

Please pray with me. May the meditations of my heart and the words of my lips be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, and may you add a blessing to the hearing and understanding of this message today. Amen.

It's Rally Day and
God's Work. Our Hands Day and
it's a day where we say farewell to Amanda.

Our readings describe the joys and challenges of life with God.
Ultimately, God's sustaining grace makes possible
a life of fullness and flourishing —
a life of love for God and neighbor.

In Deuteronomy 30 Moses addresses the people as they prepare to enter the land God promised to their ancestors. Within a larger conversation about covenant and God's faithfulness, Moses urges the people to choose the way of God, which is the way of life and prosperity. This is what God intends for God's people, and it is characterized by love for God (which is intertwined with love for neighbor), obedience to God's laws and connection to God, "holding fast to him" (v. 20). This text reminds us that God's law is a gift that guides our life together and orients our relationships with God and with one another.

Actions have consequences,
and a way of life that disregards God's laws —
in which we turn away from God and neighbor,
and are seen in the brokenness of society.
Disregarding God's laws brings hunger, the need for shelter,
the need for clothing,
the need to pick up trash from God's beautiful creation.
Caring for what we have received from God draws us to

polishing bells, appreciating our elders with cards and appreciating our Emergency Services Personnel.

The way of discipleship, the way of Jesus, is a way of love, service and sacrifice. In Luke 14:25-33, Jesus tells the crowd that there are costs for following him and that the way is not easy — impossible even. We are called to examine our priorities, allegiances and responsibilities because these can draw us away from God's call.

The good news is that in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus we see how he counted the cost of our salvation and offered himself anyway. Strengthened by this gift of grace, we seek to answer God's call to love and service. Still, we do well to count the costs and clearly consider our service work. Are we prepared to be challenged and changed? Are we willing to receive as well as give? Are we looking for a one-time opportunity to feel good about helping someone in need, or might we commit to an ongoing way of living and serving, rooted in the baptismal call and nourished by God's presence?

The bottom line is that a life of faith should look different. Discipleship is not a weekend hobby or a vacation. No, to be a disciple of Jesus requires all of us—full soul, body, and mind. We are asked to reorder our identities, our priorities. This is a lifelong process. It is the process of building a holy community, this community, worth living and dying for. And, bearing resurrection crosses that Christ helps us to bear, loving God and one another. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Deuteronomy 30:15-20
Luke 14:25-33

God's Work. Our Hands.
Rally Day

September 7, 2025
Covenant Lutheran Church
Pastor Wendy Moen