

The Third Sunday after Pentecost June 14, 2026

Hark, the Voice of Jesus Crying

Lutheran Service Book 826, Lutheran Worship 318, The Lutheran Hymnal 496



- 1 Hark, the voice of Je - sus cry - ing, "Who will go and work to - day?
- 2 If you can-not speak like an - gels, If you can - not preach like Paul,
- 3 If you can-not be a watch-man, Stand - ing high on Zi - on's wall,
- 4 Let none hear you i - dly say - ing, "There is noth-ing I can do,"



Fields are white and har-vests wait-ing— Who will bear the sheaves a-way?"
You can tell the love of Je - sus, You can say He died for all.
Point - ing out the path to heav-en, Of - f'ring life and peace to all,
While the mul - ti - tudes are dy - ing And the Mas-ter calls for you.



Loud and long the Mas-ter call-eth; Rich re-ward He of - fers thee.
If you can - not rouse the wick-ed With the judg-ment's dread a - larms,
With your prayers and with your boun-ties You can do what God com-mands;
Take the task He gives you glad-ly, Let His work your plea-sure be;



Who will an-swer, glad - ly say - ing, "Here am I, send me, send me"?
You can lead the lit - tle chil-dren To the Sav-ior's wait - ing arms.
You can be like faith-ful Aar-on, Hold - ing up the proph-et's hands.
An - swer quick-ly when He call-eth, "Here am I, send me, send me!"

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 67:4–7; antiphon: Psalm 67: 3

L Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!

C **Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth.**

L Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!

C **The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, shall bless us.**

L God shall bless us;
let all the ends of the earth fear him!

C **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

L Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!

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, eternal God, in the Word of Your apostles and prophets You have proclaimed to us Your saving will. Grant us faith to believe Your promises that we may receive eternal salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

Exodus 19:2–8

²They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain, ³while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: ⁴You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; ⁶and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”

⁷So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. ⁸All the people answered together and said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do.” And Moses reported the words of the people to the LORD.

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

Gradual Psalm 145:3, 5b, 6b

- L** Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised,
- C** and his greatness is unsearchable.
- L** On your wondrous works, I will meditate,
- C** and I will declare your greatness.

Psalm 100

- L** Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!
- C** Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!
- L** Know that the Lord, he is God!
- C** It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
- L** Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise!
- C** Give thanks to him; bless his name!
- L** For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever,
- C** and his faithfulness to all generations.

Romans 5:6–15

⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰For if while we were enemies we were

reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

¹²Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— ¹³for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. ¹⁴Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

¹⁵But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse of the Day Matthew 9:37b–38

L Alleluia. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; Alleluia.

C Alleluia, therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Alleluia.

Matthew 9:35—10:8

L The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 9th chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

³⁵And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

^{10:1}And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. ²The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

⁵These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, ⁶but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ ⁸Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay.

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

God Loved the World So That He Gave

Lutheran Service Book 571, Lutheran Worship 352, The Lutheran Hymnal 245



1 God loved the world so that He gave His on - ly
2 Christ Je - sus is the ground of faith, Who was made
3 God would not have the sin - ner die; His Son with
4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son For - gives all



Son the lost to save, That all who would in
flesh and suf - fered death; All then who trust in
sav - ing grace is nigh; His Spir - it in the
sins which you have done; And, jus - ti - fied by



Him be - lieve Should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive.
Him a - lone Are built on this chief cor - ner - stone.
Word de - clares How we in Christ are heav - en's heirs.
Je - sus' blood, Your Bap - tism grants the high - est good.

5 If you are sick, if death is near,
This truth your troubled heart can cheer:
Christ Jesus saves your soul from death;
That is the firmest ground of faith.

6 Glory to God the Father, Son,
And Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To You, O blessed Trinity,
Be praise now and eternally!

Public domain

Devotional thoughts:

During the pandemic, we witnessed many chaotic hospital scenes where ambulances were lined up at emergency rooms, patients were lined up on stretchers in hallways, and healthcare workers were exhausted, sitting on the floor with their heads in their hands. We pray that those days would not return.

In some cities, the hospitals were simply overwhelmed. Hospital ships were called in. Hospital tents were set up. Some reported that people were dying while waiting to be seen. There was so much need and so little help. Imagine for a moment what it would be like to be a doctor or nurse in a situation like that.

Your heart is moved to compassion for the suffering. You have dedicated your life to helping people. But the need is so great.

Jesus must have felt something like that during His earthly ministry. Two chapters before our Gospel lesson Jesus concluded His Sermon on the Mount. Matthew records, "When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him" (Matthew 8:1). Immediately Jesus encountered a leper. We read, "And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.' Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, 'I will; be clean.' And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." (Matthew 8:2-3).

After the leper, Jesus healed the paralyzed servant of the centurion. Next, He healed Peter's mother-in-law. And that evening they brought many to Him for healing.

Following a trip across the Sea of Galilee where Jesus healed two men with demons, chapter 9 begins with Jesus healing another paralyzed man. Mark reports that the crowds around the house were so thick that men lowered the paralytic to Jesus through a hole in the roof (Mark 2:1-12).

Next, Jesus was called upon to raise a girl from the dead but on the way, He was stopped by a woman who had been suffering for twelve years. Before he continued to Jairus' house, He healed the woman.

On His way from there, two blind men followed Him crying out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David" (Matthew 8:27). He entered their house, touched their eyes, and gave them sight!

Leaving their house, a man unable to speak was brought to Jesus. Without hesitation, Jesus healed him, too.

With this little bit of background, you can better understand Jesus' words at the beginning of our Gospel lesson today:

³⁵And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." (Matthew 9:35-38).

Everywhere Jesus went, there were crowds! He was healing every disease and every affliction! But more than that he was teaching and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom.

He saw people who were physically sick but He understood that their greater need was spiritual healing. He demonstrated this when the paralyzed man was lowered through the roof. The first thing Jesus said to him was, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven" (Matthew 9:2).

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. As much as Jesus had done and as much as He would do, more help was needed! The harvest was ready. Workers were needed.

He began by sending the twelve disciples to help in the work. One day, Jesus' entire ministry would fall upon their shoulders. Now they are getting their first taste of transitioning from being disciples to becoming apostles. They would soon be transformed from those who follow to those who are sent.

Much has changed in the world since Jesus' day but much has stayed the same. There still are many who are sick and in need of healing. Throughout history, the Church has led the way in helping those with physical needs. The Church has established hospitals, fed the hungry, and given shelter to those in need. In fact, the first deacons were chosen to help with the distribution of food so that the Apostles could focus on the more important task of proclaiming the Gospel.

Still today, this is the most important task of the Church. People are still harassed and helpless, tossed about by every wind of doctrine and the cunning of men (Ephesians 4:14). Still today, they are like sheep without a shepherd. Still today, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few!"

What do these harassed and helpless people need from their shepherd? They need to hear the eternal Gospel of salvation by grace through faith for Christ's sake. They need to hear, "God loved the world so that He gave, His only Son, the lost to save."

We all need to hear the words of St. Paul, "For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6-8).

Every one of us can help in this noble task of bringing the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation to a dying world. We can begin as Jesus directs. We can pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. We can support the work of pastors and teachers with our time, talents, and treasures. We can support Lutheran schools where little lambs learn of the Good Shepherd. We can support our colleges and seminaries where teachers and shepherds are trained. We can hold up the prophet's hands in our congregations. We can tell others about the wonderful love of our beautiful Savior.

If you cannot speak like angels, If you cannot preach like Paul, You can tell the love of Jesus, You can say He died for all. You can lead the little children To the Savior's waiting arms. You can Answer quickly when He calleth, "Here am I, send me, send me!"

God's richest blessings to you in 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).

Prayers

L Let us pray. Almighty God, You treasure Your people for Jesus' sake and give us Your commandments to guide our ways. Grant that we, who are redeemed by His blood, may do all that He has spoken.

C Amen.

L Holy Lord, send forth laborers into the harvest to make known the Gospel of Your kingdom in Christ Jesus. Prosper the work of pastors, missionaries and all church workers, that many people may hear, believe and praise You. Move all of Your children to take up that task of sharing Your message of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

L Holy Father, Your Son warned His disciples of persecution for proclaiming the kingdom of heaven. Look with compassion upon all who suffer for the sake of Jesus. Give them the words to confess. Deliver them from their enemies.

C Amen.

L Lord, guide and give wisdom to our nation and its leaders, and to all judges and magistrates. Protect those who serve us as firefighters, police, disaster workers and medical personnel. 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 cease fire would be sustained and lasting peace would be established.

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 sufficient for their needs according to Your will. Help each of us to bear our crosses with patience and grace.

C Amen.

L O blessed Lord, through Moses You called a people to Yourself, and from this people You delivered up Your own Son to be our Savior. By His sufferings and death, He has redeemed us sinners from our sins. By His resurrection, He has released us from the fear of death. Help us to live as Your people, doing the good works for which we were created and praying with confidence the petitions and supplications of our hearts; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

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

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

L Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

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

C Amen.

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 Week of The Third Sunday after Pentecost June 15—22, 2026

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.

Verse of the Day Matthew 9:37b–38

- L** Alleluia. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; Alleluia.
C Alleluia. therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Alleluia.

Introit Psalm 67:4–7; antiphon: Psalm 67: 3

- L** Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!
C Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth.
L Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!
C The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, shall bless us.
L God shall bless us;
let all the ends of the earth fear him!
C Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.
L Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!

Kyrie

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

The closing hymn for yesterday, “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty,” echoes the thoughts of the introit this week from Psalm 67. We praise God and are glad. We sing for joy because of all that the Lord has done.

While there is injustice in the world and there always will be, God is always just in His judging. He always pronounces His verdict with equity.

At first, this may sound wonderful and pleasing until we pause and consider that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). In God’s divine justice, in His divine equity, all must be judged guilty! “There is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Romans 3:12 KJV).

Unfortunately, the introit omits the first two verses of Psalm 67:

May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us,
that your way may be known on earth,
your saving power among all nations.

We learn from these verses the reason for our joy and gladness is God’s graciousness! We sing for joy and praise the Almighty God because of His saving power!

During this second half of the Church Year, we will learn to grow in Christian love and righteous living. Yet, we must never forget that the most important part of the Christian faith is what Christ has done for us on the cross when He saved us from our guilt and the righteous judgment of God.

L Let us pray. Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation! O my soul, praise Him, for He is your health and salvation! Let all hear of this salvation and draw near to Him in glad adoration.

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 Matthew 9:37b–38

L Alleluia. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; Alleluia.

C Alleluia. therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Alleluia.

Collect of the Day

L Let us pray. Almighty, eternal God, in the Word of Your apostles and prophets You have proclaimed to us Your saving will. Grant us faith to believe Your promises that we may receive eternal salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen

Jesus’ ministry continues today through the apostles and prophets! No, the apostles and prophets are not out in the world preaching sermons and conducting worship services. But we have their word in the Holy

Scriptures.

In the Confirmation Service, the pastor asks the confirmands, “Do you hold all the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God?” What are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures? They are the Bible! The prophetic Scriptures are the Old Testament. The apostolic Scriptures are the New Testament. The pastor is simply asking, “Do you believe that the Bible, both the Old and the New Testament, is the word of God?” To this, each confirmand responds: I do!

In His High Priestly Prayer, Jesus speaks of this day when He prays in John 17:20, “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word.” Jesus is praying for you! You are the one who believes in Jesus because of the word of the apostles.

You have learned of eternal salvation through faith in Christ because the Holy Spirit moved the apostles to record the message of salvation. In the Gospels, we learn of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. In the epistles, we learn of this message of salvation applies to each one of us.

Prayer: Almighty, eternal God, in the Word of Your apostles and prophets You have proclaimed to us Your saving will. Grant us faith to believe Your promises that we may receive eternal salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Wednesday

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

C Amen.

Verse of the Day Matthew 9:37b–38

L Alleluia. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; Alleluia.

C Alleluia. therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Alleluia.

Psalm 100

L Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!

C Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!

L Know that the Lord, he is God!

C It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

L Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise!

C Give thanks to him; bless his name!

L For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever,

C and his faithfulness to all generations.

Psalm 100 may be the most familiar psalm next to the 23rd. When I read Psalm 100, I think of weddings! This is because Psalm 100 is the psalm appointed for the Marriage Service in *Lutheran Worship*. Since, historically, June has been a month of weddings, let’s take a moment and consider them.

Weddings are one of the most joyful days of a person’s life. How appropriate it is on that day to “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord!”

Psalm 100 ends with, “For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.” God’s goodness is seen in the gift of a husband or wife. God’s goodness is seen in placing us in families. God’s goodness is seen when He makes us His people, the sheep of His pasture.

Unfortunately, the joy of the wedding day is soon tarnished when a wife discovers that she has married a sinful man. Unfortunately, the joy of the wedding day is soon tarnished when a husband discovers that he has married a sinful woman.

Sin ruins everything in this world. That is why God has shown to us His steadfast love in Jesus! He is the perfect groom and He has made us, the Church, His bride!

In Ephesians 5, we learn that the perfect marriage is one where, “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” The self-sacrifice of Jesus on the cross is the perfect example for husbands to love their wives. Now, this is something to make a joyful noise about!

Prayer: Almighty Father, You have generously created all things to serve us for our good. Send Your blessing upon couples who have promised their marital fidelity. Grant that by Your mercy they may live gladly and faithfully in the holy estate marriage; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Thursday

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

C Amen.

Verse of the Day Matthew 9:37b–38

L Alleluia. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; Alleluia.

C Alleluia. therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Alleluia.

Exodus 19:2–8

²They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain, ³while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: ⁴You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; ⁶and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”

⁷So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. ⁸All the people answered together and said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do.” And Moses reported the words of the people to the LORD.

The Old Testament lesson this week from Exodus finds us three months into the journey of the Israelites after leaving Egypt. Moses is about to receive the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20).

All the people gathered together say something remarkable, “All that the LORD has spoken, we will do!” This is a bold statement! How wonderful it would be if they had kept their promise.

However, the Israelites proved to be fickle. When Moses did not return from the top of the mountain as soon as the people expected, they said to Aaron in Exodus 32, “Make us gods who shall go before us. As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.” And as they say, “You know the rest of the story.” They made a golden calf and began to worship it.

Trying as hard as we can to be faithful, each of us, in our own way, makes a golden calf. We worship at the altar of wealth or prestige. We worship at the altar of self-indulgence or apathy. We worship at the altar of self-righteousness or arrogance. And the list goes on.

How amazing it is to know that God’s mercy is new every morning. In Christ, He calls us to repentance and forgives us for each golden calf we have made. In the cross, He makes us His treasured possession.

Prayer: God of love, through Your Son You have commanded us to love one another. By the guidance of Your Word and Spirit, deliver us from impenitence and teach us the truth that we might confess our sins, receive Your forgiveness, and be reconciled to one another; 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 Matthew 9:37b–38

L Alleluia. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; Alleluia.

C Alleluia. therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Alleluia.

Romans 5:6–15

⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

¹²Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— ¹³for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. ¹⁴Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

¹⁵But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.

The Book of Romans is full of treasures. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, records in his journal that while someone was reading from Martin Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, "I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." The Book of Romans has a way of doing that for people.

One of the places in Romans to learn that Jesus has taken away your sins and saved you from sin and death is the Epistle reading for this week. Romans 5:8 is a passage that I hope will be in the hearts and memories of us all, "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Notice, it doesn't say, "When we started to show some goodness, Christ died for us." It doesn't say, "When we started to help ourselves, Christ died for us." It doesn't say, "When we stopped being so bad, Christ died for us."

No, it says, "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us!" These comforting words should echo in our ears. They show the depth of Jesus' love for us. It is love for the unlovable. If you have been following along with these daily meditations, it gives depth to the words found in Ephesians 5, "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."

Christian people are not the cream of the crop. Christian people are not the best people on earth. We are sinful people who have been redeemed by Christ the crucified!

Prayer: Blessed Savior, Jesus Christ, You have given Yourself for us. Keep us in Your faith and favor that we may live in You even as You live in us. Preserve us in the true faith to life everlasting. Hear us for the sake of Your name. Amen.

Saturday

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

Verse of the Day Matthew 9:37b–38

- L** Alleluia. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; Alleluia.
C Alleluia. therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Alleluia.

Gradual Psalm 145:3, 5b, 6b

- L** Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised,
C and his greatness is unsearchable.
L On your wondrous works, I will meditate,
C and I will declare your greatness.

Matthew 9:35—38

³⁵And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Strawberries and watermelon are delightful treats. Summer is a time to enjoy the fruit that comes from a plentiful harvest. Soon we will enjoy cherries and blueberries, peaches and plums, apples and grapes.

How sad it would be if all this fruit was left in the field. None of it will last for long. Seasons change. Unpicked fruit spoils. Harvest must happen on time, without delay.

In the Gospel lesson this week, Jesus speaks of the urgent need for laborers in the harvest. I hope that this summer will bring you joy and peace. I hope that this summer you will find time for relaxation and refreshment. I hope that this summer, despite restrictions, you will accomplish what you have planned.

However, much of what we will do this summer will only be temporary and have no lasting effect. Some things we do will have eternal blessings. One of those things is working in the Lord’s harvest field. You can tell the love of Jesus. You can say, “He died for all.”

Prayer: Almighty and gracious God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, You have commanded us to pray that You would send forth laborers into Your harvest. Of Your infinite mercy give us true teachers and ministers of Your Word who truly fulfill Your command and preach nothing contrary to Your holy Word. Grant that we, being warned, instructed, nurtured, comforted, and strengthened by Your holy Word, may do those things which are well pleasing to You and profitable for our salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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