**8 Pentecost 2025**

 Married [New Yorkers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_City), Samantha "Sam" and Jay Arondekar, believe their dreams have come true when they inherit Woodstone Manor, a beautiful country house, from Sophie Brimble, Sam's great aunt, only to find that it is falling apart and inhabited by [ghosts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghost) of people from different eras of American history who died on the property and are now bound to the area, appearing as they did at the times of their deaths, hoping to reach the [afterlife](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afterlife). Jay cannot see or hear the ghosts, but Sam can after a [near-death experience](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Near-death_experience).

 It’s the comedy show called Ghosts. The cliffhanger season finale this past spring revealed that Jay had been duped into signing away his eternity to a ghost from hell. The ghost disguised himself as a publicist and played into Jay’s desire to see his restaurant become a huge success. The restaurant starts to gain attention from renowned reviewers and the ghosts who live on the property catch a glimpse of the so-called publicist and realize what’s happened.

 When Jay is finally told what he’s done, he immediately wants out of the deal: he had no idea that he was making such a high stakes deal! And isn’t that the way money and greed get their hooks in us? Wanting to be successful isn’t a bad thing, and yet when it becomes the focus of one’s life, it usually leads to the road to perdition. The stakes really are that high.

 Hmmm, reminds me of a parable Jesus told one time…I just read it from Luke’s gospel! “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.”, Jesus says to the crowd. Then he told them a parable: “The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, ‘What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?’ Then he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.’ And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’ But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.”

 Even for Christians like us who are trying our best, it can be a temptation to think about ourselves first, as it the world revolved about us. After all, it’s the way of the world, right? We live in particularly greedy times. Politicians run their mouths about how they care for the poor and downtrodden, while lining their pockets with special interest money. Billionaires live in the lap of luxury and invest to make even more money. How much is enough is a fair question, even if you’re a died-in-the-wool capitalist.

 Speaking of billionaires, there are Christian billionaires across the world. The richest one, believe it or not, is named David Green. While many billionaires will choose to buy real estate, expensive cars, and private jets, David Green has a different thing in mind. Owner and founder of [Hobby Lobby](https://www.hobbylobby.com/), Green is the largest evangelical benefactor in the world. According to Forbes, he has already given more than $500 million to religious causes during the last 10 years. Green has always been outspoken about his faith. In an [interview with Forbes](https://www.forbes.com/sites/briansolomon/2012/09/18/david-green-the-biblical-billionaire-backing-the-evangelical-movement/#57fe811b5807), he said "So I have learned to say, 'Look, this is yours, God. It's all yours. I'm going to give it to you.' "In the same interview, he also said that 90 percent of his company will go to the ministry if the company undergoes a sale or dissolution. Further, he also sponsors the YouVersion Bible app, which is free to download.

 I’m not a billionaire. I’m not a millionaire. Given my pension and my work here at Trinity, I make about $100,000 per annum. That’s chump change, but compared to billions of poor people around the world, Im living like a king. I’ve seen extreme poverty up close and personal in places like Honduras, S. Sudan and Pakistan. We work with the poor and homeless at Christ Church in Pottstown, but trust me; those people are well fed and well taken care of compared to people starving as we speak in Gaza and similar places.

 I love the parish prayer we say every Sunday. In part it says…*Help us to praise you with such holy worship; serve you with unselfish love; and to give so generously for the spread of your kingdom that we may be worthy members of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church, faithfully fulfilling our mission to make known your truth, help the needy, and proclaim the abundant life in your name. This we pray through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.* We are a generous little congregation, witnessed is morning by our socks and shoes collection of migrant kids in need. Thanks to all for helping, and to Dick for his leadership in that ministry.

 My friend Rahat Kanwal works as a Registered Nurse in her hometown of [Mansehra](https://www.facebook.com/Mansehra-108135902547511/), Pakistan. As a Christian in the minority, she has devoted her life to offering free medical care to the poor Muslims in her town. She needs support through prayer and American dollars. My practice in all the parishes I’ve served through the years was to reach out locally, but also in global world mission. Let’s pray about partnering with Rahat, during the year ahead. It would be a very powerful expression of what Jesus called “being rich toward God.” And we don’t need ghosts to teach us, because we have the Holy Ghost!

**May it be so.**