

Sermon followed by Service – February 2, 2025 Luke 6:17-26

Be ready to cover your ears; be ready for the coyotes to howl!
Oh, what a beautiful morning, Oh, what a beautiful day,
I've got a wonderful feeling, Everything's going my way.

How many of you have heard the song? From the musical
_____. Curly is on his way to see Laurey; he's twitterpated,
bursting into song -

“Oh, what a beautiful morning, Oh, what a beautiful day,
I've got a wonderful feeling, Everything's going my way.

Ever feel that way? We could use more days, even just some days like that, right? Days with everything going our way. Imagine a day like that. You wake up when you want. You wake up refreshed, with a smile, and everyone you see has a smile. You go to work, and everything works. You go to school, and all is cool. You go to the store, and everything is on sale. You go to the doctor, and you go home cured. You go on vacation; the plane lands early; your rental car is upgraded; the sun shines every day. Everything goes your way. We could use days like that, couldn't we?

Jesus was having one of those days. After days of people picking at what he said, picking at what he did, after days of people getting in his face, against him, looking to turn others against him, Jesus goes off and away; he spends a night praying on the side of a mountain. He wakes up the next day with a smile, calls his disciples close, chooses 12 of them to be apostles. He leads and brings his disciples down the mountain to a level place. And what he saw could have had him singing: “Oh, what a beautiful morning, Oh, what a beautiful day, I've got a wonderful feeling, Everything's going my way.” Instead of people looking to cause him trouble, Jesus saw

disciples looking to be close. Instead of people against him, Jesus saw disciples coming from north and south, coming from days away. Jesus saw people coming to him for help. “Oh what a beautiful day!”

And those people going to see Jesus, what kind of song do you think they could have been singing? Think about it - for the most part, what kind of people were looking to Jesus? People who had something wrong in their lives, right? Their bodies sick, broken, tormented by evil spirits; their hearts hurting and broken; their lives, their communities feeling kicked around and crushed, by evil and injustice. What kind of song could they have been singing? Ballads bitter, broken, and blue.

But they're on their way to see Jesus. And what have they heard about Jesus? He's healing the sick, casting out demons; with a word, he's making the crippled well to walk. And when the people coming to see Jesus get close, when they hear what's happening, what do they hear? People are healed just by touching Jesus. Can you imagine the song in their hearts? “I've got a wonderful feeling, Everything's going my way.” Can you imagine what they might be hoping? “Healthcare today! What's next? How about freedom, so we can be free to live our own lives? How about justice, a life where we're treated right? How about the good life, so we can live in comfort? Life is looking up!”

“Oh, what a beautiful morning, Oh, what a beautiful day,
I've got a wonderful feeling, Everything's going my way.”

It's then that Jesus looks into the eyes of his disciples: **“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.”**

I'm not sure I like what Jesus is saying. **“Blessed are you who are poor, hungry, weeping”**? I don't want to be poor, hungry, weeping. I want more; I want better; I want happy. I want the good life; I want everything going my way.

But what does Jesus say about the “good life”? **“Woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort. Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep. Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets.”**

Before I said: “I'm not sure I like what Jesus is saying.” Now, with these “Woes,” I'm pretty sure I don't like what Jesus is saying. I have a nice house, and I like it. I'm well fed, and I like it. Most every day, I get to laugh. In so many ways, life is good. But what does Jesus say? “Woe.” And not just “woe,” Jesus says the good life of this world will be gutted, reversed, turned upside down. Not just for the snoots and snobs. Not just for the 1%. Not just for those who live off the rest of us, who live high by stepping on the rest of us. The good life of the world we so easily chase and long for, the good life of the world we so easily get caught up in working for, the good life of the world we so dangerously put ahead of God's life for us - the good life of this world will be gutted, reversed, and left empty.

That kind of sucks the life and the joy out of “I've got a beautiful feeling, everything's going my way,” doesn't it? Does that mean life here is pointless? That the best we can look forward to is gathering and garbaging? That's what the life of this world is - a life of gathering and garbaging. For some, a life of hurt and heartache followed by a worse hurt. For some, a life of pretending followed by

the ugly, awful reality of God's judgment. But living the life of the world, chasing the life of the world, gathering and garbaging, pretending goodness and then forever weeping and gnashing - that's not our only option.

You may remember this in our lesson. Jesus looked into the eyes of his hurting people and spoke to their hurting hearts: **“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.”** Jesus has hope; he has a promise for us. It doesn't always sound good. **“Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets.”** And **“Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.”** Doesn't sound good, does it? But listen to what Jesus says next: **“Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven.”** There is a different life to live than the life of the world that ends gutted and empty. Jesus offers a life that celebrates forever in heaven.

How do we get that life? Not by living poor, hungry, and hurting. And not by living: “I've got a wonderful feeling everything's going my way.” No, the way to God's good life, the way to God's best life, is through Jesus. Not Jesus the healer; not Jesus the teacher; but Jesus our Savior. He doesn't just teach us how to live right by God; he lived life right by God for us. He doesn't just heal our bodies; he heals our hearts and souls and sets us right with God.

How? Not by chasing the good life and serving it up for us on a platter. No, but by sacrificing himself and serving his life up for God and for us - how? By living a life of love for others, and then by sacrificing himself for God and for us on the cross. By his sacrifice of

self on the cross, Jesus paid for the way we put living the good life of the world ahead of living the life God has for us. By his sacrifice of self in life, Jesus lived for us the life we need to be right by God. And now what? Jesus isn't living a life of sacrifice, forever hungry, poor, sad, and empty. No, today Jesus is living and celebrating in heaven, sitting at God's right hand, approved by God, sharing God's blessing and approval - inviting **"Come to me all you who are weary and burdened,"** promising **"and I will give you rest,"** forgiving **"Peace, your sins are forgiven you!"** and promising and pointing to heaven **"in my Father's house are many rooms ... I am coming back to take you to be with me, that you may be where I am."** In heaven where **"there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain."** In heaven where we will be face to face with God living and celebrating the good life, living and celebrating the best of life.

How do we live that life today? It's not a matter of living poor, hungry, and hurting. We get to live with Jesus and his promise ahead of us. With Jesus at our side and his promise ahead of us, we don't have to live stuck living the life of the world like this world and this life are all that matters. We get to live God's life sharing the love of God, even if it costs us friends or family. We get to live God's life sharing the treasures of heaven, even if it costs us lifestyle and comfort. We get to live God's life even if it costs us here, because with Jesus we have the best of life coming.

Think about it. Whether you're living with plenty or in want, with family and friends or with the world against you, healthy or not - with Jesus, you have your best life ahead of you. And that's why we get to live: "Oh, what a beautiful morning, Oh, what a beautiful day, I've got a wonderful feeling, Everything's going my way." Amen.

February 2, 2025

THE SERVICE

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... we are sounded by conflict and paradox - things just don't seem right.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... Jesus doesn't provide easy answers. Instead he adds another layer of conflict and paradox. Why? Instead of seeing or feeling peace, that all is right, Jesus leads us to where all we can do is believe him - that in Jesus all will be right!

OPENING HYMN

"See This Wonder in the Making"
Hymn 646

RECOGNITION OF A PRIVATE BAPTISM

+ Rosa Claire Wintrone +

This rite is used when a child or adult has been baptized privately and the family or individual desires the congregation to know and rejoice in the baptism. The rite follows the opening hymn in The Service.

In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Our Savior Jesus Christ commanded Baptism when he said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

All of us are born into this world with a deep need for Baptism. From our parents we inherit a sinful nature; we are without true fear of God and true faith in God and are condemned to eternal death. But while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. He took away our sin by giving his life on the cross. In Baptism, he clothes us with the robe of his righteousness and gives us a new life.

We rejoice that *Rosa* was baptized on *January 9, 2025*. Through water and the Word, *she* received the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit and gained the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

Was *Rosa* baptized with water and in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit?

Yes, *Rosa* was baptized with water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Receive the sign of the cross on the head and heart T to mark you as one redeemed by Christ the crucified.

The almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has given you the new birth of water and the Spirit and has forgiven all your sins. May he strengthen you with his grace all the days of your life. Peace be with you.

We give thanks, most merciful Father, that you have received *Rosa* as your own child and made *her* a member of Christ's body, the church. Now, we pray, grant to *her* and to all your church on earth that, being dead to sin, we may live to righteousness and, being buried with Christ into his death, we may also share in his resurrection, so that, with all your saints, we may inherit eternal life; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST

CW 191

Refrain: Glory to God in the highest, glory to God, and peace to his people on earth, and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father.
Amen. *Refrain*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God of power and might, you know that we live in the midst of many great dangers, and in our frailty we cannot stand upright. Give us strength and protection to support us in all peril, and carry us through all temptations; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 17:5–8

This is what the LORD says:

“Cursed is the one who trusts in man,
who draws strength from mere flesh
and whose heart turns away from the LORD.
That person will be like a bush in the wastelands;
they will not see prosperity when it comes.
They will dwell in the parched places of the desert,
in a salt land where no one lives.

“But blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD,
whose confidence is in him.
They will be like a tree planted by the water
that sends out its roots by the stream.
It does not fear when heat comes;
its leaves are always green.
It has no worries in a year of drought
and never fails to bear fruit.”

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

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 1A

Refrain

Bless - ed are they, bless - ed are
they who hope in the LORD.

Tone

Blessed is the one who / does not walk
in step with the / wicked
or stand in the way that / sinners take
or sit in the company of / mockers,
but whose delight is in the law / of the LORD,
and who meditates on his law / day and night.
That person is like a tree planted by streams of / water,
which yields its fruit in / season
and whose leaf does not / wither—
whatever they do / prospers. *Refrain*

Not so the / wicked!
They are like chaff that the wind / blows away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the / judgment,
nor sinners in the assembly of the / righteous. *Refrain*

For the LORD watches over the way of the / righteous,
but the way of the wicked leads to de- / struction.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain***

SECOND READING

2 Corinthians 12:7b–10

Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. The LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Luke 6:17–26

He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.

Looking at his disciples, he said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are you who hunger now,
for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

Blessed are you when people hate you,
when they exclude you and insult you
and reject your name as evil,
because of the Son of Man.

“Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

“But woe to you who are rich,
for you have already received your comfort.
Woe to you who are well fed now,
for you will go hungry.
Woe to you who laugh now,
for you will mourn and weep.
Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you,
for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Blest Are They”
Hymn 690

Blest are they, the poor in spirit, theirs is the kingdom of God.
Blest are they, full of sorrow, they shall be consoled.

Refrain

Rejoice and be glad! Blessed are you, holy are you!
Rejoice and be glad! Yours is the kingdom of God!

Blest are they, the lowly ones, they shall inherit the earth.
Blest are they who hunger and thirst, they shall have their fill. *Refrain*

Blest are they who show mercy, mercy shall be theirs.
Blest are they, the pure of heart, they shall see God! *Refrain*

Blest are they who seek peace, they are the children of God.
Blest are they who suffer in faith, the glory of God is theirs. *Refrain*

Blest are you who suffer hate all because of me.
Rejoice and be glad, yours is the kingdom; shine for all to see. *Refrain*

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 truly 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 worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian 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.

OFFERING

If you prefer to give online, the code at the right will take you to our Online Giving page. We invite our online givers to join in our offering with an "I Give Online" card in the pew racks.



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Loving God and Lord, you created the universe that surrounds us and the globe on which we live. You control all things through your Son, who sits at your right hand in glory.

Comfort us with the promise of your eternal presence.

Give your Word power as it works in our hearts and minds. Clear away our confusion, and demolish our doubts. Send your Spirit to strengthen both our confidence in your promises and our desire to live according to your will.

Take away our love of sinning, and restore us each day by your grace.

The signs of the times warn us that the end of time is near. Protect us from scoffers who sneer at your truth. Spare us and Christians around the world from all forms of hate and persecution.

Give us courage to carry the cross with patience and joy.

Instill in the hearts of our children a desire to follow you as they prepare for future days. Help them distinguish between what is passing and what is eternal, between instant thrills and lasting joy. Encourage more young people to prepare for service in the public ministry of the gospel.

Mold us and move us to be good examples for our youth.

Hold in your care, Lord, those who are experiencing physical or emotional pain and all who are afflicted by disease or facing death. [Especially bless . . . *here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Pour out your compassion on the grieving, and comfort the mourners who miss someone they loved.

Move us to pray for these brothers and sisters and to help when we can.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

Whether we pray together or alone, you have promised to hear and answer us. Give us patience to accept your blessings in whatever way you send them. In your love and wisdom, prepare us for the day when you will take us to be with you forever.

Hear us for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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 SACRAMENT

(Guests, please see our communion practice on page 2.)

(Gluten-free wafers are available; ask Pastor.)

PREFACE



The Lord be with you.



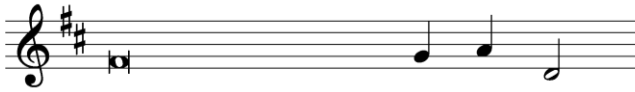
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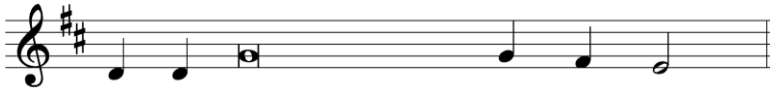
Lift up your hearts.



We lift them up to the Lord.



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lived among us as a human being and revealed his glory as your only Son, full of grace and truth. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY - SUNG

CW 200

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

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my T body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my T blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **Amen.**

JESUS, LAMB OF GOD - SUNG

CW 202

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us, grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"All Depends on Our Possessing"

Hymn 807

All depends on our possessing God's abundant grace and blessing,
though all earthly wealth depart. They who trust with faith unshaken
in their God are not forsaken and will keep a dauntless heart.

He who to this day has fed me and to many joys has led me
is and ever shall be mine. He who ever gently schools me,
he who daily guides and rules me, will remain my help divine.

Many spend their lives in fretting over trifles and in getting
things that have no solid ground. I shall strive to win a treasure
that will bring me lasting pleasure and that now is seldom found.

When with sorrow I am stricken, hope anew my heart will quicken;
all my longing shall be stilled. To his lovingkindness tender
soul and body I surrender, for on God alone I build.

Well he knows what best to grant me; all the longing hopes that haunt me,
joy and sorrow, have their day. I shall doubt his wisdom never;
as God wills, so be it ever; I commit to him my way.

If my days on earth he lengthen, he my weary soul will strengthen;
all my trust in him I place. Earthly wealth is not abiding,
like a stream away is gliding; safe I anchor in his grace.

CLOSING PRAYER

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

O God the Father, source of all goodness, in your loving-kindness you sent your Son to share our humanity. We thank you that through him you have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament. We also pray that you will not forsake us but will rule our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit so that we willingly serve you day after day; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

"I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus"

Hymn 816 vs. 1, 4-6

I am trusting you, Lord Jesus, trusting only you;
trusting you for full salvation, free and true.

I am trusting you to guide me; you alone shall lead,
ev'ry day and hour supplying all my need.

I am trusting you for power; you can never fail.
Words which you yourself shall give me must prevail.

I am trusting you, Lord Jesus; never let me fall.
I am trusting you forever and for all.

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