

The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 28, 2025

Come, Thou Almighty King

Lutheran Service Book 950, Lutheran Worship 169, The Lutheran Hymnal 239



1 Come, Thou al - might - y King, Help us Thy
2 Come, Thou in - car - nate Word, Gird on Thy
3 Come, ho - ly Com - fort - er, Thy sa - cred
4 To Thee, great One in Three, E - ter - nal



name to sing; Help us to praise; Fa - ther all -
might - y sword; Our prayer at - tend. Come and Thy
wit - ness bear In this glad hour! Thou, who al -
prais - es be Hence ev - er - more! Thy sov - 'reign



glo - ri - ous, O'er all vic - to - ri - ous,
peo - ple bless, And give Thy Word suc - cess,
might - y art, Now rule in ev - 'ry heart,
maj - es - ty May we in glo - ry see,



Come and reign o - ver us, An - cient of Days.
And let Thy righ - teous - ness On us de - scend.
And ne'er from us de - part, Spir - it of pow'r.
And to e - ter - ni - ty Love and a - dore.

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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 119:73–75, 77; antiphon Psalm 119:76

L Let your steadfast love comfort me
according to your promise to your servant.

C Your hands have made and fashioned me;
give me understanding that I may learn your commandments.

L Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice,
because I have hoped in your word.

C I know, O Lord, that your just decrees are righteous,
and that in faithfulness you have afflicted me.

L Let your mercy come to me, that I may live;
for your law is my delight.

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 Let your steadfast love comfort me
according to your promise to your servant.

Kyrie

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

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

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

Gloria in Excelsis ~ Glory to God in the Highest

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

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

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

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

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

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

Collect of the Day

L Let us pray: O God, You are the strength of all who trust in You, and without Your aid we can do no good thing. Grant us the help of Your grace that we may please You in both will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Amos 6:1–7

- ¹“Woe to those who are at ease in Zion,
and to those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria,
the notable men of the first of the nations,
to whom the house of Israel comes!
²Pass over to Calneh, and see,
and from there go to Hamath the great;
then go down to Gath of the Philistines.
Are you better than these kingdoms?
Or is their territory greater than your territory,
³O you who put far away the day of disaster
and bring near the seat of violence?

⁴“Woe to those who lie on beds of ivory
and stretch themselves out on their couches,
and eat lambs from the flock
and calves from the midst of the stall,
⁵who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp
and like David invent for themselves instruments of music,
⁶who drink wine in bowls
and anoint themselves with the finest oils,
but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!
⁷Therefore they shall now be the first of those who go into exile,
and the revelry of those who stretch themselves out shall pass away.”

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual Psalm 91:11; 103:1

- L** He will command his angels concerning you
C to guard you in all your ways.
L Bless the Lord, O my soul,
C and all that is within me, bless his holy name!

Psalm 146

- L** ¹Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD, O my soul!
C ²**I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.**
L ³Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.
C ⁴**When his breath departs he returns to the earth; on that very day his plans perish.**
L ⁵Blessèd is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,
C ⁶**who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who keeps faith forever;**
L ⁷who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free;
C ⁸**the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.**
The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.
L ⁹The LORD watches over the sojourners;
he upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.
C ¹⁰**The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, to all generations.**
Praise the LORD!

1 Timothy 3:1–13

¹The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

⁸Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. ⁹They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. ¹¹Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. ¹²Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. ¹³For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse of the Day: Luke 16:31

L Alleluia, Alleluia. If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. Neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. Alleluia.

Luke 16:19–31

L The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 16th chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹⁹[Jesus said:] “There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²²The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, ²³and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. ²⁴And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’ ²⁵But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.’ ²⁷And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house— ²⁸for I have five brothers —so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ ²⁹But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ ³⁰And he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ ³¹He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’”

L This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

The Apostles' Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father
Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living
and the dead.

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

Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart

Lutheran Service Book 708, Lutheran Worship 413, The Lutheran Hymnal 429



1 Lord, Thee I love with all my heart; I pray Thee, ne'er from
2 Yea, Lord, 'twas Thy rich boun-ty gave My bod - y, soul, and
3 Lord, let at last Thine an - gels come, To A - br'ham's bos - om



me de - part, With ten - der mer - cy cheer - me. Earth
all I have In this poor life of la - bor. Lord,
bear me home, That I may die un - fear - ing; And



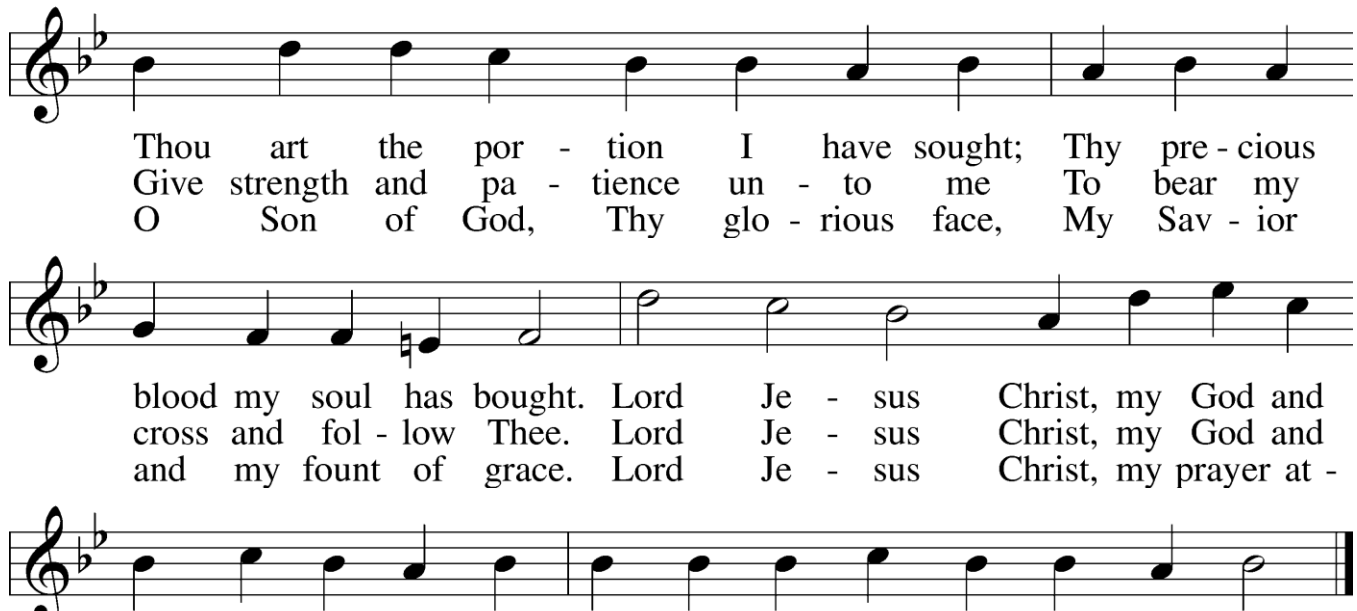
has no plea - sure I would share. Yea, heav'n it - self were
grant that I in ev - 'ry place May glo - ri - fy Thy
in its nar - row cham - ber keep My bod - y safe in



void and bare If Thou, Lord, wert not near me. And should my
lav - ish grace And help and serve my neigh - bor. Let no false
peace-ful sleep Un - til Thy re - ap - pear - ing. And then from



heart for sor - row break, My trust in Thee can noth - ing shake.
doc - trine me be - guile; Let Sa - tan not my soul de - file.
death a - wak - en me, That these mine eyes with joy may see,



Thou art the por - tion I have sought; Thy pre - cious
Give strength and pa - tience un - to me To bear my
O Son of God, Thy glo - rious face, My Sav - ior
blood my soul has bought. Lord Je - sus Christ, my God and
cross and fol - low Thee. Lord Je - sus Christ, my God and
and my fount of grace. Lord Je - sus Christ, my prayer at -
Lord, my God and Lord, For - sake me not! I trust Thy Word.
Lord, my God and Lord, In death Thy com - fort still af - ford.
tend, my prayer at - tend, And I will praise Thee with - out end.

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Devotional thoughts:

I grew up in two small towns in Southwestern Michigan. For most of my young life, a major trip consisted of going “up north” to vacation country in Michigan. We lived less than 100 miles from Chicago but we seldom ventured into the city. I remember thinking that rich people traveled on airplanes and this would be something that I could read about or see on television but never experience.

When I was a senior in college, everything changed. I took a class called “Music and Art in Europe.” My very first airplane flight was across the Atlantic Ocean. During that flight, we encountered some turbulence as we flew near thunderstorms. I was able to curl up with a blanket and snooze through most of the trip. I simply believed that this was a normal flight and that a few bumps should be expected. You can imagine my surprise when I heard one of the flight attendants say, “This was the roughest flight I’ve ever experienced!”

In the following years, God has granted me the privilege of many more airplane flights. I even briefly piloted planes in the bush of Northwestern Ontario where navigation consisted of carefully recognizing the shapes of the lakes.

All these thoughts and many more rushed through my mind as I read the Gospel lesson for this week. I recalled all the places I’ve been and the things that I have experienced. But there is one place that I have never been—heaven. But I know someone who has been there. A careful reading of our lesson for this week helps us to learn details about heaven that we would not know otherwise until we get there.

Before we talk about heaven, let’s make a few observations about our reading. The story of the Rich Man and Lazarus is the third lesson about the dangers surrounding the misuse of money recorded in this section of Luke. The first one is the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32. It tells how a wayward youth squandered his inheritance. The second is the Gospel lesson from last week and the story of the Dishonest Manager in Luke 16:1-13 which ends “You cannot serve God and money.” Finally, following two brief paragraphs, Jesus told the story of the Rich Man who was blind to the needs of his neighbor, poor Lazarus, who lay at his very gate.

It is tempting to call this story a parable and it may be one. However, Luke doesn’t identify it expressly as a parable. (Note: The story of the Lost Sheep is identified as a parable but not the stories of the Prodigal Son or the Dishonest Manager.) If it is a parable, it is the only one in which Jesus used the personal name of one of the individuals.

Lazarus’ poverty was so great that he longed to eat the scraps that fell from the Rich Man’s table. He was so weak that he couldn’t even prevent the dogs from licking his sores.

In contrast, the Rich Man lived a luxurious lifestyle. Nothing was too good for him. His clothes were the best. His meals were feasts. The way he ignored Lazarus was proof that he loved neither God nor his neighbor. He only loved money. That is where his heart was. This is what he served. He was deaf to God's word and he was blind to Lazarus' misery.

But in the end, both Lazarus and the Rich Man died. The fate of the Rich Man proved the truth of Galatians 6:7(KJV), "Be not deceived; God is not mocked." He learned the hard way "that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 6:9).

This should serve as a dire warning to each of us. The love of wealth, the world, immorality, and such will lead to a terrible end. The devil, the world, and our old sinful self seek to deceive us into believing that there are no ill consequences to a selfish, ungodly lifestyle. Our pop culture praises the Rich Man's self-indulgent choices. But the outcome of such choices is a disastrous eternity of anguish and torment.

The only antidote to such a tragedy is Jesus. He died on the cross to suffer the consequences that our sinfulness deserves. He came so that we will not suffer eternally but have eternal life in heaven. This is a life of joy, bliss, comfort, and peace. Faith in Jesus opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers. He died so that we may live.

As I mentioned at the beginning, the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus gives us important details about eternity. First, we learn that immediately at death, your soul (who you are) is separated from your body. The body decays but the soul lives on. For those who trust in Jesus for salvation, the soul is carried by the angels to "Abraham's side" which is another name for heaven or paradise. However, for the wicked and unbelieving their destination is a place of anguish which we commonly call "hell."

Second, we learn that individuals experience the joys of heaven or the suffering of hell right after death. Third, individuals can't go back and forth between heaven and hell.

Jesus can speak confidently about these things because He came down from heaven. Before He was born of the Virgin Mary heaven was His home. He is able to teach about heaven with authority. I've never been to heaven but He has.

Now He is waiting for us in paradise with the Thief on the Cross and all the believers who have gone before. It is a place of inexpressible joy. Not only do we want to spend eternity there with Jesus, but we also want all of our loved ones to be there, too. We sincerely want them to avoid the anguish of hell.

God has given us the privilege of sharing His word of salvation with our family and friends. We know the way to heaven and He has called us to join in His Great Commission of making disciples of all nations.

If you cannot preach like Peter,
If you cannot pray like Paul,
You can tell the love of Jesus,
And say He died for all.

Chorus—*There Is a Balm in Gilead*

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:4-7).

God's richest blessings to you in Christ.

Prayers

L God of mercy, You provide us with Your Holy Word, that we might know and believe in Christ. Make us diligent in the study of Your Word and move us to dwell in Your promises of daily bread and the gift of salvation.

C Amen.

L Kind Father, grant us contentment during our earthly pilgrimage that we may find joy in our daily activities as we look forward to life eternal.

C Amen.

L Holy God, bless our pastors who have been given a noble task. Strengthen them, that they might be above reproach as they care for their own households as well as Your Church. Preserve them from every snare of the devil, and give them a great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

C Amen.

L O Lord, give us vigilant and wise leaders. Be with all who serve to keep us safe. Bring peace and harmony to our nation in this time of contentiousness. Protect those in harm's way because of the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East that cause innocent men, women, and children to suffer.

C Amen.

L Visit us in Your compassion, O Lord. Deliver the sick from their infirmity, the troubled from their afflictions, the grieving from their sorrow, and the dying from their fear. May all who cry to You receive grace according to Your will. Help each of us to bear our crosses with patience and grace.

C Amen.

L Heavenly Father, we praise Your name for Your faithfulness to Abraham, Lazarus and to all the saints who have gone before us. Enliven us by Your Word and Sacraments that convinced of Jesus' death and resurrection, we may eagerly await the day of our resurrection for His sake; through Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

C Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

L Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

L The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

C Amen.

Glory Be to God the Father

Lutheran Service Book 506, Lutheran Worship 173, The Lutheran Hymnal 244



1 Glo - ry be to God the Fa - ther, Glo - ry be to
2 Glo - ry be to Him who loved us, Washed us from each
3 Glo - ry to the King of an - gels, Glo - ry to the
4 Glo - ry, bless - ing, praise e - ter - nal! Thus the choir of



God the Son, Glo - ry be to God the Spir - it:
spot and stain; Glo - ry be to Him who bought us,
Church's King, Glo - ry to the King of na - tions;
an - gels sings; Hon - or, rich - es, pow'r, do - min - ion!



Great Je - ho - vah, Three in One! Glo - ry,
Made us kings with Him to reign! Glo - ry,
Heav'n and earth, your prais - es bring! Glo - ry,
Thus its praise cre - a - tion brings. Glo - ry,



glo - ry While e - ter - nal a - ges run!
glo - ry To the Lamb that once was slain!
glo - ry To the King of glo - ry sing!
glo - ry, Glo - ry to the King of kings!

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Service Notes:

One person may serve as Leader or this may be shared with a number of individuals.

Read one or more of the lessons. Hymns may be sung or read. Use as much or little of this service as you would like.

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Enhancing Your Worship

Meditating on God's Word and Works

I will meditate on your wondrous works. Psalm 119:27
My eyes are awake through the night watches,
That I may meditate on Your word. Psalm 119:148 NKJV

The Week of

THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 29—October 4, 2025

Introduction

Most modern forms of meditation 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.
- G** Amen.

Verse of the Day: Luke 16:31

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, Alleluia.
- G** Alleluia, Alleluia. Neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. Alleluia.

Introit Psalm 119:73–75, 77; antiphon Psalm 119:76

- L** Let your steadfast love comfort me
according to your promise to your servant.
- G** Your hands have made and fashioned me;
give me understanding that I may learn your commandments.
- L** Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice,
because I have hoped in your word.
- G** I know, O Lord, that your just decrees are righteous,
and that in faithfulness you have afflicted me.
- L** Let your mercy come to me, that I may live;
for your law is my delight.
- G** 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** Let your steadfast love comfort me
according to your promise to your servant.

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. |

The portion of Psalm 119 that comprises our introit begins with verse 73, “Your hands have made and fashioned me; give me understanding that I may learn your commandments.” This verse is an interesting couplet. The psalmist recognized that God created him but beyond his functioning body, he needed one more essential component to make him complete. He needed to understand God’s commandments!

Our Gospel lesson is a warning against those who have contempt for God’s commandments. The psalmist does not want to be such a wicked individual. Rather he desires to learn and understand God’s commandments and delight in God’s law.

All who understand the full implication of God’s commandments also understand their sinfulness. They come to God with the words of the Prodigal Son, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son” (Luke 15:21). We all join the psalmist and the Prodigal Son and rely on God’s goodness, mercy, and grace. The psalmist placed his hope in God’s word and promises (Psalm 119:74, 76). He trusted God’s steadfast love to comfort him.

We, too, place our hope in God’s word and promises. We trust in God’s steadfast love. But we have the privilege of knowing what the psalmist could only imagine. God’s Old Testament promises are all fulfilled in Jesus. He is the one who brings us true comfort and hope.

Because of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, the words of the Prodigal Son’s father also apply to all who repent and have faith in Him. In Christ, God the Father looks at us and says, “This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.” This is why we delight in God’s word!

Let us pray: O merciful Lord, thank You for Your righteous law. Give us a right understanding of Your commandments. Grant us the comfort that comes from the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation won for us by our Lord and Savior Jesus. Amen.

Tuesday

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

Verse of the Day: Luke 16:31

- | | |
|----------|---|
| L | Alleluia, Alleluia. If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, Alleluia. |
| C | Alleluia, Alleluia. Neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. Alleluia. |

Kyrie

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|--------------------------|
| L | O Lord, | C | Have mercy on us. |
| L | O Christ, | C | Have mercy on us. |
| L | O Lord, | C | Have mercy on us. |

- | | |
|----------|--|
| L | Let us pray: O God, You are the strength of all who trust in You, and without Your aid we can do no good thing. Grant us the help of Your grace that we may please You in both will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. |
|----------|--|

- | | |
|----------|--------------|
| C | Amen. |
|----------|--------------|

Christians know that every decision we make is determined by whether or not we trust the Lord. The Old Testament is filled with examples of those who trusted the Lord and those who didn't.

David trusted the Lord and defeated Goliath. Daniel trusted the Lord and was protected in the lion's den. Moses trusted the Lord and the Children of Israel crossed the Red Sea on dry land.

Pharaoh defied God and was utterly destroyed. Jezebel served false gods and threatened to kill Elijah but was brought to a shameful end. Haman sought to destroy Esther, Mordecai, and all of the Jews but met the fate that he intended for them.

Sometimes the Old Testament heroes of the faith stumbled in weakness and fell into sin. But when God called them to repentance, they humbly returned to the Lord.

God sends us His Holy Spirit through word and sacrament to give us the strength and wisdom to trust Him and live according to His will. By His grace, He also restores us when we stumble and fall. May we ever seek to live lives that are pleasing to Him.

Let us pray: O God, You are the strength of all who trust in You, and without Your aid we can do no good thing. Grant us the help of Your grace that we may please You in both will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Wednesday

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

C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Luke 16:31

L Alleluia, Alleluia. If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. Neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. Alleluia.

Psalm 146

L ¹Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD, O my soul!

C ²**I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.**

L ³Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.

C ⁴**When his breath departs he returns to the earth; on that very day his plans perish.**

L ⁵Blessèd is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,

C ⁶**who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who keeps faith forever;**

L ⁷who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free;

C ⁸**the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.**

The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.

L ⁹The LORD watches over the sojourners;

he upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

C ¹⁰**The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, to all generations.**

Praise the LORD!

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.

The last five psalms are known as “Hallelujah Psalms.” In Hebrew, they all begin and end with “Hallelujah” (Praise the LORD!).

Psalm 146 is a lifelong commitment to praising God! The Lord is the only one who brings salvation. We deceive ourselves if we place our trust in powerful people such as princes or presidents. All of their plans come to an end as soon as they breathe their last breath!

Instead, trust in God who made heaven and earth. He never breaks His promises! Because He is almighty and faithful, He keeps them all!

God, in His act of salvation, brings justice to the oppressed, feeds the hungry, sets prisoners free, carries the burdens of those who are crushed, and upholds the widows and orphans. These were all done by Jesus during His earthly ministry to prove that He was the long-promised Messiah.

When John the Baptist sent messengers to Jesus to ask if He was the one or if they should expect another, Jesus said, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them” (Matthew 11:4-5).

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus went to the synagogue in Nazareth and read from the scroll of Isaiah these words:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:18-21).

This is the very definition of what it would be like when the LORD reigns (Psalm 146:10). In Jesus, the Kingdom of God came into the world! Praise the LORD! Hallelujah!

You and I have experienced the blessings of salvation expressed in Psalm 146. With Simeon, our eyes have seen the LORD’s salvation that He has prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to His people Israel (Luke 2:30-32). Hallelujah! Praise the LORD!

Let us pray: O Lord, thank You for bringing us into Your Kingdom to receive the salvation that Jesus earned for us on the cross. Grant that we would always praise You and let our Hallelujahs sound forth in response to the undeserved love You have shown to us in Him. Amen.

Thursday

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

Verse of the Day: Luke 16:31

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. Neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. 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.

Amos 6:1–7

- ¹“Woe to those who are at ease in Zion,
and to those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria,
the notable men of the first of the nations,
to whom the house of Israel comes!
²Pass over to Calneh, and see,
and from there go to Hamath the great;
then go down to Gath of the Philistines.
Are you better than these kingdoms?
Or is their territory greater than your territory,
³O you who put far away the day of disaster
and bring near the seat of violence?

⁴“Woe to those who lie on beds of ivory
and stretch themselves out on their couches,
and eat lambs from the flock
and calves from the midst of the stall,
⁵who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp
and like David invent for themselves instruments of music,
⁶who drink wine in bowls
and anoint themselves with the finest oils,
but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!
⁷Therefore they shall now be the first of those who go into exile,
and the revelry of those who stretch themselves out shall pass away.”

I was excited to read the Old Testament lesson from Amos this week. I would be surprised if you could guess which verse produced my excitement. Give up? It was verse 4, especially these words, “Woe to those who lie on beds of ivory.” You still might not understand why these words would catch my attention. Let me explain.

Awhile back, I read an article that began with: “An extraordinary treasure was unearthed in Jerusalem: **ivory plaques** from the First Temple period, the first of their kind to be found in Jerusalem”¹ (emphasis mine). Another article opened with: “**For the first time, archaeologists have found evidence of a luxury item mentioned in the Bible:** tiny ivory panels that would have been embedded on wooden furniture of the high and mighty during the First Temple period in ancient Jerusalem, the Israel Antiquities Authority announced on

¹ <https://www.jewishpress.com/news/jewish-news/first-temple-period-decorated-ivories-found-in-city-of-david/2022/09/05/>

Monday”² (emphasis mine). I found it quite astounding that the discovery of ivory plaques or panels would relate to one of our lessons this week.

Of course, it wasn’t that the ivory couches were sinful. Rather it was the attitude of those who occupied them. Amos wrote during a time when both the northern and southern kingdoms were experiencing political stability. This political stability brought prosperity. Prosperity blinded the wealthy and the powerful. They cared little for God and His people. They became idolaters. They were corrupt. They oppressed the poor. God would put an end to their revelry by sending them into exile.

History proves that God carried out His threat. The northern ten tribes were destroyed by the Assyrians. The southern kingdom of Judah was conquered by the Babylonians. Nevertheless, God was faithful to His promises. He preserved the remnant of His people who had not bowed their knees to idols.

As we contemplate the Rich Man and Lazarus this week, let us heed the warning given by Amos. It is very easy to be tempted by wealth and to let it rule our lives. Now is the time to pay attention to the words of Amos 5:6, “Seek the Lord and live!” Let us also take to heart Amos 5:14-15:

¹⁴ Seek good, and not evil,
that you may live;
and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you,
as you have said.
¹⁵ Hate evil, and love good,
and establish justice in the gate;
it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts,
will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

It is not too late to return to the Lord. Jesus came into the world to save sinners!

Let us pray: O Lord, let us not be blinded by wealth. Make us aware of those who are in need. Move us to help them as we are able. Grant us true repentance and faith so that we will seek You and live through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Friday

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

C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Luke 16:31

L Alleluia, Alleluia. If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. Neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. 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 <https://www.haaretz.com/archaeology/2022-09-08/ty-article/.premium/in-first-ivory-panels-mentioned-in-bible-found-in-jerusalem/00000183-0c93-d968-abc7-4cf315aa0000>

1 Timothy 3:1–13

¹The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

⁸Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. ⁹They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. ¹¹Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. ¹²Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. ¹³For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

I could write pages on our Epistle lesson from First Timothy. It has been a touchstone for me for over 50 years.

The word “overseer” in verse 1 is not as clear a translation as one might hope. The other common translation for the Greek word “*episcopo*” is “bishop.” The Living Bible translates it as “pastor.” *The Concordia Self-Study Commentary* states, “The modern ‘pastor’ is closer to it than the sense that bishop has acquired in church language.”³

You may wish to read verses 1-7 again. It is clear from these verses that pastors must meet a higher standard than those who make up the rest of the congregation. As a corollary, pastors who violate those requirements are no longer qualified to serve in this noble task.

Likewise, there are special qualifications for deacons who assist pastors in leading congregations. (Note: In many Lutheran congregations in our country, deacons are equivalent to our elders.)

Some years ago, a gentleman who wielded an undue amount of influence in the congregation came to me and requested that I give my approval for him to serve as an elder. In good conscience (and in light of 1 Timothy 3), I couldn't do that.

While I did not mention our meeting to anyone, word must have gotten around. At our next elders' meeting, I was confronted with the statement that I didn't have the authority to deny anyone their right to be an elder. To this, I responded, “No one has the right to be an elder.”

That turned out to be the end of the discussion. It must have been common knowledge that this individual could not meet the qualifications for a deacon listed by the Apostle Paul. While the subject never came up again, I wasn't surprised when this “gentleman” worked tirelessly to oppose my ministry. This proved to me that indeed he hadn't met the requirements of an elder.

There are at least two lessons to learn from that episode. First, God always grants us forgiveness in Jesus but sometimes the consequences of our sins cannot be undone. We must learn to guard ourselves against such damaging activities.

Second, sometimes serving in the “noble task” means making difficult decisions because they are right and then living with the outcome no matter how unfortunate it may be. God's people have always understood that doing the right thing sometimes means bearing a cross.

God has placed each of us in a vocation. As His people, we seek to serve wherever He has placed us. May we support our pastors in their noble task. “You can be like faithful Aaron, Holding up the prophet's hands” (Hark! The Voice of Jesus Crying, stanza 3).

³Walter H. Roehrs and Martin H Franzmann, joint author, *Concordia Self-Study Comentary*, electronic ed., 221 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1998, c1979).

Let us pray: O Lord, thank You for the gift of pastors and other leaders in the Church. Grant them the strength, courage, and wisdom to serve You and Your people with honesty and integrity so that Your Name would be praised and Your kingdom come 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.

Verse of the Day: Luke 16:31

L Alleluia, Alleluia. If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. Neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. Alleluia.

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.

Kyrie

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

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

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

1 Timothy 6:6–19

⁶Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, ⁷for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. ⁸But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. ⁹But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

¹¹But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, ¹⁴to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

¹⁷As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. ¹⁸They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

We have a bonus Epistle lesson this week. 1Timothy 6:6-19 is appointed as an alternative to 1 Timothy 3:1–13. Part of the focus of this lesson is on the proper understanding of wealth. But more than that, it is a valuable text for understanding and living the Christian life.

It contains one of the most well-known passages in the Bible, “The love of money is a root of all kinds of evils.” The truth of these words is proven over and over again in each generation. Ours is no exception.

Unfortunately, these powerful words overshadow an equally important passage that begins the reading, “There is great gain in godliness with contentment.” Contentment with the good things God has given to us is a great blessing. I’m not sure that people are any happier today than they were in the difficult times our nation experienced in the past. Most of us would do well to remember that cell phones and high-definition televisions are not keys to happiness.

However, those two verses take a back seat to what the Apostle Paul tells Timothy next, “Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”

We must never let the cares and concerns of this world distract us from the importance of eternal life. Sometimes the struggle can seem like a fight, the good fight of faith. Thankfully, we do not do battle alone. God has provided us with all the necessary resources for the fight. Paul speaks of them in Ephesians 6:10-18:

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

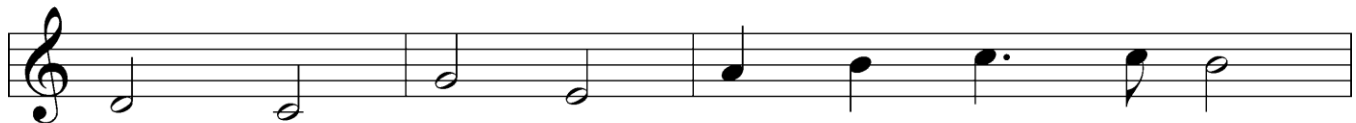
Let us never lose sight of the fact that victory over sin, death, and the devil has already been won for us by Jesus on the cross. He grants us forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation which we receive by faith. May we ever stand firm in our faith in Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Lives! The Victory's Won

Lutheran Service Book 490, Lutheran Worship 139, The Lutheran Hymnal 201



1 Je - sus lives! The vic - t'ry's won! Death no long - er can ap -
2 Je - sus lives! To Him the throne High a - bove all things is
3 Je - sus lives! For me He died, Hence will I, to Je - sus
4 Je - sus lives! I know full well Noth - ing me from Him shall



pall me; Je - sus lives! Death's reign is done!
giv - en. I shall go where He is gone,
liv - ing, Pure in heart and act a - bide,
sev - er. Nei - ther death nor pow'rs of hell



From the grave will Christ re - call me. Bright - er
Live and reign with Him in heav - en. God is
Praise to Him and glo - ry giv - ing. All I
Part me now from Christ for - ev - er. God will



scenes will then com - mence; This shall be my con - fi - dence.
faith - ful; doubt - ings, hence! This shall be my con - fi - dence.
need God will dis - pense; This shall be my con - fi - dence.
be my sure de - fense; This shall be my con - fi - dence.

5 Jesus lives! And now is death
But the gate of life immortal;
This shall calm my trembling breath
When I pass its gloomy portal.
Faith shall cry, as fails each sense:
Jesus is my confidence!

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