

**SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS AT HOME WORSHIP
COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM
MAY 18, 2025**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Gracious God, **whether we are aware of it or not, we often put up barriers, deciding for ourselves who is “in” and who is “out” of your righteous reign. Shake us out of our need to control, and open our hearts to accept all people without exception, as you do. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.**



SCRIPTURE READINGS: FIRST READING: ACTS 15: 1-18

Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”²And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders.³So they were sent on their way by the church, and as they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, they reported the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the believers.⁴When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.⁵But some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, “It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses.”⁶The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter.⁷After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “My brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers.⁸And God, who knows the human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us;⁹and in cleansing their hearts by faith he has made no distinction between them and us.¹⁰Now therefore why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear?¹¹On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.”¹²The whole assembly kept silence, and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told of all the signs and wonders that God had done through them among the Gentiles.¹³After they finished speaking, James replied, “My brothers, listen to me.¹⁴Simeon has related how God first looked favorably on the Gentiles, to take from among them a people for his name.¹⁵This agrees with the words of the prophets, as it is written,¹⁶ ‘After this I will return, and I will rebuild the dwelling of David, which has fallen; from its ruins I will rebuild it, and I will set it up,¹⁷so that all other peoples may seek the Lord – even all the Gentiles over whom my name has been called. Thus says the Lord, who has been making these things¹⁸known from long ago.’”

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL: LUKE 2: 29-32

²⁹“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

This is the Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL BY ASSISTING MINISTER JOHN YARBERRY

Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.” Maybe it’s the rebel in me, but the hair on the back of my head bristles when I think of others (“certain individuals”), supposedly with more knowledge, at least in their opinion, and authority telling me what to do or believe. Granted, these people can make you think, and that’s a good thing.

All of us have to decide for ourselves what to believe and how to behave. These questions of rules, or laws if you will, have been with us forever and still are. Are LGBTQ people welcome in the church? If they are welcome, aren’t they still really bad sinners, and of course they are worse sinners than we are, and could never become a pastor. The same goes for women, a debate that still rages today.

Logically one could extend this thinking to the saved and unsaved question. Is it required that you be a Christian to be saved just as some wanted it to have to be circumcised to be a Christian? A big question that many have taken a very rigid stance in the affirmative. In a way it is a very black and white way to view the world. I see it as an us and them viewpoint.

How does one define Christianity or more to the point how does one define who Jesus is? Is Jesus God, is Jesus the word, the Creator, does Jesus love some to the exclusion of others, or is Jesus what he commanded us to do, did he heal all who asked him, Jew or Gentile, and did he love some to the exclusion of others (no he did not!)?

There is not a parable he taught that needed a come to Jesus moment to be saved. Are you a Christian when you show compassion, when you feed the poor, when you help the widow, when you help heal the sick, when you show mercy, when you love your neighbor as yourself, or when you love God with all your heart soul and mind? As a Muslim, as an American Indian, as a Buddhist, as a Hindi, as an orthodox Jew, and yes even as an atheist, if you do these things are you not a Christ follower? Amen

HYMN OF THE DAY | THIS CHILD

<https://youtu.be/BESVZQDsGRI?si=0UKjDYAKMEL6GRDW>

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

As the early followers of Jesus finally decided that salvation was open to all people, and not just the Jews, so remind us that we also must welcome everyone, even if they don't fit into our preferred set of criteria. Holy and wonderful God, **receive our prayer.**

Salvation is open to all creation, O God. Help us to see the natural environment as we see ourselves, and work for the restoration and preservation of all that you have made. Holy and wonderful God, **receive our prayer.**

Guide leaders throughout the world to truly listen to those most vulnerable and oppressed in their communities. May they make changes that transform lives and situations. Holy and wonderful God, **receive our prayer.**

Be with those who mourn this day, especially John and Caroline, Eric, Everett Pearl, and the family and friends of Matt. Make us a source of comfort, love, and strength to them as they face the days ahead. Bring them peace as they trust in the knowledge that he rests in Your loving arms. Holy and wonderful God, **receive our prayer.**

Comfort and sustain all who journey with ongoing health challenges especially Pastor Phil, Scott, Rick and Kelly, Terry Schreier, Jim and Sally, Dave, Dorothy, Clover, and all those we lift through our Prayer Chain. Guide their caregivers and medical providers, grant patience and acceptance to their loved ones, and bring peace to troubled hearts. Holy and wonderful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for all peoples to heed your call for justice, mercy, and compassion. Incline the hearts of the leaders of our country to align with your vision for justice and mercy. Give us spirits of generosity to be of love and service to all those around us: in our families, congregations, communities, social groups, and more. And give us humility to ask for and accept care from others. Holy and wonderful God, **receive our prayer.**

Be with those estranged from their families. Bring them healing and restoration. Help them to find love and community in new places. Holy and wonderful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for our ability to care for one another. Let us love, not in words or speech, but in truth and action. Strengthen and equip us to care for those in need through the ministries of our community: The Gunbarrel Faith Partnership, Lutheran Campus Ministry, the Community Infant Program, the Little Free Pantry, All Roads of Boulder, and Rise Against Suicide. Use us to share Christ's love through the acts of kindness we share with one another and our neighbors in need, especially those who are lost, poor, abused, forgotten, silenced, or avoided. Holy and wonderful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the work of the Joshua School and organizations like them. Empower those who nurture the minds, bodies and spirits of children and adults living on the Autism Spectrum. Help us to help them reach their fullest potential. Holy and wonderful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the nations now engaged in war, especially Ukraine and Gaza. In the steadfastness of your love, hasten the day of peace. Look with mercy on those exposed to hatred, conflict, and death. In your mercy, remove all causes and occasions of war. Incline the hearts of all people to follow the path to peace and justice, that war may cease and reconciliation may come. Holy and wonderful God, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

May we honor those saints who have gone before us by continuing the walk of faith, that others might follow after us, continuing the chain of community in Christ. Holy and wonderful God, **receive our prayer.**

These and the prayers of all creation we lift to you in Jesus' name.

Amen.

BENEDICTION & SENDING

Brothers and sisters, surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us rid our lives of every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily hinders our progress. Let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us, knowing that the grace of God, the love of Jesus Christ, and the presence of the Holy Spirit goes with us. **Amen.**

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here.

We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace.

Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person—questions, complexities and all.

Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

SHEPHERD CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WEEK OF MAY 18– MAY 25, 2025

Sunday, May 18th– Council at Jerusalem

9:30 a.m. – Hybrid In-Person/ Zoom Worship with Holy Communion
Coffee and Conversation immediately following Worship

Wednesday, May 21st

11:00 a.m. - Amazing Grace Bible Study:
Sermon on the Mount: Jesus' Alternative Plan

Friday, May 23rd

7:00 a.m. – Men's Zoom Breakfast Bible Study
5:00 p.m. – Friday Perspectives

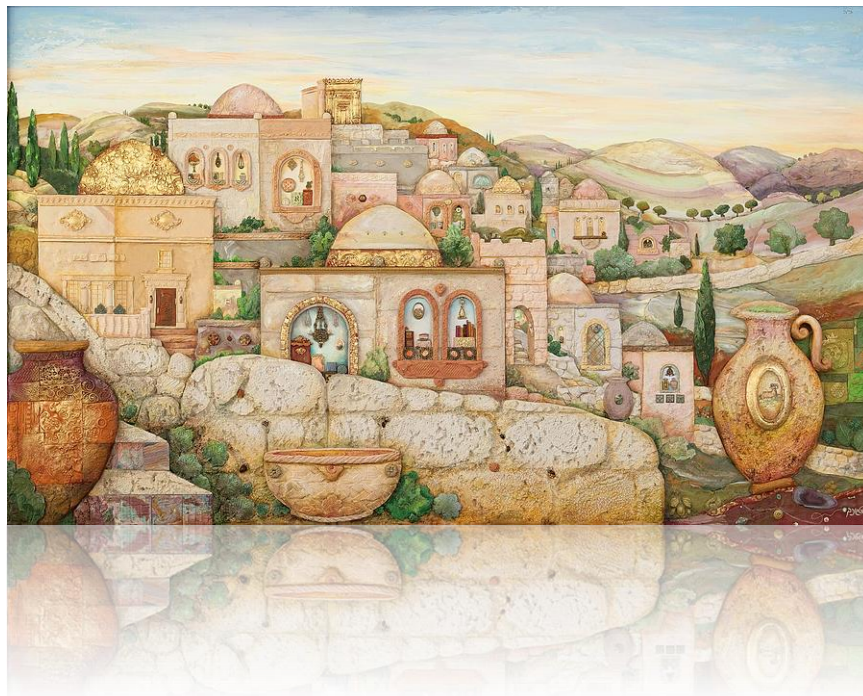
Sunday, May 25th – Living by Faith

9:30 a.m. – Hybrid In-Person/ Zoom Worship with Holy Communion
Coffee and Conversation immediately following Worship

MAY BIRTHDAYS

HELEN T. 5/13
SALLY E. 5/16
DONNA S. 5/26
TERRY S. 5/27

SAVE THE DATE!
ANNUAL RYSSBY SUMMER WORSHIP WITH POTLUCK PICNIC
Sunday, June 8, 2025 at 9:30 a.m.



DAILY NARRATIVE LECTIONARY READINGS: WEEK OF MAY 18, 2025

Monday, May 19, 2025

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/acts-1611-15-the-conversion-of-lydia2025>

Acts 16:11-15 The Conversion of Lydia

Tuesday, May 20, 2025

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/acts-1616-40-paul-and-silas-in-prison2025>

Acts 16:16-40 Paul and Silas in Prison

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/acts-271-12-paul-sails-for-rome2025>

Acts 27:1-12 Paul Sails for Rome

Thursday, May 22, 2025

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/acts-2713-38-the-storm-at-sea2025>

Acts 27:13-38 The Storm at Sea

Friday, May 23, 2025

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/acts-2739-2816-the-shipwreck2025>

Acts 27:39 – 28:16 The Shipwreck

Saturday, May 24, 2025

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/acts-2823-31-paul-preaches-in-rome2025>

Acts 28:23-31 Paul Preaches in Rome

Sunday, May 25, 2025

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/galatians-113-17-211-21-living-by-faith2025>

Galatians 1:13-17, 2:11-21 Living by Faith



WELCOME! *Thank you for worshiping with us today!*

GUESTS

Please sign our Guestbook and/or fill out the brightly-colored Info Slip and place it in the offering plate. This helps us get to know you better so that we can serve you more effectively.

DO YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW NEED PRAYERS?

Prayer Changes Things. The Shepherd Prayer Chain members stand by ready to help. You'll find our Prayer Box on the table to your left as you enter the building, as well as paper and pencils. Please write your prayer request and place it in the box. *You are not required to sign your request or give the name of the person for whom we will pray, unless you wish.* If you desire a private conversation with Pastor Janet, please contact the Church Office or call her on her cell phone at 507-360-1625. **All prayer requests will remain confidential.**

CHILDREN ARE CHERISHED AT SHEPHERD!

In our Sanctuary, you'll see a coloring table and soft toys. Children's bulletins are available on the table just outside the Sanctuary. If at any time you wish to take your child out for some quiet time, our Nursery/Library is stocked with supplies for playing, coloring, studying the Children's Bulletin, or reading.

REMEMBRANCE

On the north wall of the Sanctuary a table is set with candles. You are invited to light a candle in memory of a loved one at any time before, during, or after our worship service.

COMMUNION

At Shepherd of the Hills, we recognize that the Table of Communion is not our table. It is not a Lutheran table. It is our Lord's Table – a meal prepared for all – prepared in love. *Please come.* All who long for the Good News in Jesus Christ are truly welcome at this table. As Jesus called children to be close to him, we, likewise, extend this invitation to all children. Should you not feel comfortable receiving the Sacrament, please come forward indicating that you wish to receive a blessing by folding your arms over your chest.

COMMUNION OUTSIDE OF WORSHIP

Arrangements can be made to bring communion to you at a time convenient for you. If, for any reason, you are unable to attend normal services, such as a hospital stay or for personal reasons, and wish to have communion brought to you, please contact the Church Office, Pastor Janet at 507-360-1625, or Dick Werpy at 720-771-6767.

MEMBERSHIP

At Shepherd, we worship as one Faith Family. If you wish to extend your worship to include membership, please see Pastor Janet.

Shepherd of the Hills

LUTHERAN CHURCH

PARTNERS IN WORSHIP

THE MINISTERS: ALL THE PEOPLE

PASTOR: REV. JANET COLBY KETTERING

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: CAROLINE MICHALAK

ALTAR GUILD: KEN & GERRY MOORHEAD, LYNN TRUMBLE & KAY WERPY

ASSISTING MINISTERS: TIM KIRCHOFF, DICK WERPY & JOHN YARBERRY

PIANIST: MARGARET SCHARFF

PRAYER CHAIN ADMINISTRATOR: KATHY WOOTTON

SHEPHERD COUNCIL:

JOHN YARBERRY, PRESIDENT

DICK WERPY, VICE-PRESIDENT

KELLY MAUER, SECRETARY

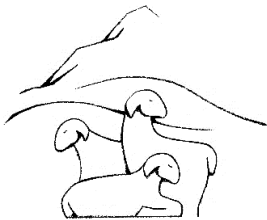
TERRY SCOBY, TREASURER

WAYNE OTTO & JIM TIMMERMANN, BUILDING & MAINTENANCE

JANICE IRISH, MICHELLE KIRCHOFF, CINDIE SCOBY & PASTOR JANET KETTERING

ZOOM TECHNICIAN: FUZZ NEWKIRK

OUR MISSION STATEMENT



Marked by the Cross of Christ Forever, we

† *Gather in Love*

† *Grow in Faith*

† *Share God's Love & Grace*

† *We are Empowered to BOLDLY*

Proclaim & Witness God's Word



7077 Harvest Road, Boulder, CO 80301 Office: 303-530-4422
Email: shepherdboulder@gmail.com Website: www.shepherdboulder.org
Check out our Facebook page at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran