

LSS Sermon Starter

July 26, 2026

You are welcome to use the following “sermon starter” content in your own sermon. Feel free to use content verbatim or edit as you see fit to adapt to your own voice and context.

Readings (Revised Common Lectionary)

- 1 Kings 3:5-12
- Psalm 119:129-136
- Romans 8:26-39
- Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

In today’s gospel reading, Jesus gives us many examples of what the kingdom of heaven is like. These parables encourage us in our faith that God is at work in the world through our humble acts of service. The parables give us reassurance that while our own power feels insignificant, God’s power is mighty. Our small acts of faith and service have effects that reach far beyond what we can possibly imagine.

If you are a gardener or a bread baker, you are well acquainted with the transformative power held within a small seed or a pinch of yeast. A sprinkle of yeast will make a lump of dough rise to double its size. Seeds of all shapes and sizes contain the knowledge of how to build roots, stems, leaves, and flowers out of air, water, and sunlight.

We simply can’t know what God will do through the offerings of time, talent, and treasure that we release back to God.

But we can see the truth of Jesus’s parables in our own lives and stories.

One such story comes from a ministry that is dear to many of your hearts – Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan.

The ministry we know today as LSS took root in 1882 when a Lutheran pastor in a small community in central Wisconsin established a home for orphaned children and elderly neighbors. To begin with, he could help just five people. But the ministry grew as local churches added their support.

Over the years more Lutheran ministries were founded to care for vulnerable neighbors. Martin Luther Home was founded in Madison in 1889. The Milwaukee Inner Mission Society was founded in 1918. The Lutheran Welfare Society established a regional office in Eau

Claire in 1938. In the 1960s these organizations joined together under the name you know today: Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan.

The ministries started by Lutherans in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan as far back as 1882 have evolved as the needs of elders and children have changed, but they continue to this day to serve children and adults in need. The founders of these ministries may never have imagined just how many lives they would touch.

From those humble beginnings, LSS has grown into a vital social services agency supporting individuals and families across every stage of life. Today, through your support for LSS, you make a difference in the lives of tens of thousands of people throughout Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, building upon a legacy of care and compassion.

You can continue to provide help to neighbors even beyond your lifetime with a gift in your will. Your legacy gift helps to shape the future.

What will you do next with the precious gifts God has given you?

Plant a seed, knead some dough, and have faith that something beyond your imagining will arise. That's how it works in the kingdom of heaven.