About the Propers

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Proper 28

November 15, 2026



The Beginning of the End

It's Time to … Put Your Affairs in Order

When you know that your death is approaching, you try to put your affairs in order for the sake of others. When you know that the second coming of Christ is approaching, what is the appropriate response? We are not to be sedentary. Jesus has not yet returned because there is still work to be done. And Jesus carries out his good work through us. So until he comes again and says, "Stop!" we will be busy with faithful service. Christ has given each believer gifts and talents. And when Christ entrusts us with those gifts and talents, he calls us to use them all for his glory. It's the beginning of the end. In the time between Christ's first and second coming, we will use everything the master has given us to live according to his will and to carry out his mission.

Prayer of the Day

Lord God Almighty, so rule and govern our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit that we may always look forward to the end of this present evil age and the day of your righteous judgment. Keep us steadfast in true and living faith, and present us at last holy and blameless before you; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Lesson — Isaiah 1:10-18

How did Israel respond to all of God's gifts? With grudging service, which is not faithful service. How does God respond to Israel? By promising to make them as pure as newly fallen snow.

Second Reading — Romans 12:1-8

When we keep God's mercy in view, we understand and appreciate the gifts he gives us in Christ, and we use those gifts faithfully as our joyful response.

Gospel — Matthew 25:14-30

Through a parable Jesus calls his followers to faithful service in grateful response to the gifts that the master has given and in joyful anticipation of the master's impending return.

Psalm of the Day [4] — Psalm 128 C — "Blest Are Those Who Love You"

The Church sings Psalm 128 in services that encourage the faithful use of material blessings. As people live their Christian vocations, blessings from the Lord are both requested and promised. Martin Luther said, "Psalm 128 is a comfort psalm. Marriage itself is praised, and married partners are comforted by God's gracious will for them. They are encouraged not to look at the trouble, work, discouragement, or discomfort of marriage, but rather at its happiness and blessing. Married life is a gracious creation of God, something that he blesses and holds dear."

Gospel Acclamation Revelation 2:10

"Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown."

Hymn of the Day 751 "O God, Your Hand the Heavens Made" (Frank L. Cross, 1904-2001)

Church Year Season [1] Season after Pentecost

After reliving the great events of the life of Christ, the worshipping Church spends half a year focusing on the teachings of Christ. The Church wears green during the season of Pentecost as the Spirit uses those teachings of Jesus to grow the faith of believers. The appointed lessons cover a great body of doctrine for faith and life.

Colors & Symbolism Green

Green is the color of life, refreshment, growth, and regeneration. Whereas the first half of the Church Year (the "Festival Half" or the "Half Year of Our Lord") focused on the life of Christ during his earthly ministry, the emphasis for the second half (the "Non-Festival half" or the "Half Year of the Church") shifts to the result of Christ's work through the Word: the work of defining and creating faith, and inspiring its fruits. The theme of the Christian's growth in faith (like healthy green plants) fills the season.

Nain Paraments Sundays after Pentecost

Superfrontal: When Isaiah was called to be a prophet of the LORD, two seraphs (a class of angels) appeared and called out to one another, "Holy, Holy, Holy" (Isaiah 6:3). The threefold repetition of the divine adjective emphasizes the infinite holiness of the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Some congregations count the Sundays in this season of the Church Year as the Sundays after the festival of the Holy Trinity, calling it the "Trinity season," or the "Sundays after Trinity." That is why most paraments for this season feature symbols of the Holy Trinity.

Lectern antependium: The equilateral triangle is one of the oldest emblems of the Holy Trinity. The three equal sides and angles represent the equality, unity, and co-eternal nature of the three persons of the Trinity. Though they are three distinct persons, they are of one essence as one God (Deuteronomy 6:4). The three interwoven circles represent the three members of the Trinity and emphasize their unity and eternal nature; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are without beginning or end.

Pulpit antependium: At each point of the triangle (the significance of the triangle is explained above) is a nimbus, Latin for *cloud.* The nimbus appears as a circle, or a halo. In Christian artwork, nimbi surround the head of the Father (when he is depicted as a human), Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit (when he is depicted as a dove) to signify their glory and holiness. In artistic depictions of believers (saints), nimbi are placed around their heads to show that they have been made holy by God's grace in Christ and through faith. The three fish in between the nimbi and that meet in the middle of the triangle signify Christians who are united to the Triune God by faith. Fish have come to represent the followers of Jesus because believers have been brought into the ship of God's church through the efforts of those who proclaim Gospel (cf. "fishers of men" in Matthew 4:19).

[1] Courtesy of "Planning Christian Worship: Year A". Jonathan E. Schroeder, Author.
[2] Courtesy of "Planning Christian Worship: Year B". Daniel M. Deutschlander, Author.
[3] Courtesy of "Planning Christian Worship: Year C". Joel J. Gawrisch, Author.
[4] From *Christian Worship: Psalter* © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Reprinted by permission.
. Clipart courtesy of "Ecclesiastical Art by Ed Riojas"