Nevomber 15, 2026
Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Abiding Word
Evangelical Lutheran Church

8470 Landen Drive Maineville, Ohio

At Abiding Word
We gather around the Word (worship)
We grow in the Word (education)
And we share the Word with the world (outreach).

Abiding Word Evangelical Lutheran Church
Wisconsin Synod
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Welcome!

To all who have gathered here this morning we welcome you in the name of Christ our Lord. Through him we have access to God in boldness and confidence. (Ephesians 3:12) Everyone is welcome to join us after the service for coffee. Sunday School is at 10:45 and Adult Bible Study at 11:00am.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END –

PUT YOUR AFFAIRS IN ORDER

The cartoon character holds a sign saying, "The End Is Near." For Christians, this is not a message of fear. Instead, it is a message of watchful hope. Scripture teaches that the End Times began with Christ's first coming, especially his death and resurrection. Christ will come again on judgment day. Now we live in that in-between time, when salvation has been won, but full glory is still to come. It's the beginning of the end.

Jesus himself makes clear that no one knows the day or hour of his return. This uncertainty is not meant to trouble us, but to keep us spiritually awake. Each day becomes an opportunity to live in repentance and faith, turning from sin and trusting fully in Christ's finished work for us.

Our preparation for the end is not about trying to predict signs or earn God's favor. Instead, it is about remaining rooted in Jesus: hearing the Word, receiving the sacraments, and trusting the promises of forgiveness. These are God's ways of keeping us ready. "The Beginning of the End" reminds us that history is moving toward our own death and toward Christ's return. For believers, that end is truly a beginning.

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. It's the beginning of the end, and we use our gifts and talents in an orderly way for God's glory.

HYMN: AS MORNING DAWNS, DEAR SAVIOR 777

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

CONFESSION OF SINS
We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.
Amen.

1008 Gloria (Amer) - NETTLETON
1 Glory be to God in heaven, peace to those he loves so well.
On the earth let all his people speak his grace, his wonders tell:
Lord, we praise you for your glory, mighty Father, heaven's King;
hear our joyful adoration and accept the thanks we bring.

2 Only Son of God the Father, Lamb who takes our sin away,
now with him in triumph seated— for your mercy, Lord, we pray:
Jesus Christ, most high and holy, Savior, you are God alone
in the glory of the Father with the Spirit, Three in One!
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The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

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 READING **ISAIAH 1:10–18**

10 Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom;
listen to the instruction of our God, you people of Gomorrah!
11 "The multitude of your sacrifices—what are they to me?" says the Lord.
"I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals;
I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.

12 When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling
of my courts? 13 Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me.
New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—I cannot bear your worthless assemblies.
14 Your New Moon feasts and your appointed festivals I hate with all my being. They
have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. 15 When you spread out your
hands in prayer, I hide my eyes from you; even when you offer many prayers, I am not
listening.

Your hands are full of blood!

16 Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop
doing wrong. 17 Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause
of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.
18 "Come now, let us settle the matter," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like
scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like
wool.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 128A: BLEST ARE ALL WHO FEAR THE LORD **Psalter pg 693**

SECOND READING **ROMANS 12:1–8**

[1]Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. [2]Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

[3]For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. [4]For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, [5]so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. [6]We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; [7]if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; [8]if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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

GOSPEL **MATTHEW 25:14–30**

14 "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and
entrusted his wealth to them. 15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and
to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. 16 The man
who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained
five bags more. 17 So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. 18 But the man
who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

19 "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts
with them. 20 The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five.
'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five
more.'

21 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been
faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your
master's happiness!'

22 "The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted
me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.'

23 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been
faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your
master's happiness!'

24 "Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I
knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where
you have not scattered seed. 25 So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the
ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

26 "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest
where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 27 Well then, you
should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would
have received it back with interest.

28 " 'So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags.
29 For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does
not have, even what they have will be taken from them. 30 And throw that worthless
servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

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

Be seated

HYMN: O GOD, YOUR HAND THE HEAVENS MADE 751

SERMON on ROMANS 12:1–8

APOSTLES' CREED
I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Offering *(At this time our usher will bring our thank offering to the Lord.)*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

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.

Be seated

HYMN: BEFORE YOU I KNEEL 735

Stand

Almighty God, we thank you for teaching us the things you want us to believe and do. Help us by your Holy Spirit to keep your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, 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 T give you peace.
Amen.

Be seated

HYMN: GOD OF GRACE AND GOD OF GLORY 770