

**A Sermon for the 9th Sunday after Pentecost
August 10, 2025**



Come to New Life!

Sermon: Pete Iole

New Life Episcopal Church, Uniontown, OH

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[Ninth Sunday after Pentecost – The Episcopal Church](#)

Preamble: Come Holy Spirit come, come as the wind that blows, come as the fire that burns, come to guide the meditations of my mind, the feelings of my heart and the words from my lips as I attempt to understand God's holy word and deliver that message for the honor and glory of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Last week our Gospel contained the parable of the wealthy fool that hoped to pull down his barns so he could build larger and store his abundance. Whereas God had other plans and demanded his life that very night. Reverend Barbara's sermon described the virtue of simplifying our lives, not depending on our earthly possessions and curbing the anxiety of feeling we don't have enough. As an example, she described a parish's loss of their church during a hurricane yet that did not diminish their faith. I know it becomes difficult to separate ourselves from our stuff. I'm sure, as I look around the congregation, that at one time or another all of us have picked up and moved our households, with some of us more experienced than others. A relocation is a forced opportunity to look at all that we have collected and decide what is essential, simply pleasing, or just no longer needed.

This week, as Luke continues, we get some advice, beginning with "Do not be afraid...." And while Jesus' instructions to his disciples were truly meant to be literal, "Sell your possessions and give alms.", our practical application is somewhat more figurative. This does not diminish the statement that "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also". The goal is to train our wills and method of thinking through the ways we use our money and resources. The Isaiah reading points out that the path is not through burnt offerings or incense, nor is it through insincere festivals and assemblies. The instruction is to do good, seek justice and rescue the oppressed.

God wants to give us the kingdom and lays out the guidance on how to get there. This is kind of like getting the answers before taking the quiz, although I do recall a Jesuit math professor that did this while neglecting to associate the answers with any particular question. Fortunately, the instruction to give alms is not unique to Luke but also appears in passages from Proverbs, Matthew and in Acts. The purpose is obviously twofold. First, it provides for those less fortunate, so that they may have their

daily bread, and more broadly, it demonstrates our generosity and willingness to open our hearts to the greater kingdom, as God opens heaven to us.

There is a caveat to this. We must also be prepared. Not just passively waiting but preparing and diligently anticipating the return. Take action, be dressed, and have your lamps lit is the instruction. Do not be surprised if, in his joy, the master reverses roles and serves dinner to the household. Take care not to become complacent. This is a trap that ensnares those that feel they have enough or have no need for improvement. We may feel that our spiritual growth is complete or that we have a portfolio of good works. Very often I find myself in trouble when I take things for granted or allow stagnation to compound to the point of deterioration. Several months ago, I spent the better part of a day organizing my tool room in the basement. Since then, I've grabbed a few random tools or hardware or fasteners and on my last trip I noticed I needed to schedule another clean up period. We do this with household spring cleaning or if we plan on moving in the near future so why not examine our spiritual house every so often to see where we might have let the edges fray a bit. We might just find that what is no longer useful to us can benefit someone else. Our book exchange or thrift store donations are just examples of what might be considered alms.

Do not be afraid. Have the faith necessary to remain alert for while we don't know the hour, we can be confident the Son of Man is coming. As Abraham and Isaac and Jacob kept the faith without ever having received the promise, they lead their people to a new homeland where God has prepared a city for them.

Amen