10-18-26 FOR THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK

"God gifts each of us with talents for ministry, ordained or lay…Your gifts can be used in the church, at your job outside of the church, at your schools, and in your neighborhoods. Be part of a culture that says yes to God's call everywhere, not just in the sanctuary."

Amy Sigmon

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 **+** Matthew 22:15-22

Questions for Reflection —

- What role has hymnody played for you in your faith journey? To what hymns do you turn when you are in need of comfort or restoration? What hymns help you to praise God? Think about (or better yet—sing!) one of your favorite hymns. Why do you find that hymn especially meaningful? What is its spiritual significance for you? How would you summarize the main focus of that hymn? Does its message challenge you in any way?

- What does the notion of the ministry of the laity mean to you? How are you using your God-given talents and gifts in ministry in the church? How are you using them outside the church (e.g. in your workplace or school, your neighborhood or local community)? What challenges you when trying to live out your faith in your environment beyond the church walls? What spiritual practices sustain you in the face of those challenges? What do you need in order to be able to serve God with joy?

- What does it mean for us as a congregation to be a community that lives our faith? In what tangible and visible ways might God be calling us to enact our faith through the ministry of the laity? How can we, as laypeople, better support and collaborate with our pastor? How can we support one another in growing in faith? How can we encourage one another in recognizing, developing, and fully utilizing our individual gifts and talents in the service of God's kingdom?

Daily Household Prayer

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against You. We have thought our lives our own. We have spent them according to our desires and protected them according to our fears. And therefore we have not served You perfectly, nor loved our neighbors as ourselves. Forgive us, reclaim us, and restore your image in us, that we may faithfully love you and serve you. Amen.