2	JUNIORS Grades 3-6	INTERMEDIATES Grades 6-9	SENIOR HIGH & ADVENTURE TRIPS
JULY 30-AUG 5	Day Camp (M-F)	Classic Bikes & Boulders	Back-Country Outpost High Adventure	KirchenQuest (Grades 7-11)
AUG 6-12	Family Camp-K-tion (Family Camp)			
	Mini Camp	Ultimate Sports	Fishing Ultimate Sports	

Kirchenwald is located on 340 acres of scenic forest, adjacent to 4,000 acres of State Game Lands, in Lebanon, PA.

CAMP WEEK	EXPLORERS Grades K-2	JUNIORS Grades 3-6	INTERMEDIATES Grades 6-9	SENIOR HIGH Grades 9-11
JULY 30-AUG 5	Classic Day Camp (M-F)	Classic Team Sports	Classic Blaze and Paddle Adventure Team Sports	
AUG 6-12	Family Camp			

Nawakwa is located on 336 acres outside of Arendtsville, in Adams County, Pennsylvania.



BETHANY CHILDREN'S HOME
**Anniversary
Day**



RAFFLE • LIVE MUSIC • CARNIVAL GAMES
FOOD • RIDES • TRIBUTE LIGHTING

FEATURING

12-2:00PM Jeff Krick Jr: Elvis Tribute

3:00-5:00PM The Celtic Martins

6:30-8:30PM Grease Band



August 19, 2023

GATES OPEN 11AM-9PM

1863 Bethany Rd. Womelsdorf, PA 19567

ALL CONCERTS HELD AT
BETHANY CHILDREN'S HOME

Lawn seating only- bring your favorite blanket or chair!

Weapons, pets, tobacco and alcohol are prohibited on
Bethany property.



**Lancaster Association
Mission & Ministry Planned Event**

Sunday, August 20

3:30-5:30 pm

Pavilion at Church of the Apostles.

It will be an ICE CREAM SOCIAL with a time to hear from
various ministries and ministry partners.

FIRST READING: 1 Kings 3:5-12

At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you."⁶ And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today.⁷ And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in.⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted.⁹ Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?"

¹⁰It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this.¹¹ God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right,¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you."

Psalm 119:129-136

SECOND READING: Romans 8:26-39

The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.²⁷ And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family.³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not

with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

³³He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

⁴⁴"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹"Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." ⁵²And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

Next Sunday's Readings: Isaiah 55:1-5; Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21; Romans 9:1-5; Matthew 14:13-21.

Cover: Bowls of sourdough rising. Photo copyright © The Picture Pantry/Alamy Stock Photo. Used by permission.

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