

**Welcome to  
Crestholme Presbyterian Church  
24th Sunday after Pentecost  
November 15, 2020**

\*Those who are able, please stand.

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**PRELUDE** **Dubois**  
*"Offertoire"*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8mKYDctt24>

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP** **Choir**  
*"He Is Here"*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lit87CZImQ8>

**OPENING PRAYER**

**\*OPENING HYMN** **Blue Hymnal #464**  
*"Joyful, Joyful We Adore Him"*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMY3ivdNzwe>

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image, through Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Amen. (From the PCUSA Book of Common Worship Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993; p. 88)

**ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

**L:** Hear the good news: Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners! Saints, in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

**All:** Thanks be to God!

**\*GLORIA PATRI** **Blue Hymnal #579**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUBxpypSblw>

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** **Judges 4: 1-7**  
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Judges%204:1-7&version=NIV>

**PSALM READING** **Psalm 123**  
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+123&version=NIV>

**NEW TESTAMENT READING** **1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11**  
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Thessalonians+5%3A+1-11&version=NIV>

**ANTHEM** **Choir**  
*"Count Your Blessings"*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WDU pudh-pY>

**GOSPEL READING****Matthew 25: 14-30**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+25%3A+14-30&version=NIV>

**SERMON***Stay Awake***Fred Archer**

November 17, 2002

**[RCL: Judges 4:1-7; Psalm 123; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30](#)**

[Richard E. Helmer](#)

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On this, the next-to-the-last Sunday of the church year, we hear one resounding theme in all our readings: "Stay awake. Be alert. Be found working with what you have been given."

For Christians in the early church, this was a message of absolute urgency, especially because much of the ancient church, as we hear implied in Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians, believed that Christ's return was imminent. But what about us living in the 21st century? We might be tempted to be a little less urgent in our hope for Christ's return, so being prepared for it also carries a little less urgency.

Yet for our time, there may be another reason to be found hard at work, to remain alert, to avoid burying our gifts in a field while we wait for our master's return. We live in an era of incredibly fast change, and as we struggle to maintain and build our communities, we must constantly be aware of the changes occurring in the needs of the world we serve. What worked in building our faith communities 20 years ago, 10 years ago, and even only last year may not work today. The landscapes of this country and the greater world are in rapid transition, and as a church both locally and nationally, we cannot remain as we were and expect to be accessible and open to such a radically changing world.

Prevalent in Jesus' parable today is the fascinating conversation between the master and the slave who hid his master's talent in the ground. It is, in so many ways, a discourse for our times, a study of our struggle as a church in transition: "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours."

In a world of change, it may well be that God is in the business of reaping where we least expect the Spirit to have sown, gathering where Christianity's seed was apparently not scattered. Today's Gospel is an invitation for us to look outside of our stayed, historical boundaries at a world where God, at times like an opportunist, is harvesting spiritual abundance in the most unlikely places.

For us living in a land that is increasingly unchurched, this invitation can, in fact, be a declaration of our mission. We can no longer expect to harvest where Christianity once sowed. Our newest members, and our most abundant resources to grow as the Body of Christ, may be found amongst those who have never before darkened the door of the church, amongst those who have never even considered the Christian faith viable.



**\*DOXOLOGY**

**Blue Hymnal, #592**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8TkUuKIh84>

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Lord, to thee we present what is rightfully yours. Take. Multiply, and use for thy kingdom's sake. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

**\*CLOSING HYMN**

*"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"*

**Blue Hymnal #276**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTKIqmdfHSk>

**\*BENEDICTION**

May the Grace of the Son, the Love of the Father, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit go with you wherever he may lead you. Amen.

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**The end of this worship gathering - The beginning of service**

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Welcome to worship this glorious morning! We're glad that you're here! If you do not have a church home, we invite you to become part of our compassionate church family... ask Dick or an Elder about meaningful participation and membership!

Dr. Carlos Baladez will lead our Sunday morning worship next Sunday.

**COVID-19 Reminder**

As we gather in worship together, we are reminded to adhere to the rules of "social distancing," hand washing, and facemask wearing. We have, to the best of our ability, cleaned and disinfected the sanctuary. Please cooperate by not sitting in the "skipped rows." Hymn books, Bibles, and bulletins are pre-distributed to indicate where to sit. Families are allowed to sit together. Thank you!