

The Second Sunday after Epiphany

January 14, 2024

God calls! By His Spirit, we respond!

Speak, O Lord, Your Servant Listens

Lutheran Service Book 589, Lutheran Worship 339, The Lutheran Hymnal 296



1 Speak, O Lord, Your ser - vant lis - tens, Let Your Word to
2 Oh, what bless - ing to be near You And to lis - ten
3 Lord, Your words are wa - ters liv - ing When my thirst - ing
4 As I pray, dear Je - sus, hear me; Let Your words in



me come near; New - born life and spir - it give me,
to Your voice; Let me ev - er love and hear You,
spir - it pleads. Lord, Your words are bread life - giv - ing;
me take root. May Your Spir - it e'er be near me



Let each prom - ise still my fear. Death's dread pow'r, its in - ward
Let Your Word be now my choice! Man - y hard - ened sin - ners,
On Your words my spir - it feeds. Lord, Your words will be my
That I bear a - bun - dant fruit. May I dai - ly sing Your



strife, Wars a - gainst Your Word of life; Fill me, Lord, with
Lord, Flee in ter - ror at Your Word; But to all who
light Through death's cold and drea - ry night; Yes, they are my
praise, From my heart glad an - thems raise, Till my high - est



love's strong fer - vor That I cling to You for - ev - er!
feel sin's bur - den You give words of peace and par - don.
sword pre - vail - ing And my cup of joy un - fail - ing!
praise is giv - en In the end - less joy of heav - en.

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 40:1–5; antiphon Psalm 40:10a, b

L I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart;
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;

C I waited patiently for the Lord;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.

L He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.

C He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.

L Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust,
who does not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after a lie!

C You have multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can
compare with you!

I will proclaim and tell of them, yet they are more than can be told.

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 I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart;
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation.

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, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

1 Samuel 3:1–10

¹Now the young man Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision.

²At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. ³The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was.

⁴Then the LORD called Samuel, and he said, “Here I am!” ⁵and ran to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call; lie down again.” So he went and lay down.

⁶And the LORD called again, “Samuel!” and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.” ⁷Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

⁸And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the young man. ⁹Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰And the LORD came and stood, calling as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant hears.”

- L** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

Gradual Psalm 117:1–2a; 96:8

- L** Praise the LORD, all nations!
- C** Extol him, all peoples!
- L** For great is his steadfast love toward us,
- C** and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.
- L** Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
- C** bring an offering, and come into his courts!

Psalm 139:1–10

- L** ¹O LORD, you have searched me and known me!
C ²**You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.**
L ³You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.
C ⁴**Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.**
L ⁵You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.
C ⁶**Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.**
L ⁷Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?
C ⁸**If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!**
L ⁹If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
C ¹⁰**even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.**

1 Corinthians 6:12–20

¹²“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be enslaved by anything. ¹³“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. ¹⁵Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” ¹⁷But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. ¹⁸Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

- L** This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

Verse of the Day: Isaiah 49:3

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my servant, Israel, Alleluia.
C **Alleluia, Alleluia, In whom I will be glorified. Alleluia.**

John 1:43–51

- L** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 1st chapter.
C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” ⁴⁴Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” ⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” ⁴⁷Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” ⁴⁸Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” ⁴⁹Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” ⁵⁰Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” ⁵¹And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

- L** This is the Gospel of the Lord.
C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

The Apostles' Creed

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

Hark, the Voice of Jesus Crying

Lutheran Service Book 826, Lutheran Worship 318, The Lutheran Hymnal 496



1 Hark, the voice of Je - sus cry - ing, "Who will go and work to - day?
2 If you can - not speak like an - gels, If you can - not preach like Paul,
3 If you can - not be a watch - man, Stand - ing high on Zi - on's wall,
4 Let none hear you i - dly say - ing, "There is noth - ing I can do,"



Fields are white and har - vests wait - ing— Who will bear the sheaves a - way?"
You can tell the love of Je - sus, You can say He died for all.
Point - ing out the path to heav - en, Of - f'ring life and peace to all,
While the mul - ti - tudes are dy - ing And the Mas - ter calls for you.



Loud and long the Mas - ter call - eth; Rich re - ward He of - fers thee.
If you can - not rouse the wick - ed With the judg - ment's dread a - larms,
With your prayers and with your boun - ties You can do what God com - mands;
Take the task He gives you glad - ly, Let His work your plea - sure be;



Who will an - swer, glad - ly say - ing, "Here am I, send me, send me?"
You can lead the lit - tle chil - dren To the Sav - ior's wait - ing arms.
You can be like faith - ful Aar - on, Hold - ing up the proph - et's hands.
An - swer quick - ly when He call - eth, "Here am I, send me, send me!"

Devotional thoughts:

After high school, I attended Concordia Lutheran Junior College in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Much has changed for Concordia since then. In the late 1970s, it inherited the function of Concordia Senior College in Ft. Wayne where I completed my undergraduate degree before attending seminary. Today, it is known as Concordia University, Ann Arbor, having merged with Concordia University, Wisconsin.

Concordia, Ann Arbor provided me with many life-altering experiences. At the top of my list, Concordia is where I met my lovely and awesome wife, Valerie. Concordia also gave me a thorough introduction to the Bible and Bible history.

I was already very familiar with the Bible but until then, I did not have a comprehensive outline of the events of the Bible in my mind. The Bible was a jumble of stories that I knew. I knew the stories of Ruth, David and Goliath, the Three Men in the Fiery Furnace, Samuel, Solomon, etc. But I couldn't connect them together in a meaningful way. Through my Old Testament and New Testament classes at Concordia, everything came together for me. I remember visiting with my pastor and excitedly telling him about how significant that was for me.

As a result, at Christ Lutheran School our confirmation/religion curriculum consisted of the Old Testament in the sixth grade, New Testament in the seventh grade, and Bible doctrine in the eighth grade. But did you notice anything missing? What about the time between the Old Testament and the New Testament? The Old Testament ends with the Persian Empire pretty much in control of the Holy Land and the New Testament begins with the Romans in charge. What happened in the 400 years between these two states of affairs?

To answer this question, I would always begin seventh-grade religion with a brief summary of the events that happened between the Testaments, known as the Intertestamental Period. Students of history will already know that the Greek Empire overtook the Persian Empire during this time before being defeated by the Romans. To introduce this subject, I always asked, "Who was the first famous Philip?" And we would be off and running.

For the curious, the first famous Philip is mostly remembered because he was the father of Alexander the Great! We recall him today as Philip II of Macedon (Macedonia). Like that Philip, I intend to become famous through the reputations gained by my children (which seems to already be happening).

Please pardon the long introduction. I wanted to begin this way because our Gospel lesson introduces us to Philip, one of Jesus' Apostles.

In our Christian community, this Philip certainly is more famous than the father of Alexander the Great. Yet, he most likely received his name because of the influence of the Greek culture brought to the Holy Land by Alexander.

Philip, like the other Apostles, was a Jew but there must have been a strong affinity in his family for the Greeks. We find evidence of this in John 12:20-21 when some Greeks want to see Jesus and they come to Philip for an introduction.

America is very different now than it was a hundred years ago. Today, more than ever America is a place where cultures from all over the world interface with each other. Jesus was raised in a similar environment. His calling of Philip is a reminder that Israel lies at the crossroads of Asia, Europe, and Africa.

We don't know much about the ministry of Philip after Jesus' ascension into heaven but we do know about the ministry of the Church. It went into all the world making disciples of all nations. It continues until this very day calling people to follow Jesus. Some of these people may be culturally just like us. Others may be quite different. But the message of salvation is for all.

Jesus called Philip. Philip found Nathaniel. The Apostles called others and their call eventually found you!

By God's grace, you have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9). You have met the savior. Through His life, death, and resurrection you have received the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation! Like Philip, you know someone who needs to meet Jesus!

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 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 4:4-7).

God's richest blessings to you in Christ.

Prayers

- L** O Lord, as You once called Samuel, Philip and Nathanael into Your service, thank You for calling us. Give us a delight in Your holy word, that our witness would lead many to follow Jesus, the Son of God.
- C** Amen.
- L** O Lord, You call fathers, mothers and children to serve each other in their homes. Let them be faithful to their callings, trusting that their love for each other will be blessed by You.
- C** Amen.
- L** Gracious Lord, receive our prayers for those who suffer from loneliness. Comfort them with the sure and certain knowledge that You will never forsake them. Give them family and friends within the household of faith with whom they can find loving companionship.
- C** Amen.
- L** O God of peace, during this time of war in the ancient land of Jesus' birth and in Ukraine, we pray that You would grant a swift end to the conflict and lasting peace, that right and justice would prevail, and that You would grant Your mighty hand of protection to the innocent and helpless.
- C** Amen.
- L** Holy God, mighty Lord, bless our president, Congress, governor, and all our leaders, that justice may prevail and Your people would be free to live at peace with all. Guard those who protect us, especially our armed forces, police, and firefighters.
- C** Amen.
- L** Visit us in Your compassion, O Lord. Deliver the sick from their infirmity, the troubled from their afflictions, the grieving from their sorrow, and the dying from their fear. May all who cry to You receive grace according to Your will.
- C** Amen.
- L** Holy Lord, mighty God, You have shown us Your mercy in Your Son. Hear the prayers of Your people and grant what is needful to us and those for whom we pray, that trusting in Your mercy, our hearts may find perfect peace and rest; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, 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.

Take My Life and Let It Be

Lutheran Service Book 783, Lutheran Worship 404, The Lutheran Hymnal 400



1 Take my life and let it be Con-se - crat - ed, Lord, to Thee;
2 Take my hands and let them move At the im - pulse of Thy love;
3 Take my voice and let me sing Al-ways, on - ly for my King;
4 Take my sil - ver and my gold, Not a mite would I with - hold;



Take my mo - ments and my days, Let them flow in cease-less praise.
Take my feet and let them be Swift and beau - ti - ful for Thee.
Take my lips and let them be Filled with mes - sag - es from Thee.
Take my in - tel - lect and use Ev - 'ry pow'r as Thou shalt choose.

5 Take my will and make it Thine,
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is Thine own,
It shall be Thy royal throne.

6 Take my love, my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store;
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

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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 The Second Sunday after Epiphany January 15 - 20, 2024

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.
C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Isaiah 49:3

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my servant, Israel, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia, In whom I will be glorified. Alleluia.

Introit Psalm 40:1–5; antiphon Psalm 40:10a, b

- L** I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart;
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;
C I waited patiently for the Lord;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.
L He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.
C He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.
L Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust,
who does not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after a lie!
C You have multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you!
I will proclaim and tell of them, yet they are more than can be told.
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 I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart;
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation.

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.

When I think of King David, I remember his encounter with Goliath. I remember his splendor as a king and the blessings he received from God. I remember his faith expressed in the Twenty-third Psalm. I, also, need to remember that for a time he was an outlaw fleeing King Saul. I need to remember that he had times of great distress. In Psalm 40, David remembers those times and how God ultimately delivered him.

We as a nation are living in a time of great distress. People are suffering from the flu and RSV. Covid-19 is surging again. There is political unrest. The nightly news is disheartening. Add to that all the troubles that we have in our daily lives. Some of us struggle with finances. Others struggle with health and illness. Some of us are struggling with conflict in our families. The list goes on!

David has good advice for us while we seem to be in this pit of destruction. Cry to the Lord! Wait patiently! God delivered David. God put his feet on rocks to get him out of the miry bog.

God is also the Rock of our Salvation. Times of distress turn us to Him. We cry for mercy and He delivers us. He delivers us from day to day. His ultimate deliverance is the salvation won for us by Jesus. It is life eternal with Him!

L Let us pray. O Lord, help us to trust in You for deliverance. These times seem dark but You are the Light of our Salvation. We need not fear. Grant us peace in all our troubles.

C Amen

Tuesday

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

Verse of the Day: Isaiah 49:3

L Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my servant, Israel, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia, In whom I will be glorified. 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, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen

If you've been following along with these daily meditations, you know that Tuesdays are the days that we consider the collect for the week. Historically, the collect "collects" the thoughts of the day in a one-sentence prayer. Sometimes for the sake of our modern ears, long collects have been transformed into more than one sentence.

Today, our collect reminds us that God is in charge! He is almighty and eternal! He is in control of all things in heaven and on earth!

It is unbelievably amazing that we may come to Him with our prayers for mercy. Sometimes these prayers are very specific, dealing with the things that are on our hearts and minds. Other times, we may have so much distress that we don't know what to pray for or how to pray. At those times, we simply cry, "Lord, have mercy."

Today, we pray for peace. We pray for peace in our hearts, in our families, and in our nation. Jesus is the Prince of Peace. At His birth, the angels proclaimed, "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men."

Because of Jesus, we do not pray to an angry God. Rather, we pray to a loving God, our heavenly Father. Because of Jesus, we have peace with God. We are no longer enemies but we have been reconciled to Him.

He hears our prayers and answers them. He always answers them in a way that is best for us.

Let us pray: Almighty and everlasting God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, 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 of the Day: Isaiah 49:3

L Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my servant, Israel, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia, In whom I will be glorified. 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 139:1–10

L ¹O LORD, you have searched me and known me!

C ²You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

L ³You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.

C ⁴Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.

L ⁵You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.

C ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.

L ⁷Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?

C ⁸If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!

L ⁹If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

C ¹⁰even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.

Psalms 139 helps us to focus on an underlying theme for this week. God is deeply and personally interested in you. He knows when you sit down and rise up. He knows the paths that you take. He knows every word you will say before it leaves your mouth. He is with you wherever you go. He is with you in the morning and evening and every moment of your life.

The knowledge of this truth was too wonderful for David. It is too wonderful for us to fully comprehend.

You are not dust in the wind. You are a beloved child of God who loves you and will never leave you or forsake you. He sent His son to be your Savior. He will one day take you to be with Him forever.

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for the steadiness of Your love for us. When we feel lonely and forgotten, remind us of your love and presence. Amen.

Thursday

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

Verse of the Day: Isaiah 49:3

L Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my servant, Israel, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia, In whom I will be glorified. Alleluia.

1 Samuel 3:1–10

¹Now the young man Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision.

²At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. ³The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was.

⁴Then the LORD called Samuel, and he said, “Here I am!” ⁵and ran to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call; lie down again.” So he went and lay down.

⁶And the LORD called again, “Samuel!” and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.” ⁷Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

⁸And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the young man. ⁹Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰And the LORD came and stood, calling as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant hears.”

Today we meet Samuel as a young man serving the Lord under Eli, the high priest. Read the first three chapters of 1 Samuel to learn about his amazing birth and the prayers and devotion of his mother, Hannah.

Samuel is a key figure in God’s plan of salvation. We meet him today when God calls him by name! This week is a good week to consider God’s call. In the Gospel lesson, Philip is called by Jesus. Each of us in turn has been called by God. For many of us, this first call was realized in our baptism. For others, it came through hearing the Gospel. Whenever and however God has called you, rejoice in that calling.

When God calls us, He also has a plan to use us in His kingdom for His purposes. Among the important tasks God had for Samuel was traveling to Bethlehem to anoint David as the future King of Israel.

I don’t know the specifics of the plan that God has for you. If you are a husband or wife, His plan is for you to be the best spouse you can be. If you are a parent, His plan for you is to be the best parent that you can be. He has placed each of us in a vocation to serve our neighbor. Like Samuel and Philip, God uses each of us in His kingdom to touch the people around us with the message of salvation through faith in Jesus.

Prayer: Almighty God, thank you for calling me into Your kingdom. Grant that we may be faithful in following You and reaching out to others. Amen.

Friday

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

Verse of the Day: Isaiah 49:3

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my servant, Israel, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia, In whom I will be glorified. 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 Corinthians 6:12–20

¹²“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be enslaved by anything. ¹³“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. ¹⁵Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” ¹⁷But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. ¹⁸Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

We live in a country where we are proud of our rights. We have a Bill of Rights. The Declaration of Independence contains these famous words, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

We all should thank God for these rights and that we live in a nation where we can exercise them. However, the Apostle Paul gives us a good perspective on our rights. Sometimes, it is better not to exercise our rights! Imagine that!

We may have the right to do something but to exercise our right may not be helpful at all! Sometimes the pursuit of our rights may actually enslave us. Paul uses the examples of food and sexuality. In the proper context, both are great gifts from God. However, they both can be abused in ways that are hurtful to ourselves and others.

This is always an important motto for Christians, to think of others before we exercise our rights. On the highway, I often have the right of way. But at times, the most gracious thing to do is to yield the right of way to someone who may have a greater need.

Jesus had such an attitude when He humbled Himself to become one of us. This humility sent Him to the cross because He placed each of us first in His life. Like Jesus, we are sometimes called upon to sacrifice for the sake of others.

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for the rights we enjoy in this country. Thank You for the opportunity to freely worship You and share Your word. Grant us wisdom to know when exercising our rights is not helpful to ourselves and others. Amen.

Saturday

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

Gradual Psalm 117:1–2a; 96:8

- L** Praise the LORD, all nations!
C Extol him, all peoples!
L For great is his steadfast love toward us,
C and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.
L Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
C bring an offering, and come into his courts!

Verse of the Day: Isaiah 49:3

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my servant, Israel, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia, In whom I will be glorified. 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. |

In the Old Testament, Israel was God's servant. God showed forth His glory by caring for them. He parted the Red Sea for them. He fed them in the wilderness. He gave them the Promised Land. In doing this, His Name was glorified.

In the New Testament, God's servant is the New Israel. God's servant is everyone who calls on the name of the Lord. In each of us, God shows His glory by caring for us. Sometimes He will part the Red Sea that blocks your way. Sometimes He will feed you in the wilderness. All of this is done so that you will reach the Promised Land of eternal life in heaven. For this reason, He sent His Servant-Son, Jesus to be our Savior. In the cross of Christ, God is glorified.

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for Your Servant Jesus. Thank You, for bringing us into Your kingdom and making us Your servants. Grant that we may always be faithful in our service to You, that Your name would be glorified among the nations. Amen.

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