

The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

July 31, 2022

Son of God, Eternal Savior

Lutheran Service Book 842, Lutheran Worship 394, The Lutheran Hymnal n/a



1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, Source of life and
2 As You, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, So may we for
3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and
4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, Source of life and



truth and grace, Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us
oth - ers live. Free - ly have Your gifts been grant - ed;
Prince of Peace; Hush the storm of strife and pas - sion,
truth and grace, Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us



Hal - lows all our hu - man race, You our Head, who, throned in
Free - ly may Your ser - vants give. Yours the gold and Yours the
Bid its cru - el dis - cords cease. By Your pa - tient years of
Hal - lows all our hu - man race: By Your pray - ing, by Your



glo - ry, For Your own will ev - er plead: Fill us with Your
sil - ver, Yours the wealth of land and sea; We but stew - ards
toil - ing, By Your si - lent hours of pain, Quench our fe - vered
will - ing That Your peo - ple should be one, Grant, O grant our



love and pit - y, Heal our wrongs, and help our need.
of Your boun - ty Held in sol - emn trust will be.
thirst of plea - sure, Stem our self - ish greed of gain.
hope's fru - i - tion: Here on earth Your will be done.

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 49:7– 8, 13–14a, 15; antiphon Psalm 49:1–2

L Hear this, all peoples!

Give ear, all inhabitants of the world,
both low and high,
rich and poor together!

C **Truly no man can ransom another,
or give to God the price of his life,**

L for the ransom of their life is costly
and can never suffice,

C **This is the path of those who have foolish confidence;
yet after them people approve of their boasts.**

L Like sheep they are appointed for Sheol;
Death shall be their shepherd,

C **But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol,
for he will receive me.**

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 Hear this, all peoples!

Give ear, all inhabitants of the world,
both low and high,
rich and poor together!

Kyrie

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

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

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

Gloria in Excelsis ~ Glory to God in the Highest

- L** Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.
- C** **Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father: We worship You, we give You thanks, and we praise You for Your glory.**
- L** Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, You are Lord and God, You are the Lamb of God:
- C** **Lord Jesus Christ, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**
- L** Lord Jesus Christ, You are seated at the right hand of the Father; and we ask you to graciously receive our prayer.
- C** **For You alone are the Holy One,
You alone are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Collect of the Day

- L** Let us pray: O Lord, grant us wisdom to recognize the treasures You have stored up for us in heaven, that we may never despair but always rejoice and be thankful for the riches of Your grace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12–14; 2:18–26

²Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity. . . .

¹²I the Preacher have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven. It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. ¹⁴I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind.

^{2:18}I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me, ¹⁹and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. ²⁰So I turned about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun, ²¹because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil.

²²What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? ²³For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity.

²⁴There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, ²⁵for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? ²⁶For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

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

Gradual Romans 10:15b, 18b; Isaiah 52:7b, alt.

- L** How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news,
- C** **who publish peace and bring good news of salvation.**
- L** Their voice has gone out to all the earth,
- C** **and their words to the ends of the world.**

Psalm 100

- L** ¹Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth!
C ²**Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!**
L ³Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
C ⁴**Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!**
L ⁵For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever,
C **and his faithfulness to all generations.**

Colossians 3:1–11

¹If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

⁵Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming. ⁷In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. ⁸But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. ¹¹Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

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

Verse of the Day: Colossians 3:23–24a

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. Alleluia.

Luke 12:13–21

- L** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 12th chapter.
C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹³Someone in the crowd said to [Jesus], “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” ¹⁴But he said to him, “Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?” ¹⁵And he said to them, “Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.” ¹⁶And he told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man produced plentifully, ¹⁷and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’” ¹⁸And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.’” ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’” ²⁰But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’” ²¹So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

- L** This is the Gospel of the Lord.
C Praise to You, O Christ.

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

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

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

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

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

All Depends on Our Possessing

Lutheran Service Book 732, Lutheran Worship 415, The Lutheran Hymnal 425



1 All de - pends on our pos - sess - ing God's a - bun - dant
2 He who to this day has fed me And to man - y
3 Man - y spend their lives in fret - ting O - ver tri - fles
4 When with sor - row I am strick - en, Hope a - new my



grace and bless - ing, Though all earth - ly wealth de - part.
joys has led me Is and ev - er shall be mine.
and in get - ting Things that have no sol - id ground.
heart will quick - en; All my long - ing shall be stilled.



They who trust with faith un - shak - en By their God are
He who ev - er gent - ly schools me, He who dai - ly
I shall strive to win a trea - sure That will bring me
To His lov - ing - kind - ness ten - der Soul and bod - y



not for - sak - en And will keep a daunt - less heart.
guides and rules me Will re - main my help di - vine.
last - ing plea - sure And that now is sel - dom found.
I sur - ren - der, For on God a - lone I build.

5 Well He knows what best to grant me;
All the longing hopes that haunt me,
Joy and sorrow, have their day.
I shall doubt His wisdom never;
As God wills, so be it ever;
I commit to Him my way.

6 If my days on earth He lengthen,
God my weary soul will strengthen;
All my trust in Him I place.
Earthly wealth is not abiding,
Like a stream away is gliding;
Safe I anchor in His grace

Public domain

Devotional thoughts:

“Relax, eat, drink, be merry!” This sounds like a great retirement plan! But it didn’t turn out that way for the rich man in Jesus’ parable.

Our Gospel lesson begins with a dispute about an inheritance. It’s amazing how easily an inheritance can cause divisions in families. An inheritance by its very nature is neither worked for nor deserved. It is a gift passed on from a lifetime of labor by someone else. It is a token of generosity that should be received graciously. Eternal life in heaven is often called an inheritance. It was earned by Jesus and given freely to those who believe in Him. This dispute between brothers offered Jesus the opportunity to demonstrate the vanity and futility of a life dedicated to the pursuit of wealth without regard for eternity.

You may have met people like the rich man in the parable. In fact, we all have tendencies to be like him. It’s in our sinful nature. Jesus explained the danger that we all face, “Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.”

The Greek word translated as “covetousness” is described as “the greedy desire to have more” or avarice. Wealth, in and of itself, is not the real danger. Rather, it is our attitude toward wealth. In analyzing the problem of the Rich Fool, Jesus explained, “So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

This is a constant struggle for each one of us. We live in a world where wealth and power are praised. It even infects the Church. During my active years in ministry, I found it disappointing that we spent so much time on budgeting rather than outreach and spreading the Gospel.

In reading Jesus’ parable, I noticed something that I hadn’t thought about before. Jesus’ said, “The land of a rich man produced plentifully.” It wasn’t the hard work of the rich man that produced. It was his land! The rich man should have recognized what we all need to recognize. Everything we have comes to us as a gift from God!

It is easy for me to be deceived into thinking that it is my hard work or cleverness that brings me wealth and prosperity. With that attitude, I will never pause to thank God because I will believe that I deserve all that I have. But I need to remember that even my strength and intellect come from God.

Some years ago, a pastor told me this story. The roof at his church was leaking. The church council decided to communicate the problem to the congregation and to ask each member to consider giving a little more to cover the cost of the new roof.

One dedicated member of the council (Let’s call him, Dan.) commented that he had already set his budget for the year and that there wasn’t any more room in it for an increased gift to the church. The pastor went on to explain that this man was known to be generous in his support of the ministry. However, the pastor (a brave soul) looked at him and said, “Dan, you haven’t begun to imagine the ways God has of taking your money from you.” (I might note that over the years, I have thought of saying that in a meeting but never had the courage.)

A year later, Dan was in the hospital suffering from a severe illness. The doctors gave him no hope for survival. Dan turned to the pastor and said, “I have decided to give up. My health insurance is exhausted and my savings are going fast. If I die now, my family will have some money left to start out on.” To this, the pastor replied, “Dan, it’s your decision. But your family would rather have you a thousand times more than your money.” (I often wished that I had half of the wisdom of this pastor.)

I first heard this story about ten years after these events. By then, Dan was a close friend. As things turned out, Dan was approved for an experimental treatment program. He lived to see his young children grow to adulthood. He enjoyed becoming a grandfather. I have often recounted this story to young couples preparing for marriage as they consider setting their priorities for life.

So the obvious question remains, “Am I laying up treasure for myself, or am I rich toward God?” How do we become rich toward God? We do this by receiving His riches through faith in Christ and learning to be

generous as He is generous with us. The Apostle Paul writes, “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace” (Ephesians 1:7). He goes on to explain to Timothy:

¹⁷ As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. ¹⁸ They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹ thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

Jesus’ parable about the Rich Fool illustrates the difference between seeing the world from a human perspective versus God’s perspective. The rich man thought he was being wise with this plan, “I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.” In human terms, he was wise. But in God’s eyes and in view of eternity, he was the ultimate fool. God said to him, “Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?” Jesus explained, “So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

May we all be rich toward God through faith and live our lives with a spirit of generosity in service to others.

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).

L O Lord, without Your Word and Spirit all is vanity. Guard our hearts against pride and arrogance and a life rich in things but poor in spirit. Grant to us wise hearts, that we may love rightly all that You have made and use them all for Your purpose and glory.

C Amen.

L O Lord, grant that in our lives together would show the love of Christ to one another. Grant husbands and wives an abiding commitment to their vows and promises of faithfulness. Help parents to teach their children to know and love the Lord. Give fulfillment and joy to those who are single or widowed in adulthood.

C Amen.

L Almighty God, send Your holy angels to watch over all of our loved ones, especially those who live in distant places. Give aid and relief to those suffering from flooding and other natural disasters. 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.

God of Grace and God of Glory

Lutheran Service Book 850, Lutheran Worship 398, The Lutheran Hymnal n/a



1 God of grace and God of glo - ry, On Your peo - ple
2 Lo, the hosts of e - vil round us Scorn the Christ, as -
3 Cure Your chil - dren's war - ring mad - ness; Bend our pride to
4 Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion To the e - vils



pour Your pow'r; Crown Your an - cient Church's sto - ry;
sail His ways! From the fears that long have bound us
Your con - trol; Shame our wan - ton, self - ish glad - ness,
we de - plore; Let the gift of Your sal - va - tion



Bring its bud to glo - rious flow'r. Grant us wis - dom,
Free our hearts to faith and praise. Grant us wis - dom,
Rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wis - dom,
Be our glo - ry ev - er - more. Grant us wis - dom,



grant us cour - age For the fac - ing of this
grant us cour - age For the liv - ing of these
grant us cour - age Lest we miss Your king - dom's
grant us cour - age, Serv - ing You whom we a -



hour, For the fac - ing of this hour.
days, For the liv - ing of these days.
goal, Lest we miss Your king - dom's goal.
dore, Serv - ing You whom we a - dore.

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 Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

August 1 – August 6, 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 49:7– 8, 13–14a, 15; antiphon Psalm 49:1–2

- L** Hear this, all peoples!
Give ear, all inhabitants of the world,
both low and high,
rich and poor together!
- C** Truly no man can ransom another,
or give to God the price of his life,
- L** for the ransom of their life is costly
and can never suffice,
- C** This is the path of those who have foolish confidence;
yet after them people approve of their boasts.
- L** Like sheep they are appointed for Sheol;
Death shall be their shepherd,
- C** But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol,
for he will receive me.
- 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** Hear this, all peoples!
Give ear, all inhabitants of the world,
both low and high,
rich and poor together!

Verse of the Day: Colossians 3:23–24a

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. 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.

Psalm 49 is the ideal companion to our lessons for this week. It teaches us about the limitations of wealth and worldliness. As is often the case, we benefit from reading the entire psalm. However, let's focus on verses 7-8:

- ⁷ Truly no man can ransom another,
or give to God the price of his life,
⁸ for the ransom of their life is costly
and can never suffice,

No amount of wealth is sufficient to buy eternal salvation! It is impossible to ransom another person or to even pay God for your own life. The cost is too high!

But thanks be to God that there is someone able to pay the high price of salvation. That someone is Jesus. His sacrifice is more than enough to pay for the sins of the whole world! That is what John the Baptist meant when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

Why is this so? Since Jesus is a human being, he is able to be our substitute and take upon Himself the punishment that we deserve. Because He is also God, His death on the cross has infinite value. It is more than sufficient to pay for your sins and mine!

This is a good week to remember that we should never trust in wealth or good works or anything other than Jesus for our salvation. It is a good week to "Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love" (Joel 2:13). "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Let us pray: O Lord, thank You for sending Jesus to pay the high price of salvation through His sacrifice on the cross. Grant us faith always to trust in His sacrifice and not our own wealth and prestige, through the same Jesus Christ our 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: Colossians 3:23–24a

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. Alleluia.

Kyrie

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

L Let us pray: O Lord, grant us wisdom to recognize the treasures You have stored up for us in heaven, that we may never despair but always rejoice and be thankful for the riches of Your grace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C Amen.

This is a week to appreciate and honor wisdom. The highest wisdom is to set our priorities in order and recognize heaven as the greatest treasure that God has given to us through faith in Jesus.

The burdens of life can often lead us to despair of ever experiencing true joy and happiness. But trusting in God means recognizing that Easter follows Good Friday. The cross is not the end but the beginning. Our sin and sorrow may seem great but the riches of God's grace abound even more.

It is the ultimate foolishness to believe that the here and now is all we have or will ever experience. True wisdom looks to eternity and the gift of salvation that God freely gives to all who believe. May we always be thankful and rejoice in this gift.

Let us pray: O Lord, grant us wisdom to recognize the treasures You have stored up for us in heaven, that we may never despair but always rejoice and be thankful for the riches of Your grace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Wednesday

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

Verse of the Day: Colossians 3:23–24a

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. Alleluia.

Psalms 100

L ¹Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth!
C ²Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!
L ³Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
C ⁴Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!
L ⁵For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever,
C and his faithfulness to all generations.

Kyrie

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

Psalm 100 is a favorite for many people. When we sing the common doxology, we are singing a tune originally written for the singing of Psalm 100!

Psalm 100:1 has often been quoted to people who claim to be unable to sing. It only calls for us to “make a joyful noise to the Lord.”

Psalm 100 gives us the perfect description of life lived in the light of God’s grace. Living as forgiven people, we serve the Lord with gladness!

Because Jesus died on the cross for us, we are now the people of God and the sheep of His pasture. Nothing good be better than that.

We come into God’s presence with thanksgiving and praise for all that He has done for us in Christ. We rejoice that the LORD is good and His steadfast love endures forever!

Psalm 100 is the appointed psalm for weddings in Lutheran Worship. Marriage is one of the greatest blessings granted to us. It is a day of gladness and joy! Psalm 100 is perfect for weddings.

On a personal note, I will sing Psalm 100 with a little more fervor today. My wife, Valerie, and I are celebrating our 48th wedding anniversary. The Lord is good!

Let us pray: O Lord, allow us to make a joyful noise to You for all that you have done for us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Thursday

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

C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Colossians 3:23–24a

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. 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.

Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12–14; 2:18–26

²Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity. . . .

¹²I the Preacher have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven. It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. ¹⁴I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind.

^{2:18}I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me, ¹⁹and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. ²⁰So I turned about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun, ²¹because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil.

²²What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? ²³For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity.

²⁴There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, ²⁵for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? ²⁶For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

It may be best to read Ecclesiastes 1:1-2:26 in order to receive the full impact of these words rather than the selected verses of our Old Testament lesson for this week. Nevertheless, these readings are adequate to make an important connection to the Gospel lesson. All earthly activity and effort are useless and empty when a person “lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God” (Luke 12:21).

Hard work and great effort are North American virtues. Climbing the corporate ladder and careerism are highly praised. However, at life’s end, these things are less than useless when compared to entering eternal life. As Ecclesiastes says, “All is vanity.” In this sense, vanity can be described as emptiness.

During my vicarage in Moline, Illinois, I was given a tour of the production facilities of a local television station. It was fascinating because I had managed the television studios at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis.

As part of the tour, I was shown a massive 2-inch quadruplex videotape machine. The television engineer was overjoyed at the acquisition of this new apparatus. He was positively exuberant.

I was quite impressed. This piece of equipment was expensive. It was something that I would never have available to us in our small seminary control room.

However, as I walked away, I turned to my friend and explained that making an eternal significance by teaching salvation through faith in Christ was infinitely more important to me than a 2-inch quad machine.

By now, the 2-inch quad machine has gone the way the dinosaur. It was simply another example of vanity.

It is certainly important to work hard at our vocations and enjoy life. However, these things should never dominate our thinking to such an extent that we neglect the things that are eternal. Eternal things are the only things with true importance. Eternity is so important that God sent His only-begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him would not perish but have eternal life!

Let us pray: O Lord, thank You for all the earthly gifts You have given to us. Grant that they would never distract us from our Savior, Jesus, and things that have eternal significance. Amen.

Friday

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

C Amen.

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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.

Colossians 3:1–11

¹If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

⁵Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming. ⁷In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. ⁸But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. ¹¹Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Paul wrote to the Colossians, “Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.” This is an abstract saying but Paul went on to be very specific about what it means to set your mind on earthly things. Minds set on earthly things focus on sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness. They are filled with anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk. Minds set on earthly things are prone to lies and untruth.

That’s quite a list. It’s so very easy to slip into that way of thinking again. But this is not who we are anymore. That old self in us has been replaced with a new self. Through faith in Jesus, our old selves have been drowned in baptism and our new lives reflect who we have become. We now are renewed in the knowledge of God and the image of God.

I once knew a young man who had lived a wild and violent life. When he came to faith in Jesus, he put that all behind him. I once asked him to play on my flag football team. He refused. He didn’t want to participate in anything that might cause him to slip into his old way of life. We all could learn something from this *gentle* man.

Since we have been redeemed by Christ the crucified, we no longer desire to set our minds on earthly things. Our true home is in the eternal mansions of heaven. That is where our thoughts should be.

Let us pray: O Lord, grant us the grace to set behind us our earthly thoughts and desires. Move us to focus our thoughts on things that are noble, good, and holy through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Saturday

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

C Amen.

Gradual Romans 10:8b, 10

L The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart,

C **the word of faith that we proclaim.**

L For with the heart one believes and is justified,

C **and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.**

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C **Alleluia, Alleluia. knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. Alleluia.**

Kyrie

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

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

Psalm 100

- L** ¹Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth!
C ²**Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!**
L ³Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
C ⁴**Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!**
L ⁵For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever,
C **and his faithfulness to all generations.**

Psalm 100:2 begins, “Serve the Lord with gladness!” This is an excellent theme for all of our activities in life. At home or at work, while exercising or relaxing, it is good to serve the Lord with gladness.

However, Psalm 100 is very specific about where we are to serve the Lord with gladness. We are to serve the Lord with gladness and come into his presence with singing! We are to enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise.

Where do we purposely enter God’s presence? We do this when we come to church in worship. It is then that we enter His gates and His courts.

Worshiping and praising God in church is a delight for His people. This is where we give thanks to Him and bless His name. It is in church that we hear His word and sing His praise. There we learn that He is good and His steadfast love endures forever.

I love to golf. I enjoy the beauty of nature. But it is important for me not to deceive myself into believing that God doesn’t want me to be in His sanctuary to sing His praise and offer to Him thanksgiving for all that He has done for me in Christ.

Let us pray: O Lord, grant me every opportunity to come into Your presence and worship You in the congregation of Your people. Let me serve You in Your sanctuary with gladness through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

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