

**A Sermon for the 18th Sunday after Pentecost
October 12, 2025**



Come to New Life!

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

Luke 17:11-19

Not Unusual

Jesus is walking towards Jerusalem, and he has to go through Samaria to get there. He walks through a village where ten people with leprosy are keeping their distance from him but are calling to him plaintively, saying "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" This is not unusual. Many people have heard of Jesus' healing ministry, and these ten are sore in need of healing. Leprosy keeps them outside society, ostracized. Perhaps Jesus can heal them! Their plea is not unusual.

Jesus does not get any closer to them. Instead, he instructs them to show themselves to the priests. This way they will be made ritually clean, and Jesus himself will remain clean. This is not an unusual response.

So the ten lepers head towards the priests, and on the way, they are healed. This is not what they expected. They continue on their way rejoicing. Their joyous response is understandable.

But here is where the story veers into the unusual. One of the ten, a Samaritan, who is ostracized anyway because Samaritans just *are* ostracized in this society, turns back to Jesus, praising God with a loud voice. He kneels before Jesus and thanks him. This expression of gratitude is unusual. Jesus notes that nine others were healed and apparently feel no compunction to express gratitude. Perhaps they took their healing for granted. We take many things for granted and it does not occur to us to give thanks where thanks is due. But this Samaritan, this foreigner, as Jesus calls him, gives thanks.

I've been thinking of these themes – gratitude, giving thanks, receiving gifts, acknowledging gifts, giving gifts. As the fall weather gathers around us like harvest time itself, we naturally think of these themes. Some of us may already be contemplating our Thanksgiving dinners! All of these are natural associations, what usually happens this time of year. Not unusual.

As we hear the story of Jesus and the ten lepers, there are lots of associations we can make. Which group are we in, the nine ingrates, or the one that says thank you? Of the whole group of formerly sick people, what was the percentage of gratitude expressed? One out of ten, that's ten percent. That is the same amount that is Biblically

recommended for tithing, for giving back to God, and so this story also illustrates a response to God's gifts, a monetary expression of gratitude. This time of year, you expect me to mention stewardship. That is usual.

What is not usual is that you, the wonderful people of this parish, are giving more than ten percent of yourselves all year long. Name any outreach effort, such as the recent collection for One of a Kind pet shelter, and soon the collection area is overflowing. You are constantly bringing in items for the FISH food pantry. You adopt families for Christmas. You give of your time and attention to adults with disabilities. You watch over those less fortunate inside the parish and outside. You are active in the running of the parish. You give way more than ten percent of yourselves to serve the Kingdom of God.

Ten percent is a convenient number, the usual request. Your generosity is way over the minimum. Jesus tells us to give of our whole selves, and you do that. You live lives of generosity. You say thank you to God all the time.

And so allow me to say thank you to you. I know you will do all you can to keep this small but mighty church going, with your participation, with your contributions, with your faith. In the name of God, I thank you.