

The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost June 20, 2021

PRAYER FOR FATHER'S DAY

Almighty Father, You entrusted Your Son to the protection of Joseph, His earthly father. We thank You for the gift of our fathers. Help them to provide for both the physical and spiritual needs of their families so that in all things they may be examples of Your fatherly love. Amen.

Oh, Blest the House Lutheran Service Book 862, Lutheran Worship 467, The Lutheran Hymnal 625



1 Oh, blest the house, what - e'er be - fall, Where Je - sus
2 Oh, blest that house where faith is found And all in
3 Oh, blest the par - ents who give heed Un - to their
4 Oh, blest that house; it pros - pers well. In peace and
5 Then here will I and mine to - day A sol - emn



Christ is all in all! A home that is not whol - ly
hope and love a - bound; They trust their God and serve Him
chil - dren's fore - most need And wea - ry not of care or
joy the par - ents dwell, And in their chil - dren's lives is
prom - ise make and say: Though all the world for - sake His



His— How sad and poor and dark it is!
still And do in all His ho - ly will!
cost. May none to them and heav'n be lost!
shown How rich - ly God can bless His own.
Word, I and my house will serve the Lord!

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

C Amen.

L Our help is in the name of the Lord,

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

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

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

L If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord who could stand?
C But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared. (*Psalm 130:3–4*)

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

C God, be merciful to me, a sinner, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

(*Luke 18:13*)

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

C Amen.

Introit Psalm 107:29–32; antiphon Psalm 107:28

L Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.

C He made the storm be still,
and the waves of the sea were hushed.

L Then they were glad that the waters were quiet,
and he brought them to their desired haven.

C Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love,
for his wondrous works to the children of men!

L Let them extol him in the congregation of the people,
and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

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 Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.

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, in Your mercy guide the course of this world so that Your Church may joyfully serve You in godly 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.

C Amen.

Job 38:1–11

¹Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:

²“Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?

³Dress for action like a man;

I will question you, and you make it known to me.

⁴“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell me, if you have understanding.

⁵Who determined its measurements—surely you know!

Or who stretched the line upon it?

⁶On what were its bases sunk,

or who laid its cornerstone,

⁷when the morning stars sang together

and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

⁸“Or who shut in the sea with doors

when it burst out from the womb,

⁹when I made clouds its garment

and thick darkness its swaddling band,

¹⁰and prescribed limits for it

and set bars and doors,

¹¹and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther,

and here shall your proud waves be stayed’?

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual Psalm 145:3, 5b, 6b

L Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised,

C and his greatness is unsearchable.

L On your wondrous works, I will meditate,

C and I will declare your greatness.

Psalm 124

L ¹If it had not been the LORD who was on our side—let Israel now say—

C ²**if it had not been the LORD who was on our side when people rose up against us,**

L ³then they would have swallowed us up alive, when their anger was kindled against us;

C ⁴**then the flood would have swept us away, the torrent would have gone over us;**

L ⁵then over us would have gone the raging waters.

C ⁶**Blessèd be the LORD, who has not given us as prey to their teeth!**

- L** ⁷We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowlers;
the snare is broken, and we have escaped!
- C** ⁸**Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.**

2 Corinthians 6:1–13

¹Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ²For he says,

“In a favorable time I listened to you,
and in a day of salvation I have helped you.”

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. ³We put no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; ⁷by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

¹¹We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open. ¹²You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections. ¹³In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also.

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

Verse of the Day: Mark 4:41b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Who then is this, Alleluia.
- C** **Alleluia, Alleluia. that even wind and sea obey him? Alleluia.**

Mark 4:35–41

- L** The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 4th chapter.
- C** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

³⁵On that day, when evening had come, [Jesus] said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” ³⁶And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. ³⁷And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. ³⁸But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” ³⁹And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰He said to them, “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?” ⁴¹And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey 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.

My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less Lutheran Service Book 575, Lutheran Worship 368, The Lutheran Hymnal 370

1 My hope is built on noth - ing less Than Je - sus'
2 When dark - ness veils His love - ly face, I rest on
3 His oath, His cov - e - nant and blood Sup - port me
4 When He shall come with trum - pet sound, Oh, may I

blood and righ - teous - ness; No mer - it of my
His un - chang - ing grace; In ev - 'ry high and
in the rag - ing flood; When ev - 'ry earth - ly
then in Him be found, Clothed in His righ - teous -

own I claim But whol - ly lean on Je - sus' name.
storm - y gale My an - chor holds with - in the veil.
prop gives way, He then is all my hope and stay.
ness a - lone, Re - deemed to stand be - fore His throne!

Refrain

On Christ, the sol-id rock, I stand; All oth-er ground is sink-ing sand.

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Devotional thoughts:

We all like to celebrate! In our families, we celebrate birthdays and anniversaries. In church, we celebrate Christmas and Easter, and other great festivals. In our nation, we celebrate Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving. Now we have a brand new national holiday known as Juneteenth! This day is dedicated to celebrating the end of slavery.

Slavery did not end with a whimper in our nation. Rather, a most deadly war was fought to release African Americans from slavery. Some of us may have forgotten that Memorial Day was originally called “Decoration Day.” It was a day set aside to honor those who died in the Civil War to put an end to slavery. It is hard for us to imagine the devastation brought about by this war and the number of soldiers who died to bring freedom to four million Americans held in slavery. According to the United States National Park Service, almost 365,000 Union soldiers died in the conflict. This compares to about 58,000 Americans who died in the Vietnam War. 456,373 were wounded in action or taken as prisoners of war. Over 800,000 Union soldiers died, were wounded, or were captured in the war to end slavery. This number is even more staggering when you remember that the population of the Union was only 22,000,000.

Juneteenth is a worthy holiday for all Americans to celebrate. However, you may not have noticed that we are in the middle of series of days to celebrate. June 14th was Flag Day. Today is Father’s Day. June 24th is the Nativity of John the Baptist. June 25th is the Presentation of the Augsburg Confession. In the middle of all this celebrating, we find the lowly celebration of something called the Fourth Sunday after Pentecost.

Today, we remember that Jesus rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” We remember that the incredulous disciples asked, “Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?” I’m going to use some of the other holidays to help us answer this question.

My father and mother were married 70 years ago. Shortly after they were married, my dad found himself in some of the heaviest fighting of the Korean War. By the grace of God, he survived many close encounters with death while losing many of his army buddies. When he returned, he was joyfully greeted by my mother. And he met me for the first time! I had been born while he was in Korea.

Eventually, he was discharged from the army and was determined never to hike or march again! Things didn’t turn out that way.

One day a decade or so later, his son had a request. I asked, “Dad, will you march with me?” I was a Cub Scout. Our den was going to participate in the annual Flag Day Parade in Three Oaks, Michigan. I still cherish the picture of the only time I ever marched in a parade. Right beside me is my dad!

Dads do wonderful things for their children! They are proud of their accomplishments and activities. One of the greatest odes of pride ever spoken by a father about his son is recorded in Luke 1:68-79. We call it the Benedictus or Song of Zechariah. We sing it in Matins and Morning Prayer. Zechariah praised God with the Benedictus for the gift of his son, John the Baptist. He composed these words of prophecy in anticipation of how God would use his son in the plan of salvation by preparing the way for Jesus.

This is how Flag Day, Father’s Day, and the Nativity of John the Baptist all help us answer the question posed by the disciples, “Who is this?” In fact, one way of understanding the entire Gospel of Mark is an answer to this question, “Who is this?”

In Mark 1:1 we read, “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the **SON of God**.” The Gospel of Mark is all about Jesus being the son of our heavenly Father! Father’s Day is an exceptionally good time to remember the work of the Father sending His only-begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him would not perish but have eternal life.

The question asked by the disciples today is somewhat ironic. They don’t know who Jesus is, but they should. Who is the only one who controls the wind and the waves? That is the question God asked Job in our Old Testament Lesson today. Who said to the sea, “Thus far shall you come, and no farther and here shall your proud waves be stayed?” (Job 38:11). Job knows the answer, so should the disciples. They had many opportunities to get it right.

In Mark 1:11, we learn of God, the Father’s pride in His Son. Immediately following His baptism by John, He spoke from heaven, “You are my **beloved Son**; with you I am well pleased.”

The disciples didn’t know who Jesus was but the demons did! In Mark 3:11, we read, “And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, “You are the **Son of God**.”

Again on the Mount of Transfiguration, Our Father in heaven expressed delight in Jesus. A cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, “This is my **beloved Son**; listen to him” (Mark 9:7).

While the disciples at the time didn’t know who Jesus was, Mark wants to make sure that we do. Jesus demonstrated it by healing the sick, making the lame to walk, the blind to see, and the deaf to hear. He demonstrated it by rebuking the wind and calming the waves.

Lest there be any doubt, Jesus Himself tells us that He is the Son of God. After things go poorly in the Garden of Gethsemane, we find Jesus standing in front of the Sanhedrin. As each accuser comes forward, He is silent. But then the high priest asks, "Are you the Christ, the **Son** of the Blessed?" And JESUS SAID, "**I AM**" (Mark 14:61-62).

Finally, on Calvary's hill, Jesus is abandoned and alone when He breaths His last. At the foot of the cross, stands a centurion who exclaims, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" (Mark 15:39).

No father ever loved their son more than God loved Jesus. No child was ever more faithful to their father and Jesus was to His. But their love was more inclusive. They shared that love with us!

God the Father so loved the world that He sent His Son! The Son so loved you that He went to the cross!

Who is this, that even wind and sea obey him? It the Son of God! He is with us through all the storms of life. His almighty power is there in every time of need. He sets us free from slavery to sin, death, and the devil.

As we celebrate this new national holiday of Juneteenth, let us also remember John 8:34-36. "Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.'"

"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 We thank You, Lord, for Your steadfast love. You hold power over wind and wave, sin and death. Deliver us from every trouble and distress, and bring us at last to our eternal haven.

C Amen.

L Visit, O Lord, the homes in which Your people dwell, and keep them from all harm and danger. On this Father's Day, we come before You with gratefulness for the gift of Fathers. We offer special thanks for Christian fathers who take seriously the charge to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Give wisdom, courage, and strength to fathers who seek faithfully to train their children in the eternal truths of the Christian faith. Grant that our families may dwell together in peace under Your divine protection, sharing eternally in Your blessings; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

L Almighty God, send Your holy angels to watch over all of our loved ones, especially those who live in distant places. Protect all who attend to our needs during this time of national emergency and pandemic. We ask that you would quickly grant relief according to Your will.

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.

Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise

Lutheran Service Book 917, Lutheran Worship 221, The Lutheran Hymnal 47



1 Sav - ior, a - gain to Thy dear name we raise
2 Grant us Thy peace up - on our home - ward way;
3 Grant us Thy peace, Lord, through the com - ing night;
4 Grant us Thy peace through - out our earth - ly life,



With one ac - cord our part - ing hymn of praise;
With Thee be - gan, with Thee shall end, the day.
Turn Thou for us its dark - ness in - to light.
Our balm in sor - row and our stay in strife;



Once more we bless Thee ere our wor - ship cease,
Guard Thou the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,
From harm and dan - ger keep Thy chil - dren free;
Then, when Thy voice shall bid our con - flict cease,



Then, low - ly bend - ing, wait Thy word of peace.
That in this house have called up - on Thy name.
For dark and light are both a - like to Thee.
Call us, O Lord, to Thine e - ter - nal peace.

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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 Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

June 21 – June 26, 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 107:29–32; antiphon Psalm 107:28

- L** Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.
C He made the storm be still,
and the waves of the sea were hushed.
L Then they were glad that the waters were quiet,
and he brought them to their desired haven.
C Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love,
for his wondrous works to the children of men!
L Let them extol him in the congregation of the people,
and praise him in the assembly of the elders.
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 Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.

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 suppose that most of the sermons preached on the Gospel yesterday were about how Jesus calms the storms raging in our lives. This is certainly true. He also protects us from the literal storms that rage in our world. I read this morning about one of my Facebook friends who survived a storm. The winds devastated their property but their house with them inside was preserved. Thanks be to God!

Psalms 107 is a song about how God's steadfast love preserves us. Verses 28-29 say, "Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed. Then they were glad that the waters were quiet, and he brought them to their desired haven."

We all have distress. Sometimes it is obvious to everyone. Other times we suffer in silence. Nevertheless, God has a solution to all of our problems. His ultimate goal is for us to spend eternity with Him where there is no more distress and suffering. He has worked everything out so that we will be with Him.

He planned salvation. He sent the savior. Jesus died and rose again. The Holy Spirit brought us to faith.

God worked everything out in our lives so that we would hear the word and believe. He sends blessings and allows distress so that our eyes will look to Him in thanksgiving and for aid. His steadfast love endures forever.

L Let us pray. Almighty and most merciful God, in this earthly life we endure sufferings before we enter into eternal glory. Grant us grace at all times in any tribulation or distress to come before You, so that in every situation we may recognize and receive Your gracious help, comfort, and peace through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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: Mark 4:41b

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Who then is this, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. that even wind and sea obey him? Alleluia.

Kyrie

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

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

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

L Let us pray: Almighty God, in Your mercy guide the course of this world so that Your Church may joyfully serve You in godly 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.

C Amen.

The collect for this week reminds me of 1 Timothy 2:1-3:

^{2:1} First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, ² for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. ³ This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior

We all live under those in authority. Unless you happen to be Robinson Crusoe living on a desert island, we are all subject to people in high positions. Sometimes they are pleasant masters. Other times they are tyrants.

In recent years, it seems that no matter who has been elected, almost half of the population comes to despise our leaders. Nevertheless, God expects us to pray for them! Paul instructs Timothy to even pray for the pagan rulers of his day. We pray so “that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.”

The Christian Church is blessed when we live in godly peace and quietness. We are not distracted by discord and turmoil. This allows us to go about the business of sharing God’s word. We can teach the Gospel. People are free to come and hear of salvation through faith in Jesus. May God so direct our days that we will have the peacefulness necessary for this work to flourish in our homes, in our schools, and in our nation.

Let us pray: Almighty God, in Your mercy guide the course of this world so that Your Church may joyfully serve You in godly 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.

Wednesday

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

Verse of the Day: Mark 4:41b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Who then is this, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. that even wind and sea obey him? Alleluia.

Psalm 124

- L** ¹If it had not been the LORD who was on our side—let Israel now say—
C ²**if it had not been the LORD who was on our side when people rose up against us,**
L ³then they would have swallowed us up alive, when their anger was kindled against us;
C ⁴**then the flood would have swept us away, the torrent would have gone over us;**
L ⁵then over us would have gone the raging waters.
C ⁶**Blessèd be the LORD, who has not given us as prey to their teeth!**

L ⁷We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowlers;
the snare is broken, and we have escaped!
C ⁸**Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.**

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. |

Psalm 124 causes me to ask, “What would life be like if the Lord had not been on my side?” When you pause and reflect on that question, it is staggering to imagine all the calamities that could have come our way.

My father and mother lived through the depression. They were grateful if they had enough to eat, clothes to wear, and a roof over their heads. I have always had the luxury of being blessed with those things.

In the Korean War, my father was on the frontline longer than almost any other American military unit in history. He never had enough to eat. Once while withdrawing from a forward position, he was in a long line of soldiers walking single file along a ridgeline. Suddenly, he heard a bullet fly past his ear. He then turned and saw the enemy. He dropped everything and ran like lightning telling everyone he passed that the enemy was right behind. Everyone following my father that day was killed or captured. He was the last one to escape.

Another time, he was in his foxhole when an enemy artillery shell exploded nearby. His best friend was critically wounded. Some were killed. His jacket on the ground next to the fox hole looked like Swiss cheese. My dad had only a small wound in his chest. God has preserved me from such turmoil.

Sometimes God allows us to see His protecting hand. Other times we are not aware of disasters that we are protected from. God protects even the unbelievers but they don't acknowledge His graceful intervention and divine protection.

Let us be counted upon those who join David in recognizing, "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (Psalm 124:8). One day the fullness of His help will be fully known when we enter our eternal rest because of Jesus our savior.

Prayer: Almighty God, You are always at our side. Grant that we would recognize Your divine deliverance and thank You for all of Your blessings 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: Mark 4:41b

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Who then is this, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. that even wind and sea obey him? 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.

Job 38:1–11

¹Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:

²"Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?

³Dress for action like a man;

I will question you, and you make it known to me.

⁴"Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell me, if you have understanding.

⁵Who determined its measurements—surely you know!

Or who stretched the line upon it?

⁶On what were its bases sunk,

or who laid its cornerstone,

⁷when the morning stars sang together

and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

⁸"Or who shut in the sea with doors

when it burst out from the womb,

⁹when I made clouds its garment

and thick darkness its swaddling band,

¹⁰and prescribed limits for it

and set bars and doors,

¹¹and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther,
and here shall your proud waves be stayed’?

Job is a difficult book to contemplate. This is especially so for those who believe in the so-called “Prosperity Gospel.” The prosperity gospel teaches that God will grant prosperity to those who obey Him. Job bursts that bubble.

In one sense, Job is a book that challenges the notion that God is subject to human judgment. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

It is common for Americans to say, “I can’t believe in a God who ...” Fill in the blank with whatever particular complaint that contemporary people have. But we shouldn’t be surprised at this. From the Garden of Eden on, humans have believed that they are smarter than God. Pharaoh defied Him. The Israelites complained about manna and built a golden calf. David believed that he could get away with adultery and murder. The stories are endless.

In our verses from Job 38, God gives His reply to this kind of thinking. He is the creator. We are the created.

The reading from Job was selected this week particularly because of verses 8-10, ⁸“Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb, ⁹when I made clouds its garment and thick darkness its swaddling band, ¹⁰and prescribed limits for it and set bars and doors, ¹¹and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed’?”

Only God can set limits to the sea and calm the waves. Jesus can do this because He is God’s Son!

The most amazing and unbelievable thing is that the Creator of all things has adopted us as His children through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. To steal David’s words from Psalm 139:6, “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.”

Prayer: Lord God, heavenly Father, we praise Your wonderful goodness for every blessing especially the blessing of forgiveness, life, and salvation. Grant that may be restored when we sin or doubt Your word and promises. Make us fit for service in Your kingdom; 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: Mark 4:41b

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Who then is this, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. that even wind and sea obey him? 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.

2 Corinthians 6:1–13

¹Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ²For he says,

“In a favorable time I listened to you,
and in a day of salvation I have helped you.”

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. ³We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; ⁷by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

¹¹We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open. ¹²You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections. ¹³In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also.

This portion of Paul's epistle presents us with more than enough material to contemplate for days at a time. Paul's ministry was not one of unbounded success but it was made up of "afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger." And this is just the beginning of the litany of things endured by the Apostle for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We recently replaced our car. Our new vehicle has more creature comforts than I could have imagined when I was a kid. In the summer, we were happy to roll down the windows and let the breeze flow through our hair. It was so much nicer than the stifling heat and humidity of staying home. Now, we go from our air-conditioned homes in our air-conditioned cars to our air-conditioned stores. We are so "conditioned" to this comfortable life that it is hard to imagine anything less. Have we grown so used to the comfortable that we are unwilling or unable to endure hardship?

For Paul, the goal of salvation of souls was worth every effort and adversity. Jesus died on the cross for our sins could Paul shun his cross?

I am thankful for those who have gone before. I am thankful that they endured untold difficulties so that one day I would believe in Jesus and receive the gift of eternal life. May we join in that throng of faithful servants of Jesus for the sake of those who have yet to believe.

Prayer: Almighty and gracious God, You want all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Magnify the power of the Gospel in the hearts of Your faithful people that Your Church may spread the good news of salvation. Protect, encourage, and bless all missionaries who proclaim the saving cross that Christ, being lifted up, may draw all people to Himself, 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 145:3, 5b, 6b

L Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised,

C and his greatness is unsearchable.

L On your wondrous works, I will meditate,

C and I will declare your greatness.

Verse of the Day: Mark 4:41b

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Who then is this, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. that even wind and sea obey him? 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.

2 Corinthians 6:1–2

¹Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ²For he says,

“In a favorable time I listened to you,
and in a day of salvation I have helped you.”

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

These are the beginning words of the epistle this week. In them, Paul speaks of the urgency of the Gospel.

Unfortunately, many of us live by words attributed to Mark Twain, “Never put off till tomorrow what may be done day after tomorrow just as well.”

Paul understood that tomorrow may not come. There is no guarantee that God will grant to us the day after tomorrow. Now is the day of salvation. Now is the favorable time.

Older pastors and theologians often spoke of the Day of Grace. Based on scriptures such as these, they knew that the Day of Grace would one day come to an end. Faith and salvation are not things to be put off. There will come a day when it is too late to repent and believe the Gospel.

Let us join Paul in appealing with the Gospel of salvation to the people around us. Pray that they will not receive the grace of God in vain. Now is the favorable time! Now is the day of salvation!

Prayer: Most merciful God, You desire everyone to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Grant that by the preaching of Your Gospel we may be given the wisdom that leads to salvation. Direct us by Your Spirit that we may not delay in seeking to grow in grace. Increase in us the urgency of sharing the knowledge of our Savior with people around us until we stand before You in the joy of life everlasting; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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