

The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 1, 2021

Glorious Things of You Are Spoken Lutheran Service Book 648, Lutheran Worship 294, The Lutheran Hymnal 469



1 Glo - rious things of you are spo - ken, Zi - on, cit - y
2 See, the streams of liv - ing wa - ters, Spring - ing from e -
3 Round each hab - i - ta - tion hov - 'ring, See the cloud and
4 Sav - ior, since of Zi - on's cit - y I through grace a



of our God; He whose word can - not be bro - ken Formed you
ter - nal love, Well sup - ply your sons and daugh - ters And all
fire ap - pear For a glo - ry and a cov - 'ring, Show - ing
mem - ber am, Let the world de - ride or pit - y, I will



for His own a - bode. On the Rock of A - ges found - ed,
fear of want re - move. Who can faint while such a riv - er
that the Lord is near. Thus de - riv - ing from their ban - ner
glo - ry in Your name. Fad - ing are the world's vain plea - sures,



What can shake your sure re - pose? With sal - va - tion's
Ev - er will their thirst as - suage? Grace, which like the
Light by night and shade by day, Safe they feed up -
All their boast - ed pomp and show; Sol - id joys and



walls sur - round - ed, You may smile at all your foes.
Lord, the giv - er, Nev - er fails from age to age.
on the man - na Which God gives them on their way.
last - ing trea - sures None but Zi - on's chil - dren know.

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 78:23–25; antiphon Psalm 78:72

L With upright heart he shepherded them
and guided them with his skillful hand.

C He commanded the skies above
and opened the doors of heaven,

L and he rained down on them manna to eat
and gave them the grain of heaven.

C Man ate of the bread of the angels;
he sent them food in abundance.

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 With upright heart he shepherded them
and guided them with his skillful hand.

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: Merciful Father, You gave Your Son Jesus as the heavenly bread of life. Grant us faith to feast on Him in Your Word and Sacraments that we may be nourished unto life everlasting; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

Exodus 16:2–15

²The whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, ³and the people of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. ⁵On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.” ⁶So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, “At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, ⁷and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against the LORD. For what are we, that you grumble against us?” ⁸And Moses said, “When the LORD gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him—what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD.”

⁹Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, ‘Come near before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.’” ¹⁰And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. ¹¹And the LORD said to Moses, ¹²“I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’”

¹³In the evening quail came up and covered the camp, and in the morning dew lay around the camp. ¹⁴And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.

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

Gradual Romans 11:33, 36

- L** Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!
- C** How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!
- L** For from him and through him and to him are all things.
- C** To him be glory forever. Amen.

Psalm 145:10 –21

- L** ¹⁰All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD, and all your saints shall bless you!
- C** ¹¹**They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power,**
- L** ¹²to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.
- C** ¹³**Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,**
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.
The LORD is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.
- L** ¹⁴The LORD upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down.
- C** ¹⁵**The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season.**
- L** ¹⁶You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing.
- C** ¹⁷**The LORD is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works.**
- L** ¹⁸The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.
- C** ¹⁹**He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them.**
- L** ²⁰The LORD preserves all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.
- C** ²¹**My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD,**
and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

Ephesians 4:1–16

¹I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. ⁸Therefore it says,

“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men.”

⁹(In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) ¹¹And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

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

Verse of the Day: John 6:35b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, Alleluia.
- C** Alleluia, Alleluia. And whoever believes in me shall never thirst. Alleluia.

John 6:22–35

L The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 6th chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

²²On the next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone.

²³Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks.

²⁴So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.

²⁵When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?”

²⁶Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. ²⁷Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.” ²⁸Then they said to him, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” ²⁹Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” ³⁰So they said to him, “Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform? ³¹Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” ³²Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” ³⁴They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.”

³⁵Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

³⁶For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” ³⁷They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.”

³⁸Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

³⁹For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” ⁴⁰They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.”

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.

1 Guide me, O Thou great Re-deem-er, Pil-grim through this
 2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain Whence the heal - ing
 3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, Bid my anx - ious

bar - ren land. I am weak, but Thou art might - y;
 stream doth flow; Let the fi - ery, cloud - y pil - lar
 fears sub - side; Death of death and hell's de - struc - tion,

Hold me with Thy pow'r - ful hand. Bread of heav - en,
 Lead me all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - 'rer,
 Land me safe on Ca - naan's side. Songs of prais - es,

bread of heav - en, Feed me till I want no
 strong de - liv - 'rer, Be Thou still my strength and
 songs of prais - es I will ev - er give to

more; shield; Feed me till I want no more. shield.
 Thee; I will ev - er give to Thee.

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Devotional Thoughts:

Today is my mother's 90th birthday. Unfortunately for me, she was unexpectedly called home in February. Fortunately for her, she is celebrating her birthday in heaven. If you know me, you know that I have a slight tendency to reminisce. Okay, I admit it. I am overly inclined to reminisce. These last few months and today on her birthday, I seem to be reflecting more and more on the past. This comes to mind as we leave the Gospel of Mark for three weeks and dig into the Gospel of John.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the first three Gospels, are known as the synoptic Gospels. Synoptic means that they are writing from a similar viewpoint. But John often recounts Jesus' life from a different perspective.

Over the last months, I have been going through my mother's house and possessions. Now and then, a brother or sister will point out an object and tell me a story that is connected to it. Sometimes, I have a clear recollection of the story. Other times, I will learn something new or long forgotten. I can imagine this happening as John writes his Gospel.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke have each written in turn. They each tell the story of Jesus in a similar way, adding or omitting details as they see fit. But then, years later, John is reading through these Gospels and

realizes that there are some important events in Jesus' life that need to be passed on. I can envision that this is how we got our readings for the next three weeks. We have been following the life of Jesus through the eyes of Mark. But now John is going to jump in and add his important recollections to the chronicle of Jesus' life.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all record the miracle of Jesus feeding the 5000. Matthew, Mark, and John then recall for us the account of Jesus walking on water. It is at this point that John realizes that succeeding generations need to know about Jesus' next encounter with the people. He supplies the important lesson of the Bread of Life that will occupy our thoughts for three weeks.

Jesus and His disciples had been looking for a place of rest. Instead, the crowd followed them and Jesus taught them many things. At the end of the day, there was no food to be had in this remote location. After challenging His disciples to feed the crowd, Jesus multiplied the loaves and fish, enough to feed 5000! (Mark 6:30-44).

This time, Jesus and his disciples do manage to elude the crowds that pursue them. But this doesn't last long. The people notice that their boat is gone and the hunt is on. John reports that sometime the next day they found Him.

Jesus is perfectly aware of the motivation behind their pursuit. They were delighted to eat their fill of the loaves! Their enthusiasm to find and follow Jesus was completely misguided. They were so focused on earthly blessings that they were neglecting the blessing of eternal life that Jesus brings.

This is a common affliction. It still happens to us today. Entire churches are built on preaching about prosperity that comes from being faithful to God. That is just as foolish today as it was then.

I once met a woman who experienced much distress. She owned a clothing store that was in great financial difficulty. As is so often the case, her troubles led her to seek relief in religion. She went to a church that told her that her business was failing because she had failed to tithe! She immediately set about tithing in order to save her business! As you would expect, this advice did not avert financial disaster for her.

As I reminisce on my ministry, I recall an encounter with another woman. She was a refugee from behind the Iron Curtain. She developed a friendship with a woman who brought her to church. I was soon meeting with them weekly to teach her the faith.

The communists in charge in her homeland severely restricted religion and almost everything she learned from me was new to her. I vividly remember the day when I presented her with a Bible in her own language from the Lutheran Heritage Foundation. Tears streamed down her cheeks as she read God's word in her own language for the first time!

But after a period of time, she stopped coming to church and Bible study. A couple of weeks went by and I called her to ask if there were any problems. She replied that in fact there were no problems but she had decided to attend another church. When I asked her why she told me that they had explained to her that there were extra "benefits" that came from attending this new church!

We are so eager to work for food that perishes that we neglect the food that endures to eternal life. It is doubly distressing when churches make that the focal point of their teachings.

Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" (verse 28). This is an apt question. If I asked you for a list of godly works for people to do, would you come up with Jesus' answer? Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent" (verse 29).

All of Jesus' ministry, all of His teaching, all of His miracles had one overarching goal. Jesus wanted the people to believe in Him and receive eternal life. This had been His message from the start as John records. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Yes, believers will seek to live according to God's law. They will seek to love God and their neighbors. They will be kind and generous. They will forgive as they have been forgiven. But first, they must believe!

God cared for His people of old. He led them out of slavery. He fed them manna in the wilderness. His goal was for them to believe and trust in Him and His promise of a savior.

The real Bread of Life is Jesus himself. It is not the manna in the wilderness. It is not the multiplied loaves and fishes. It is not the bread and circuses of a local eating establishment. It is not a weekly paycheck or government stimulus money. It is not a retirement plan or an investment strategy.

Jesus says, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." My mother is enjoying the eternal fulfillment of this promise that Jesus made to her. One day, I expect to share in that eternal fulfillment. I hope to see you there.

"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 Gracious heavenly Father, as You provided bread from heaven for the Israelites during their journey through the wilderness to the land You had promised, give us the confidence to trust in Your promises and to look to Your hand to provide all we need for our journey through this life to the life to come.

C Amen.

L Lord of all, hear our prayers for the hungry and the homeless. Provide for them not only bread to satisfy their hunger but, above all, the true bread of life, Jesus Christ, who alone can fill and satisfy every need of body and soul.

C Amen.

L God and Father of all, enable us to walk in humility, gentleness, and patience, that we would bear with one another in love and be eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

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 the pandemic. As we again experience an increase in infections, we ask for Your continued protection and grace.

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 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais - es ring! To God the Fa -
 2 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais - es ring! Un - to the Lamb
 3 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais - es ring! Un - to the Ho -
 4 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais - es ring! Un - to our tri -



ther let us bring Our songs of ad - o - ra - tion.
 of God we sing, In whom we are e - lect - ed.
 ly Ghost we sing For our re - gen - er - a - tion.
 une God we sing; Blest be His name for - ev - er!



To Him through ev - er - last - ing days Be wor - ship, hon -
 He bought His Church with His own blood, He cleansed her in
 The sav - ing faith in us He wrought And us un - to
 With an - gel hosts let us a - dore And sing His prais -



or, pow'r, and praise, Whose hand sus - tains cre - a - tion.
 that bless - ed flood, And as His bride se - lect - ed.
 the Bride - groom brought, Made us His cho - sen na - tion.
 es ev - er - more For all His grace and fa - vor!



Sing - ing, ring - ing: Ho - ly, ho - ly, God is ho - ly;
 Ho - ly, ho - ly Is our u - nion And com - mu - nion.
 Glo - ry! Glo - ry! Joy e - ter - nal, Bliss su - per - nal;
 Sing - ing, ring - ing: Ho - ly, ho - ly, God is ho - ly;



Spread the sto - ry Of our God, the Lord of glo - ry.
 His be - friend - ing Gives us joy and peace un - end - ing.
 There is man - na And an end - less, glad ho - san - na.
 Spread the sto - ry Of our God, the Lord of glo - ry!

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 Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 2 – August 7, 2021

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.

Introit Psalm 78:23–25; antiphon Psalm 78:72

- L** With upright heart he shepherded them
and guided them with his skillful hand.
C He commanded the skies above
and opened the doors of heaven,
L and he rained down on them manna to eat
and gave them the grain of heaven.
C Man ate of the bread of the angels;
he sent them food in abundance.
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 With upright heart he shepherded them
and guided them with his skillful hand.

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. |

It is no surprise that our introit contains only a few selected verses from Psalm 78. Psalm 78 is the second longest psalm with 72 verses! (Do you recall which psalm is the longest? Answer: Psalm 119 with 176 verses!)

Psalm 78 recounts God's interaction with His people from the Exodus to the time of David. In that way, it serves as a good summary of a large portion of the Old Testament and an important memory tool for the people of Israel.

So why is it the introit for this week? Jesus quotes Psalm 78:24 in our Gospel lesson for today.

In part, Psalm 78 was written because the people must never forget how God provided manna to the people in the wilderness. Manna was indeed bread from heaven. Likewise, Jesus provided bread for the 5000 in a desolate place so that all could eat and be satisfied. But Jesus does more than provide bread for the body. He is the Bread of Life for the soul. He is the Bread from heaven who descended to become one of us. He is the greater Son of David who brings us life through His death. Let us never forget or neglect this Bread of Life.

Not only must we never forget. We must pass this on to our children and each succeeding generation. We would do well to remember Psalm 78:5-7.

He commanded our fathers
to teach to their children,
that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,
and arise and tell them to their children,
so that they should set their hope in God
and not forget the works of God,

L Let us pray. Lord Jesus, You invite all who are burdened with sin to come to You for rest. Strengthen our faith, increase our love and hope, and assure us a place at Your heavenly table, where we will eat eternal manna and drink of the river of Your pleasure forever and ever. Hear us, Jesus, for Your own sake.

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: John 6:35b

L Alleluia, Alleluia. I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. And whoever believes in me shall never thirst. 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: Merciful Father, You gave Your Son Jesus as the heavenly bread of life. Grant us faith to feast on Him in Your Word and Sacraments that we may be nourished unto life everlasting; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

The lessons for this week remind us that all of us are both body and soul. As the Olympic games progress into their second week, we are inundated with images of the human body at the peak of its powers. The danger is that we make the human body an object of worship rather than recognizing that our bodies are the temple of the living God.

Our Twenty-first Century mentality has caused us to become obsessed with physical perfection and well-being. Yoga, running, biking, and rock climbing are often portrayed in commercials as the highest good. Healthy, clean food is the path to physical perfection. Nothing must stand in the way!

But Olympic athletes soon falter. Happiness through physical perfection soon fails. Pandemics appear. Muscles weaken. Joints wear out.

It eventually is apparent that lasting benefits come only through things we do for our souls. Our souls are not fed with food from the farm. Our souls are fed with the Bread of Life. Our souls are fed with the word of God. Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. (John 6: 35).

Let us pray: Merciful Father, You gave Your Son Jesus as the heavenly bread of life. Grant us faith to feast on Him in Your Word and Sacraments that we may be nourished unto life everlasting; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

PS. Happy anniversary, Valerie! I love you!

Wednesday

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

C Amen.

Verse of the Day: John 6:35b

L Alleluia, Alleluia. I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. And whoever believes in me shall never thirst. Alleluia.

Psalm 145:10 –21

L ¹⁰All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD, and all your saints shall bless you!

C ¹¹**They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power,**

L ¹²to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

C ¹³**Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.**

The LORD is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.

L ¹⁴The LORD upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down.

C ¹⁵**The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season.**

L ¹⁶You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing.

C ¹⁷**The LORD is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works.**

L ¹⁸The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

C ¹⁹**He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them.**

L ²⁰The LORD preserves all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.

C ²¹**My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD,
and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.**

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.

“Silence is Golden” is the title of a rock song from the sixties. It was initially the B-side of the U.S. number 1 single “Rag Doll” by the Four Seasons in 1964. In 1967, it was recorded by the Tremolos and became a number one hit.

“Silence is golden” is a well-known proverb. The full version is “Speech is silver, silence is golden.” My initial reaction after reading the psalm for this week is: “Silence is golden but it can also be deadly.”

There is indeed a certain virtue in knowing when not to speak. It is a virtue that is mostly lacking in my personality. I work hard at being silent but often fail.

On the other hand, there is no virtue in remaining silent when a timely warning or wise word is required. Most of us have experienced the call of “Heads up!” when an errant ball is traveling our way. We all appreciate a “Watch out!” when danger approaches or an automobile is careening out of control.

If you have learned about a life-saving medicine or medical procedure, you will share this information with a friend or relative. In these cases, silence is not golden but deadly. Withholding life-saving information is practically the same as manslaughter.

In Psalm 145:4, David declares, “One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.” In the first verses of the Psalm for this week, David says, “All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD, and all your saints shall bless you! They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power, to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom” (Psalm 145:10-12).

People are not born knowing the true God. We all have an innate knowledge that there is a God. We see evidence of this in His works all around us. However, just as we must hand down our language and culture to the next generation, we must also teach the children about the true God and His plan of salvation through faith in Christ. To not do so is deadly in the extreme.

Many cultures of the world have a concept of God that is faulty. World religions teach retribution and karma. This is all well and good for the righteous (or self-righteous) but what about the rest of us? Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief! (1 Timothy 1:15).

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for the knowledge of salvation through faith in Christ. Grant me the wisdom to know when to be silent and when to speak. Let my mouth speak the praise of the Lord and tell of the love that is our in Christ Jesus. Grant me the skill to teach the next generation about Jesus and His cross, the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Amen.

Thursday

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

C Amen.

Verse of the Day: John 6:35b

L Alleluia, Alleluia. I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. And whoever believes in me shall never thirst. 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.

Exodus 16:2–15

²The whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, ³and the people of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. ⁵On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.” ⁶So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, “At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, ⁷and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against the LORD. For what are we, that you grumble against us?” ⁸And Moses said, “When the LORD gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him—what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD.”

⁹Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, ‘Come near before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.’” ¹⁰And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. ¹¹And the LORD said to Moses, ¹²“I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’”

¹³In the evening quail came up and covered the camp, and in the morning dew lay around the camp. ¹⁴And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.

Have you read the latest polls? Who thinks we should be wearing masks? Who thinks we shouldn’t? Who likes the president? Who believes in UFOs? It seems that no matter what the issue is, the media will report a poll. And of course, the majority is never wrong!

In our Old Testament lesson for this week from Exodus, we learn that Moses and Aaron’s poll numbers are terrible! The whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against them! But it’s not just Moses and Aaron who have bad poll numbers. It is God, himself that is polling poorly! Moses reported, “Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD.”

As you read through this, you may decide that the people had a legitimate complaint. They were hungry. They remember their days of slavery. Things were bad but they weren’t starving.

They were like us. We want our prayers to be answered in our own way and we want it now! We don’t care what God has done for us in the past. We are only interested in what He’s doing now.

The Israelites were foolish in their grumbling. It was sinful because their grumbling was fueled by a lack of faith in their loving and saving God. But God did not abandon them. Instead, He responded to their grumbling in a most spectacularly miraculous way. Heavenly bread in the morning and quail in the evening. No work was necessary. All they had to do was gather it!

But they were to gather no more than what they needed for the day! God would use this manna from heaven to teach them to have the faith that had been lacking. They could have gathered more but God wanted them to trust Him to provide their daily bread each and every day.

God provides for our needs each day. When He isn’t as quick as we would like, we grumble. We ought to be punished for our grumbling but instead, God answers our prayers in spectacularly miraculous ways. He provides everything that we need for our physical life here on earth. But more than that, He daily provides us with the Bread of Life and the gift of eternal life through faith in Jesus.

Prayer: Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Deliver us from evil and grant us eternal life through the Bread of Life, 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: John 6:35b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. And whoever believes in me shall never thirst. 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.

Ephesians 4:1–16

¹I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. ⁸Therefore it says,

“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men.”

⁹(In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) ¹¹And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

As we go through Ephesians, you may have noticed that it is a fire hose of doctrine and theology. This little portion is no exception.

Here we learn about living according to our Christian calling with all humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another, unity, and peace in just the first two verses! There is more than enough here to provide a week’s worth of meditations! And we’ve only just begun. Let’s save the rest for another time.

In fact, let’s just consider one word: patience. Have you ever lost your patience? Have you ever regretted it? I certainly have, especially when my children were young and I was tired.

There is another English word for patience—longsuffering! In our way of hearing this word today, it makes sense. Patience sometimes means that we have to suffer a little bit for the sake of giving someone else a little space. However, that’s not exactly what longsuffering means. The word “suffer” in this case means “to allow or permit,” as in “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not” recorded by Matthew in chapter 19:14 in the King James Version. The English Standard Version (ESV) translation reads “Let the little

children come to me and do not hinder them.” So, “longsuffering” means permitting someone or something to continue for a long time before expressing anger. It is the opposite of short-tempered.

To be patient or longsuffering, does not ignore a wrong or transgression. Rather, it delays the consequence.

Unfortunately, many times, we as God’s people feel justified in our “righteous anger.” We see a wrong and immediately allow our indignation to show. However, the Apostle Paul tells us that this is not the way it should be when we interact with our fellow believers.

This is not how God treats us. When we strive to be “Christ-like,” we try to be more and more like God. When it comes to patience, Psalm 103:8 reveals God’s heart to us: “The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.”

God would be entirely justified in allowing His wrath to consume sinful humanity. But that is not His way. He is merciful! He is gracious! He is slow to anger! He is abounding in steadfast love! The cross of Christ is proof of all this. We are the ultimate recipients of God’s patience! Can we be anything less in our relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ?

Prayer: O God, by the patient endurance of Your only-begotten Son You overcame the old evil foe. Help us to bear with patience the shortcomings and failures of our fellow believers as You have been patient and longsuffering with us; 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 Romans 11:33, 36

L Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!

C **How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!**

L For from him and through him and to him are all things.

C **To him be glory forever. Amen.**

Verse of the Day: John 6:35b

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C **Alleluia, Alleluia. And whoever believes in me shall never thirst. 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.**

Ephesians 4:11–16

¹¹And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

You may have noticed that I used a “bad word” yesterday—doctrine! How things have changed from my youth. Today, even a hint of the word sends shivers up and down the spine of many self-proclaimed spiritual leaders.

The denunciation of doctrine is in part responsible for the loss of denominational titles for churches. We no longer see Baptist, Presbyterian, or Lutheran Churches to name a few. Now we see Rock Church, Shore Church, Overflow Church, etc. There is no way of knowing from their names what kind of doctrine characterizes each of these churches. Marketing has taught them to carefully avoid being associated with a particular doctrinal view.

But being concerned about doctrine is Biblical in the extreme. Early Christians were inundated by false doctrine and false teachers. It was a threat that deeply concerned the Apostle Paul as he wrote the Epistle to the Ephesians. He says that the goal of verses 11-13 is “that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes” (verse 14).

This verse played a pivotal role in my life. It’s disappointing to see it ignored by otherwise committed Christian people.

Avoiding a deep and abiding knowledge of the truths revealed in God’s word makes us subject to being tossed to and from by the wind and waves of false doctrine and human cunning. We then succumb to the deceitful schemes of our contemporary cultural influencers.

The antidote to this is no longer being children. Learning and believing the true teachings (doctrine) of God’s word is an indication of maturity. Mature Christians speak the truth in love!

This is essential because God does not lie! Every teaching (doctrine) revealed in Scripture is connected in one way or another to God’s plan of salvation through faith in Christ. Every false doctrine weakens our understanding of God’s grace and mercy. Some false doctrines even lead to a loss of faith.

May God grant that we would cherish the truth of His holy word and no longer be tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

Prayer: Merciful God, we ask You to cast the bright beams of Your light upon Your Church. . Guard and protect us from a spirit of indifference in doctrine and practice that we, being instructed by Your holy word, may walk in the light of Your truth through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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