

Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost November 9, 2025

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

Lutheran Service Book 802, Lutheran Worship 451, The Lutheran Hymnal N/A

1 Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,
2 Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,
3 To all life Thou giv - est— to both great and small—
4 Great Fa - ther of glo - ry, pure Fa - ther of light,

In light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,
Nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, Thou rul - est in might;
In all life Thou liv - est, the true Life of all;
Thine an - gels a - dore Thee, all veil - ing their sight;

Most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,
Thy jus - tice like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove
We blos - som and flour - ish as leaves on the tree
All laud we would ren - der: O help us to see

Al - might - y, vic - to - rious, Thy great name we praise.
Thy clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.
And with - er and per - ish— but naught chang - es Thee.
'Tis on - ly the splen - dor of light that hides Thee.

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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 115:2– 4, 8, 17–18; antiphon Psalm 115:11

L You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord!

He is their help and their shield.

C **Why should the nations say,
“Where is their God?”**

L Our God is in the heavens;

he does all that he pleases.

C **Their idols are silver and gold,
the work of human hands.**

L Those who make them become like them;

so do all who trust in them.

C **The dead do not praise the Lord,
nor do any who go down into silence.**

L But we will bless the Lord

from this time forth and forevermore. Praise the Lord!

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 You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord!

He is their help and their shield.

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: Living God, Your almighty power is made known chiefly in showing mercy and pity. Grant us the fullness of Your grace to lay hold of Your promises and live forever in Your presence; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- G** Amen.

Exodus 3:1–15

¹Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ²And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. ³And Moses said, “I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.” ⁴When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” ⁵Then he said, “Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” ⁶And he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

⁷Then the LORD said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, ⁸and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁹And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. ¹⁰Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” ¹¹But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?” ¹²He said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

¹³Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” ¹⁴God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.”

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

Gradual Revelation 7:14; Psalm 84:5

- L** These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.
- G** They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
- L** Blessed are those whose strength is in you,
- G** in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

Psalm 149

- L** ¹Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!
- G** ²Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts!
- L** ³Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars!
- G** ⁴Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!
- L** ⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD! For he commanded and they were created.

C ⁶And he established them forever and ever; he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.

L ⁷Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps,

C ⁸fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind fulfilling his word!

L ⁹Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

C ¹⁰Beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds!

L ¹¹Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!

C ¹²Young men and maidens together, old men and children!

L ¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted;
his majesty is above earth and heaven.

C ¹⁴He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his saints,
for the people of Israel who are near to him.
Praise the LORD!

2 Thessalonians 2:1–8, 13–17

¹Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, ²not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. ³Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, ⁴who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. ⁵Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. ⁷For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. ⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. . . . ¹³But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. ¹⁴To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.

¹⁶Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, ¹⁷comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse of the Day: Luke 20:38

L Alleluia, Alleluia. He is not God of the dead, but of the living, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. For all live to Him. Alleluia.

Luke 20:27–40

L The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 20th chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

²⁷There came to [Jesus] some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection, ²⁸and they asked him a question, saying, “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies, having a wife but no children, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. ²⁹Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife, and died without children. ³⁰And the second ³¹and the third took her, and likewise all seven left no children and died. ³²Afterward the woman also died. ³³In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had her as wife.” ³⁴And Jesus said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, ³⁵but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead

neither marry nor are given in marriage, ³⁶for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. ³⁷But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. ³⁸Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him.” ³⁹Then some of the scribes answered, “Teacher, you have spoken well.” ⁴⁰For they no longer dared to ask him any question.

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

Christ, the Life of All the Living

Lutheran Service Book 420, Lutheran Worship 94, The Lutheran Hymnal 151



1 Christ, the life of all the liv - ing, Christ, the death of
2 Thou, ah! Thou, hast tak - en on Thee Bonds and stripes, a
3 Thou hast borne the smit - ing on - ly That my wounds might
4 Heart - less scof - fers did sur - round Thee, Treat - ing Thee with



death, our foe, Who, Thy - self for me once giv - ing
cru - el rod; Pain and scorn were heaped up - on Thee,
all be whole; Thou hast suf - fered, sad and lone - ly,
shame - ful scorn And with pierc - ing thorns they crowned Thee.



To the dark - est depths of woe: Through Thy suf - f'ring,
O Thou sin - less Son of God! Thus didst Thou my
Rest to give my wea - ry soul; Yea, the curse of
All dis - grace Thou, Lord, hast borne, That as Thine Thou



death, and mer - it I e - ter - nal life in - her - it.
soul de - liv - er From the bonds of sin for - ev - er.
God en - dur - ing, Bless - ing un - to me se - cur - ing.
might - est own me And with heav'n - ly glo - ry crown me.



Thou-sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.
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Thou-sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.

5 Thou hast suffered men to bruise Thee,
That from pain I might be free;
Falsely did Thy foes accuse Thee:
Thence I gain security;
Comfortless Thy soul did languish
Me to comfort in my anguish.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.

6 Thou hast suffered great affliction
And hast borne it patiently,
Even death by crucifixion,
Fully to atone for me;
Thou didst choose to be tormented
That my doom should be prevented.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.

7 Then, for all that wrought my pardon,
For Thy sorrows deep and sore,
For Thine anguish in the Garden,
I will thank Thee evermore,
Thank Thee for Thy groaning, sighing,
For Thy bleeding and Thy dying,
For that last triumphant cry,
And shall praise Thee, Lord, on high.

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Devotional thoughts:

If you're on a highway and Road Runner goes beep beep.
Just step aside or you might end up in a heap.
Road Runner, Road Runner runs down the road all day.
Even the coyote can't make him change his ways.

This the beginning of the iconic theme song from the animated classic films featuring “*Carnivorous Vulgaris*” and “*Accelleratti Incredibus*.” They are better known as Wile E. Coyote and the Road Runner!

This pair made their first film appearance in 1949! I hesitated to use them as examples because it might tarnish my reputation of being trending and relevant (wink, wink). But my fears were eased when I discovered that they are featured in a live-action animated film scheduled to be released in August of 2026!

Wile E. Coyote came to mind because he is renowned for being cunning and devious just like the Sadducees as portrayed in our Gospel lesson for today. Wile E. Coyote spares no effort or expense to put together the most elaborate and brilliant plans to capture the Road Runner. He is convinced that the latest technology delivered

from the Acme Corporation will ensure his ultimate success in trapping the Road Runner. But he fails every time!

Wile E Coyote represents someone that my mother would have described as “too smart for his own good.” You may have known people just like him. They are constantly bragging about their own brilliance, only to be foiled by their own arrogance and over confidence.

We have witnessed examples of this in the recent marketing fiasco of a large restaurant chain and other marketing disasters in the last few years. Examples abound in politics, too.

However, the worst kind of self-aggrandizing arrogance is found in the aggressive anti-Christian atheists that have popped up in recent decades. Like Wile E. Coyote, they are blind to their own folly.

In Jesus’ day, the Sadducees were elite, politically minded aristocrats. They held the majority of seats in the Sanhedrin and controlled the high priesthood. They considered themselves to be smarter and more sophisticated than ordinary people. To maintain their power, they were willing to compromise with secular and pagan authorities.

At the end of Luke 19, we learn about Jesus cleansing the temple and declaring, “ ‘My house shall be a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a den of robbers” (Luke 19:46). Now here in chapter 20, Jesus authority is being challenged. First at bat were the scribes and chief priests. They struck out when they refused to answer Jesus’ question about John the Baptist.

Embarrassed, they sent spies to trap Jesus with this question: “Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?” (Luke 20:22). Jesus set them on their ears with this answer, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Luke 20:25).

Now the Sadducees step forward as if to say, “Get out of the way and let the big boys show you how it is done.” Luke points out that the Sadducees denied the resurrection of the dead. They were also notorious for rejecting most of the Old Testament. They only accepted the first Five Books of Moses, which are also known as the Torah.

As we learn from this episode, they trusted in their own wisdom and superior intellect. But they turned out to be too clever by half. They came up with an extreme example in an attempt to make the resurrection and Jesus look ridiculous.

Like modern day skeptics, they sought to use God’s word to belittle the faithful. They reminded Jesus of Deuteronomy 25:5, saying, “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife but no children, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.”

Have you ever been set up like that? I have, more than once! I have been set up by people who claim to be asking an innocent question when in reality they already know the answer but have planned a “gottcha” at the end.

In Old Testament Israel, God, in His wisdom, had established this practice of remarriage to care for widows and to perpetuate the ownership of ancestral lands. Read the Book of Ruth and see how Ruth benefitted from the application of Deuteronomy 25:5.

Their “catch question” was this: “Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife, and died without children. And the second and the third took her, and likewise all seven left no children and died. Afterward the woman also died. In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had her as wife.”

By implication, they are saying, “Gottcha, Jesus. Let’s see you get out of that one.” However, in reality, Jesus pointed out that they were simply displaying their own ignorance. Matthew’s account of this incident includes this verse, “But Jesus answered them, ‘You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God’” (Matthew 22:29).

Marriage is a divine institution that is given only for this age. It is valid and in force only until death parts a couple. Then the marriage vow is ended. The surviving party is free to marry again or not. Jesus explained to the Sadducees that in heaven and in the resurrection from the dead, people neither marry nor are given in marriage.

Then Jesus turned the tables on them. The Sadducees claimed to only accept the first five books of the Bible—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. And right there in Exodus 3, Jesus showed them proof of the resurrection and eternal life. He pointed them to our Old Testament lesson for today and the account of Moses and the burning bush.

Jesus said to them, “But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him.”

God is not God of the dead but of the living!!! Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses are among the living right now along with David, Daniel, and all the Old Testament believers. So are all the New Testament believers of every age, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages (Revelation 7:9). They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:14). They are with the angels and archangels and all the company of heaven including our loved ones who have gone before us.

The most cunning and devious Wile E. Coyote of them all is Satan. He convinced himself, that he had outwitted Jesus and defeated Him on the cross. He has convinced many in the world that this is true. But in reality, Jesus turned the tables on Satan and defeated him by the cross. When Jesus rose from the dead on Easter morning, He opened the kingdom of heaven to us and all believers!

Let us always remember what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

¹⁸ For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. ²² For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men (1 Corinthians 1:18-25).

And finally what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:55-57

“O death, where is your victory?
O death, where is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

“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

- ☐ Almighty God and Father, You sent Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, to overcome the world for us through His cross and resurrection. Grant us grace and peace in Him, that whatever troubles, tribulations and temptations afflict us in this world of sin and sorrow, we may never forget You or forsake You. Rather, strengthen us by Your grace, that we may bear our crosses in patience and trust and remain faithful in Christ Jesus, until He comes again in glory.

☐ Amen.

L Lord God, You have built Your Church and called us to hold fast to the Word of life in the midst of a crooked and twisted world. Preserve us from all grumbling, rivalry and conceit, and sustain us in humble and devout faith until the day of Christ.

C Amen.

L Grant to us, heavenly Father, those good works that flow from faith in Your Son. Grant that everything we do in thought, word and deed would bring glory and honor to the name of Jesus Christ.

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. Grant that the new found peace in Gaza would be sustained.

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 All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God 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.

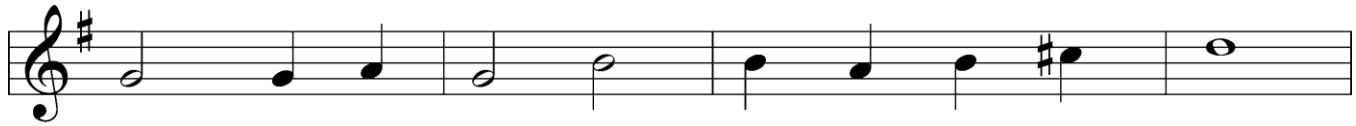
C Amen.

Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise

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



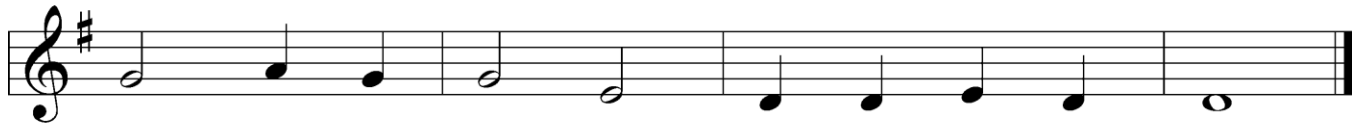
1 Sav - ior, a - gain to Thy dear name we raise
2 Grant us Thy peace up - on our home - ward way;
3 Grant us Thy peace, Lord, through the com - ing night;
4 Grant us Thy peace through - out our earth - ly life,



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



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



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

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Service Notes:

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

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

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Enhancing Your Worship

Meditating on God's Word and Works

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

The Week of The Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost November 10—15, 2025

Introduction

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

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

Monday

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

Verse of the Day: Luke 20:38

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. He is not God of the dead, but of the living, Alleluia.
- C** Alleluia, Alleluia. For all live to Him. Alleluia.

Introit Psalm 115:2– 4, 8, 17–18; antiphon Psalm 115:11

- L** You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord!
He is their help and their shield.
- C** Why should the nations say,
“Where is their God?”
- L** Our God is in the heavens;
he does all that he pleases.
- C** Their idols are silver and gold,
the work of human hands.
- L** Those who make them become like them;
so do all who trust in them.
- C** The dead do not praise the Lord,
nor do any who go down into silence.
- L** But we will bless the Lord
from this time forth and forevermore. Praise the Lord!
- 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** You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord!
He is their help and their shield.

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.

We all know that many problems and troubles will come in life. Psalm 115 reminds us to trust God in times of difficulty and turmoil. He always promises to be there for us and to help us.

But it is sometimes a challenge for us to trust His promises. Many turn their trust from the Lord to false gods and idols. It is tempting for us to trust our own intellect, abilities, and wealth rather than trusting God. But these things will ultimately fail us. Our only sure help and shield in times of trouble is the Lord.

We need the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts so that we will learn to trust the Lord. He strengthens our faith through His word and sacraments. This is why it is important for us to be faithful in worship and Bible study.

God has indeed overcome our greatest problem of all, our problem of sin and death. He did this by sending Jesus to be our savior. May we ever trust in Him for eternal life and salvation. When we do this, we can exclaim with the Apostle Paul:

“For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).

Psalm 115 ends with these words: “We will bless the Lord from this time forth and forevermore. Praise the Lord!” When we recognize the help that God brings to us for time and eternity, we will join with all who sing this psalm and praise the Lord!

- L** Let us pray. O Lord, help us to trust in You and your steadfast love and faithfulness. Let us never turn to idols and false gods for help in times of trouble. Move us to recognize Your sustaining hand and the gift of eternal life that you have granted to us through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
C Amen.

Tuesday

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

Verse of the Day: Luke 20:38

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. He is not God of the dead, but of the living, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. For all live to Him. Alleluia.

Kyrie

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

Collect of the Day

- L** Let us pray: Living God, Your almighty power is made known chiefly in showing mercy and pity. Grant us the fullness of Your grace to lay hold of Your promises and live forever in Your presence; 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 powerful storm just came through Southwestern Michigan. The same storm produced a record snowfall in South Bend, Indiana. I have often seen television reports about hurricanes and tornados. Someone might be tempted to believe that God's almighty power is seen mainly in nature and events sometimes called "acts of God."

But there is something even more amazing and powerful that shows God's almighty power. It is God's mercy! Mercy is the word we use to translate the Hebrew word *chesed* (). The ESV has chosen to translate *chesed* as "steadfast love." This is such an important word and concept that it appears almost 250 times in the Old Testament with more than 130 of those times just in the Book of Psalms. You may be familiar with this verse or one like it. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy (*chesed*) endureth for ever" (Psalm 136:KJV).

The ultimate power of God's mercy is found in Jesus and His suffering and death for sinners. Every time someone called out to Jesus for mercy, He granted it. He made the lame to walk, the blind to see, and the deaf to hear. In His mercy, He has forgiven our sins and granted us life and salvation. This is where we find God's almighty power. It is not primarily seen in the beauty and power of nature but in His loving kindness that He has for each one of us.

Prayer: Living God, Your almighty power is made known chiefly in showing mercy and pity. Grant us the fullness of Your grace to lay hold of Your promises and live forever in Your presence; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Wednesday

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

Verse of the Day: Luke 20:38

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. He is not God of the dead, but of the living, Alleluia.
- C** Alleluia, Alleluia. For all live to Him. Alleluia.

Psalms 149

- L** ¹Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!
- C** ²**Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts!**
- L** ³Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars!
- C** ⁴**Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!**
- L** ⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD! For he commanded and they were created.
- C** ⁶**And he established them forever and ever; he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.**
- L** ⁷Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps,
- C** ⁸**fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind fulfilling his word!**

- L** ⁹Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!
- C** ¹⁰**Beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds!**
- L** ¹¹Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!
- C** ¹²**Young men and maidens together, old men and children!**
- L** ¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted;
his majesty is above earth and heaven.
- C** ¹⁴**He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his saints,
for the people of Israel who are near to him.
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. |

A few years ago, I agreed to fill in at a church while their pastor was away. As many churches do, this congregation had an early and late service.

The idea of having two services on Sunday morning began many years ago. Most often it was because the size of the congregation had out grown the sanctuary and two services were needed to accommodate everyone on Sunday morning. (Or worship was offered in a different language.)

Beginning a few decades ago, multiple services began to be offered as a convenience for the worshipers. Today, many churches offer services so that people can choose the “style” of worship that suits them. One of the alternative styles is sometimes called a “praise service.” That was the case in the congregation where I was filling in.

It’s funny how we use language. A “Praise Service” is often characterized as something new and modern. But in fact, praise services are as ancient as can be. All Christian worship services involve prayer and praise in some form or another.

Psalm 149 is an example of a hymn of praise from the Old Testament. It reminds us that all of creation praises God for His mighty deeds.

However, we must never forget that praise is actually a secondary action. The primary action in worship is not something we do but something God did and continues to do today.

Primarily in worship, we learn about God’s mighty deeds. Not only His work of creating and sustaining us but more importantly, we learn of His work of redeeming us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

It is God’s love for us in Christ that moves our hearts to sing His praise “in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs’ (Ephesians 5:19). May all of our worship and praise be grounded in the truth of salvation through faith in Christ.

Prayer: O Lord God, heavenly Father, You have ransomed us by the blood of our savior Jesus. Move our hearts to sing Your praises with the new song of salvation. Amen.

Thursday

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

Verse of the Day: Luke 20:38

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. He is not God of the dead, but of the living, Alleluia.
- C** Alleluia, Alleluia. For all live to Him. Alleluia.

Kyrie

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

Exodus 3:1–15

¹Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ²And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. ³And Moses said, “I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.” ⁴When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” ⁵Then he said, “Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” ⁶And he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

⁷Then the LORD said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, ⁸and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁹And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. ¹⁰Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” ¹¹But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?” ¹²He said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

¹³Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” ¹⁴God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.”

This is one of the most spectacular events in the life of Moses. God revealed Himself to Moses from inside a burning bush that was not consumed by the flame.

God continues to reveal Himself to us today. It may not seem to be as spectacular but it is. He reveals Himself to us through His holy word as found in the Bible.

From Moses and all the Old Testament prophets to Jesus, His only-begotten Son, God has revealed His plan of salvation to us. After His ascension into heaven, the Apostles were commissioned to bring Jesus message to all nations. They continue to do this today through the New Testament.

We certainly are not burning bushes, prophets or apostles but we also have the Word of God within us through our study of Holy Scriptures. We have the privilege of reaching out with God’s word when we tell others about the love of God in Christ Jesus and the gift of eternal life.

Prayer: O Lord God, thank you for the gift of forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Grant that we may be Your instruments to bring Your holy word and plan of salvation to a world that is lost and dying in sin, 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 20:38

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. He is not God of the dead, but of the living, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. For all live to Him. Alleluia.

Kyrie

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

2 Thessalonians 2:1–8, 13–17

¹Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, ²not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. ³Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, ⁴who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. ⁵Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. ⁷For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. ⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. . . . ¹³But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. ¹⁴To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.

¹⁶Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, ¹⁷comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.

It is hard for me to imagine going back to a time before cell phones. They have been a great blessing to me. I can quickly communicate with everyone in my family and all my friends. I am able to call for help and I am able to respond quickly to calls for help. But there is always a downside to every advance in technology.

As soon as there is an advance in communication tech, someone figures out a way to exploit it for sinful and criminal purposes. I've lost count of how many fraudulent phone calls, text messages, and emails that I have received.

Satan's use of deception is nothing new. Jesus calls the devil "the father of lies" (John 8:44). The Apostle Paul was worried about the Thessalonian Christians because people had been trying to deceive them about Christ's return.

Paul encouraged the Thessalonians to stand firm in what they were taught. I pray that today, we, too, will stand firm in what we were taught. May God guard us from those who claim new or special revelation from God. May we be on guard against anyone who teaches contrary to the foundation of faith that we have in Christ. May God protect us from all the wiles of the devil.

The most precious thing we have is salvation and forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ. Let us never be deceived by Satan into believing anything else.

Prayer: Almighty, everlasting God, You gave Your only Son to be our Savior. We look forward to the day when He will call us home to be with Him for all eternity through the same 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 20:38

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. He is not God of the dead, but of the living, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. For all live to Him. Alleluia.

Gradual Revelation 7:14; Psalm 84:5

- L** These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.
C They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
L Blessed are those whose strength is in you,
C in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

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. |

Luke 20:27–40

²⁷There came to [Jesus] some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection, ²⁸and they asked him a question, saying, “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies, having a wife but no children, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. ²⁹Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife, and died without children. ³⁰And the second ³¹and the third took her, and likewise all seven left no children and died. ³²Afterward the woman also died. ³³In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had her as wife.” ³⁴And Jesus said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, ³⁵but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, ³⁶for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. ³⁷But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. ³⁸Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him.” ³⁹Then some of the scribes answered, “Teacher, you have spoken well.” ⁴⁰For they no longer dared to ask him any question.

The Gospel lesson for this week presents us with questions and answers about two important topics: marriage and the resurrection of the dead.

First, let’s consider marriage. Marriage has been the topic of many discussions lately. It has become a political football and an issue in certain denominations. Mostly, this is the result of muddled thinking regarding marriage and its institution.

Christians have been the focus of extreme criticism recently for defining marriage as the lifelong union of one man and one woman. But of course, we are not alone. All the major religions of the world have a similar understanding of marriage, include Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism (The list could go on). Likewise, in cultures around the globe and throughout history, marriage is understood in this way.

Of course, since we live in a sinful world, God’s plans are often ignored. Even in the Bible we see examples of polygamy and divorce.

The Pharisees knew this and like modern critics of biblical marriage, they thought that they could challenge Jesus. This event is recorded in Matthew 19:3-6.

³ And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?” ⁴ He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, ⁵ and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? ⁶ So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”

Jesus rightly answered that it is God who defines marriage not humanity!

Another question that arises from this Gospel lesson is the resurrection. Do people become angels when they die? The short answer is no.

Matthew 22:30 is more helpful here than this translation of Luke 20:36. (More on that in a bit.) Matthew 22:30 says, “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.” Notice that Jesus is not saying that we become angels in the resurrection but that we are LIKE angels in the resurrection in this the matter of marriage.

What is slightly confusing in Luke 20:22 are these words “they are equal to angels.” Jesus does not intend for us to understand that we are to become equal to angels in every way but only in regards to marriage.

I was curious about this so I checked the original Greek of Luke 20:22. I discovered that the phrase “equal to angels” is the translation of just one word, “*isangeloi*” (ἰσαγγελοι). The New American Standard Bible translates it as “like angels.” It is a compound of two words *isos* and *aggelos*. *Aggelos* is the Greek word for angels. *Isos* can be translated as agree, as much, equal, like, consistent, and similar.

Since *isangeloi* is just one word, I think that I would prefer to translate it as “angel-like.” Nevertheless, however it is translated, we can be sure that Jesus was not saying that we “become” angels in the resurrection.

Deeply looking in Scripture is always fascinating for me. But when we do this, we should never forget that the purpose of the Bible is to make us wise unto salvation (2 Timothy 3:15).

In addition, we should remember that Jesus died on the cross to pay for all of our sins, even sins regarding marriage. He calls each one of us to repentance for all of our sins in every area of life.

When it comes to the Sixth Commandment, “We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do, and husband and wife love and honor each other.”¹

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for Your gift of marriage and family. Grant that we may always honor the truth of Your Word and be faithful to it. Where we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, bring us to repentance and grant us forgiveness through faith in Jesus until we join with You and all the saints in eternity, through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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¹Martin Luther, *Luther's Small Catechism With Explanation*, Contains the basic principles of the Lutheran religion with some explanation.; Translation of: *Kleine Katechismus - English.*, electronic ed., 3 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1997, c1986).