

**A Sermon for the 21st Sunday after Pentecost
November 2, 2025**

All Saints Sunday



Come to New Life!

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New Life Episcopal Church, Uniontown, OH

Click Here for today's Readings:

[Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost – The Episcopal Church](#)

Luke 6:20-31

Along the paths of life

Today we celebrate our Beloved Departed, who left us in the past year. They are saints to us, along with all the saints of the church, who we envision gathered around the Lamb on the Throne of Heaven. We honor them collectively, and we honor them individually, holding memories of them close to our hearts.

In our Gospel reading today, Jesus delivers a powerful sermon on blessings and woes. The parallel sermon in the Gospel of Matthew has Jesus delivering a similar sermon from the top of a mountain – the Sermon on the Mount. This one from Luke could be called The Sermon on the Plane, on an even place. There is a certain leveling in what Jesus says, as appropriate to the landscape.

As you just heard in the Gospel lesson, Jesus offers his listeners many contrasts in life experience. He begins with those who have suffered losses, such as poverty, hunger, and abuse, and he calls all of them Blessed. Then he lists the prosperous people – the well-fed, the rich – and says they will be laid low – woe to them! Blessings and curses, in effect.

All of us have had ups and downs in our lives, but I choose to see it more laterally – not up and down so much, but rather as paths leading to different places, perhaps along a level place. We can follow where others have led and learn from their lives and the good or bad we have experienced in our own lives. We all make choices, we occasionally make momentous turns, occasionally make some mistakes, but our lives and the lives of our loved ones are all gifts from God.

This morning, I have some visual cues, some symbols of the paths of life. Look at the beautiful altar hanging, handmade by Toni Miller. She has woven symbols of the church, of the sacraments, and the golden path of life. Likewise, I am debuting a new stole this morning by liturgical artist Jennifer Burk. She shows an angel, probably Gabriel, blowing a trumpet to announce the Good News. On the pathway of our spiritual ancestors, we see four figures, top to bottom: Zechariah, the priestly father of

John the Baptist; Mary, mother of our Lord Jesus; a shepherd, to whom the Good News was announced on a hillside, and Simeon, who received the baby Jesus in the temple and instantly recognized that he had seen God. I am grateful for these artistic renderings, from Toni and from Jennifer, just as I see signs of your love for each other and for those who have gone on to greater glory.

You may recall Easter of 2024, when we dedicated the Resurrection Windows, these lovely renderings in stained glass that beautify our space and remind us of the glory of the Resurrection with their symbols of lilies. We dedicated three of the windows that Easter, leaving one for future recognition. Today I would like to dedicate the fourth window, that one standing alone over there, to one of our own saints, Lynn Gorman.

Lynn was truly an original, often standing alone against the oppressions of the world. She came to us already ordained, in a nondenominational church, drawn here by the people and their devotion to helping those less fortunate. When she and Denise first visited New Life, about 25 years ago, they felt the Holy Spirit in this place, and they stayed. I did not know Lynn well, but I was honored to perform her marriage service to the love of her life, Denise Prowell, and then the funeral services for each of them. Lynn died on November 15 last year, just a few days before her birthday, and a few days too late to appear on last year's list of the Beloved Departed, so we will read her name from the altar today. Another interesting juxtaposition of Lynn's life and death is that in two days we will have Election Day, another fitting memorial to Lynn. She tirelessly worked the polls and then ran for office herself, stating that the people needed a choice. She was on the candidates' list the year she died – when 18,000 voters voted for her anyway, stating loudly that she had indeed given them a choice. If she were with us for this year's election, she would be out registering voters and participating in demonstrations of resistance. Lynn's life took many different pathways; many turns along the way as she spread the Good News in her own way. It is fitting that we should honor her memory today. Likewise, we have a long list of names of our Beloved

Departed today, including two members of the parish, Vi Croasmun and Bill Maling, of blessed memory. I am pleased and honored to name them all.

I close with the beautiful words from the Commendation, that part of our funeral service which commends the deceased to God:

Give rest, O Christ, to your servants with your saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting...All of us go down to the dust, yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.