

Countryside Community Church WORSHIP



In the Wilderness © Jan Richardson, janrichardsonimages.com

September 14, 2025

† Indicates those places where those who are able are invited to stand.
Text in **bold** indicates places where the congregation is invited to join in response.

Gathering

COMMUNITY TIME (9:55)

Dan Loven-Crum

PRELUDE

Song of Hope
Countryside Handbell Choir

Brenda E. Austin

†WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Dr. Jenny Shultz-Thomas

One: Come, beloved of God, for the Shepherd searches until the lost are found.

Many: We come, grateful that God has not given up on us.

One: Come, beloved of God, for the Woman lights a lamp and sweeps with persistence.

Many: We come, knowing we are treasured, every single one.

One: Come, beloved of God, for heaven rejoices over each who is gathered.

Many: We come to worship with joy – counting every one, beloved!

†PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The Peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Peace I leave with you:
my peace I give you. I do not
give to you as the world gives.
Do not let your hearts be
troubled and do not be afraid.
John 14:27

†HYMN OF RESPONSE

All Are Welcome (vs. 1)

CHILDREN'S TIME

Heather Moran

Children are invited to join Heather for a lesson at the chancel and then head to Discovery Kids classes. Nursery is available for children 0-4 years.

SUNG RESPONSE

Go Now in Peace X 2

Go now in peace, go now in peace,
may the love of God surround you
everywhere, everywhere
you may go.

Hearing the Word

FIRST LESSON: Psalm 14

Reader: Molly Anderson

Fools say in their hearts, "There is no God."

They are corrupt; they do abominable deeds;
there is no one who does good.

The Lord looks down from heaven on humankind
to see if there are any who are wise,
who seek after God.

They have all gone astray; they are all alike perverse;
there is no one who does good,
no, not one.

Have they no knowledge, all the evildoers
who eat up my people as they eat bread
and do not call upon the Lord?

There they shall be in great terror,
for God is with the company of the righteous.

You would confound the plans of the poor,
but the Lord is their refuge.

O that deliverance for Israel would come from Zion!
When the Lord restores the fortunes of his people,
Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be glad!

MUSICAL REFLECTION

The Ninety and Nine

Elizabeth Clephane arr. Courtney

SECOND LESSON: Luke 15:1-10

Rev. Dr. Jenny Shultz-Thomas

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

So he told them this parable: "Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

"Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Responding to the Word

PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

HYMN OF RESPONSE

Hymn #566 *Be Still, My Soul*

SHARING OUR GIFTS

Dan Loven-Crum

The Social Justice and Outreach Board has designated Project Everlast for the September Box donations. This organization is committed to supporting young adults without family support, helping them transition to adulthood.

Fingerprints will collect over the counter medicines: pain relievers, cold and flu remedies, cough syrup, allergy medicine, antacids, and children's fever reducers in September.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

Generous God, all we have is from you. As we return our gifts, use them to shine light in dark places, bring comfort to the hurting, and remind every person they are counted and loved. Bless our offerings, and bless us, that we may join your search for justice and joy. Amen.

Sending

†SENDING HYMN

Hymn #558 *Savior, Like A Shepherd Lead Us*

†BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Jenny Shultz-Thomas

POSTLUDE

Countryside Handbell Choir and Countryside Choir - Adam Witte, director - Diane Hill, organ and piano

Sunday Flowers This Week

Flowers were given today by Mary and Ray Meints
in honor of their wedding anniversary.

Joys & Concerns

Join us as we pray for our congregation members and their loved ones who are on our Joys and Concerns list every week on Thursdays at 9 am in the Sanctuary. If you have someone who would benefit from prayer, want to share a joy or be included on the bulletin list, and /or be included on Countryside's Prayer Chain, contact the church office at 402.391.0350 or email office@countrysideucc.org.

Prayers of Gratitude for the following Joys:

As summer fades and September's light surrounds us, we give thanks—for cool mornings, ripening harvests, and the beauty of change. Bless our work and our relationships in this season of gathering. May joy and gratitude guide our hearts.

Please join in praying for the following new and ongoing concerns:

Please pray for swift and complete healing for **Molly Anderson's** older sister, Kate, who fell at home on Friday evening and broke her hip. She is recuperating well after surgery and will move to the care center at her senior living facility to undergo physical therapy until she can move back into her apartment.

Merv and Kris Olberding ask for prayers for their son Connor and his wife Lizzie Johnson who are moving to Kyiv, Ukraine next week. Lizzie is a Foreign Correspondent to Ukraine for the Washington Post. As of this time it is a 4-year assignment.

Laurie Sample who is back home following a brief hospitalization.

Prayers for **Doug Bloomquist's** daughter and her family following the death of her husband **Frank Fong**.

On the Cover

Jan Richardson's *In the Wilderness* layers creams and pale gold over a darker foundation, with traces of blue still breaking through the surface. The brushstrokes feel both fragile and fierce – covering yet revealing, hiding yet hinting at what remains beneath. It is a wilderness of color and shadow, reminding us that what seems buried is not forgotten.

Like the shepherd and the woman in Jesus' parables, the painting insists that nothing is beyond the search. Even in shadow, light lingers. Even in loss, beauty presses through. Every mark matters, every layer tells a story, every life is counted. God's mercy sweeps across what we call expendable, uncovering joy where the world has shrugged. In this wilderness, what is lost is not abandoned – it is being sought, still, by grace that refuses to let go.

About the Artist: Jan Richardson is an artist, poet and ordained minister whose work explores the sacred in everyday life. She blends color, form, and text to create contemplative spaces for reflection and renewal. Her paintings often evoke themes of spiritual journey, hope, and communal care.

