

## The Fifth Sunday after Epiphany February 6, 2022

**O Holy Spirit, Enter In** Lutheran Service Book 913, Lutheran Worship 160, The Lutheran Hymnal 235



1 O Ho - ly Spir - it, en - ter in, And in our hearts  
2 Give to Your Word im - pres - sive pow'r, That in our hearts  
3 O might - y Rock, O Source of life, Let Your dear Word,



Your work be - gin, Your dwell - ing place now make us.  
from this good hour As fire it may be glow - ing,  
in doubt and strife, In us be strong - ly burn - ing



Sun of the soul, O Light di - vine, A - round and in  
That in true Chris - tian u - ni - ty We faith - ful wit -  
That we be faith - ful un - to death And live in love



us bright - ly shine, To joy and glad - ness wake us  
ness - es may be, Your glo - ry ev - er show - ing.  
and ho - ly faith, From You true wis - dom learn - ing.



That we may be Tru - ly liv - ing, To You giv - ing  
Hear us, cheer us By Your teach - ing; Let our preach - ing  
Your grace and peace On us show - er; By Your pow - er



Prayer un - ceas - ing And in love be still in - creas - ing.  
And our la - bor Praise You, Lord, and serve our neigh - bor.  
Christ con - fess - ing, Let us see our Sav - ior's bless - ing.

**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 71:15–18; antiphon Psalm 71:12

**L** O God, be not far from me;

O my God, make haste to help me!

**C** **My mouth will tell of your righteous acts, of your deeds of salvation all the day, for their number is past my knowledge.**

**L** With the mighty deeds of the Lord God I will come;

I will remind them of your righteousness, yours alone.

**C** **O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.**

**L** So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me,

until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.

**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** O God, be not far from me;

O my God, make haste to help me!

### 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: O Lord, keep Your family the Church continually in the true faith that relying on the hope of Your heavenly grace we may ever be defended by Your mighty power; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**C** Amen.

### Isaiah 6:1–8

<sup>1</sup>In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup>Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. <sup>3</sup>And one called to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of his glory!”

<sup>4</sup>And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. <sup>5</sup>And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”

<sup>6</sup>Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. <sup>7</sup>And he touched my mouth and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.”

<sup>8</sup>And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.”

**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! Extol him, all peoples!  
**C** For great is his steadfast love toward us, 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 138

**L** <sup>1</sup>I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart; before the gods I sing your praise;  
**C** <sup>2</sup>I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word.  
**L** <sup>3</sup>On the day I called, you answered me; my strength of soul you increased.  
**C** <sup>4</sup>All the kings of the earth shall give you thanks, O LORD,  
for they have heard the words of your mouth,  
**L** <sup>5</sup>and they shall sing of the ways of the LORD, for great is the glory of the LORD.  
**C** <sup>6</sup>For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly, but the haughty he knows from afar.

- L** <sup>7</sup>Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life;  
you stretch out your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and your right hand delivers me.
- C** <sup>8</sup>**The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me;**  
**your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.**

## 1 Corinthians 14:12b–20

<sup>12b</sup>Since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.

<sup>13</sup>Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. <sup>14</sup>For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. <sup>15</sup>What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also. <sup>16</sup>Otherwise, if you give thanks with your spirit, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say “Amen” to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you are saying? <sup>17</sup>For you may be giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not being built up. <sup>18</sup>I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. <sup>19</sup>Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

<sup>20</sup>Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature.

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

## Verse of the Day: Luke 5:10b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia, Do not be afraid; Alleluia.
- C** **Alleluia, Alleluia, From now on you will be catching men. Alleluia.**

## Luke 5:1–11

- L** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter.
- C** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on [Jesus] to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, <sup>2</sup>and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup>Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon’s, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. <sup>4</sup>And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.” <sup>5</sup>And Simon answered, “Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.” <sup>6</sup>And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. <sup>7</sup>They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. <sup>8</sup>But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” <sup>9</sup>For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, <sup>10</sup>and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.” <sup>11</sup>And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

- 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.

**Spread the Reign of God the Lord** Lutheran Service Book 830, Lutheran Worship 321, The Lutheran Hymnal 507



1 Spread the reign of God the Lord, Spo - ken, writ - ten, might-y Word;  
2 Tell how God the Fa - ther's will Made the world, up - holds it still,  
3 Tell of our Re-deem - er's grace, Who, to save our hu - man race  
4 Tell of God the Spir - it giv'n Now to guide us on to heav'n,



Ev - 'ry - where His crea-tures call To His heav'n-ly ban-quet hall.  
How His own dear Son He gave Us from sin and death to save.  
And to pay re - bel-lion's price, Gave Him - self as sac - ri - fice.  
Strong and ho - ly, just and true, Work - ing both to will and do.

5 Enter, mighty Word, the field;  
Ripe the promise of its yield.  
But the reapers, oh, how few  
For the work there is to do!

6 Lord of harvest, great and kind,  
Rouse to action heart and mind;  
Let the gath'ring nations all  
See Your light and heed Your call.

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### Devotional Thoughts:

I remember it as though it was yesterday. It was late in the evening, almost dark. I was standing on a dock by a small lake with a cane pole in my hand. My eyes were glued to a little red and white bobber. At the end of the line was a small hook with a worm firmly attached.

My dad, mom, sister, grandmother, aunt, and uncle were all there. As I recall, my sister was catching bluegills but I was catching nothing. But it wasn't for my lack of trying.

The little fish were nibbling at my bait. I could see the bobber dancing. Suddenly, it disappeared under the water. At that moment in unbridled excitement, I yanked that cane pole as hard as my five or six-year-old arms could manage. The hook, worm, and bobber flew through the air but no fish.

If you know fishermen, you know that they are quick to offer advice. My dad, mom, grandmother, aunt, and uncle were all fishermen. They all offered the same sage advice, "DON'T JERK THE POLE SO HARD!" "You are pulling the hook out of the fish's mouth."

I tried and tried but I couldn't curb my excitement at seeing my bobber disappear under the water. Every time it did, I responded the same way with the same result, except once!

The bobber went down. I yanked the pole. The pole bent. The bobber stayed under the water! I yelled. Someone said, "You hooked a turtle." I was in a tug-o-war with a sea monster. My uncle shouted, "No, you have a catfish!" As the tip of the pole continued to point to the water, I yelled, "I don't want it. You take it."

But my family insisted that I continue the struggle unaided. After what seemed like an eternity, I landed this enormous catfish. It measured 12-13 inches long! My mighty tug had jammed the hook under its jawbone.

Later that night, we had a fish fry. My uncle prepared the catfish especially for me! I was a fisherman!

Do you want to hear more fish stories? I've got lots. I didn't think so.

Peter, James, and John surely had many fish stories. But our Gospel lesson for today must have been one of their favorites. I can imagine them telling it over and over as the years went by. Luke makes sure that we know the details.

In my mind, I can see Jesus being pressed upon by the crowds of people. They wanted to hear the word of God. People of every generation, in every nation, of every age, need to hear the word of God! This account reveals to us Jesus' plan for that to happen.

Luke begins, "On one occasion." By this, he indicates that the event was not recorded in chronological order. He also says that it happened on the shore of the lake of Gennesaret which is another name for the Sea of Galilee or the Sea of Tiberias. I think that Luke uses the term "Gennesaret" to indicate that this episode took place near a small fertile valley of the same name. It's on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee not far from Capernaum. There is a productive fishing spot there near a place known for its seven springs.

Jesus then used Peter's boat for a pulpit. This was a wise decision. If you've ever been on a lake, fishing in the calm of the morning or evening, you know how far a voice can travel over water. This must have been early in the morning because later we learn that Peter, James, and John had been fishing all night to no avail. (As an aside, I once was fishing about a hundred yards offshore in the calm of the evening. Unfortunately, in a cabin about twice that distance away, a mother and daughter were arguing. The peacefulness of our fishing was disrupted because we could clearly hear every word spoken between these two!)

Finally, Jesus' sermon was finished. He told Peter, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." At first, this may have seemed like a casual request to go fishing. But as we shall see, it was not.

Peter, the professional fisherman, was skeptical of Jesus' request. The fishing profession isn't the leisurely activity that comes to my mind when fishing is mentioned. Rather, it's a toilsome and wearying task of letting out nets and hauling them in. Peter, James, and John had spent all night repeating this process but the nets remained empty.

But Peter said to Jesus, "You're in charge" which is a loose translation of the Greek word for Master in verse 5. So they let down their nets.

And wonder of wonders, the nets were filled! They were not just filled but they were breaking! They needed help and called their partners. They had never seen a catch of fish like this before. The two boats were overflowing with fish! They began to sink!

Next occurred the twofold epiphany! The first epiphany was that the man with them in the boat is the LORD! He is not just a lord but Christ the Lord! The second epiphany was the same one experienced by Isaiah when he saw the Lord and heard the angels sing, "Holy, Holy, Holy." Peter was terrified by the fact that he was a sinful man standing in the presence of the holy Son of God!

Our world today needs these two epiphanies. We need to recognize Jesus as Christ the Lord and we need to recognize our sin and need for a savior. Without delay, Jesus spoke these words of comfort, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men."

We, too, need these two epiphanies and we too need to hear a word of comfort. We need not fear because our holy Lord is also the one who died for us and for the sins of the world. He calls us to share this message with people everywhere so they would be brought into His everlasting kingdom.

If you've been around fishermen, you know that they love to tell stories. How much more ought we love to tell the story of Jesus who has called each of us to make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that He has commanded us. (Matthew 28:18-20). When He calls, may we answer with the words of Isaiah, "Here I am! Send me! Send me!"

"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.

**L** O Lord God, sustain us in our efforts to be fishers of men. Grant that we would not become discouraged when we toil all night and catch nothing, but that we would continue to let down our nets of Your Word according to Your command.

**C** Amen.

**L** O Lord God, You allowed Isaiah to declare, “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!” Grant us so also to come before Your throne of grace claiming no merit of our own but resting solely upon the work of Jesus and the forgiveness that He won for us upon the cross.

**C** Amen.

**L** O Lord God, heavenly Father, when we hear Your divine call to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, grant that our answer would be the same as that of Isaiah, “Here am I! Send me.”

**C** Amen.

**L** Almighty God, send Your holy angels to watch over all of our loved ones, especially those who live in distant places. We thank You for the protection granted to all who have attended to our needs during this pandemic. Thank You that the recent surge of infections in our nation has begun to decline. Continue to strengthen all those who serve us in the medical field. Give Your comfort and peace to all who are suffering from this illness or others. Be with those who mourn the death of those who are dear. Grant to them the hope and assurance of a blessed reunion in heaven.

**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.



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!"

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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 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

#### February 7 – February 12, 2022

#### 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 mediate 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: Luke 5:10b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia, Do not be afraid; Alleluia.
- C** Alleluia, Alleluia, From now on you will be catching men. Alleluia.

#### Introit Psalm 71:15–18; antiphon Psalm 71:12

- L** O God, be not far from me;  
O my God, make haste to help me!
- C** My mouth will tell of your righteous acts, of your deeds of salvation all the day,  
for their number is past my knowledge.
- L** With the mighty deeds of the Lord God I will come;  
I will remind them of your righteousness, yours alone.
- C** O God, from my youth you have taught me,  
and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.
- L** So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me,  
until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.
- 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** O God, be not far from me;  
O my God, make haste to help me!

## 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.

These verses of our introit from Psalm 71 speak of praise to God for the salvation that He brings to us in life. However, many other verses in the psalm are a litany of adversities that the psalmist (possibly David) experienced.

Verse 18 speaks of “old age and grey hairs.” Verse 20 recalls “troubles and calamities.” Nevertheless, God has rescued him from them all. He is confident that God will come to his aid again.

No one reaches old age without experiencing difficulties. But with these experiences also comes perspective. In our youth, we can be devastated by setbacks that are easily shrugged off by mature individuals. On the other hand, young people can be buoyed by enthusiasm and energy while the elderly become jaded.

Psalm 71 offers a view of life and faith to keep things in proper balance. Difficulties will come but because God is on our side, they will never defeat us. These victories over adversity move us to proclaim God’s might to another generation and His power to all those to come (Psalm 71:18).

The Apostle Paul expresses similar thoughts with these words:

“But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed” (2 Corinthians 4:7-9).

And again, he writes,

“But he (God) said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

He also declares to the Romans:

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written,

‘For your sake we are being killed all the day long;  
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:35-39).

Let us pray: Lord God, our heavenly Father, You walk with us throughout every part of life. You never leave us or forsake us. Grant that when we arrive at old age, we would continue to speak of Your righteous acts, of Your deeds of salvation all the day through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Tuesday

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

## Verse of the Day: Luke 5:10b

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia, Do not be afraid; Alleluia.  
**C** Alleluia, Alleluia, From now on you will be catching men. 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: O Lord, keep Your family the Church continually in the true faith that relying on the hope of Your heavenly grace we may ever be defended by Your mighty power; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

In my younger years, I often heard a song titled, “Give Me That Old-Time Religion.” It was recorded by such greats as Johnny Cash and June Carter, Elvis Presley, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Dolly Parton, and many others. This Gospel song reflects the idea that something has happened in the Church and we must return to an earlier time. It’s a reaction to those who think that the Church is too old-fashion and must leave behind its outmoded ways.

It seems everyone has an idea of what the Church is or should be. Some believe that for the Church to be successful it must be trendy and culturally relevant. They turn to marketing, sociology, pop culture, and demographics to “grow the church.”

Others believe that modern pop culture is irredeemable and the solution is for the Church to become what it was in its glory days (whenever that was). For some, the glory days were defined by tent revivals and Gospel songs. For others, the glory days were characterized by high church pomp and pageantry.

Wherever you find yourself in this debate, the collect for this week offers us valuable insight into the Church and it really has nothing to do with marketing, pop culture, tent meetings, or pageantry.

First, we remember that the true Church is the family of God. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians, “So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:10). To the Ephesians, He wrote, “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). He wrote to Timothy, “I am writing these things to you so that ... you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:14-15). The Apostle Peter also calls the Church “the household of God” (1 Peter 4:17).

The New Testament Church was so insistent upon viewing the Church as the family of God that they referred to each other as brothers and sisters. Since we are the family of God, we are privileged to call the Almighty God, maker of heaven and earth, “our Father.” Paul refers to Jesus as “the firstborn among many brothers” (Romans 8:29). In fact, identifying the Church as the family of God is just following Jesus’ lead! He said, “‘Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?’ And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, ‘Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother’” (Matthew 12:48-50).

Second, the Church is made up of all those who hold the true faith. It does not consist of marketing trends. It does not rely on the success of retail religion or spectacular ceremonies. It depends upon faith in Jesus. This is the faith of the Apostle Paul who writes, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). “We hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law” (Romans 3:28). Every other focus is misplaced whether it be pop culture or ornate ritual.

Finally, it is God’s mighty power that defends the Church. The Church will always be here. It may look different. It may suffer persecution as in the days of ancient Rome. But we know that Christ Himself builds the Church and “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18).

Let us pray: O Lord, keep Your family the Church continually in the true faith that relying on the hope of Your heavenly grace we may ever be defended by Your mighty power; 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: Luke 5:10b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia, Do not be afraid; Alleluia.  
**C** Alleluia, Alleluia, From now on you will be catching men. Alleluia.

### Psalm 138

- L** <sup>1</sup>I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart; before the gods I sing your praise;  
**C** <sup>2</sup>**I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word.**  
**L** <sup>3</sup>On the day I called, you answered me; my strength of soul you increased.  
**C** <sup>4</sup>**All the kings of the earth shall give you thanks, O LORD, for they have heard the words of your mouth,**  
**L** <sup>5</sup>and they shall sing of the ways of the LORD, for great is the glory of the LORD.  
**C** <sup>6</sup>**For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly, but the haughty he knows from afar.**  
**L** <sup>7</sup>Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life;  
you stretch out your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and your right hand delivers me.  
**C** <sup>8</sup>**The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me;**  
**your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.**

### Kyrie

- |                    |                            |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>L</b> O Lord,   | <b>C</b> Have Mercy on us. |
| <b>L</b> O Christ, | <b>C</b> Have Mercy on us. |
| <b>L</b> O Lord,   | <b>C</b> Have Mercy on us. |

Have you ever experienced sleepless nights resulting from stress and anxiety? I have.

I recall many times returning home late in the evening following acrimonious meetings at church. Although it may have been approaching 11 pm, I would be so keyed up that I couldn't begin to think about going to bed. When I did, I often couldn't sleep. I found some of those meetings to be so traumatic that it is still uncomfortable to think about them.

However, today, my older and wiser self might say to my younger self, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" (Matthew 8:26 KJV). Of course, most of the wrangling was about money. I could tell you stories that would make your hair stand on end (pardon the hyperbole).

Over the years, as I would present the weekly offerings at the altar, I learned to silently pray, "Dear Lord, let these loaves and fishes be sufficient for our needs." And I'm pleased to say, they always were.

I know that this is an inadequate illustration. Many people face far worse threats to their life and peaceful sleep. Some suffer from life-threatening illness or witness loved ones suffer. Some are threatened by ill-intentioned adversaries or evil people. We all concur with King David, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous."

But we must not stop there. He goes on to declare, "but the Lord delivers him out of them all" (Psalm 34:19).

When you have experienced God's deliverance, what do you do? King David wrote Psalm 138! He gives thanks with his whole heart! He sings God's praise even in front of God's enemies. He worships and thanks God for His steadfast love and faithfulness.

May we join David in declaring, “Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life.”

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for Your steadfast love and faithfulness. Thank You for delivering me from every adversity and trouble. Grant me the grace to worship You and sing Your praises as You fulfill Your purpose for me through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

## Thursday

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

**C** Amen.

### Verse of the Day: Luke 5:10b

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia, Do not be afraid; Alleluia.

**C** Alleluia, Alleluia, From now on you will be catching men. 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.

### Isaiah 6:1–8

<sup>1</sup>In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup>Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. <sup>3</sup>And one called to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of his glory!”

<sup>4</sup>And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. <sup>5</sup>And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”

<sup>6</sup>Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. <sup>7</sup>And he touched my mouth and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.”

<sup>8</sup>And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.”

“God is love, therefore He does not condemn sin or sinners” is a common theological misconception popular today. It is not only found among armchair theologians, it seems to be the motto of most progressive churches. As a result, not only do we live in a time when immoral activities are permitted, they are often celebrated by secular society and formerly faithful churches.

Isaiah offers a powerful corrective when he says, “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”

What Isaiah remembered but many today have forgotten is that God is a thrice-holy God who is just and must condemn sin. Because of Adam’s sin, God told him, “You are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19). We read in Ezekiel 18:20, “The soul who sins shall die.” The Apostle Paul tells us, “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23).

Indeed, God is love but that does not mean that He ignores sin. No, sin is so real for God that the only solution was to send His only-begotten Son to pay the penalty of sin on the cross. Because of this, Paul is able to say, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

Does this mean that we are free to go on sinning? No. Paul already answered that question at the beginning of this chapter:

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (Romans 6:1-4).

You might say, “But this is Paul. What does Jesus say?” Here it is. In the account of the woman caught in adultery, Jesus told her, “From now on, sin no more” (John 8:11).

Yes, we all continue to sin. We sin out of weakness. However, we do not approve of sin as though it was an alternate form of righteousness and we do not deliberately sin. To do so threatens our salvation. (For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, Hebrews 10:26.)

Rather, we rejoice in forgiveness. We cannot help but call others to repentance and share with them the message of salvation through faith in Jesus. When Jesus commissions us to make disciples of all nations, we cannot help but join with Isaiah in saying, “Here am I! Send me.”

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for the forgiveness of sins through Christ our Lord. Grant us true repentance. Move us to put away our sins and live lives worthy of our calling to holiness. Give us a willing spirit to answer Your call and speak for You to all nations 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 of the Day: Luke 5:10b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia, Do not be afraid; Alleluia.  
**C** Alleluia, Alleluia, From now on you will be catching men. 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 14:12b–20

<sup>12b</sup>Since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.

<sup>13</sup>Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. <sup>14</sup>For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. <sup>15</sup>What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also. <sup>16</sup>Otherwise, if you give thanks with your spirit, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say “Amen” to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you are saying? <sup>17</sup>For you may be giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not being built up. <sup>18</sup>I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. <sup>19</sup>Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

<sup>20</sup>Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature.

*Glóssa* is the Greek word for tongue. We use it for taste, swallowing, and forming words. When it is used with *laleó*, the Greek word for talk or speak, it means to speak in a language. We use the same expression today when we refer to our native language as our “mother tongue.”

English has a word that combines *Glóssa* with *laleó*. This word is glossolalia and means “speaking in tongues.” It is often used to refer to the Pentecost miracle when the Apostles were given the gift to speak in the languages of the people gathered in Jerusalem. In this event, everyone gathered understood what the Apostles were saying. Acts 2:8 reports that the people asked, “And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?”

It is also used to refer to ecstatic speech practiced by some Christians known as Pentecostals or Charismatics. Unlike the Pentecost experience where the languages spoken by the Apostles were understood by the people, this modern practice of “speaking in tongues” consists of unintelligible strings of syllables. Those who practice glossolalia believe that they are speaking in a spiritual language that only God and angels can understand.

This modern practice of speaking in tongues began about 1900 on the west coast of the United States. A Los Angeles newspaper documents this with these amazing headlines from an April 18, 1906 edition: “WEIRD BABEL OF TONGUES,” “New Sect of Fanatics Is Breaking Loose,” “Wild Scene Last Night on Azusa Street,” and “Gurgle of Wordless Talk by a Sister.”

In one sense, glossolalia can be rather innocuous. If someone wants to use nonsense syllables to praise God, St. Paul will not forbid it. History tells us that ancient Greeks and Romans were accustomed to doing this in their worship of false gods. Paul is willing to allow these recently converted believers to continue the practice in worship of the true God. But if you read 1 Corinthians 12-14 with the backdrop of glossolalia, you will quickly see that he is not happy about it.

The Corinthian church was infected with a focus on differences and division. Paul addresses the issue in the first chapter. In chapter 11, we learn that it was affecting their communion practices. In chapter 12, we discover that they were bragging about spiritual gifts, one of those gifts being glossolalia. In chapter 13, Paul comes to the heart of the matter. They are not reflecting God’s love.

In this same chapter, we read this telling verse regarding glossolalia: “When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways” (1 Corinthians 13:11). Paul expects them to grow up and stop practicing glossolalia. He makes this even clearer in chapter 14.

In verses 18 and 19 from our Epistle lesson this week, Paul says, “<sup>18</sup>I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. <sup>19</sup>Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.”

When Paul says that “I speak in tongues more than all of you,” he is not talking about glossolalia (unintelligible syllables). He is saying that his language skills enable him to speak in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and Aramaic. A better translation would be, “I can speak in more languages than all of you.”

Then he makes this telling statement, “in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue [language].” If people cannot understand what is said, it is useless and should be kept to one’s self!

One final thought about the modern-day practice of glossolalia. Denominations that have glossolalia as a key component of their teachings are known as Pentecostals. The Charismatic Movement was an attempt to introduce glossolalia into other denominations including Roman Catholic, Lutheran, etc.

The major flaw in both Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement is the claim that glossolalia is the sure sign of the Holy Spirit in your life. In fact, they claim that if you don’t practice glossolalia then you don’t have the Holy Spirit. Both of these groups ignore a key verse that Paul used to introduce this whole discussion, “No one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except in [by] the Holy Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:3).

Let no one deceive you into believing that you do not have the Holy Spirit because you do not practice glossolalia. If you believe in Jesus as your Savior, then you have the Holy Spirit! No amount of glossolalia will add to that!

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for the gift of the Holy Spirit who comes to us through word and sacrament. Grant that we would be faithful in using Your means of grace and never doubt the gift of faith that You have given to us by the power of Your Spirit 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 Psalm 117:1–2a; 96:8

**L** Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples!

**C** For great is his steadfast love toward us, 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: Luke 5:10b

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia, Do not be afraid; Alleluia.

**C** Alleluia, Alleluia, From now on you will be catching men. 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.

I once had the privilege of attending worship at the La Almodena Cathedral in Madrid, Spain. While I only know a few Spanish words, I was able to follow the service because I am familiar with the historic liturgy and the order of worship in the Lutheran Church.

Churches all over the world including Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Lutheran, Episcopal, etc. use similar orders of worship. This is a wonderful blessing and an expression of unity among Christians. They all derive from the worship practices of the early Church. Why did Christians develop an order of worship and stick to it throughout the centuries?

There are a number of answers to this question. In part, Christian worship can be traced to worship in the synagogue. Jesus attended the synagogue every week. He participated in the liturgy of the synagogue by reading the Scriptures. Paul followed the same practice. He began his ministry in each new city by attending worship at the synagogue until he was forced to leave.

By the time 1 Corinthians was written, Christians were gathering weekly for worship in their own assemblies. The Christians in Corinth came from pagan backgrounds. It seems that they weren't familiar with the order of worship from the synagogue so Paul gave them some instructions.

In chapter 14, we read these two telling verses: "God is not a God of confusion but of peace" (verse 33) and "All things should be done decently and in order" (verse 40). From these verses, we conclude that our worship services should be orderly and not filled with confusion.

The Bible does not specify an order for our worship. Christians are free to agree together on their order for worship. The important thing is that there be order in hearing God's word, singing His praise, and sharing the sacrament. It is a great blessing that Christians have a shared order for worship yet we must recognize the right of congregations to agree together on their own particular order of worship. The Augsburg Confession states:



For the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree about the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments.<sup>3</sup> It is not necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies instituted by men, should be the same everywhere<sup>1</sup>

May we thank God for the freedom that He grants to us in worship. May we never abuse our freedom but learn to do things decently and in order so that God's name would be glorified and His people would hear the Gospel of salvation through faith in Jesus.

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for unity in the Church as expressed in our weekly worship. Grant that we would be faithful in the proclamation of Your pure word and doctrine. Give us the wisdom to worship You in an orderly and god-pleasing way. Do not allow our freedom in worship to offend the weak through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup>*Concordia : The Lutheran Confessions*, Edited by Paul Timothy McCain, 34 (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2005).