

# The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

## October 9, 2022

### Rise! To Arms! With Prayer Employ You

Lutheran Service Book 668, Lutheran Worship 303, The Lutheran Hymnal 444



1 Rise! To arms! With prayer em-ploy you, O Chris-tians, lest the  
2 Cast a - far this world's vain plea - sure And bold - ly strive for  
3 Wise - ly fight, for time is fleet - ing; The hours of grace are



foe de-stroy you; For Sa - tan has de-signed your fall.  
heav'n-ly trea - sure. Be stead-fast in the Sav - ior's might.  
fast re - treat - ing; Short, short is this our earth - ly way.



Wield God's Word, the weap - on glo - rious; A - gainst all foes be  
Trust the Lord, who stands be - side you, For Je - sus from all  
When the Lord the dead will wak - en And sin - ners all by



thus vic - to - rious, For God pro-pects you from them all.  
harm will hide you. By faith you con-quer in the fight.  
fear are shak - en, The saints with joy will greet that day.



Fear not the hordes of hell, Here is Em - man - u - el.  
Take cour - age, wea - ry soul! Look for - ward to the goal!  
Praise God, our tri-umph's sure. We need not long en-dure



Hail the Sav - ior! The strong foes yield To Christ, our shield,  
Joy a - waits you. The race well run, Your long war won,  
Scorn and tri - al. Our Sav - ior King His own will bring



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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 34:2– 4, 17; antiphon Psalm 48:1

**L** Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised  
in the city of our God!

**C** My soul makes its boast in the Lord;  
let the humble hear and be glad.

**L** Oh, magnify the Lord with me,  
and let us exalt his name together!

**C** I sought the Lord, and he answered me  
and delivered me from all my fears.

**L** When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears  
and delivers them out of all their troubles.

**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** Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised  
in the city of our God!

### 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, You show mercy to Your people in all their troubles. Grant us always to recognize Your goodness, give thanks for Your compassion, and praise Your holy name; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

## Ruth 1:1–19a

<sup>1</sup>In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. <sup>2</sup>The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. <sup>3</sup>But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. <sup>4</sup>These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, <sup>5</sup>and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband. <sup>6</sup>Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the LORD had visited his people and given them food. <sup>7</sup>So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. <sup>8</sup>But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go, return each of you to her mother’s house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. <sup>9</sup>The LORD grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!” Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. <sup>10</sup>And they said to her, “No, we will return with you to your people.” <sup>11</sup>But Naomi said, “Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? <sup>12</sup>Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, <sup>13</sup>would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me.” <sup>14</sup>Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

<sup>15</sup>And she said, “See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.” <sup>16</sup>But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. <sup>17</sup>Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you.” <sup>18</sup>And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.

<sup>19</sup>So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem.

- 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 111

- L** <sup>1</sup>Praise the LORD!  
I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.
- C** <sup>2</sup>**Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them.**
- L** <sup>3</sup>Full of splendor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever.
- C** <sup>4</sup>**He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered; the LORD is gracious and merciful.**
- L** <sup>5</sup>He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever.
- C** <sup>6</sup>**He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the inheritance of the nations.**
- L** <sup>7</sup>The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy;
- C** <sup>8</sup>**they are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.**
- L** <sup>9</sup>He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever.  
Holy and awesome is his name!
- C** <sup>10</sup>**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding.**  
**His praise endures forever!**

## 2 Timothy 2:1–13

<sup>1</sup>You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup>and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. <sup>3</sup>Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. <sup>4</sup>No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. <sup>5</sup>An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. <sup>6</sup>It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. <sup>7</sup>Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

<sup>8</sup>Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, <sup>9</sup>for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! <sup>10</sup>Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. <sup>11</sup>The saying is trustworthy, for:

- If we have died with him, we will also live with him;
- <sup>12</sup>if we endure, we will also reign with him;
- if we deny him, he also will deny us;
- <sup>13</sup>if we are faithless, he remains faithful—

for he cannot deny himself.

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

## Verse of the Day: Luke 5:15

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Now even more the report about him went abroad, Alleluia.
- C** **Alleluia, Alleluia. And great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities.**  
**Alleluia.**

## **Luke 17:11–19**

**L** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter.

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

<sup>11</sup>On the way to Jerusalem [Jesus] was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. <sup>12</sup>And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance <sup>13</sup>and lifted up their voices, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” <sup>14</sup>When he saw them he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went they were cleansed. <sup>15</sup>Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; <sup>16</sup>and he fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. <sup>17</sup>Then Jesus answered, “Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? <sup>18</sup>Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” <sup>19</sup>And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.”

**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.

## Your Hand, O Lord, in Days of Old

Lutheran Service Book 846, Lutheran Worship 399, The Lutheran Hymnal n/a

1 Your hand, O Lord, in days of old  
2 Your touch then, Lord, brought life and health,  
3 O be our great de - liv - 'er still,

Was strong to heal and save; It tri - umphed o - ver  
Gave speech and strength and sight; And youth re - newed and  
The Lord of life and death; Re - store and quick - en,

ills and death, O'er dark - ness and the grave.  
fren - zy calmed Re - vealed You, Lord of light.  
soothe and bless, With Your life - giv - ing breath.

To You they came, the blind, the mute,  
And now, O Lord, the be near to bless,  
To hands that work and eyes that see

The pal - sied and the lame, The lep - ers in their  
Al - might - y as be - fore, In crowd - ed street, by  
Give wis - dom's heal - ing pow'r That whole and sick and

mis - er - y, The sick with fe - vered frame.  
beds of pain, As by Gen - nes - 'ret's shore.  
weak and strong May praise You ev - er - more.

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### Devotional thoughts:

We always had at least one cat when I was growing up. Our children had cats in our home until allergies flared up. I like watching funny cat videos online. But there are still things that I don't know about cats.

I've always been puzzled by cats being stuck in trees. I've never witnessed it myself but many plots in film or on TV feature a cat stuck in a tree.

Cats are such good climbers. They seem to be able to go everywhere. They appear to be fearless. So I wondered, “Can cats really get stuck in trees, or is this just a myth?” What do you think?

I was pretty sure that it was a myth and that firefighters rescuing cats from trees was just a plot device for scriptwriters. But not being confident, I thought that I better do some research. To my surprise, I discovered that, yes, cats can get stuck in trees.

Cats have claws that are shaped like sharp hooks. They can easily climb up but down is a different story. If a cat is not too high, it can jump down. But they can go so high that they are afraid to jump. They may stay up in a tree for days. The only safe way for them to come down is backward but many cats are unwilling to do that. Experts suggest that if a cat does not come down from a tree after twenty-four hours, a rescue attempt should be made.

Have you ever been in a situation where you needed to be rescued? Cats in a tree came to my mind because when I was very young, I once got stuck in a tree. Somehow, I climbed a tree across the driveway from our backdoor. I had a wonderful view of the top of our house. But I soon discovered that I was stuck.

That was the first time it ever occurred to me that I could get myself into real danger. I was helpless. I couldn't come down.

In full panic mode, I yelled for help. I don't know what my mother thought when she heard me through the kitchen window. She quickly came out the back door wearing her apron. When she saw my predicament, she calmly brought a green step ladder to the tree. With her help, my feet were soon securely planted on terra firma.

The ten lepers in our Gospel lesson are in a helpless situation through no fault of their own. They cannot help themselves and there is no one who can help. They have banded together to provide comfort to one another in their misery.

Then one day, the most amazing thing happened. The only one who can help came to their village. Because of their leprosy, by law, they were not allowed to approach Jesus. They could only stand at a distance. The Greek says they “stood far off.” But their only hope was to catch Jesus' attention.

The Bible says that they “lifted up their voices.” I wonder what it sounded like. I imagine that they shouted at the top of their lungs!

My brother-in-law and I once capsized our fishing boat in the frigid fall waters of a remote lake in Northwestern Ontario. A long way off, there was another boat. I didn't think that we could ever catch their attention until my brother-in-law let out the loudest yell for help known to man. (I may have yelled louder from the tree when I was little). Soon these fishermen rescued us.

I'm guessing that there was real urgency in the voices of the lepers as they yelled, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” They would not let Jesus pass by without noticing them. He was their only hope.

In response, in my mind, I can hear Jesus calmly say, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” The Old Testament assigned priests the responsibility to verify healing (Leviticus 14). Jesus is the one who can and does heal.

However, they weren't healed right away. It wasn't until they started on their way that they were cleansed. They started their expedition to the priests in faith!

All ten were healed! Only one returned to give thanks and he was a Samaritan. He did this with a loud voice! We get our word “megaphone” from the Greek words for loud voice. There was no holding him back in his cry for mercy and there would be no holding him back in his cry of thanksgiving and praise.

In the end, Jesus told him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.” Literally, the Greek says, “Your faith has saved you.” The connections between faith and salvation, God's mercy and our thanks and praise are demonstrated by this account of Jesus healing the ten lepers.

I have never met an individual with leprosy. However, I have heard people cry out, “Lord, have mercy on us.” To be honest, most of the time we mumble or softly speak these words.

Our disease is much worse than leprosy. It is not a disease of the skin but a disease of the soul. We need more than physical healing. We need spiritual healing. There is no one who can cleanse us from our sins except for Jesus.

If we were to recognize the seriousness of our predicament of sin, we would raise our voices. We would cry out like a little boy stuck in a tree. Our voices would be filled with urgency.

In Christ, God hears our plea for mercy. His mercy endures forever!

Because Jesus died on the cross for our sins, He says to us “Your faith has saved you.” Your sins have been forgiven. Eternal life is yours!

I was grateful that my mother rescued me from the tree. We were extremely appreciative that we were rescued from potential hypothermia in Northwestern Ontario. I am thankful that Jesus died on the cross to open the kingdom of heaven. If the leper returned praising God with a loud voice and giving thanks to Jesus, can I do anything less for the salvation that He has won for me?

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!  
O my soul, praise Him, for He is your health and salvation!

“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).

## Prayers

**L** Faithful Lord, by Your Holy Spirit teach us constantly to pray, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us,” and to trust that You have cleansed us by His blood. Grant that we, like the former leper, would raise our voices of praise in joyful response to Your loving care.

**C Amen.**

**L** Heavenly Father, Your servant Ruth faithfully cared for Naomi in her later years. Bless all adult children with wisdom and compassion as they care for their aging parents, and give their parents a humble spirit to accept needed assistance.

**C Amen.**

**L** God of hope, if we are faithless, You remain faithful to Your promises, for You cannot deny Yourself. Remember those who have departed from the faith. Grant them penitent hearts, that they might again receive the salvation that is ours in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

**C Amen.**

**L** Almighty God, comfort those who have suffered loss as a result of hurricane Ian. Continue to give them endurance as they recover from the widespread damage. Bless the efforts of rescue workers and those bringing aide to the survivors.

**C Amen.**

**L** Almighty God, send Your holy angels to watch over all of our loved ones, especially those who live in distant places. Strengthen all those who serve us in the medical field. Give Your comfort and peace to all who are suffering from illness. Be with those who mourn. Grant to them the hope and assurance of a blessed reunion in heaven.

**C Amen.**

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



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

**L** Let us bless the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

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

**C** Amen.

## Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

Lutheran Service Book 790, Lutheran Worship 444, The Lutheran Hymnal 39



1 Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -  
2 Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is won - drous - ly  
3 Praise to the Lord, who has fear - ful - ly, won - drous - ly,  
4 Praise to the Lord, who will pros - per your work and de -



a - tion! O my soul, praise Him, for He is your  
reign - ing And, as on wings of an ea - gle, up -  
made you, Health has be - stowed and, when heed - less - ly  
fend you; Sure - ly His good - ness and mer - cy shall



health and sal - va - tion! Let all who hear Now to His  
lift - ing, sus - tain - ing. Have you not seen All that is  
fall - ing, has stayed you. What need or grief Ev - er has  
dai - ly at - tend you. Pon - der a - new What the Al -



tem - ple draw near, Join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion!  
need - ful has been Sent by His gra - cious or - dain - ing?  
failed of re - lief? Wings of His mer - cy did shade you.  
might - y can do As with His love He be - friends you.

5 Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore Him!  
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before Him!  
Let the Amen  
Sound from His people again;  
Gladly forever adore Him!

**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 Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

### October 10 – October 15, 2022

#### Introduction

Most modern forms of mediation turn a person inward. Biblical meditation turns a person outward toward what God has said and done especially what He has said and done through Jesus for our salvation.

Each Sunday has its own special theme directing us to meditate on God's word and actions. This theme is found in the Propers of the Day (the parts of the service that change week to week). From Advent through the Easter season these themes focus our attention on the life of Jesus from His birth to His death and resurrection. There is always much more in the propers than can be covered in any Sunday service. God willing, I will use the propers for Sunday to provide you with a devotion each day to help you 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 34:2– 4, 17; antiphon Psalm 48:1

- L** Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised  
in the city of our God!
- C** My soul makes its boast in the Lord;  
let the humble hear and be glad.
- L** Oh, magnify the Lord with me,  
and let us exalt his name together!
- C** I sought the Lord, and he answered me  
and delivered me from all my fears.
- L** When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears  
and delivers them out of all their troubles.
- 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** Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised  
in the city of our God!

#### Verse of the Day: Luke 5:15

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Now even more the report about him went abroad, Alleluia.
- C** Alleluia, Alleluia. And great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities.  
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>

This is another week where the abbreviation of the psalm found in our introit simply whets my appetite for the entire psalm. There are so many gems in Psalm 34 that I am moved to share it with you here.

## Psalm 34

- <sup>1</sup> I will bless the Lord at all times;  
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
- <sup>2</sup> My soul makes its boast in the Lord;  
let the humble hear and be glad.
- <sup>3</sup> Oh, magnify the Lord with me,  
and let us exalt his name together!
- <sup>4</sup> I sought the Lord, and he answered me  
and delivered me from all my fears.
- <sup>5</sup> Those who look to him are radiant,  
and their faces shall never be ashamed.
- <sup>6</sup> This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him  
and saved him out of all his troubles.
- <sup>7</sup> The angel of the Lord encamps  
around those who fear him, and delivers them.
- <sup>8</sup> Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!  
Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!
- <sup>9</sup> Oh, fear the Lord, you his saints,  
for those who fear him have no lack!
- <sup>10</sup> The young lions suffer want and hunger;  
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.
- <sup>11</sup> Come, O children, listen to me;  
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
- <sup>12</sup> What man is there who desires life  
and loves many days, that he may see good?
- <sup>13</sup> Keep your tongue from evil  
and your lips from speaking deceit.
- <sup>14</sup> Turn away from evil and do good;  
seek peace and pursue it.
- <sup>15</sup> The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous  
and his ears toward their cry.
- <sup>16</sup> The face of the Lord is against those who do evil,  
to cut off the memory of them from the earth.
- <sup>17</sup> When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears  
and delivers them out of all their troubles.
- <sup>18</sup> The Lord is near to the brokenhearted  
and saves the crushed in spirit.

- <sup>19</sup> Many are the afflictions of the righteous,  
but the Lord delivers him out of them all.  
<sup>20</sup> He keeps all his bones;  
not one of them is broken.  
<sup>21</sup> Affliction will slay the wicked,  
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.  
<sup>22</sup> The Lord redeems the life of his servants;  
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Why praise the Lord at all times? We do this because He is good to us at all times. At all times, He cares for us. At all times, He loves and forgives us. There never is a time when He forgets us.

He always hears our prayers. He never neglects to answer and deliver us from evil. He sends His angels to watch over us and protect us.

The only ones who doubt the Lord's goodness are those who haven't tasted for themselves the benefits of faith. Those who trust in their own wisdom and might are like hungry young lions who cannot feed themselves. But those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

The truth of God's goodness is something so important that we must share it with our children. Our strong desire is for them to lead godly lives of faith and obedience.

God is deaf to the disobedient and unfaithful but He always listens to our cries for mercy. The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. The Lord redeems the life of his servants. None of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

I hope that you will meditate on Psalm 34 throughout the week.

Let us pray: O Lord, thank You for Your goodness. Grant to me a faithful heart that I may continually praise You and bless You at all times for the salvation that You have granted to me through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

## Tuesday

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

**C** Amen.

## Verse of the Day: Luke 5:15

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Now even more the report about him went abroad, Alleluia.

**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. And great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. 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, You show mercy to Your people in all their troubles. Grant us always to recognize Your goodness, give thanks for Your compassion, and praise Your holy name; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

A few years ago, God granted to me the privilege of entering retirement after more than 40 years of active, ordained ministry in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. For more than 32 years, I served a congregation with about 1100 members. I could fill a book and bore a crowd with everything I learned about God and His people through the years.

One thing that came to mind as I read the collect was something that I hadn't considered when I entered the ministry. I did expect that only about 40-50% of the congregation would be in church on any given Sunday. I understood that some people had pressing issues that kept them away. Some would be sick or out of town. Others just chose not to be "every Sunday" attenders.

What I hadn't anticipated was that almost every one of our members would contact me when they had serious troubles. I was always glad to bring help or comfort in any way that I could. I eventually realized that each year I encountered the equivalent of 1000 years of serious troubles through my relationships with the members of God's flock entrusted to me.

God's people are not immune to troubles. In fact, sometimes following Jesus means bearing a cross. No one craves troubles but often God uses troubles to bring us blessings.

First, troubles cause us to cry to God for mercy. One way that He answers that cry is to send pastors to you to bring His message of comfort and grace. Sometimes they can bring the resources and generosity of the other members of the body of Christ.

Second, troubles move us to give thanks to God for His compassion.

Let us pray: Almighty God, You show mercy to Your people in all their troubles. Grant us always to recognize Your goodness, give thanks for Your compassion, and praise Your holy name; 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.

**G** Amen.

## Verse of the Day: Luke 5:15

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Now even more the report about him went abroad, Alleluia.

**G** Alleluia, Alleluia. And great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. Alleluia.

## Psalms 111

**L** <sup>1</sup>Praise the LORD!

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

**G** <sup>2</sup>**Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them.**

**L** <sup>3</sup>Full of splendor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever.

**G** <sup>4</sup>**He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered; the LORD is gracious and merciful.**

**L** <sup>5</sup>He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever.

**G** <sup>6</sup>**He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the inheritance of the nations.**

**L** <sup>7</sup>The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy;

**G** <sup>8</sup>**they are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.**

**L** <sup>9</sup>He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever.

Holy and awesome is his name!

**G** <sup>10</sup>**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 constitutes the exclamation of a faithful believer to God. We are the only ones who can truly give thanks to God with our whole hearts. Verse one concludes with the statement that we do this in the congregation!

I am proud of my children and their accomplishments. I will talk about them to anyone who is foolish enough to give me the opportunity. I know many people who are like this.

How many of you are also proud of your parents and their accomplishments. My father was known as one of the best of his craft. My mother humbly spoke of her high school education but she was as widely read as any college graduate that I know. I beam with pride when I speak about my grandchildren! They are amazingly gifted.

If I can't keep quiet about my parents, children, and grandchildren, can I be any less vocal about my heavenly Father? Contemporary society demands that we are to be quiet about our religion. The Bible knows nothing of this. Faithful people have always shouted their praise to God in public.

We praise God for every blessing. We praise Him for food and drink, house and home, family and children and everything He gives to us out of His bountiful goodness and mercy.

But the highest reason to boldly praise God is for the redemption that He has granted to us in Jesus Christ our Lord (verse 9). Those who do not recognize this are the greatest fools of all.

The world doesn't like our boasting. To them, this seems like foolishness. But true wisdom comes from fearing, loving, and trusting God above all things!

We cannot help but boast in the Lord for all that He has done for us in Jesus Christ. If we are tempted to give credit to someone or something else for our salvation, we are greatly deceived.

Let us pray: O Lord, thank You for blessing each one of us in so many wonderful ways. Grant us the wisdom to publicly sing your praise through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Thursday

<b>L</b>	In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
<b>C</b>	<b>Amen.</b>

## Verse of the Day: Luke 5:15

<b>L</b>	Alleluia, Alleluia. Now even more the report about him went abroad, Alleluia.
<b>C</b>	<b>Alleluia, Alleluia. And great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. Alleluia.</b>

## 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>

## Ruth 1:1–19a

<sup>1</sup>In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. <sup>2</sup>The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. <sup>3</sup>But Elimelech, the husband of

Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. <sup>4</sup>These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, <sup>5</sup>and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband. <sup>6</sup>Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the LORD had visited his people and given them food. <sup>7</sup>So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. <sup>8</sup>But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. <sup>9</sup>The LORD grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!" Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. <sup>10</sup>And they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." <sup>11</sup>But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? <sup>12</sup>Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, <sup>13</sup>would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me." <sup>14</sup>Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

<sup>15</sup>And she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." <sup>16</sup>But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. <sup>17</sup>Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you." <sup>18</sup>And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.

<sup>19</sup>So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem.

I like to listen to the Bible being read. There are several ways to do this. One that is easy to use is a website called <https://www.biblegateway.com/> There are multiple Bibles available for you to read in many different languages. Some of the Bibles give you the option to listen to them being read out loud by a narrator. I prefer to listen to the ESV but I will sometimes listen to the KJV.

One of my favorite Old Testament books to hear read is Ruth. It is such a compelling story that I enjoy listening to it over and over again.

Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, experience incredible tragedies and heartbreak resulting from the death of their husbands. Naomi also was required to cope with the untimely deaths of both of her sons. Through all this, Ruth and Naomi developed a powerful bond of love and friendship. If this is all there was to the story of Ruth and Naomi, it would be enough. But there was so much more.

Ruth not only wholeheartedly committed herself to Naomi, but she also fully and completely pledged herself to Naomi's people and Naomi's God!

The Bible does not report what led Ruth to make such a vow. It is easy to conclude that Naomi must have been a powerful witness of faith to Ruth for her to make such a promise.

Ruth is not only the account of Ruth's faithfulness to her promise. It is also a report of God's faithfulness to Ruth through Boaz.

An important aspect of the story of Ruth is the truth that God accomplishes His purpose through people. Ruth and Boaz became David's great-grandparents. Therefore, they were also ancestors of Jesus!

They could not have known how God would use them to bless the world. When we are faithful to God, who knows how God will use us to accomplish His purpose.

Let us pray: O Lord, thank You for the faithfulness of Ruth and Naomi. Grant us also the wisdom and ability to remain faithful to You. Use us to accomplish Your purposes in the Church and in the world through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Friday

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

**C** Amen.



## Verse of the Day: Luke 5:15

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Now even more the report about him went abroad, Alleluia.  
**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. And great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. 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 Timothy 2:1–13

<sup>1</sup>You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup>and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. <sup>3</sup>Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. <sup>4</sup>No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. <sup>5</sup>An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. <sup>6</sup>It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. <sup>7</sup>Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

<sup>8</sup>Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, <sup>9</sup>for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! <sup>10</sup>Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. <sup>11</sup>The saying is trustworthy, for:

If we have died with him, we will also live with him;

<sup>12</sup>if we endure, we will also reign with him;

if we deny him, he also will deny us;

<sup>13</sup>if we are faithless, he remains faithful—

for he cannot deny himself.

In the 1960s, there was a well-known pain reliever commercial that featured the often-quoted phrase, “Mother, please, I’d rather do it myself.” In this commercial, a woman is tending to her cooking when her mother asks, “Do you think it needs a little salt?” At this suggestion, the first woman angrily explodes saying, “Mother, please, I’d rather do it myself.” The announcer then explains that she has lost control because of a headache. A few minutes after taking the pain reliever, she brings a hot cup of tea or coffee to her mother. They both smile and all is well!

If only problems in life could be resolved so easily! This commercial is remembered by many today because it’s so comical. Almost everyone from my generation instantly recognizes the phrase, “Mother, please, I’d rather do it myself.” Over the years, I have jokingly used it in a number of situations.

However, the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy when the time for joviality was long past. Paul’s ministry would soon end. There is no humor in that realization. He understood that Timothy’s time for work would also come to an end. Neither, he nor Timothy could afford to say, “I’d rather do it myself.” So Paul directed Timothy to entrust the message of salvation through trusting Jesus to faithful men who would be able to teach others also.

Jesus found and trained the Twelve Apostles. They, in turn, trained the next generation and so on until our very day.

The work to be done is great. Even with the power of social media and the internet, no one can do it all by themselves. We need to pass the work on and engage the creativity and resourcefulness of others to proclaim the Gospel.

But there is one ingredient that must we must never neglect. These men must be faithful!

The Church needs trustworthy and faithful pastors who will preach and teach the whole counsel of God. They not only must be willing to step up to the task with energy and enthusiasm but they must also truthfully teach the undiluted word of God. The Church never benefits from false and misleading preaching.

Let us pray: O Lord, thank You for the gift of pastors and other leaders in the Church. Continue to raise up generation after generation of faithful church workers to proclaim Gospel of salvation through faith in Christ. Let each one of us take up that task, as we are able, and then, when it is time, hand it on to those who follow after us in this sacred task. Amen.

## Saturday

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

**C** Amen.

### 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!

### Verse of the Day: Luke 5:15

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Now even more the report about him went abroad, Alleluia.

**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. And great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. 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 Timothy 2:8–13

<sup>8</sup>Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, <sup>9</sup>for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! <sup>10</sup>Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. <sup>11</sup>The saying is trustworthy, for:

If we have died with him, we will also live with him;

<sup>12</sup>if we endure, we will also reign with him;

if we deny him, he also will deny us;

<sup>13</sup>if we are faithless, he remains faithful—

for he cannot deny himself.

Almost every parent with more than one child has heard this exclamation, “He hit me first!” Unfortunately, children are not the only members of society who believe that every evil can be justified when it is done in retaliation. For many, this is the definition of fairness.

In our modern society, there are those who believe that present-day unfairness is justified because of past inequity. Fortunately for us, God is not like that.

2 Timothy 2:13 tells us, “If we are faithless, he remains faithful.” This sounds totally strange to human ears. In our way of thinking, if we break our promises then God would be perfectly justified in breaking His promises.

But God never breaks His promises. This is the essence of who He is. If He broke His promises, He would be denying Himself. He would never do that.

God’s promises are totally trustworthy. We are not always faithful. We are not always trustworthy but God is always dependable. We would be in a terrible mess if God went back on His promises to us.

“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” (1 Timothy 1:15). You never need to doubt the promise of salvation given to you through faith in Jesus. He is always there for you to welcome you home!

Let us pray: O Lord, thank You for Your faithful promise of salvation. Keep us in the one, true, faith. If we should stumble or fall, restore us to faith in Jesus. Amen.

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