

All Saints' Sunday

November 5, 2023

(All Saints' Day is November 1)

"Sing with all the saints in glory, Sing the resurrection song!" is a wonderful theme for the observance of All Saints' Day. We here in the Church Militant continue to fight the good fight of faith yet we rejoice that in the Church Triumphant those who have gone before now rest from their struggle with sin and enjoy being with Christ in Paradise.

"Life eternal! Heav'n rejoices: Jesus lives who once was dead" are words to sustain us through our earthly pilgrimage.

Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones

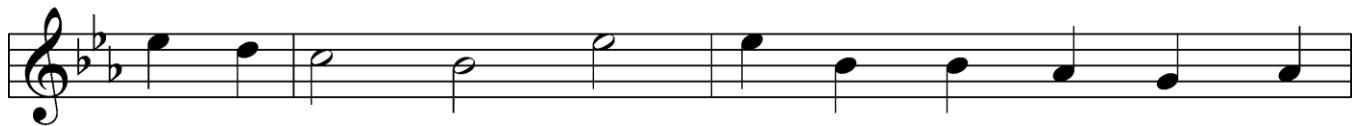
Lutheran Service Book 670, Lutheran Worship 308, The Lutheran Hymnal 475



1 Ye watch - ers and ye ho - ly ones, Bright
2 O high - er than the cher - u - bim, More
3 Re - spond, ye souls in end - less rest, Ye
4 O friends, in glad - ness let us sing, Su -



ser - a - phs, cher - u - bim, and thrones, Raise the glad strain:
glo - rious than the ser - a - phim, Lead their prais - es:
pa - tri - archs and proph - ets blest: "Al - le - lu - ia,
per - nal an - thems ech - o - ing: "Al - le - lu - ia,



"Al - le - lu - ia!" Cry out, do - min - ions, prince - doms,
"Al - le - lu - ia!" Thou bear - er of the e - ter - nal
al - le - lu - ia!" Ye ho - ly Twelve, ye mar - tyrs
al - le - lu - ia!" To God the Fa - ther, God the



pow'rs, Vir - tues, arch - an - gels, an - gels'
Word, Most gra - cious, mag - ni - fy the
strong, All saints tri - um - phant, raise the
Son, And God the Spir - it, Three in



choirs: "Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
 Lord: "Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
 song: "Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
 One: "Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -



lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!"
 lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!"
 lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!"
 lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!"

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L In the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

L Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth. (*Psalm 124:8*)

L Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

C Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. (*Psalm 19:12, 13*)

L If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord who could stand?

C But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared. (*Psalm 130:3–4*)

L Let us, confess before God that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and as His people let us take refuge in His infinite mercy seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, saying:

C God, be merciful to me, a sinner, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen. (*Luke 18:13*)

L Almighty God, merciful Father, in Your holy Church, You daily and richly forgive us our sins and grant us new life through Your Spirit. Be in our midst, enliven our faith, and graciously receive our prayer and praise; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Introit Psalm 31:1, 3, 5; antiphon Revelation 7:14

L These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

C In you, O Lord, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame;
 in your righteousness deliver me.

L For you are my rock and my fortress;
 and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me.

C Into your hand I commit my spirit;
 you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.

C Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
 as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

L These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Kyrie

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|--------------------------|
| L | O Lord, | C | Have Mercy on us. |
| L | O Christ, | C | Have Mercy on us. |
| L | O Lord, | C | Have Mercy on us. |

Gloria in Excelsis ~ Glory to God in the Highest

- L** Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.
- C** **Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father: We worship You, we give You thanks, and we praise You for Your glory.**
- L** Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, You are Lord and God, You are the Lamb of God:
- C** **Lord Jesus Christ, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**
- L** Lord Jesus Christ, You are seated at the right hand of the Father; and we ask you to graciously receive our prayer.
- C** **For You alone are the Holy One,
You alone are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Collect of the Day

- L** Let us pray: Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

Revelation 7:9–17

⁹After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” ¹¹And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹²saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

¹³Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?” ¹⁴I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵“Therefore they are before the throne of God,
and serve him day and night in his temple;
and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.

¹⁶They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore;
the sun shall not strike them,
nor any scorching heat.

¹⁷For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of living water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual Revelation 7:14; Psalm 84:5

L These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

C They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

L Blessed are those whose strength is in you,

C in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

Psalm 149

L ¹Praise the LORD!

Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of the godly!

C ²Let Israel be glad in his Maker; let the children of Zion rejoice in their King!

L ³Let them praise his name with dancing, making melody to him with tambourine and lyre!

C ⁴For the LORD takes pleasure in his people; he adorns the humble with salvation.

L ⁵Let the godly exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their beds.

C ⁶Let the high praises of God be in their throats and two-edged swords in their hands,

L ⁷to execute vengeance on the nations and punishments on the peoples,

C ⁸to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron,

L ⁹to execute on them the judgment written!

C This is honor for all his godly ones.

Praise the LORD!

1 John 3:1–3

¹See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ³And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse Hebrews 12:1,2

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,

C Let us look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith. Alleluia.

Matthew 5:1–12

L The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 5th chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹Seeing the crowds, [Jesus] went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

²And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

L This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father
Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living
and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen

For All the Saints

Lutheran Service Book 677, Lutheran Worship 191, The Lutheran Hymnal 463



1 For all the saints who from their la - bors rest,
2 Thou wast their rock, their for - tress, and their might;
3 Oh, may Thy sol - diers, faith - ful, true, and bold,
4 Oh, blest com - mu - nion, fel - low - ship di - vine!
5 And when the fight is fierce, the war - fare long,
6 The gold - en eve - ning bright - ens in the west;
7 But, lo, there breaks a yet more glo - rious day: The
8 From earth's wide bounds, from o - cean's far - thest coast, Through



Who Thee by faith be - fore the world con - fessed, Thy
Thou, Lord, their cap - tain in the well-fought fight;
Fight as the saints who no - bly fought of old And
We fee - bly strug - gle, they in glo - ry shine; Yet
Steals on the ear the dis - tant tri - umph song, And
Soon, soon to faith - ful war - riors com - eth rest;
saints tri - um - phant rise in bright ar - ray; The
gates of pearl streams in the count - less host,



name, O Je - sus, be for - ev - er blest.
 Thou, in the dark - ness drear, their one true light.
 win with them the vic - tor's crown of gold!
 all are one in Thee, for all are Thine.
 hearts are brave a - gain, and arms are strong.
 Sweet is the calm of par - a - dise the blest.
 King of Glo - ry pass - es on His way.
 Sing - ing to Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost:



Al	-	le - lu - ia!	Al	-	le - lu - ia!
Al	-	le - lu - ia!	Al	-	le - lu - ia!
Al	-	le - lu - ia!	Al	-	le - lu - ia!
Al	-	le - lu - ia!	Al	-	le - lu - ia!
Al	-	le - lu - ia!	Al	-	le - lu - ia!
Al	-	le - lu - ia!	Al	-	le - lu - ia!
Al	-	le - lu - ia!	Al	-	le - lu - ia!
Al	-	le - lu - ia!	Al	-	le - lu - ia!

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Devotional thoughts:

The word “saint” has an interesting history. It comes to us from Latin but first, it takes a long journey through French and Middle English. The original Latin word for saint is *sanctus* which means holy. In our communion liturgy, we sing the Sanctus that begins “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of power and might.” *Sanctus* in turn is the Latin word for the Greek word *Hagios*. The word saint means “holy one.” The New Testament uses the word saint approximately 80 times.

Today, we often use the word saint to refer to someone who lives an especially good life towering above the rest of humanity. Some of these “exceptionally good” people have been designated by the Roman Catholic Church to be called saints. But this is not how the Bible uses the word. In the Bible, the word saint is simply a designation for Christian people. In biblical terms, you and I are saints! “How can this be?” you may ask. “If saint means holy, how could this refer to me?”

Yes indeed, it is true. You are a saint. You are holy! You are holy because Jesus has taken your sins away. When your sins have been forgiven, in God’s eyes, you are a saint! Of course here on earth, you are also a sinner. These two realities live side by side in us and all the Christian people. One day, when we join with all the saints in heaven, the sinner in us will be gone and we will only be holy for all eternity.

There are three saints that I would like for us to consider. The first one is Stephen. You can read about Stephen in Acts 6-8. He is an example of someone that we would normally consider a saint in our way of thinking.

Stephen was one of the first seven assistants chosen to help the Apostles. In Acts 6:5, we learn that he was a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit—a saint! Luke goes on to report that he was doing great wonders and signs among the people. Like Jesus, he was arrested and brought before the council.

In Acts 7, Stephen delivered a powerful message that condemned them for killing Jesus, the “Righteous One.” This enraged the council. They dragged him out of the city and stoned him. As he was dying, Stephen

called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” His final words are, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them” (Acts 7:59-60). Indeed, Stephen was a saint!

The second saint for us to consider does not seem very saint-like. We don’t know anything about his childhood or early life. We can guess that it didn’t go well. I’ve often imagined that he was a disappointment to his mother and father. Anyway, we know that he eventually became a criminal and paid the ultimate price for his crimes. He was crucified. He appeared to get what he deserved.

But this is not the end of the story. As you may have guessed, he was crucified on the cross next to Jesus. As his final hours of life were slipping away, he met the Lord of Life. Luke records this,

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!” ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴² And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” ⁴³ And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:39-43).

Here is a man who died a saint! Yes, he was only a saint for a few hours, if that. But through faith in Jesus, his sins were forgiven and he received the gift of eternal life. No, he didn’t fit our contemporary definition of a saint but nevertheless, he was. And is!

The third saint for us to reflect on is the only one who ever lived who was a saint on his own merits. He was born in Bethlehem, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger because there was no room for him in the inn. Although he was tempted by Satan, himself, he never sinned! The Bible tells us, “He appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin” (1 John 3:5). This Sinless Saint went to the cross and paid for the sins of the whole world so that we can become saints!

All the saints in heaven are there because Jesus went to the cross. You and I are saints because Jesus went to the cross. You and I will one day join Him in paradise because this Saint took our sins upon Himself and gave to us His holiness! He has made us saints!

Today we thank God for all the saints who are now with Jesus in paradise and we look forward to the day when we will join them for all eternity.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7).

God’s richest blessings to you in Christ.

Prayers

L O Lord, faithful God, we commend ourselves, our bodies and souls, and all things into Your keeping. Deliver us from all that would harm the body or assault the soul.

C Amen.

L O Lord, visit our homes and the homes of all Your people, that they may be places where faith is nurtured and where we learn to live our new lives in holiness and righteousness.

C Amen.

L O Lord, be with us and Your entire Church who are Yours through faith. At the bidding of the Lamb, our Shepherd, give us ears to hear Your holy Word and faith to believe all of Your promises.

C Amen.

L Heavenly Father, grant that we may be brought to everlasting life with all the faithful who have gone before us who now rest from their labors. Help us to look forward to a blessed reunion with those whom we love and have died in the faith.

C Amen.

L O God of peace, during this time of war in the ancient land of Israel and in Ukraine, we pray that You would grant a swift end to the conflict, that right and justice would prevail, and that You would grant Your mighty hand of protection to the innocent and helpless. We also ask that you bring your comfort to and peace to those who are grieving and suffering in Maine as a result of the shootings there.

C Amen.

L Righteous God, You give leaders to every nation and people. Grant us good and wise public servants defend the innocent and punish evil. Guard those who protect us, especially our armed forces, police and firefighters.

C Amen.

L Heavenly Father, Your Son came to heal the sick and forgive sinners. Hear our prayers for those who suffer in any way. Restore them according to Your gracious will, and strengthen their trust in Your faithfulness and love. Let Your blessings rest upon all medical personnel and first responders who come to our aid in time of need.

C Amen.

L Almighty Father, we give You thanks that You have washed us in the blood of the Lamb, written our names in the Book of Life, and made us a royal priesthood and heirs of an eternal inheritance. Though we are unworthy of Your saving grace, we pray You to hear us in the name of Jesus Christ, in whom, with whom and through whom all honor and glory is Yours, heavenly Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

The Commemoration of The Faithful Departed

P We remember those who together with us stood at the foot of the cross, who heard the Easter truths at the empty tomb, who have gone before us into the heavenly mansions.

C We give special thanks as we recall the lives of our loved ones who have entered into Paradise to be with Jesus and all the saints during this past year.

P Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies;

C And whoever lives and believes in Me will never die.

(John 11:25-26)

P Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous: “The Lord's right hand has done mighty things! The Lord's right hand is lifted high; the Lord's right hand has done mighty things!”

C I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the Lord has done. (Psalm 118:15-17)

P Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

C Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

(Colossians 3:1-2)

P I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the earth.

C And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God. (Job 19:25-26)

P For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone.

C **If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.** (Rom. 14:7-8)

P Almighty God, in whose glorious presence live all who depart in the Lord and before whom all the souls of the faithful who are delivered of the burden of the flesh are in joy and felicity, we give You hearty thanks for Your loving-kindness to all Your servants who have finished their course in faith and now rest from their labors, and we humbly implore Your mercy that we, together with all who have departed in the saving faith, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, in both body and soul, in Your eternal and everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen

C **I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

C **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

L Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

L The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

C Amen.

Jesus Lives! The Victory's Won

Lutheran Service Book 490, Lutheran Worship 139, The Lutheran Hymnal 201



1 Je - sus lives! The vic - t'ry's won! Death no long - er can ap -
2 Je - sus lives! To Him the throne High a - bove all things is
3 Je - sus lives! For me He died, Hence will I, to Je - sus
4 Je - sus lives! I know full well Noth - ing me from Him shall



pall me; Je - sus lives! Death's reign is done!
giv - en. I shall go where He is gone,
liv - ing, Pure in heart and act a - bide,
sev - er. Nei - ther death nor pow'rs of hell



From the grave will Christ re - call me. Bright - er
Live and reign with Him in heav - en. God is
Praise to Him and glo - ry giv - ing. All I
Part me now from Christ for - ev - er. God will



scenes will then com - mence; This shall be my con - fi - dence.
faith - ful; doubt - ings, hence! This shall be my con - fi - dence.
need God will dis - pense; This shall be my con - fi - dence.
be my sure de - fense; This shall be my con - fi - dence.

5 Jesus lives! And now is death
But the gate of life immortal;
This shall calm my trembling breath
When I pass its gloomy portal.
Faith shall cry, as fails each sense:
Jesus is my confidence!

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Service Notes:

One person may serve as Leader or this may be shared with a number of individuals.

Read one or more of the lessons. Hymns may be sung or read. Use as much or little of this service as you would like.

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Enhancing Your Worship

Meditating on God's Word and Works

I will meditate on your wondrous works. Psalm 119:27
My eyes are awake through the night watches,
That I may meditate on Your word. Psalm 119:148 NKJV

The Week of All Saints' Sunday November 6 - 11, 2023

Introduction

Most modern forms of mediation turn a person inward. Biblical meditation turns a person outward toward what God has said and done especially what He has said and done through Jesus for our salvation.

Each Sunday has its own special theme directing us to meditate on God's word and actions. This theme is found in the Propers of the Day (the parts of the service that change week to week). From Advent through the Easter season these themes focus our attention on the life of Jesus from His birth to His death and resurrection. There is always much more in the propers than can be covered in any Sunday service. God willing, I will use the propers for Sunday to provide you with a devotion each day to help you meditate on what God has done for you.

Monday

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
G Amen.

Verse Hebrews 12:1,2

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,
G Let us look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith. Alleluia.

Introit Psalm 31:1, 3, 5; antiphon Revelation 7:14

- L** These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.
They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
G In you, O Lord, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame;
in your righteousness deliver me.
L For you are my rock and my fortress;
and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me.
G Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.
G Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.
L These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.
They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Kyrie

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| L O Lord, | C Have Mercy on us. |
| L O Christ, | C Have Mercy on us. |
| L O Lord, | C Have Mercy on us. |

Trouble, trouble, trouble. Our lives are full of trouble. Psalm 90:10 declares that our lives are “toil and trouble.” We may approach life with a joyful and happy spirit. We may be positive and count our blessings but we all have trouble. We take comfort in the fact that God has directed us to “Call upon me in the day of trouble” and He promises, “I will deliver you” (Psalm 90:15). When troubles come, God is always there for us.

All of our trouble comes from sin. It either comes from our sin or the sins of others. The only real solution to trouble is ending sin and its consequences.

Our time of living in this world of sin and its troubles is called the “great tribulation.” We all look forward to the day when this time of tribulation and trouble will end. We look forward to that day because our robes have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb—Jesus, the Son of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

He delivers us from all danger and trouble. He is our rock and our fortress. He ultimately takes us out of this time of trouble and tribulation into His eternal kingdom. Into His hands, we commit our spirits.

- L** Let us pray. O Lord, in You we take refuge. Thank you for washing our sins away and making our robes white through the blood of the Lamb. Grant that we may always have a joyful spirit in times of trouble as we look forward to the day when You will rescue us for all eternity from this time of tribulation, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen

Tuesday

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Verse Hebrews 12:1,2

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,
C Let us look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith. Alleluia.

Kyrie

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| L O Lord, | C Have Mercy on us. |
| L O Christ, | C Have Mercy on us. |
| L O Lord, | C Have Mercy on us. |

- L** Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen

Our nation is sharply divided. Unfortunately, many on each side see those on the other side as evil. It would be hyperbole to claim that we’ve never been divided like this before. History tells us that our nation has seldom been united except in times of war. We pray that God will heal our wounds and grant wisdom and

godliness to those we have chosen to lead us in our democracy.

Our collect for the week focuses on an important truth. We believe in ONE holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints. We have just celebrated Reformation Day. We are rightly happy to be children of the Reformation. Still, we must never forget that there is only one Church. It is not divided. It is made up of all believers in Jesus and only believers. We read in Ephesians 4:4-6, “There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”

All Saints’ Day is a time to thank God for all believers everywhere and throughout history. They may be called Lutheran, Catholic, Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, etc. They come from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages. In Christ, we all are one through the forgiveness of sins. We are all brothers and sisters in the one holy Christian and apostolic Church. One day we will join together in praising God with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven.

Prayer: Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Wednesday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Verse Hebrews 12:1,2

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,

C Let us look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

Psalms 149

L ¹Praise the LORD!

Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of the godly!

C ²Let Israel be glad in his Maker; let the children of Zion rejoice in their King!

L ³Let them praise his name with dancing, making melody to him with tambourine and lyre!

C ⁴For the LORD takes pleasure in his people; he adorns the humble with salvation.

L ⁵Let the godly exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their beds.

C ⁶Let the high praises of God be in their throats and two-edged swords in their hands,

L ⁷to execute vengeance on the nations and punishments on the peoples,

C ⁸to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron,

L ⁹to execute on them the judgment written!

C This is honor for all his godly ones.

Praise the LORD!

Psalms 149 is a song of celebration. We sing to the Lord a new song. This new song is not a top-forty pop hit. It is a song no one has ever heard or dreamed of. It is the song of the Gospel. It is the song of

forgiveness. It is the song of eternal life.

The old song is the song of sin and death. The old song is the song of retribution and punishment. The old song is the song of defeat.

The old song is a song of consequences and you get what you deserve. The new song is the song of grace and mercy. May this be our song.

As we contemplate next year's election, let us be people of the new song. Let us be people of grace and mercy. Let us take to heart the immortal words of Abraham Lincoln in his second inaugural address:

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.

Prayer: Almighty God, You have given us this good land as our heritage. Grant that we remember Your generosity and constantly do Your will. Bless our land with honest industry, truthful education, and an honorable way of life. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion, from pride and arrogance, and from every evil course of action. Grant that we, who came from many nations with many different languages, may become a united people. Support us in defending our liberties, and give those to whom we have entrusted the authority of government the spirit of wisdom, that there may be justice and peace in our land. When times are prosperous, may our hearts be thankful, and in troubled times do not let our trust in You fail; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Thursday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Verse Hebrews 12:1,2

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,
C Let us look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L O Lord,	C Have Mercy on us.
L O Christ,	C Have Mercy on us.
L O Lord,	C Have Mercy on us.

Revelation 7:9–17

⁹After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" ¹¹And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹²saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

¹³Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" ¹⁴I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵"Therefore they are before the throne of God,

and serve him day and night in his temple;
and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.
¹⁶They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore;
the sun shall not strike them,
nor any scorching heat.
¹⁷For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of living water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

These words from Revelation give us more than enough to consider for the entire week. For now, let us consider the words of the great multitude, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

Though most of the decades of my life, our nation has become more and more fascinated with the non-Christian religions of the world. Each of them is unique in its own way but they all have one thing in common: The good are rewarded in eternity and the evil are punished. This reward or punishment may come through reincarnation or some form of heaven and hell. They all are united in this thought, your eternity is determined by what you do, think, and say in this life. We are all subject to some form of karma.

The Bible rejects such thinking. Salvation does not depend on me and my actions. My salvation depends upon God had His actions for me in Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Left to my own devices, I will get what I deserve: eternal death and punishment for my sin—karma if you will.

But thanks be to God, I have been given the gift of eternal life because of what Jesus has done for me! This is the Christian faith. There is none other like it. It is along in declaring, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

Prayer: O Lord God, thank you for the gift of forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Grant that I may be faithful to You until the day you call me out this present time of tribulation and trial, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Friday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Verse Hebrews 12:1,2

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,

C Let us look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

1 John 3:1–3

¹See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ³And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure

Who are the saints? They are children of God. We are counted among them! How did this happen? God

so loved the world that He gave His Only-begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

What will life in heaven be for us who are God's children? It will be different from life in our sinful condition but it will be wonderful. The Bible uses all sorts of pictures to help us understand it. Streets are paved with Gold. Gates are made of pearls. Tears are wiped away. There is no more sorrow or suffering. And ultimately, we will be like Jesus!

Prayer: Almighty, everlasting God, You gave Your only Son to be a High Priest of good things to come. Grant unto us, Your unworthy servants, to have our share in the company of the blessed for all eternity; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Saturday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Gradual Revelation 7:14; Psalm 84:5

L These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

C They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

L Blessed are those whose strength is in you,

C in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

Verse Hebrews 12:1,2

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,

C Let us look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

Matthew 5:1–12

¹Seeing the crowds, [Jesus] went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

²And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

If you have been following along with these home worship services and daily meditations, you will know I

seldom save the Gospel lesson for Saturday.

Matthew 5-7 is Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. You may wish to read the entire sermon today. The most famous part of it are The Beatitudes, our Gospel lesson for this week.

On the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee on top of a mount is the Church of the Beatitudes. It is a modern church located not too far from Capernaum which served as Jesus' home base for ministry. A church has been located on this site since at least 381 when it was reported about by a pilgrim to the Holy Land. On the side of the mount, you can recognize a natural amphitheater where it is easy to imagine Jesus delivering His sermon.

These words of the Beatitudes begin Jesus' sermon on righteousness. Whenever I read this sermon, I am taken aback by how far I fall from Jesus' expectations. No wonder that people prefer to read the Beatitudes and Jesus' promise of blessings.

The entire Sermon on the Mount is a sermon on God's grace. None of us can be perfect as God is perfect (Matthew 5:48). None of us can live up to the law's demands as Jesus articulates it in this powerful sermon. We only can receive perfection from God by grace. The poor in spirit receive the kingdom by grace. When we come humbly to Jesus not relying on our own merit or worthiness but poor in spirit, He gives us all the blessings of living with Him for time and eternity!

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for Your gift of grace. Grant that we may always receive the blessings You have for the poor in spirit. Amen.

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