

# The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

## August 15, 2021

**Rejoice, O Pilgrim Throng** Lutheran Service Book 813, Lutheran Worship 455, The Lutheran Hymnal n/a



1 Re - joice, O pil - grim throng! Re - joice, give  
2 With voice as full and strong As o - cean's  
3 With all the an - gel choirs, With all the  
4 Yet on and on - ward still, With hymn and  
5 Still lift your stan - dard high, Still march in



thanks, and sing; Your fes - tal ban - ner  
sur - ing on praise, Send forth the stur - dy  
saints on earth Pour out the strains of  
chant and song, Through gate and porch and  
firm ar - ray, As pil - grims through the



wave on high, The cross of Christ your king.  
hymns of old, The psalms of an - cient days.  
joy and bliss, True rap - ture, no - blest mirth.  
col - umned aisle The hal - lowed path - ways throng.  
dark - ness wend Till dawns the gold - en day.

*Refrain*



Re - joice! Re - joice! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing!

6 At last the march shall end;  
The wearied ones shall rest;  
The pilgrims find their home at last,  
Jerusalem the blest. Refrain

7 Praise Him who reigns on high,  
The Lord whom we adore:  
The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
One God forevermore. Refrain

**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 111:1–5, 9; antiphon Psalm 111:10

**L** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!

**C** Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

**L** Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them.

**C** Full of splendor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever.

**L** He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and merciful.

**C** He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever.

**L** He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name!

**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** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!

### Kyrie

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

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

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

## Gloria in Excelsis ~ Glory to God in the Highest

**L** Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

**C** Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father: We worship You, we give You thanks, and we praise You for Your glory.

**L** Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, You are Lord and God, You are the Lamb of God:

**C** Lord Jesus Christ, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

**L** Lord Jesus Christ, You are seated at the right hand of the Father; and we ask you to graciously receive our prayer.

**C** For You alone are the Holy One,  
You alone are the Lord,  
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

## Collect of the Day

**L** Let us pray: Almighty God, whom to know is everlasting life, grant us to know Your Son, Jesus, to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow His steps in the way that leads to life eternal; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

## Proverbs 9:1–10

<sup>1</sup>Wisdom has built her house;

she has hewn her seven pillars.

<sup>2</sup>She has slaughtered her beasts; she has mixed her wine;

she has also set her table.

<sup>3</sup>She has sent out her young women to call

from the highest places in the town,

<sup>4</sup>“Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!”

To him who lacks sense she says,

<sup>5</sup>“Come, eat of my bread

and drink of the wine I have mixed.

<sup>6</sup>Leave your simple ways, and live,

and walk in the way of insight.”

<sup>7</sup>Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse,

and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury.

<sup>8</sup>Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you;

reprove a wise man, and he will love you.

<sup>9</sup>Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser;

teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.

<sup>10</sup>The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,

and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Gradual Psalm 34:9, 19, alt.

- L** Fear the Lord, you his saints,
- C** **for those who fear him lack nothing!**
- L** Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
- C** **but the Lord delivers him out of them all.**

## Psalm 34:12–22

- L** <sup>12</sup>What man is there who desires life and loves many days, that he may see good?
- C** <sup>13</sup>Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.
- L** <sup>14</sup>Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.
- C** <sup>15</sup>The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cry.
- L** <sup>16</sup>The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.
- C** <sup>17</sup>When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles.
- L** <sup>18</sup>The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.
- C** <sup>19</sup>Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.
- L** <sup>20</sup>He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken.
- C** <sup>21</sup>Affliction will slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.
- L** <sup>22</sup>The Lord redeems the life of his servants;
- C** none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

## Ephesians 5:6–21

<sup>6</sup>Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. <sup>7</sup>Therefore do not associate with them; <sup>8</sup>for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light <sup>9</sup>(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), <sup>10</sup>and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>11</sup>Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. <sup>12</sup>For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. <sup>13</sup>But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, <sup>14</sup>for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Awake, O sleeper,  
and arise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.”

<sup>15</sup>Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup>making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup>Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup>And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup>addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, <sup>20</sup>giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup>submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

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

## Verse of the Day: John 6:68

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? Alleluia.
- C** **Alleluia, Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

## John 6:51–69

**L** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

[Jesus said,] <sup>51</sup>“I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

<sup>52</sup>The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” <sup>53</sup>So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. <sup>54</sup>Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. <sup>55</sup>For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. <sup>56</sup>Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. <sup>57</sup>As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. <sup>58</sup>This is the bread that came down from heaven, not as the fathers ate and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.” <sup>59</sup>Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum.

<sup>60</sup>When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” <sup>61</sup>But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this? <sup>62</sup>Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? <sup>63</sup>It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is of no avail. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. <sup>64</sup>But there are some of you who do not believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) <sup>65</sup>And he said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.”

<sup>66</sup>After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. <sup>67</sup>So Jesus said to the Twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” <sup>68</sup>Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, <sup>69</sup>and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”

**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.

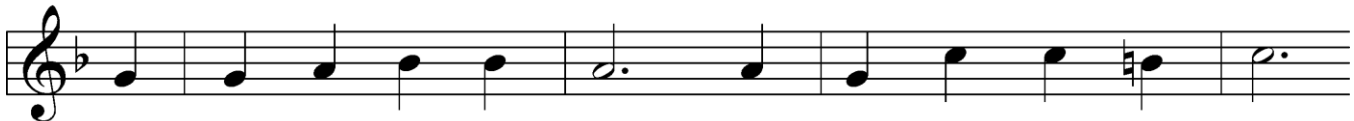
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.



1 O God, my faith - ful God, True foun-tain ev - er flow - ing,  
2 Grant me the strength to do With read - y heart and will - ing;  
3 Keep me from say - ing words That lat - er need re - call - ing;  
4 Lord, let me win my foes With kind - ly words and ac - tions,



With - out whom noth - ing is, All per - fect gifts be - stow - ing;  
What - ev - er You com - mand, My call - ing here ful - fill - ing;  
Guard me lest i - dle speech May from my lips be fall - ing;  
And let me find good friends For coun - sel and cor - rec - tion.



Give me a health - y frame, And may I have with - in  
That I do what I should While trust - ing You to bless  
But when with - in my place I must and ought to speak,  
Help me, as You have taught, To love both great and small



A con - science free from blame, A soul un - stained by sin.  
The out - come for my good, For You must give suc - cess.  
Then to my words give grace Lest I of - fend the weak.  
And by Your Spir - it's might To live in peace with all.

5 Let me depart this life  
Confiding in my Savior;  
By grace receive my soul  
That it may live forever;  
And let my body have  
A quiet resting place  
Within a Christian grave;  
And let it sleep in peace.

And on that final day  
When all the dead are waking,  
Stretch out Your mighty hand,  
My deathly slumber breaking.  
Then let me hear Your voice,  
Redeem this earthly frame,  
And bid me to rejoice  
With those who love Your name.

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### Devotional Thoughts:

Following Jesus' discourse on being the Bread of Life and declaring, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you," many of his disciples declared, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" Then John reports, "Many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him."

This has so often been the case. We don't want any "hard sayings" from Jesus. We only want socially compatible sayings from Jesus. We only want culturally acceptable sayings from Jesus. We only want comfortable, unchallenging sayings from Jesus.

According to much of what I read today, religion is only there to help you. If it doesn't provide you with the help that you seek, reject it. Or if you don't reject all of religion, just reject the parts you don't like. Reject the hard sayings!

This is Satan's trick. Jesus, the Bread of Life, is also the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He came not to make life easy but to bring Truth that leads to eternal life.

Religion is not alone in suffering from people choosing to reject the truth. Our current pandemic has also witnessed countless people who are willing to reject solid scientific evidence. In economics, we witness people reject the time-proven realities of supply and demand. The list goes on. No matter how much we would like to change things, objective truth will not go away.

The objective truth of Holy Scripture is that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God! (Romans 3:23). There is no one worthy of eternal life. There are no moral superstars who can demand entrance into the mansions of heaven. The failure of humanity to meet the moral perfection of heaven is often denied. We constantly believe that obtaining righteousness should be comfortable and easy. Rather it is an impossible challenge for sinful people.

This may lead you to ask, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus answers exactly this question in Matthew 18:26, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." God has a solution to all of the hard challenges.

Jesus himself is the way to eternal life. He is not a way to heaven. He is THE way to heaven. He is also THE truth and THE life!

So what about "eating" His flesh and "drinking" His blood? This has been debated by theologians for centuries and my few comments will not change long-held opinions. While you may be thinking that Jesus is speaking here of Holy Communion, it is Luther's view that He is not. Luther said, "In this light I now remind you that these words are not to be misconstrued and made to refer to the Sacrament of the Altar; whoever so interprets them does violence to this Gospel text. There is not a letter in it that refers to the Lord's Supper. Why should Christ here have in mind that Sacrament when it was not yet instituted? The whole chapter from which this Gospel is taken speaks of nothing but the spiritual food, namely, faith."

(<https://ccel.org/ccel/luther/sermons/sermons.vii.iv.html>)

Faith is our way of eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood! Faith trusts the hard sayings of Jesus! One of the hardest and most beautiful sayings of Jesus is also found in John: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." Jesus never contradicts Himself. Here He interprets His own words from John 6, whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life! In this way, God in Christ makes the impossible possible!

"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** Father, we thank You that You have sent the great Good Shepherd who has compassion on His flock. In His name, we lift up our prayers for the family of God; for every nation, tribe, people and language; and for all those who hunger for the true bread of life.

**C Amen.**

**L** Grant true unity in place of disunity, harmony in place of disharmony, and peace in place of violence, that the spread of Your Gospel may continue unhindered and the spirit of love abound.

**C Amen.**

**L** By Your Holy Spirit, change our old nature into Your new creation in Christ. Enable us to cling to Your Word and Sacraments, that we may put aside the cravings of our sinful flesh and be clothed with Your likeness in true righteousness and holiness.

**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.

**In Thee Is Gladness** Lutheran Service Book 818, Lutheran Worship 442, The Lutheran Hymnal n/a

1 In Thee is glad - ness A - mid all sad - ness, Je - sus,  
2 Since He is ours, \_\_\_\_\_ We fear no pow - ers, Not of  
sun - shine of my heart. By Thee are giv - en The gifts of  
earth nor sin nor death. He sees and bless - es In worst dis -  
heav - en, Thou the true Re - deem - er art. Our souls Thou  
tress - es; He can change them with a breath. Where - fore the  
wak - est, Our bonds Thou break - est; Who trusts Thee sure - ly Has built se -  
sto - ry Tell of His glo - ry With hearts and voic - es; All heav'n re -



cure - ly; He stands for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia! Our hearts are  
joic - es In Him for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia! We shout for

pin - ing To see Thy shin - ing, Dy - ing or liv - ing  
glad - ness, Tri - umph o'er sad - ness, Love Him and praise Him

To Thee are cleav - ing; Naught can us sev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!  
And still shall raise Him Glad hymns for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!

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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 Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

#### August 16– August 21, 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 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.

#### Introit Psalm 111:1–5, 9; antiphon Psalm 111:10

- L** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!
- C** Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.
- L** Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them.
- C** Full of splendor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever.
- L** He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and merciful.
- C** He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever.
- L** He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name!
- 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** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!

## Kyrie

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

Psalm 111:10 is one of the more well-known passages of the Bible, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” In my lifetime, I have often witnessed people in authority make decisions that were perfectly justifiable but unwise. My mother and father would often observe that some very intelligent people displayed little “common sense.” By that, I think they meant that they displayed a lack of wisdom.

Wisdom is a common theme in Holy Scriptures. There is The Parable of the Ten Virgins (Five were wise and five were foolish—Matthew 25). An entire book of the Bible is dedicated to wisdom (Proverbs). Of course, Solomon is noted for his wisdom. Paul exclaims, “Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!” (Romans 11:33).

Wisdom is a valuable commodity. It is hard to come by. How do we obtain it? God’s word is the source of ultimate wisdom. Those who respect God and seek His thoughts and His will in the Bible are on the path to wisdom. Psalm 90:12 declares, “Teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.” The greatest wisdom is faith in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins and eternal life!

- L** Let us pray. Lord, Almighty God, grant to Your Church Your Holy Spirit and the wisdom that comes down from above, that Your Word may not be bound but have free course and be preached to the joy and edifying of Christ’s holy people, that in steadfast faith we may serve You and, in the confession of Your name, abide unto the end; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C** **Amen**

## Tuesday

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

## Verse of the Day: John 6:68

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? Alleluia.
- C** **Alleluia, Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

## Kyrie

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

- L** Let us pray: Almighty God, whom to know is everlasting life, grant us to know Your Son, Jesus, to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow His steps in the way that leads to life eternal; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

Jesus told His disciples, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). What we may not remember is the context for His words. Jesus has just told His disciples, “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to

prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going” (John 14:1-4).

Way, truth, and life are inseparable. They are essential for entering the eternal mansions of heaven. We will not receive Jesus, the Life if we reject Jesus the Way! We will not receive Jesus, the Life if we reject Jesus, the Truth.

May we all join together in everlasting life with Jesus who is the way! May we always submit our flawed and imperfect understanding to Jesus who is the truth!

Let us pray: Almighty God, whom to know is everlasting life, grant us to know Your Son, Jesus, to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow His steps in the way that leads to life eternal; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## Wednesday

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

### Verse of the Day: John 6:68

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? Alleluia.  
**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

### Psalm 34:12–22

- L** <sup>12</sup>What man is there who desires life and loves many days, that he may see good?  
**C** <sup>13</sup>Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.  
**L** <sup>14</sup>Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.  
**C** <sup>15</sup>The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cry.  
**L** <sup>16</sup>The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.  
**C** <sup>17</sup>When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles.  
**L** <sup>18</sup>The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.  
**C** <sup>19</sup>Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.  
**L** <sup>20</sup>He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken.  
**C** <sup>21</sup>Affliction will slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.  
**L** <sup>22</sup>The Lord redeems the life of his servants;  
**C** none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

## 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. |

The words of Psalm 34:18-19 have comforted His people for centuries. “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.”

Have you ever been brokenhearted? I am sure that you have. It is impossible to go through life without suffering heartbreak.

Contrary to the plots of most Hallmark movies, heartbreak is not confined to romance. It comes when any relationship in life is shattered. It happens when a so-called friend betrays or abandons you. It happens when children wander from parental guidance. It happens when parents ignore or discard their children. It happens when death tears a loved one away. I don't need to go on. I am sure you can continue to add to the list.

Heartbreak is evidence of sin. Every sin damages our hearts. We are heartbroken when the sins of others hurt us. Our own sins wound the hearts of others.

Our modern world scoffs at the concept of sin. Yet we all sense the reality of sin in the deepest parts of our broken hearts.

The only real solution to the brokenness that sin brings is God. His solution is our savior, Jesus. He comes to bind up broken hearts. The ultimate healing for hearts comes from forgiveness. Our human relationships are repaired with confession and forgiveness. Friendships are restored through forgiveness. Parents and children are restored through forgiveness. But ultimately, the most important relationship of all is restored through forgiveness—our relationship with God and eternity.

Jesus and His cross are the way God mends broken hearts. He spoke these words of comfort from the cross, "Father, forgiven them!"

Prayer: Look with mercy, O Lord, on Your servants who are brokenhearted. Where they have sinned, grant them repentance that they may receive Your forgiveness and live in the mercy of Your healing power. Bind up their broken hearts through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## Thursday

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

**C** Amen.

## Verse of the Day: John 6:68

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? Alleluia.

**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life. 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.

## Proverbs 9:1–10

<sup>1</sup>Wisdom has built her house;

she has hewn her seven pillars.

<sup>2</sup>She has slaughtered her beasts; she has mixed her wine;

she has also set her table.

<sup>3</sup>She has sent out her young women to call

from the highest places in the town,

<sup>4</sup>"Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!"

To him who lacks sense she says,

<sup>5</sup>"Come, eat of my bread

and drink of the wine I have mixed.

<sup>6</sup>Leave your simple ways, and live,

and walk in the way of insight."

<sup>7</sup>Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse,  
and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury.

<sup>8</sup>Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you;  
reprove a wise man, and he will love you.

<sup>9</sup>Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser;  
teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.

<sup>10</sup>The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,  
and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

As you have noticed, wisdom is a dominant theme this week. Our Old Testament lesson is from the Book of Proverbs which is a wellspring of wisdom!

Here again, we hear these important words, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom” (verse 10). Over the years, I have heard Christians disapprove of the concept of “the fear of the Lord.” The common complaint goes like this, “We shouldn’t be afraid of God.”

In fact, we should “be afraid” of God when we refuse to repent of our sins. God is serious about the consequence of sin. We ought to never believe that God simply winks at our sinfulness.

On the other hand, those who live in faith need not be afraid of God. In love, He sent Jesus to be the sacrifice for sin and restore us to His family.

For the redeemed, the fear of the Lord is the concept of standing in awe of God. God is not our casual acquaintance. He is worthy of our worship and respect.

An Old Testament scholar once pointed out to me that “The fear of the Lord” is a way of expressing faithfulness to all that God has said and living according to His precepts. May we always have this proper fear of the Lord! This is the beginning of wisdom that leads to eternal life.

Prayer: O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. 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 6:68

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? Alleluia.

**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life. 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 5:15–21

<sup>15</sup>Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup>making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup>Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup>And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup>addressing one another in psalms and

hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, <sup>20</sup>giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup>submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Continuing our wisdom theme, Paul warns, “Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise.” He then gives directions on being wise.

The wise make the best use of time! What is the best use of time? Is it working and playing hard? Is it saving for a house? Is it using all of your vacation days? Or is it learning God’s will and grace to prepare for eternity?

The foolish do not understand the will of the Lord. They get drunk with wine.

The wise are filled with the Spirit through word and sacrament. They speak God’s word to one another in psalms and hymns. They sing and make melody to the Lord with all their hearts!

As wise children of God, let us give thanks always and for everything, especially for the gift of Jesus and eternal life. May we learn to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Prayer: Almighty and most gracious God and Father, we implore You to turn the hearts of all who have forsaken the faith, especially those who have wandered from it or are in doubt through the corruption of Your truth. Mercifully visit and restore them that in gladness of heart they may take pleasure in Your Word and be made wise to salvation through faith in Your Son, 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 34:9, 19, alt.

**L** Fear the Lord, you his saints,

**C** **for those who fear him lack nothing!**

**L** Many are the afflictions of the righteous,

**C** **but the Lord delivers him out of them all.**

## Verse of the Day: John 6:68

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? Alleluia.

**C** **Alleluia, Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life. 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 5:6–14

<sup>6</sup>Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. <sup>7</sup>Therefore do not associate with them; <sup>8</sup>for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light <sup>9</sup>(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), <sup>10</sup>and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>11</sup>Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. <sup>12</sup>For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. <sup>13</sup>But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, <sup>14</sup>for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Awake, O sleeper,  
and arise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.”

Paul’s words to the Ephesians are apt for Christians of all generations. “Let no one deceive you with empty words.”

Deception has been Satan’s tool from the beginning of time. The clever and “wise” of the world pride themselves on their ability to deceive.

Deception is not limited to lies. Deception also comes from omitting important facts or leading people to make false conclusions by manipulating true statements.

Unfortunately, some in the Church believe that God’s mission depends on deception. Churches hide their denominational affiliation or disguise their teachings in order to attract the unsuspecting. May the Lord grant that this will soon end.

Jesus never deceived. Even if what He had to say was hard to hear, He always spoke the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth!

The truth He spoke is the reality of sin and our failure to be like God. His Sermon on the Mount pulls no punches. We do not only sin with our actions but our words and thoughts also fall short of God’s perfect will for us.

The only solution to sin is His suffering and death on the cross. His disciples didn’t want to hear these hard words. But Jesus would not sugar coat the consequences of sin. Sin leads to death. If we were to be saved, it meant that He must suffer death on the cross that we might live with Him eternally in paradise. Let no one deceive you about Jesus and His love for you.

Prayer: Almighty God, the fount of all wisdom, by Your Holy Spirit enlighten those who teach and those who learn that we may never be deceived by empty words but would rejoice in the truth of Your word and trust Your promise life and salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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